

THE BUILDINGS OF ENGLAND

WILTSHIRE

Julian Orbach, Nikolaus Pevsner and Bridget Cherry

SALISBURY
CIVIC SOCIETY

JUNE 2021



DIARY OF SOCIETY EVENTS

Wednesday 7th July 2021 Visit To Melbury Vale Vineyard, Shaftesbury

An evening visit to the Melbury Vale Vineyard, Shaftesbury. The vineyard is a family-owned, rural business specialising in the production of wines, liqueurs, brandies and ciders. The on-site winery was completed and in production for 2013. ***See Website ****

Thursday 22nd July 2021 Guided Tour Of The Settlement Of Britford

Hadrian Cook will give a guided tour on the theme of "The Settlement of Britford" on Thursday 22nd July 2021. The walk and talk is based on his research taking in the river, Church, Green, Park, Manor (from outside) and a quick look-see at the water meadows near the Fish Farm and should last about an hour and a half. FULLY BOOKED

Monday 2nd August 2021 St George, Dragons And Medieval Beasts In Salisbury – Afternoon Walk

The celebrated Blue Badge guide, David Richards hosts a guided tour through Salisbury introducing us to St George, Dragons and Medieval Beasts on Monday 2nd August. The afternoon walk and talk gives an opportunity to discover Salisbury's special historical relationship with St George and the city's amazing range of dragons, wyverns, griffins, unicorns and other fantastical beasts. ***See Website ****

Thursday 5th August 2021 St George, Dragons And Medieval Beasts In Salisbury – Evening Walk

The celebrated Blue Badge guide, David Richards hosts a guided tour through Salisbury introducing us to St George, Dragons and Medieval Beasts on Thursday 5th August. The evening walk and talk gives an opportunity to discover Salisbury's special historical relationship with St George and the city's amazing range of dragons, wyverns, griffins, unicorns and other fantastical beasts. ***See Website ****

Tuesday 17th August 2021 Visit To Norrington Manor (Grade 1 Listed), Alvediston

Back by popular demand! A further visit, for Society members and their guests, has been arranged to the important and beautiful Grade 1 listed Norrington Manor at Alvediston, Salisbury, Wiltshire SP5 5LL on Tuesday 17th August 2021. Norrington Manor is a medieval manor house which lies in the hills above Alvediston in the Ebbles Valley. ***See Website****

Saturday 18th September 2021 People In The Park

We're taking a stand at the People in the Park day hosted by Salisbury Transition City. Images of our hugely successful awards scheme will be on display together with visual and written accounts of the work of the Development group and events and visits arranged by the GP team together with copies of our popular book, 'Salisbury in Detail'.

Tuesday 28th September 2021 Salisbury Recovery

An event jointly organised with the Royal Society of Arts, on the theme of 'Salisbury Recovery' will take place on Tuesday September 28th. RSA Salisbury and Salisbury Civic Society will be hosting an open forum with a number of experienced and informed panellists presenting their views on the recovery of Salisbury.

Wednesday 29th September AGM 2021:

Followed by a talk from Phil Harding. The highlight of this year's AGM will be a talk by Phil Harding currently a Fieldwork Archaeologist at Wessex Archaeology's Salisbury office working on large scale excavation projects including Kingsmead Horton and the Army Basing Programme work at Bulford. Phil is probably best known for his regular appearances on Channel 4's Time Team where he was one of the core group of archaeologists. **See Website ***

Whistler

It is proposed to unveil a plaque to Rex and Laurence Whistler in the Close later this summer.

*** PLEASE NOTE !**

For booking instructions and current updates on all events please go to the 'Salisbury Civic Society' website and go straight to Events, which is kept up to date and gives all booking instructions

www.salisburycivicsociety.org.uk/events/

Front cover from Pevsner ©James O Davies / Yale University Press



St George and the Dragon

will be introduced by David Richard on his walks, 2nd and 5th August



Visit: Melbury Vale Vineyard

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT - JUNE 2021

Welcome to the June edition of the Quarterly Magazine and our new Editor, Charles Villiers, is providing many interesting features for you to digest.

Do you, I wonder, have many new words or expressions in use since the Covid 19 pandemic took over our lives? The verb 'Zoom' is now firmly established and application of the words 'test' and 'trace' now have sinister big brother connotations! The use of the expression 'lockdown' is now applicable to a state of being in fear of contact with others – no keys or bars on the windows needed – but something we hope will become a distant memory and not return to haunt us.

With this in mind we look forward enthusiastically to the resumption of live events and meeting together soon including the Talk by Phil Harding on the 29th September, preceded by our Annual General Meeting which we could not hold last year, hopefully at the Methodist Church - and subject to applicable Government guidelines of course. Do keep abreast of other forthcoming events by visiting the Society website which our enthusiastic and dedicated Stephanie Siddons-Deighton continuously updates.

The Society has been keeping a close involvement with Salisbury City Council to assist them with the emerging Neighbourhood Development Plan and news of that process and regular updates can be found on the City Council website: www.salisburycitycouncil.gov.uk.

The Wiltshire Council 'Local Plan Review' consultation received over 2,500 responses with your Society submitting very constructive comments prepared by the Development Committee (see page 7 and web site) and the City Council deciding against support for the concept of a by-pass which now seems to be firmly back on the Agenda.

Maybe the new Guildhall Square sculpture 'Turning Point' is a sign of great things to come for Salisbury? Only time will tell but the Civic Society will keep engaged with the Planning process and hope to encourage all to maintain high standards for all new developments.

Pete Dunbar
Chairman

EDITORIAL

At this stage of the year it is customary to publish reports on the Society's activities. However full activity has had to be curtailed in some sections, particularly in services provide by the General Purposes Committee which is chaired by Judy Howles. Because of this her report is not as full and detailed as usual it has had to be edited for reasons of space. However everything that we all need to know has been included. Anyone who really needs to see any more can obtain the original direct from me. Their work is extensive and includes the research that goes into the installation of Blue Plaques as well as all the planning for visits, lecture etc.

'Heritage Open Days' needs a special mention: This event is not being held this year. This is partly due to there being nobody available to take charge. This is an exciting and interesting feature of the Society's activity and we are looking for two volunteers to join the committee and organise Heritage Open Days each year, probably expanding our coverage beyond what we have achieved in past years.

In this edition the feature Public Eye fulfils its purpose exactly. Richard Deane has used the opportunity to explain the Society's position on the Local Plan very exactly, its rationale and detail.

The relationship between history and publicity planning for the future in general is brought together in the personal thoughts of David Richards. He is a Blue Badge Guide with a wide knowledge of local history. He is also responsible for some revealing information about King Henry VI - page 12.

On pages 2 & 3 information about future events is up to date, but to be completely informed it is necessary to go to the Society's website, and see 'Events' where there will always be full information.

Charles Villiers

***The Society welcomes new members
John and Catherine Avery Jones, Colin Duller,
Angelika and James Hamilton,
Mary Parker, Andrew Williams***

PUBLIC EYE

THE SOCIETY'S RESPONSE TO THE LOCAL PLAN REVIEW

Major changes proposed by the government to the planning system include a drastically revised local plan system. Apart from anything else, this would greatly reduce any chance for public awareness of proposals within a new plan, till a very late stage. The Society objected to this during consultations on the planning White Paper, without much expectation of the government changing its approach, given the normal outcome of such consultations.

As things stand, the current local plan system remains in place, and a new plan for Wiltshire is in the process of being drawn up. Wiltshire Council's timetable shows various stages, leading to a public enquiry and, they hope, adoption of the plan in the second quarter of 2023. Whether this timetable survives the government's envisaged plans for change remains to be seen, but for the time being the Society, like everyone else with an interest in the plan, can only work on the assumption that matters will proceed as per the timetable. A draft plan is expected to be published late this year, and comments were invited early this year on proposals published by Wiltshire Council, aimed at shaping various facets of that plan, especially the location of new housing. The Society's response, made in March, is outlined below.

New settlement concept. We expressed our disappointment that no proposal was included for shifting all greenfield development (assuming that it's currently not realistic to expect this to be reduced to zero) away from existing settlements, and to completely focus it on a new settlement somewhere in south Wiltshire.

The Society has long advocated this, believing that a continuing process of seeking less and less satisfactory sites on the edge of Salisbury, in particular, has nothing to be said for it, and will just increasingly detract from the city's character. A new settlement, carefully positioned, would create the chance to create a genuine new community, properly infrastructured. It would, subject to the commercial requirements of the housebuilders who would no doubt need to play a major role, offer town planners, architects and landscape architects the chance to think a settlement through from scratch, and create something which is a testament to the possibilities of contemporary design, and a great benefit to those who live there.

The new settlement concept was assessed as an alternative to the adopted strategy in the plan review, but dismissed, on grounds which the Society saw as potentially flawed. However a general assessment of the way forward for Salisbury stated that there may be 'long term constraints' on continuing with the strategy on which the plan thinking is based. The Society suggested that if this strategy is likely to eventually run into a dead end, now is surely the time to look for an alternative approach, and avoid some of the damage which will be done before that dead end is reached.

The lack of any current precise location for a new settlement was cited as a reason for not being able to adopt the concept, with no evidence that such a site had been seriously looked for. We said that the current local plan review was precisely

the time work should have been done on evaluating potential locations. At the time of a very successful Planning Forum on the new settlement idea, in 2018, we were told that Wiltshire Council was actively pursuing that idea, and it was very disappointing that nothing appears to have come of this.



Site 6, north of the Downton road

Location of new dwellings for Salisbury. The plan review started from the premise that 940 such dwellings were needed, a relatively modest figure by recent standards. Chippenham, for instance, is required to find over 3000. Three greenfield locations on the edge of the city were proposed for these, one at Old Sarum, and two either side of the Downton Road, on the edge of the existing built-up area. The Society said that its ultimate position was that no greenfield sites should be considered. Current thinking, driven in particular by the climate emergency, should be pushing towards the abandonment of construction on such sites, and the seeking of higher densities within the existing city in order to meet projected needs.

However, it also said that it accepts that it may be unrealistic to expect this sort of major change to happen rapidly, and it would therefore still comment on the proposed location of these 940 dwellings. One of these was Site 6, north of the Downton road, in the angle of that road and a road down to Britford. The Society said that it saw this as fundamentally unacceptable, principally because of its impact on views of the cathedral, and it does not believe the impact could be removed or mitigated to an acceptable degree through the scale or layout of any housing scheme there [see photo]. Early discussions by the Development Committee included consideration of a site not being put forward by Wiltshire Council, on the southern edge of the city, east of the Blandford road, but it was decided not to pursue this as an alternative, and instead to say that the Society was not going to propose any other location for the 220 dwellings Site 6 was expected to take. These dwellings should be treated as additional to the 330 ones cited by the plan as coming from proposals in

the adopted Salisbury Central Area Framework, and from the emerging Salisbury Neighbourhood Plan's call for sites. Other comments in the plan review were related to this

The Maltings/Central Car Park. The plan review failed to make clear that 200 dwellings here are already adopted policy, and therefore do not count towards the calculation of the 940 dwellings needed in Salisbury. However the Society stated it should be possible to achieve a significantly greater number than 200 here, on a major brownfield site, which in the emerging retail climate seems very unlikely to be the focus of any major retail developments. The River Park project, currently at the stage of a Phase 1 planning application, is expected to prepare the way for major redevelopment schemes on the Maltings/Central Car park. These should lend themselves to quite high densities, without needing to build particularly high and have any impact on cathedral views.

Churchfields. The Society expressed its considerable disappointment at an 'assumption', quoted in the local plan review, that 'There are significant barriers to the re-development of the Churchfields site in Salisbury for housing. It is not considered capable of development in the plan period 2016- 2036.' An earlier adopted policy for 1100 dwellings here may well not be currently realistic, but this should not prevent a serious look at removing of some existing uses on Churchfields, not least ones operated by Wiltshire Council itself, and looking for a portion of housing development here.

Brownfield sites generally. The importance of maximum utilisation of brownfield sites was cited as needing to be at the absolute forefront of plan thinking, essential if further encroachment into the countryside round Salisbury is to be kept to a minimum. In addition to the Maltings/Central Car Park and Churchfields, the Society emphasised the potential for housing, along possibly with other uses, on the Brown Street and Salt Lane car parks. This has been cited since at least the Salisbury Vision of 2006, and the time has come to take it forwards in a serious way.

There are many other possible small sites where, without challenging the adopted Salisbury Skyline policy (a.k.a. the Forty Foot Rule), housing development of a reasonable scale of density can be fitted in. With the right professional design input from architects, town planners, landscape architects, and urban designers, such developments could also add significantly to the built quality of the city.

Green and Blue Infrastructure (GBI). The Society expressed its support for comments made by the Salisbury Area Greenspace Partnership in its response to the plan review. GBI locally is essentially the city's landscape and riparian environments, which support health and wellbeing with spaces for recreation, education and getting close to nature. They also provide an extremely high-quality landscape setting which supports the local economy by making Salisbury an attractive place to live, work and visit. There is a wealth of important cultural features and important wildlife

habitats in addition to the city's historic fabric. As well as the watermeadows, penetrating almost into the heart of the city, and views of and from Old Sarum, there are the internationally important rare chalk stream habitats that flow through the city, and several contemporary as well as historic designed landscapes within the urban area.

All these important spaces in and around the city are already under pressure from large scale peripheral housing development, and there are still more planning approvals in the pipelines which will mean additional pressures – overuse and misuse, and protected sites and priority habitats becoming increasingly vulnerable to damage.

Richard Deane

HENRY VI: A FISHERTON MIRACLE

A little over 500 years ago a remarkable event occurred in Fisherton. It involved a dead king, a young Wiltshire man, the reigning monarch and the Roman Catholic Church.

Henry VI was born in 1421 at Windsor Castle, the son of the warrior King Henry V. Unlike his father he was a shy, timid man unsuited to high command. This was compounded by bouts of mental illness and madness that would eventually lead to his arrest and murder, aged 49, as a prisoner in the Tower of London.



He had previously however, had a passion for education and architecture, founding Eton College, King's College, Cambridge and All Souls College, Oxford. He was generally perceived as a religious, even a holy man. After his death he was associated with miracles and a Lancastrian cult of Henry VI developed. Pilgrim badges from his shrine in St Georges Chapel, Windsor have been found in Salisbury and they may be seen today in Salisbury Museum, indicating his local fame and underlining the support he had from

the citizens of our city. It is worth remembering that in the 15th century Windsor was in the Diocese of Salisbury and that Richard Beauchamp, Bishop of Salisbury, was also the Dean of Windsor. It is probable that the bishop encouraged pilgrimage to Windsor among his Salisbury

congregation. Even today Henry VI is remembered in Salisbury with his statue on the West Front of the Cathedral.

Henry's miracles included cures for blindness, the King's Evil, and migraine. This current account is based on the records of Henry's miracles that were unsuccessfully presented to Rome in the 1500s in an attempted canonisation.



Henry VI - Salisbury Cathedral

the crowd carried Beys along Fisherton Street to the Blackfriars Church where he was granted sanctuary and safe refuge.

Roger Beys, a servant of the Stourtons (a family ennobled by Henry VI) was convicted in Salisbury of stealing sheep and despite his passionate assertions of his innocence, was condemned to death.

On St Mathias's Eve, the 23RD February 1483 Roger Beys was dragged to the scaffold at Gallows Gate in Fisherton now occupied by a large traffic roundabout. He prayed to Henry VI to intercede on his behalf. As the execution began the spirit of Henry appeared to him (but not to the assembled crowd) and placed his right hand under the noose and relieved the pressure on Beys's neck. At the same time Our Lady of Salisbury, the Virgin Mary supported his feet. After an hour had passed the executioner cut the rope to drop the corpse to the ground. Waiting at the scaffold was a priest from St Johns Hospital charged with the burial. He placed the cross he was wearing on the chest of the apparent corpse when he and the crowd, to their astonishment, noticed he was breathing. After a little drink to refresh him, the crowd removed him despite the efforts of the Sheriff and all his bailiffs to repeat the hanging. The

When King Richard III heard of the miracle he gave Beys a full pardon. On gaining his freedom Beys set out with 40 supporters on a pilgrimage to the shrine of Henry VI at Windsor. He left his noose as a holy relic of Henry's miracle on the tomb. A 15th century woodcut shows Henry VI at his shrine surrounded by praying pilgrims. If you look carefully you will see one of them has a noose around his neck. It is quite probable that this is Roger Beys from Wiltshire.

David Richards

PLANNING THE FUTURE. A CALL FOR REMEMBERING OUR HISTORY.

Fisherton is hundreds of years older than the City of Salisbury and yet the public recognition of its history is very thin on the ground. One example of this failure is the lack of public imagery explaining the significance of the Blackfriars' 250 year occupation on their five acre Fisherton site. When there are new plans to redevelop Fisherton Street and The Maltings it will offer a timely opportunity for increasing the public's awareness and knowledge of Fisherton's past. It is worth remembering that Salisbury Civic Society's aims include 'to celebrate and commemorate the area's rich heritage'. Its proud record in commissioning historical plaques has demonstrated that intent over a number of years.

How might this Society principle be applied to Fisherton's redevelopment? Certainly there are opportunities for plaques and information boards. The provision of public art (such as statues, monuments and memorials) is beyond the Society's means but it could actively encourage other institutions to commission work. And then there is the question of modern architecture's embrace of minimalism and rejection of ornament. Some of it looks exclusively to the future with little acknowledgement of its historical predecessors. Some of it makes use of traditional materials, like stone and wood to silently (some might say obscurely) hint at an area's heritage. Sadly very few modern buildings in Fisherton display any specifically descriptive decorative art such as those in Salisbury city centre historic buildings. In Fisherton there is a dearth of modern examples of architectural dates, texts, carvings or images of life. The memory of long past events being preserved in the community is in danger of being submerged by faceless commercial architecture.

The runaway success of Salisbury Civic Society's *Salisbury in Detail* demonstrated the public's appreciation of decorative architectural features. Should then the Society build on this achievement and lobby developers and planners on the community benefits of the placement of modern descriptive decorative art on new buildings constructed with traditional materials? This could inform the non-specialist and the ordinary person's understanding of Fisherton's heritage. It could also help to create a unique, historical sense of place in what is an otherwise anonymous shopping development. In the absence of such actions will Fisherton's hidden history ever be revealed by the existing plans to redevelop, which in any case are now failing to progress, its built environment? Only time will tell.

David Richards

1. Planning Applications

The old Salisbury District Council area remains as the Society's geographical remit, but an unhelpful change in Wiltshire Council's system for handling planning applications makes it impossible to say how many affecting the Society's area were submitted during the year. What can be said is that 269 applications were selected for examination, resulting in 20 letters of objection or comment being sent in by the Society, both figures around the average for recent years. The new change in the Wiltshire Council system just compounds a steady decline during this century, the most serious feature being a failure to identify proposals which affect conservation areas.

2. The Maltings – new library building

There is now no proposed overall scheme for Maltings redevelopment, but at the start of the year there was still a proposal for a new library, plus a Travelodge Hotel, on the Fisherton Street/Malthouse Lane corner. A design approved in 2019 was reasonably promising, and the committee was in discussion with its architect about details of implementation, but it became increasingly clear that Wiltshire Council was not prepared to take on the necessary lease for a library in part of the new building, and by the middle of the year the whole idea had unravelled completely. The old building having been demolished, the site remained vacant at the end of the year.

3. Salisbury Central Area Framework

The Central Area Framework is a range of proposals for how the central part of Salisbury might develop, seen by the Society as largely sensible, with its chief weakness being the question marks left over how laudable aims would be funded. It was adopted in the middle of the year, following extensive consultation to which the Society contributed, but there was only a clear and immediate way ahead for one project. This was the River Park, which will upgrade the Avon from Bishop's Mill northwards to the Ashley Road open space, and has significant funding, from the Environment Agency and Wiltshire Council. Implementation should start in 2021.

4. Illuminating Salisbury

Projection of images onto Salisbury buildings, as an attraction to the city during specific periods, is another initiative encouraged by the Central Area Framework, and supported by the Society. Workshop events developed ideas for it early in the year, but it had dropped out of the news by the year end. The outcome of the bid to the government's Future High Streets Fund was unknown at that point, and subsequent success may help revive the idea of illuminations.

5. People Friendly Streets

The Society strongly supported the introduction in October of traffic measures designed to create a better balance between motorised traffic and other users in the centre of Salisbury, and was extremely disappointed to see them scrapped less than two months later. It will look for any opportunities to push for the return of such measures, not necessarily in exactly the same format.

6. Planning Forum and Open Meeting

The 2019 Planning Forum was due to cover the subject of how architecture and planning react to the climate emergency, but Covid prevented it going ahead. It also put an end to hopes for a traditional Open Meeting, but an online one was held instead, in October. This covered the topic of 'The Impact of Covid-19 on the Emerging Salisbury Neighbourhood Plan', and the format enabled involvement from a range of speakers not based close to Salisbury. It covered responses to the retail crisis, a project in Swansea which involves mixed-use development with a theme of bringing nature into the heart of the city, and aspects of the Neighbourhood Plan. The online format, enabled by Wiltshire Creative, worked well, and topics came up which could usefully be examined again in the future.

7. Salisbury Neighbourhood Plan

The Development Committee is not directly involved in the plan's preparation, though several Society members, including its chairman, were on the steering group. The committee took an interest in particular in the development of the plan's design chapter, which could make a very useful contribution to the long-running question for better design of buildings in the city.

8. Changes to the Planning System

2020 saw the start of a lengthy period of government tinkering with the planning system, some of it relatively mundane, but some of it quite alarming. Objections were made to proposals to drastically reduce consultation with the public over local plans, and to a possible threat to Salisbury's eminently successful Forty Foot Rule (more properly the Salisbury Skyline Policy), which protects views of the spire. It seemed highly likely that opportunities presented to comment on proposed changes were only token gestures, and some of the changes weren't even subject to consultation at all.

9. Awards Scheme

2020 saw work to existing buildings being looked at by the awards scheme, with a judging panel chaired by Susanna Denniston, until recently chair of Salisbury Museum Trustees. The judging process was somewhat complicated by needing to respect Covid precautions, but nine awards and one commendation were still given. The awards in or near Salisbury were to conversion from a shop to residential at 53 St Ann Street, and conversion of farm buildings at Petersfinger Farm.

Outside the city, awards went to the rescue from dereliction of Harewarren Cottage, Wilton, reconstruction of a wrought iron bridge at Waterside Villa, Mere, conversion to residential of the Methodist Chapel in North Street, Mere, extensions at Hillcroft, Chicks Grove, and at Summerleaze House, E Knoyle, and alterations and extensions at The Old Rectory, Fonthill Gifford, and at Old Fovant House, Fovant. The commendation went to an extension at Downton Memorial Hall. Winners had to be told that the usual presentations event in January 2021 could not go ahead, and that a decision would be taken later about how to proceed.

10. Involvement with Other Bodies

The Society continued to be represented on the Salisbury Conservation Advisory Panel, and to be linked to the Salisbury Area Greenspace Partnership, and to the CPRE.

Richard Deane

PUBLICATION OF THE NEW WILTSHIRE PEVSNER

Julian Orbach's revision of the Wiltshire Pevsner, which he started in 2014, has finally reached its conclusion, and we're delighted to be able to report that the volume was published on June 8th. Julian spoke to the Society twice, in November 2016, when he was working in the north of the county, and then in September 2019, when his work in Salisbury was in full swing. Several members, who've been consulted along the way, will be particularly aware of the thoroughness and skill which he has brought to bear on the task, and his capacity for making discoveries which add greatly to our knowledge of the buildings of Salisbury and its surrounding area.

The book is approximately 40% longer than its predecessor volume, and greatly helped by an upgrade from black and white to colour photographs. Its full title is *The Buildings of England: Wiltshire*, and it is published by Yale University Press. It's a hardback, priced at £45-00, ISBN 9780300251203. There was an online launch on June 15th, to which members were sent a link, together with a chance to purchase the book at £35-00, with free postage.

Julian will be talking about the book at the Chalke Valley History Festival, on June 23rd. A review of it will appear in the September magazine.

THE DOWNTON SOCIETY — NEW CORPORATE MEMBER

The large village of Downton, six miles south of Salisbury, is an ancient crossing point over the river Avon. There is evidence of habitation from Neolithic and Roman times, and earthworks of a Norman motte and bailey castle lie within the Moot which is a scheduled monument. The central part of the village is a Conservation Area containing over 80 listed buildings. Most are Grade 2 or Grade 2*, including cottages from the 18th century, but there is significant evidence of earlier, including medieval, construction and the Church and Manor house are Grade 1. Farms and scattered buildings within the rural area include the historic Trafalgar Park house, and evidence of more recent economic history (such as tanning and corn milling) can be seen in older properties and mills used to power local industry

The Downton Society was formed in 1975 to help preserve this special environment. Its main aims are very similar to those of SCS, and centre on “the preservation, protection, development and improvement of features of historic and public interest”. This includes promoting high standards of planning and architecture, stimulating interest in the village and its environment and co-operating, or partnering, with like-minded bodies. We focus on the village Conservation Area and a Society award encourages owners to consider character, setting and use of materials when carrying out extensions and alterations on their properties.

The Society, a registered charity, is independent and self-funding. It has over 120 fee paying members and is run by a Committee, all volunteers, who monitor & respond to planning applications in the conservation area, keep a close eye on housing policy and developments, initiate projects to enhance the green environment, work with others (including the Parish Council) to help improve public spaces in the village, and encourage interest in historic buildings. Activities – from walks, films and talks - to wine tasting and an annual party are also provided for members and residents.

Achievements include involvement in campaigns - **for** a 7.5 ton HGV weight limit and Flood Defence Scheme, and **against** excessive numbers for new housing development. We drafted the Village Design Statement, helped to steer through the Downton Neighbourhood Plan, and regularly contribute to planning outcomes which protect historic settings. Wiltshire Council Conservation officers are stretched and, even with village support, our opposition to planning applications is not always successful: a recent extension to the Primary school being an example of design we felt was highly detrimental to the conservation area. But, importantly, the Society is not anti-change or anti-development per se, and we take a pragmatic view about buildings being adapted to the needs of the 21st century (as in the case of a failed listed pub being converted to residential use or a modern annexe being built on a thatched cottage) However, with two developers



Downton - Moot House and the High Street



pressing to build a further 200 houses in Downton, (over and above those already agreed in Neighbourhood Plan) we are likely to be busy this year assessing the potentially harmful impact on the character – and creaking infrastructure – of our historic village.

Mindful of our setting within South Wiltshire and the connection with Salisbury – and not only as a service centre - the Downton Society is represented on the Salisbury Conservation Advisory Panel, responds to WC consultations and is always interested in proposals that affect the city and its rural hinterland. We have a great deal in common with the approach of the Salisbury Civic Society, and having been welcomed as corporate members in late 2020, we look forward to strengthening links and enabling our members to enjoy and support our mutual interests.

Nikki Ratcliffe Wilson

(Chair, The Downton Society)

MEMBERS FORUM

We are aware that a number of Civic Society members have significant interest and expertise in aspects of Salisbury history, architecture, culture and that we should offer them the opportunity to share that interest with fellow members.

It has been suggested we host a members online forum on Thursday 18th November 2021 where four members will have ten minutes to give an illustrated (or not illustrated) talk about their area of interest. Each talk will be followed by ten minutes of questions.

We are therefore asking interested members to write a short precis of a potential talk which can be included in our first Members Forum.

If there are more than four talks proposed we will make a selection for the first forum and schedule others for what we are hoping will become an annual event.

Please submit your interest by Monday 19th July to Jamie Hobson
jamie.hobson@icloud.com or Judy Howles howles@ntlworld.com

We will get back to you by the 17th September to allow plenty of time for preparation.

Jamie Hobson

ANNUAL REPORT 2021 - GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

The General Purposes Committee (GPC) is responsible for organising lectures, visits, Blue Plaques, Heritage Open Days and publicity for these on behalf of the Salisbury Civic Society. It also contributes articles to the quarterly magazine. One member of the committee usually leads on each of these subjects, but all members contribute to their choice and discussion.

COVID 19 restrictions have had a severe impact upon our programme. Lockdown arrived soon after our 12 March lecture by Alison Craig on the topic of a Cleaner, Greener Salisbury. The committee officers, who remain in the same roles as 2019, met regularly throughout the year by Zoom. This has worked so effectively that members have decided to stick with virtual meetings in the winter months. The pandemic has made it difficult to plan an events programme. We have spent much time exploring the feasibility of virtual lectures and visits, with Frogg Moody giving the first online talk in March 2021.

Lectures. One lecture was held in 2020: Alison Craig on 12 March talked on the topic of a Cleaner, Greener Salisbury.

The remainder of our 2020 lecture schedule had to be deferred. The society now has a Zoom account that enables online lectures and webinars. Frogg Moody pioneered our first online lecture on 25 March 2021 on the topic of Supernatural Salisbury. It is hoped that more online lectures will follow and it may be that some of the future lectures take place online even once restrictions are lifted, especially in the winter when the nights are cold and dark.

Blue Plaques. The plaque to Dorothy Brooke in the Close was finally installed on 15 October after a change in location required to obtain Listed Building Consent.

The installation of the plaque to Herbert Ponting was on 25 November. Two plaques were temporarily removed. The 'Spitfire' plaque in Castle Street has been taken into safe keeping by the society as the building has planning permission to be redeveloped. The Pitt plaque at Mawarden Court, Stratford sub Castle had deteriorated and has been refurbished and reinstated.

Two plaques are programmed for 2021: to Rex Whistler on the Walton Canonry (date to be advised) and to Wolfe Frank in Mere (deferred from 2020) in November 2021.

Communications and Outreach.

Stephanie Siddons Deighton has publicised the Society's activities across a wide range of media, . She has set up the booking system via Eventbrite and hosts the Society's Zoom account which enables online lectures and webinars. She has also been in communication with Wiltshire Council providing information that can feed into its Salisbury Heritage Walking Trail app.

Heritage Open Days.

There are currently two vacancies for people to take this forward. See page 6.

Films

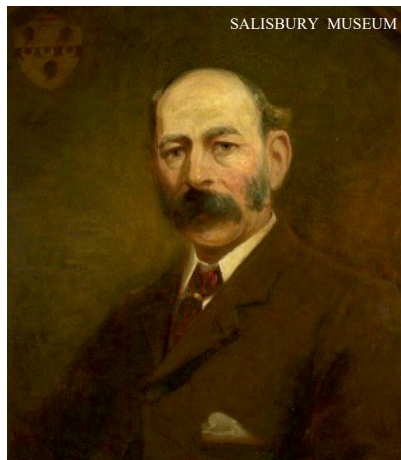
Stephanie Siddons Deighton is working with Fox Productions who are making a film of a tour of some of the society's blue plaques. The showing of the film The Great White Silence relating to Herbert Ponting Photographer had to be cancelled. It is now rescheduled for 6 October 2021 at St John's Place Bemerton.

Judy Howles

THE MEDIEVAL DOORWAY FROM ELSEWHERE - AN ALTERNATIVE SCENARIO

Richard Deane's article on the medieval doorway in the garden of Vale House, St Ann St, (September 2020) quotes the speculation of the Royal Commission on Historical Monuments that it might have 'migrated' from the extensive garden next door. There was indeed an extensive garden to the west of Vale House but there may be an alternative story here.

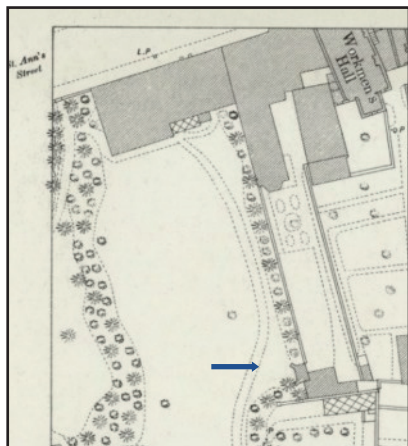
Col. Baker had moved to a fine Georgian house two doors away in early c19 and developed his grounds to include several stone structures. However, the Salisbury 'drainage' maps of 1854 and 1860 show nothing similar in shape and size to that of the mystery doorway. The 1854 Kingdon and Shearn 'drainage' map is drawn to the same scale as the 1879 OS Salisbury 'Town' map (pictured below) and this later map shows the structure clearly.



Dr Humphrey P Blackmore 1835-1929

Col. Baker died in 1862 and his house and land were acquired by the newly established Salisbury and South Wiltshire Museum. Baker's main house and adjoining smaller property were demolished, though his magnificent circular dining room was kept and still survives within the retirement housing complex that is there today.

Living at Vale House in 1861 was William Henry Blackmore, eldest son of the woollen draper of the city. He and his two brothers were leading lights in the foundation of the museum. By 1867 his brother Dr Humphrey Purnell Blackmore had replaced William at Vale House. In 1878 Humphrey became Honorary Director of the museum.



OS 'Tower' map surveyed 1978

City maps indicate that after the acquisition of Col. Baker's property and garden, the grounds of the two houses were merged and remained that way until after Blackmore's death in 1929. In the aforementioned OS map, the doorway appears in the south east corner of the

grounds behind Vale House, where it still stands. Until 1875 the dirty open waters of 'The Canal' or 'Town Ditch' ran along this south east boundary of the garden, and it was reported that in 1868 residents of St Ann's Street were forced to move out for a while because of the stench. It is therefore unlikely that the doorway was installed prior to the removal of the canal.



**Stonehenge near Avebury. H P Blackmore 1857. Watercolour.
The Salisbury Museum.**

The Salisbury Museum records that '*As well as being a medical doctor practising at The Infirmary, museum curator, respected historian and amateur archaeologist, Blackmore was a talented artist. He often employed watercolours to record archaeological sites and finds and his diaries (held in the Museum) are full of useful pictures and annotated diagrams.*'

Blackmore was acquainted with William Osmond Jr. stonemason, who together with his stonemason father had premises on the corner of St John St. and St Ann St. Osmond was also involved with the early museum. Might Osmond have rescued the redundant doorway from elsewhere to use as a gothic garden feature? In Richard's article Ann Ballantyne suggests that the painting in the alcove is likely to be nineteenth century rather than medieval, so perhaps Blackmore, as the '*talented artist.*' decorated it himself.



The Doorway in 2005. © Peter Read, Historic England.



Closer photograph to show the plasterwork in the doorway

Photographs taken for the sale of Vale House in 2012 show more of the superstructure of the doorway and the painting. The building was referred to as 'The Doll's House' in the sale particulars. However, the most complete image found is that attached to its listing as a Grade II Monument. Here it is described as 'Reset C15 porch in garden facing west. Late C15/C16 buttresses and other old fragments with brickwork as early C19 "ruin". Low ashlar plinth, richly moulded 3 canted arch, ogee and roll moulded chamfered outer strip. Carved spandrels. Deep cavetto rectangular surround. Some reset carved stones above arch'. It is to be hoped that the encroaching ivy observed in Richard's recent photo of the archway is still hiding a more dramatic 'ruin' beneath.

Rosemary Pemberton

<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1258858>.

OFFICERS AS OF JUNE 1ST 2021

PATRON Dame Rosemary Spencer DCMG

PRESIDENT

Brigadier Alastair Clark

VICE PRESIDENT

Mr Ken Wiltshire

CHAIRMAN Peter Dunbar

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Peter Dunbar (Chairman)

p.dunbar212@btinternet.com

01722 417847

Richard Deane (Vice-Chairman, acting membership secretary)

rdeane@madasafish.com

07974 140888

Rosemary Pemberton (Secretary)

rosemary.pemberton@hotmail.co.uk

Adrian Harris (Treasurer)

adrian.harris62@ntlworld.com

Stephanie Siddons Deighton

(Communications and Outreach)

stephaniedsd@gmail.com

Judy Howles (GP Committee)

howles@ntlworld.com

Charles Villiers (Editor)

villiers.crv@gmail.com

DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

Paul Stevens (Acting Chairman)

admin@paulstevensarchitecture.co.uk

Richard Deane (Secretary)

rdeane@madasafish.com

Leslie Lipscombe

leslie.lipscombe@btopenworld.com

Nicola Lipscombe

nicola.lipscombe@btinternet.com

Elaine Milton

emilton@emhp.co.uk

Louise Rendell

louise@stannsgate.com

Melanie Latham

melanielatham56@gmail.com

David Gregory

david.gregory.architects@googlemail.com

James Salman

jamessalman@designengine.co.uk

Hans-Dieter Scholz

hdieterscholz@msn.com

Lynne Pearson

lynnempearson@talktalk.net

John Comparelli

comparelli@btinternet.com

Steve Sims

steversims@icloud.com

GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE

Judy Howles (Chair)

howles@ntlworld.com

Lis Woods (Secretary)

lisandjames@gmail.com

Brenda Hunt (Visits)

brendahunt@clara.net

Janet Patch (Blue Plaques)

patch.janet@gmail.com

Jamie Hobson (Lectures)

jamie.hobson@icloud.com

Deanna Dykes (Heritage Open Days)

dmd@stepassociates.co.uk

James Woods

lisandjames@gmail.com

01722 422169

Hadrian Cook

hadrian@salisburywatermeadows.org.uk

Frogg Moody

frogg@timezonepublishing.com

Spring Optimism
Salisbury

