



THE
WARWICK SOCIETY
NEWSLETTER

September 2008

OUR AUTUMN EVENTS BEGIN AT HILL CLOSE GARDENS

WEDNESDAY, 17TH SEPTEMBER, 2008

THE REGENERATION OF HILL CLOSE GARDENS

With Dr Christine Hodgetts

At the Hill Close Gardens Centre – 6.30pm for 7.30pm



Join Dr Christine Hodgetts and other Society members for an informative talk on the Development and Regeneration of Hill Close Gardens.

Hill Close Gardens benefited from a enormous restoration project in 1996 thanks to the efforts of many Warwick residents and volunteers. Following the gardens' opening in summer 2007, the Warwick Society awarded the project a plaque for its regeneration work.

Now run by volunteers for the benefit of Warwick visitors and locals, the hidden hedged gardens of Hill Close Gardens are rare survivals of Victorian gardens once used by townfolk living above their business to escape from the crowded town.

The early autumn is one of the best times in the gardens and visitors are surprised by the colour and variety of plants and by the harvest of pears and apples.



Hill Close Gardens.

TUESDAY, 28TH OCTOBER, 2008

THE EVOLUTION OF LIBRARIES

With Edwina Cordwell and Maureen Oakes

At the Lord Leicester Hospital – 7.30pm for 7.45pm

What you see is not what you get! Libraries and Museums are like icebergs – a small part visible but a large part hidden from view. Edwina Cordwell will talk about the huge range of services offered by Warwickshire's Libraries, Learning and Cultural teams for which most of us only experience a small part.

WEDNESDAY, 19TH NOVEMBER, 2008

COMPTON VERNEY HOUSE AND ESTATE

With Cranmer Webb

At the Lord Leicester Hospital – 7.30pm for 7.45pm

Examining the history and development of this A Grade-1 listed mansion house, set in more than 120 acres of classical parkland landscaped by Lancelot 'Capability' Brown. When the Peter Moores Foundation bought Compton Verney in 1993, the house and grounds were in a state of decay after decades of neglect. The Compton Verney House Trust was established to transform the mansion into a gallery of international standard where visitors can enjoy art in a welcoming, accessible environment.



Compton Verney.

FRIDAY, 5TH DECEMBER, 2008

CHRISTMAS MUSICAL SUPPER

At the Court House Ballroom, 7.00pm for 7.30pm

Christmas is coming... See back page to apply for tickets to this years Society Christmas Supper.



ARCHAEOLOGICAL DIG UNEARTH'S NEW SURPRISES IN TOWN'S HISTORY

The creation of the new bus station in Market Place has enabled yet more of Warwick's past to be uncovered by archaeologists, says Dr Christine Hodgetts.

There were investigations in the 1960s when the modern redevelopment took place, but they concentrated on what was to be built over by Westgate House and the Market Street shops. The redevelopment of the Woolpack in the late 1990s also helped to fill in the jigsaw.

Developers are only required to pay for the investigation of archaeology which will be destroyed by the development, so, the site has certainly not yielded up all its secrets yet.

In the southern corner of the site, at the bottom of the modern street called Puckering's Lane, the photograph shows a section of cobbled street, estimated to date from the sixteenth century, dipping down over the old town ditch.



16th Century cobbled street revealed in dig.

It comes as a shock to realise that the line of Market Street was changed so much in the 1960s that some of the remains discovered were of buildings originally on its north side.

Tantalisingly, the excavation was unable to go below this level to unravel the mystery of when during the middle ages this street had been driven through the town ramparts.

It must have been at a time when the fortifications were no longer considered necessary, though in fact new ramparts (bulwarks, they were called at the time) were constructed during the Civil War. At the side and over the top of this surface there was an amount of burnt building rubble, particularly roof tiles.

This had obviously been put here to raise the surface and improve the gradient over the ditch. It is tempting to think that it was debris from the Great Fire of Warwick (1694), of which great quantities had to be disposed of, but we have to remember that a timber-framed town like Warwick had frequent fire casualties, like the groups of houses burned down in 1664 at the top of Saltisford, or in 1706 in Smith Street.

The archaeology of the town centre of Warwick is made difficult by the fact that successive phases of development often scrape away the previous layers, or dig through them to create cellars. Many of the building foundations uncovered sit directly on the underlying rock, but can directly be related to buildings shown on nineteenth century maps, leaving little chance that there is earlier material to discover.

In between the buildings, in courtyards or the small areas of garden still surviving in the nineteenth century, there are sometimes unexpectedly early remains, like the evidence of 13-14c pottery manufacture found under the yards of the Woolpack some years ago. What excited the archaeologists most on this dig are similarly unexpected. They are also the most difficult for the lay eye even to see: Neolithic rubbish pits, surprisingly close to the surface and appearing among the cellars of the Victorian houses.



Work continues following the completion of the archaeological dig.

Fragments of pottery in these pits, as much as 5,000 years old, give the first evidence that Neolithic man had actually lived on the Warwick hill-top, whereas the few previous finds of this date might have been left by people passing through.

The most evocative and self-explanatory finds are the numerous fragments of clay pipe, many encased in lumps of kiln. In the nineteenth century, until the 1880's, there was a yard behind the Market Street houses, with a tobacco pipe factory in it. The business was probably at its peak around 1850, when the proprietor of the works, his wife and daughters, and five employees were engaged in the craft. There may also have been some independent craftsmen buying space in the kilns. The factory itself was approximately under the walkway in front of the Saffron restaurant, and some of the pipe makers lived in small houses around the court. The kiln waste, the result of firings that had gone wrong, was not found here, but in the yards of houses further down the site. They give nice examples of the pattern of pipe being produced by these craftsmen in Warwick. It had perhaps provided useful hardcore to stabilise a muddy yard, just as similar damaged pipes were once used on the paths at Hill Close Gardens.

*Thank you to Bryn Gethin from
Warwickshire Museum,
Field Archaeology*

JOIN A NEW CAMPAIGN TO PROTECT WARWICK TREES AND PLANT MORE

A small band of enthusiasts are hoping to start a "Warwick Trees" group. The first main meeting will be held on September 24th in the rear room of the "Rose & Crown" public house in the Market Square, Warwick. The meeting will be advertised to the public in the newspapers and they are hoping that people of any age who care about the trees in Warwick and who would like to see many more of them being planted and then properly looked after will join them.



St John's tree with bizarre concrete surround.

The Warwick Society has offered the new group financial support to assist them in their work. Do go along if you, and any of your friends, share their real enthusiasm for a 'greener' Warwick.

FACT FILE

"Warwick Trees"

Aim: *The Planting & Preservation of trees in Warwick*

Objectives: *Enhance urban landscape in Warwick area, list existing trees, lobby developers to plant trees, work with local government, engage young generation as active participants in planting.*

Contact :
Philip Harris
01926 492586 / 07766 014016.
8 Lodge Crescent, Warwick,
CV34 6BB

Shire Hall Rebuilding booklet republished

Warwick Society members who read the article on the future of the Crown Courts in the March 2008 edition of the Warwick Society newsletter may be interested to know that The Warwickshire Local History Society has recently republished a booklet on the architectural history of the original Shire Hall.

"The Shire Hall, Warwick: Its rebuilding in the mid-eighteenth century" is an account of its construction by the former County Archivist Anthony C Wood.

The booklet has been out of print for some years but is now available once again. Copies are available from The Warwick Bookshop and available to order from the History Society's co-chair, Christine Woodland, for £4.00 (£5.00 including postage).

Contact:

Christine Woodland
Email: h.woodland1@ntlworld.com
01926 422628

28 Lillington Road, Leamington Spa
Warwickshire, CV32 5YY

WHAT IS IT?

Situated high up in a wall on Castle Lane is a face carved into the stone work. Does anyone know the origin or story behind the face? If so we would very interested in hearing from you. We would like to establish the history behind the face in the wall and then share the information with our members. Please contact Mark Robertson on 496643 or email beamend@ntlworld.com. We look forward to hearing any news.



The Face in the Wall, Castle Lane, photographed in 1991.

WARWICK WORDS

An ode to hanging plastic foliage balls

Plastic balls hung from ancient walls,
To decorate,
Deteriorate,
Disintegrate,
Mere detritus,
Mixed with litter,
On our streets,
Choking drains,
Cause flooding,
When it rains,
Live variegated ivy ones instead please.



By Sue Silvester, Warwick Society Member.

THE PURPOSE OF THE WARWICK SOCIETY

To preserve the heritage and improve the town environment of Warwick by encouraging high standards of design, architecture and planning.

New members are always welcome to join socially or contribute time to help improve the town environment. Please see the Warwick Society website for further details at www.warwicksociety.org.uk alternatively call one of the committee members below for further details.

MEMBERSHIP & CONTACTS

The society is proud to have 388 Members. If you know someone who would like to become a member please contact John Fletcher on the number below who will be pleased to send a membership form.

<i>Chairman</i>	James Mackay	498381
<i>Membership</i>	John Fletcher	493066
<i>Planning</i>	John Turner	491410
<i>Programme</i>	Liz Holroyde	492329
<i>Newsletter</i>	Mark Robertson	496643
<i>Website</i>	Richard Eddy	496643

Email: sec@warwicksociety.org.uk

Web: www.warwicksociety.org.uk

Treasurer Antony Butcher,
49 West Street, Warwick, CV34 6AB, 492975

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THE

WARWICK SOCIETY'S

Christmas Supper



Apply for tickets to join Society members for a festive evening supper, complete with musical entertainment.

FRIDAY, 5th DECEMBER – 7.00pm for 7.30pm

To be held in the splendour of the
Court House Ballroom, Warwick

A buffet meal will give the chance to meet lots of friends and other members during the evening.

- ❖ Arrive at the Court House from 7.00pm onwards
- ❖ Celebrate with a complimentary glass of sherry or wine on arrival.
- ❖ Musical entertainment by The Coten End Players at 7.30pm
- ❖ The festivities will end at 10.00pm

~ Tickets ~

The ticket price of £10 per person will include a three-course buffet supper, and that first drink. We hope that you will join us to share an enjoyable start to the Christmas season

The Ballroom, The Court House, Jury Street ~ 7.00pm for 7.30pm



TICKET APPLICATION FOR THE CHRISTMAS SUPPER 2008

I (NAME)would like tickets
for myself and for (NAME/S)

I enclose a cheque payable to the Warwick Society for £10 per ticket, total £.....

My telephone no is

TICK ONE

- I enclose a stamped addressed envelope, please send my ticket/s by post.
- Please hold my ticket/s for me to collect on arrival

Please send this application with your cheque by 21st November, 2008 to:

Monica Ory, 32 Mercia Way, Warwick CV34 4QB

If you have enclosed an envelope, your tickets will be despatched shortly after that date

