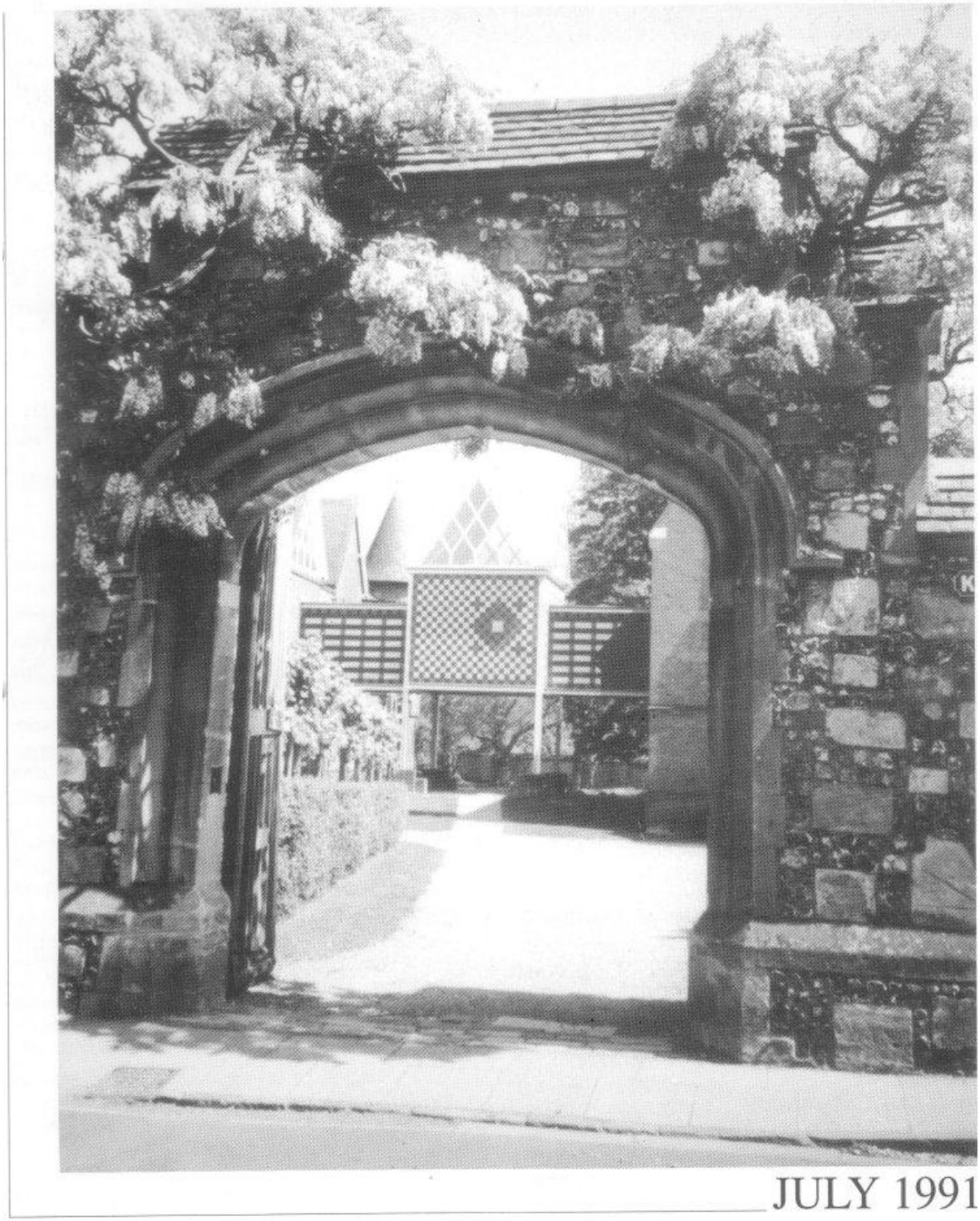
Title Picture - TrustNews July 1991

WINCHESTER PRESERVATION TRUST NEWSLETTER



JULY 1991

Winchester College Art School - architect Ted Cullinan - from Kingsgate Street

Chairman of the Trust - TrustNews July 1991

At long last work on the Heritage Centre is within sight of completion, as you will learn elsewhere in this edition of the Newsletter. As a result of an extensive facelift both within and without we believe that the Centre will be a very much pleasanter place both for visitors and for the volunteers who man it, and we look forward to the future with confidence. We hope that the Centre will be open by the time this Newsletter is in your hands and we urge you to pay it a visit.

A report from the Development Control Committee will bring you abreast on the planning front. The Trust is particularly delighted that the City has now abandoned plans to build a public car park on the Lower Barracks site and we can fairly claim to have played some part in the campaign which led recently to the final defeat of this proposal at a meeting of Winchester City Council.

There is surely no more important conservation project in Winchester than the restoration of the Cathedral, for which a major appeal has been launched. The Trust is contributing £2500 to the appeal, and in case any members are not aware of it, there is more information in this issue.

Finally, some members may not know of the Dever Society which is combatting plans by Eagle Star Properties to build a new town of 5000 houses on agricultural land at Micheldever Station. Winchester Preservation Trust limits its concerns to the Winchester area but this is a cause which members may well wish to support as individuals, and in this issue we print a short article, contributed by the Dever Society, explaining the situation.

David Middleditch

Development Control - TrustNews July 1991

Recession has resulted in a crop of applications to extend and alter houses and a dearth of larger projects. The scheme that will have the most effect on Winchester, **Peninsula Barracks**, is still wending its way through the planning processes, with an amended scheme at present under consideration. We understand that this contains alterations that go some way to meeting many previous criticisms, including a reduction of fifteen residential units and a re-designed St James Crescent, and the Trust is seeking a presentation of the amended application. The other major change in this scheme is that the City Council has reduced its parking requirement from the original three hundred additional spaces for general use to one hundred to provide parking for the visitors to the museum on the Upper Barracks, and while the Trust still feels this to be unnecessary - as well as impracticable, (for how is it proposed to prevent casual shoppers rather than museum visitors using it?) - it does feel gratified that it was instrumental in helping to bring about this change of mind by the City Councillors. The Trust has campaigned for a Park and Ride scheme for Winchester for about fifteen years and feels very strongly that to provide more central car

parking would preempt any possibility of Park and Ride being a success, besides exacerbating traffic conditions in the area.

Another scheme which might also threaten the viability of a possible Park and Ride scheme for Winchester, is the County Council's proposal to build thirty residential units on part of the former **Montgomery School**, a site that the recent consultant's report had suggested was a good place for parking in such a scheme. Since the report was commissioned by the County Council and the City Council (with a financial contribution from the Trust), it seems unwisely precipitate to commit this land to housing before the subject of Park and Ride has been fully discussed, and the Trust and the City Council have both raised objections to this proposal. A question of the right hand not knowing what the left is doing at the County, perhaps?

Economic recession appears to have brought a halt to work on **Century House and 32-33 Jewry Street**, where planning permission has been granted on condition that the present Jewry Street facades are retained. It had been proposed that the basements should be backfilled, but the Trust successfully prevented this happening, for it is believed that the cellars may be older than the buildings above and that they might therefore be of future archaeological interest. The applicant has also agreed to the Trust's suggestions that, where possible, the internal fittings should be salvaged rather than scrapped, and that a photographic record should be made of the interior before it is gutted. A member of the Committee is liaising with the architects to see whether we can help with the photographic recordings, but this has been postponed until work on the scheme restarts.

The Trust was also able to ensure that the original shop front of **11 Parchment Street** would be retained, but regrets that it was unable to save the rest of the building as it stood. A survey of the building was commissioned by the Trust, and it was discovered that much of the building was indeed unstable and could not be retained, but we understand that the external appearance will almost exactly replicate the present building.

The Trust was given an interesting presentation of the proposed new acute mental illness unit at **Melbury Lodge, Royal Hampshire Hospital**. The Trust's main concern here is the landscaping and trees, which are referred to in the Landscape Committee's report below.



Water Lane

After another presentation, a detailed objection was made to an application to demolish **3 & 5 Water Lane**, adjoining **Winchester City Mill** (below). The scheme was put forward by the Youth Hostels Association, who need to move the men's accommodation to the same side of the river as the rest of their operation, because this would then allow the national Trust, who own the City Mill, to expand their activities there. The YHA proposed some internal alterations to the Mill, to which the Trust had no objection, but they also wished to demolish and replace the two early 19th century terrace cottages to the north of the Mill. These modest cottages are in themselves of no great beauty or architectural merit, but they are closely linked, physically and historically, with the City Mill, and they have a visual group value with both the Mill and the rest of the buildings in Water Lane. The design of the building that was to replace them was far too elaborate for its surroundings, and it was felt that a flint wall surmounted by a timber upper storey would not have been employed traditionally in the way that was proposed. The external appearance of the section linking the new building with the Mill was especially disliked by the members attending the presentation, since its materials and design were considered too pretentious for its simple surroundings. The Trust's comments were later found to be in line with those of both the Hampshire Mills Group and the National Trust, and we await with interest to hear about future proposals for this scheme.

Although the Trust's role may sometimes bring it into dispute with official current planning opinion, it also aims to work with those responsible for preserving Winchester's character and environment. It is therefore satisfying to know that on occasions our comments or objections are helpful when planning decisions are being reached. We believe we were of assistance to the planning officers in their battle with **McDonalds** over their shop front for the site on the corner of St Georges Street and Upper Brook Street: the original design was little short of horrific, with a marble facade (so typical of Winchester?) and plastic stick-on lettering, and vast plate-glass windows. What has been installed may not please everyone, but members can be assured that what was proposed was very much worse!

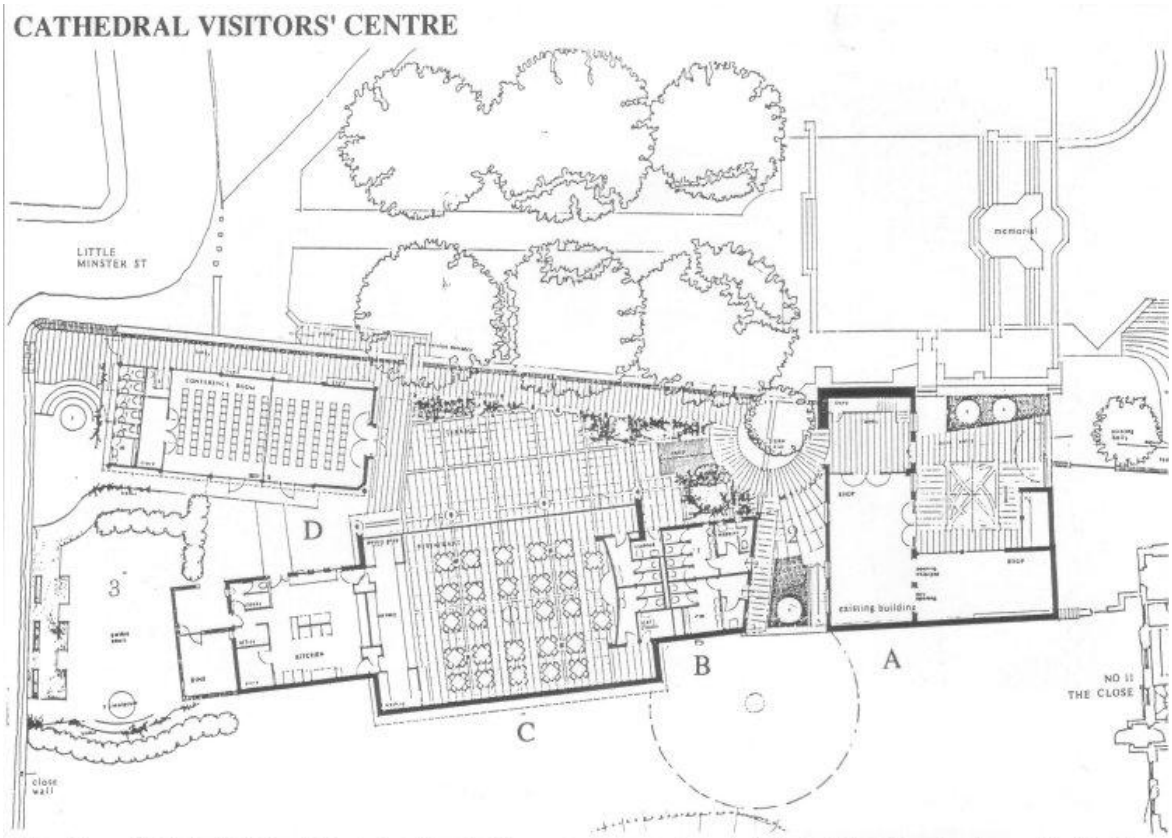
The Trust strongly supported the City at the appeal against its refusal to grant a change of use from residential to retail for the top floor of the **Brooks development**, stating that it felt that the residential accommodation was an important component of

the original scheme and that the proposed changed was contrary to the area local plan and an example of 'back-door' application. Sadly, the Department of the Environment decided to allow the appeal. We also supported the City in the appeal against its refusal to allow a two storey side extension to **10 King Alfred Place** since, although the proposed extension had been imagina¬tively designed, it was felt that it could set a precedent for future development in the sensitive Hyde Abbey area of the city. A decision has still to be made on this appeal.

Towards the end of May, members of the Development Control and Landscape Committees had a useful meeting with officers of the City's planning department, and it is hoped that this will be the first of a regular exchange of views with opportunities for more consultation and co-operation. Among the subjects discussed at this meeting - which is of increasing concern to the Development Control and Landscape Committees - is the overall appearance of the principal streets of the City: such matters as street furniture, road signs, lighting, and landscaping in general.

An improvement in the standard of shopfronts, facias, lettering and signs could do much to enhance the environment of shop¬ping streets and the Committees believe that they have already achieved some success in this field.

Particularly welcome has been the leading role that City Planning Officers have taken in the production by The English Historic Towns Forum, of an excellent booklet 'Shopfronts: Advertisements in Historic Towns'*. This publication aims to enlist the co-operation of retailers in "improving the environmental quality of traditional, shopping centres" and, it is hoped, will be followed up with further material, specific to Winchester, to give guidance and encouragement to retailers to play their part in improving the appearance of our historic shopping streets. The Trust has offered its support to the planning officers in this project.



Plan of new Cathedral Visitors' Centre by **Plincke, Leaman & Brown*ing***. A full set of drawings has been submitted for planning approval and can been seen at the City Council Offices, Avalon House in Chesil Street.

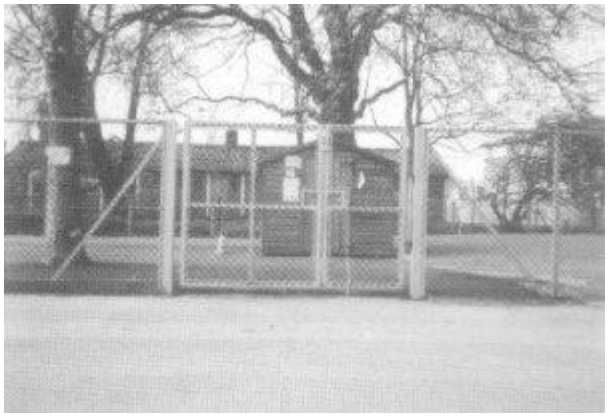
Key: A Shop: B Cloakrooms: C Restaurant: D Conference Room

**Available at the City Planning Office, Avalon House, Chesil Street. Price £2.50*.

Landscape - TrustNews July 1991

The Landscape Committee has continued to pursue some of the projects mentioned in the February Newsletter. We discussed with the City Landscape Architect proposals for paving and improvements to the west end of the **Wessex Hotel**. We were informed then that money was not available for railings along the path that links Market lane with the Cathedral grounds, for a wall to screen the refuse bins, or for a barrier across the parking area. However the Trust wrote direct to Trust House Forte to ask if these items would be included whilst other work was being undertaken, and were very pleased to hear they have agreed to fund this work. The paving has been done and a good size Paulownia tree planted to replace the one that had to be felled.

St Bedes Court, Hyde which had an unrelieved large car parking yard to this new development and about which we wrote to the Chief Executive, has had some paving removed, a tree and shrubs planted and some wall climbers put in, which will help this area.


North Walls

The Skateboard Park which has been constructed near the Park Road entrance to the North Walls park looks like an industrial yard with high chainlink fencing and metal gates (below). It is even worse than we anticipated from the planning application. We objected, not to the provision of the skateboard park but to its siting. The grass area at the north end has also been fenced in which seems unnecessary. The Skateboard Park could have been a colourful and exciting feature if it had been properly sited and thought out. We are very disappointed this has gone ahead and ruined an area that we consider is badly in need of a comprehensive rehabilitation scheme to make better use of the water and for a wider range of people to enjoy.

We have attended presentations for several new developments including the acute mental illness unit at **Melbury Lodge**. The site is in the wooded hinterland between Romsey Road and Sleepers Hill and slopes steeply down to a level area where the proposed building is to go. The former Italianate villa having been demolished some years ago, and the trees have suffered from neglect and storm damage. We are concerned that the good trees are identified and protected and that the access road, service trenches and other ancillary works are routed to avoid root damage to trees worth preserving. We were assured this had been taken into account and new planting would be included in the scheme. We asked that trees be planted within the car park.

Following our comments in November at the presentation to the Trust of the **New Records Office** on the Carfax site, we had a meeting with the County Architects. We are concerned about their proposals for the car park, in particular the visually unsatisfactory slope towards the south east corner of the building and the effect on the Sussex Street/Gladstone Road frontages. We are also concerned at the poor protection for new trees and we feel the proposed laurel hedge on the Sussex Street side is inappropriate. We were informed that the County had decided to proceed with the scheme as presented, but since then the City Council has made strong objections and work has been suspended. We asked for more details, for discussion, of the hard and soft landscaping around the proposed building, and the lighting proposals for the public footpath through the site. We are concerned that planting on this site seems to be so temporary. Some of the Lime trees on the Sussex Street frontage have been moved to Orams Arbour, but it is Sussex Street that is badly in need of permanent trees.

The Landscape Committee obtained the plans for two bicycle routes into the City one from Kings Worthy and one from St Cross - and agreed with these. However the placing of cycle parking stands caused considerable concern. Those for the Cathedral approach from the Square were visually intrusive. Other stands proposed outside W H Smith we considered too large and would obstruct pedestrian access: this was also the case by Market Street for stands under cover. The committee hope to raise these points when discussing street furniture in general with the City Planners.

We have continued to press for improvements to the setting of the Library in Jewry Street and understand a meeting has taken place between the County Council and the City planners. We opposed the conversion of the old wooden Bus Shelter into a kiosk as we considered this should await a comprehensive scheme which should include the car park, street furniture, bottle bank etc. We consider the new bus shelter, which mars the view of the portico, telephone kiosk, proposed bicycle stands, far from satisfactory. There appears to be no co-ordinated scheme, or liaison between various departments. Additions to this area seem to appear overnight in an ad hoc fashion and it now looks very shabby.

The Development Control Committee has reported the recent joint meeting with the City Planners, but we would add that it was good to hear the whole central area of Winchester with regard to street furniture was to be looked at, and the high posts at the Guildhall end removed. We understand an overall scheme is being prepared (not before time; why after rather than before?) and that there will be a general improvement in the cleaning and maintenance of the High Street. We were also informed that four dog bins will be provided in the High Street, but their design and position have yet to be decided. We also requested that developers should submit their detailed landscape schemes for approval well in advance of contracts being placed and work starting on site, to avoid another 'Brooks' scheme happening again.

Among other ways of the Trust assisting the planners in improving the general appearance of the central area is by the Trust contacting owners/developers direct. This has proved successful already with, for example, the Wessex Hotel, mentioned above.

Chippindale Venture - TrustNews July 1991

Following the Urban Studies Committee's report in the Febru¬ary newsletter Haydn Bennett describes the Second Chippindale Venture which took place earlier this year.

The Chippindale Venture, as members of the Trust know, introduces school children to problems and challenges of the built environment via a design project under the direct guidance of architects, landscape architects and planners.

Named after Frank Chippindale who died in 1988, the Venture was set up by the Urban Studies Committee of the Winchester Preservation Trust to promote a greater awareness of landscape and the built environment. Frank Chippindale, who had

been Chairman and the guiding light of the Committee, felt that children should be encouraged to a greater understanding and awareness of their urban environment.

The project takes its format from the planning application submission, that is from receiving a client's brief and requirements fora building to the consideration by an elected committee of the scheme submitted. The project involves site visits, site evaluation, research into various aspects of the problem, studies of existing buildings, structures and environments, feasibility studies, design development and recording of progress and presentation of the final schemes. The children work in school in teams of 5 or 6 over a period of weeks with their class teacher directly on the project as well as in peripheral exercises to cover the wide variety of topics applicable to the National Curriculum. The design professionals spend a number of sessions as team leaders and advisers to each group, working specifically on the project analysis and design development.

This year saw the Second Chippindale Venture involved in the design of an Environmental Centre on the North Walls Recreation Ground and Nature Reserve at Winnall Moors in Winchester. The project area, on the edge of the city centre, contains a Site of Special Scientific Interest. The special nature of the site led to the inclusion in each team of a landscape architect to compliment the architect team leaders who had provided the special input to the first Venture. The children were also briefed by an ecologist at an early stage of the project.

Two groups of children took part, a class of 8.5 to 9.5 year olds from St Bede's Junior School, Winchester and a group from the Southampton Explorers' Club (the local branch of the National Association of Gifted Children), aged 11.5 to 14 years. The St Bede's children spent most of their class time on the project over a period of about 6 weeks under the guidance of their school teacher. The architects and landscape architects spent in the region of 4 half day sessions with their teams. The Explorers had to undertake the project in their own time and consequently had less time to complete the task. The children produced a wide range of possibilities from bildings on stilts covered in natural materials to one almost completely underground with only a viewing dome visible. Perhaps the most original approach was not a building at all but a boat resembling a fish which cruised the river surrounding the site. All the schemes were well presented and the amount and depth of work involved was obvious. Equally noticeable was that the schemes in different ways were influenced by the setting and the children's response to the ecology of the area.

The culmination of the children's work was a full day's presentation to Planning Officers and to a "Planning Committee" of representatives of the Winchester City and Hampshire County Councils. Each team presented their schemes and the "Planning Committee" made comments as though the schemes were planning applications. This final session was well attended by the organisers and participants, the sponsors who covered the material costs of the project, interested members of local organisations and, especially welcome, many of the parents of the children involved. The special landscape aspect of the Second Chippindale Venture was marked by the presentation to each team of a specially selected tree by Hilliers Landscapes.

The children clearly enjoyed the project and all showed a considerable degree of commitment and involvement. There were inevitably areas of work that the children

found "unexciting" but on closer questioning it appeared that much of this related to studies where the children were being substantially challenged or to the parts of the design and presentation processes where it was necessary to cover the same ground several times to test and refine the decisions and products. It is clear that this latter aspect was a process with which the children were not familiar. However, the children were unanimous in agreeing that they would like to do a similar project in the future.

It is obviously too early to judge the long term effect of the project but the class teachers report a considerable growth in confidence and ability of the children and the clear benefit to the children of working alongside the professional advisers and of the involvement of elected members of the Councils. The participating adults were favourable surprised by the depth of thought and fresh approach that the children brought to the work.

Whilst there are lessons to be learned regarding the fine tuning of the Venture, the two Chippindale Ventures so far are judged to be considerable successes and well worth the substantial effort put in by very many people. A third project to be held in 1992 is already proposed and many of the design professionals have volunteered to help again.

The Heritage Centre - TrustNews July 1991

The repairs to the exterior of 52/54 Upper Brook Street being undertaken by the City Council have taken longer than was anticipated, but are now complete and the building appears much as it would have looked when built in late Georgian days. We are grateful to the City for what they have done. It is now our turn to carry out improvements to the interior, and externally we are planning to construct a porch over the old south entrance door, a hanging sign, and a footpath crossing so that a parking space can be provided on the north side for the use of stewards.

Many of the changes being made internally will be for the benefit of the stewards. There will be a new front entrance onto Upper Brook Street, and a raised floor area with counter and sales facilities, which will provide a view of much of the ground floor. The Carnegie Exhibition previously on this floor will be moved to the upper floor, and a new kitchen will be provided replacing the original entrance room. Gas heating is being installed, towards which the Gas Board has generously made a grant. We have also received a donation towards the cost of repairs from Shell, for which we are indeed grateful. It is hoped the centre will be open early in July, and we have fixed an official opening for Friday September 6th.

On Easter Monday, Trust members, Elizabeth Proudman, Phil Yates and Alan Cooke assisted Sally Taylor of Radio Solent in a programme based on Winchester which took the form of a Treasure Hunt. If anyone taped the programme Alan Cooke would be pleased to hear from them.

Finally, we believe that the refurbished Heritage Centre will have a lively future, and Alan Cooke, the Honorary Manager is anxious for new stewards to come forward.

Any members willing to help man the Centre should contact him on Winchester (0962) 864292. Two hours once a month would help, and the opening hours are 10.30 am - 12.30 pm and 2.00 pm - 4.00 pm. Sundays 2.00 pm - 4.00 pm (closed Mondays).



The refurbished Heritage Centre, 52/54 Upper Brook Street

Annual Fete - TrustNews July 1991

An active committee is arranging fund raising events, and a Fete will be held at the Heritage Centre on Saturday 10 August at 11.00 am under the kind organisation of Mr John Balchin. There will be stalls for the sale of books (hardback and good paperbacks), clothes, bric-a-brac, cakes, raffle and bottles. All contributions will be gratefully received at the Heritage Centre (see previous page for opening times), or contact Rosemary Kinnard-Smith (840596 evenings). A 50-50 auction sale is being planned for later in the year.

Winchester Cathedral Appeal - TrustNews July 1991

Most members will know about the current campaign to raise £7 million to fund the future of our Cathedral. Of this, £5 million is needed to enable a programme of structural building work to begin which will last well into the 21st century; £1 million will secure the long term future of the choir, and £1 million will provide for the building of a new Visitors' & Education centre. Many members of the Trust will have contributed already, but we hope that others will do so, preferably by Deed of Covenant. Particulars can be obtained from Winchester Cathedral Trust, Deanery Cottage, The Close (0962) 868647. As mentioned earlier, the Trust is contributing £2500 to the Appeal.

Hampshire Photographic Survey - TrustNews July 1991

The Hampshire Archives Trust is carrying out a survey of photographic collections held by individuals and organisations. The object of this survey is to bring together information about photographic material on Hampshire subjects and people, and to compile a list for the benefit of researchers and others. It is also hoped that it may be possible to borrow and duplicate particularly interesting or early photographs. Winchester Preservation Trust is itself making a collection of slides and has accumulated about 400, mostly of Winchester buildings dating from the 1970s to the present time.

Both for our own purposes, and in order to help Hampshire Archives Trust, we shall be very glad to hear from any member who has slides or photographs, particularly early ones, of buildings and events in Winchester or its surroundings. If you can help, please contact Harold Sturges, 29 Stockers Avenue, Weeke, Winchester S022 5LB (0962) 863420.

Hampshire Butterfly Report - TrustNews July 1991

Forty eight species of Hants and Isle of Wight butterflies are described in the most recent Hampshire Butterfly Report. This is a distillation of 10,000 observations sent in by members and friends during 1990, and tells how each species fared during the long hot summer. The Society's unique computerised register of Hants and IOW butterflies and butterfly sites now contains a total of 20,000 entries for all years. If you would like further information on the species including the Small Tortoiseshell, Chalkhill Blues, Brown Argus, Green Hairstreaks, Clouded Yellow, Painted Lady or the White Admiral, - the Holly Blue is still Butterfly of the Year - write for a copy of the report to Juliet Bloss, 7 Forest Meadow, Butts Ash, Hythe, Southampton SO4 6RH with a cheque for £2 (postage included) made payable to "BBCS Hants Branch".

Grass Roots Democracy - TrustNews July 1991

From Pamela Peskett
Former Mayor of Winchester

Dear Sir

Many people who read my article on Grass Roots Democracy in your February issue have told me that they share my views. The citizens of Winchester are deprived of a forum in which to voice their opinion on planning, traffic and other matters normally considered by a parish or town council.

This April the Department of the Environment issued a Consultation Paper on "The Structure of Local Government in England" to which comments were invited by 14 June.

Amongst other important issues such as the abolition of County Councils, the Paper looks at the role of Parish Councils. It states that "operating at a very local level,

parish and town councils play a useful role within communities in providing local facilities and representing local opinion. The Government believe that there may be a case for considering whether to enhance the role of parish councils, especially where a new unitary authority covers a wide area, and would welcome views".

Perhaps Winchester will get its "town council" after all.

Pamela Peskettt
Winchester

From John Moodie
Principal: Central Hampshire Community Education Institute.

Dear Sir

I write to say how interested I was to read the article by our former Mayor, Pamela Peskett, in the Trust's recent newsletter. I have felt for some time that people in urban areas are not nearly so well represented as those living in rural areas.

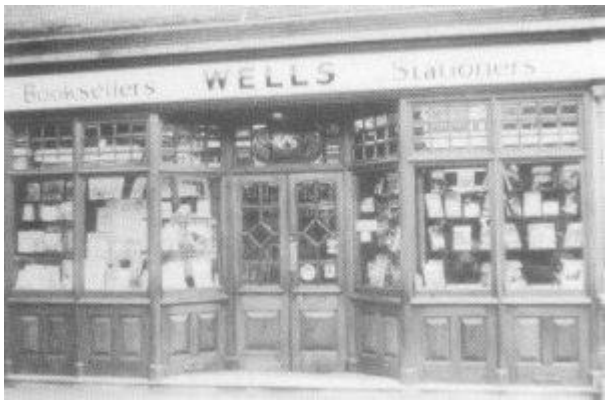
This is a timely raising of this issue, when there is considerable debate on the efficiency and effectiveness of our local government institutions. I hope the Trust will encourage and assist the debate. Such a possibility has prompted me to apply for membership, and I have enclosed a completed application form and cheque.

John Moodie
Winchester

A Winchester Bookshop & Bindery - TrustNews July 1991

By **Claire Bolton** who lived in Winchester for ten years before moving the Alembic Press to Oxford. She publishes books on printing history, bookbinding, decorative papers and book related topics.

Drawings by Patricia Calderhead



Wells Bookshop in College Street:
the shop front was installed a hundred years ago in 1891
when the shop started trading as P & G wells

Wells Bookshop in College Street has become a Winchester landmark for generations of College boys and for Winchester citizens alike. The shop's front has stood unchanged for the last hundred years and the bookshop had traded from the site for at least a hundred and fifty years previous to that. During its centuries of trading it has also had connections with two other Winchester 'landmarks', the Hampshire Chronicle and the Public Library. Apart from the longevity of the shop's trading record it is also unique in still having a working book bindery attached to it, perhaps being the only bookshop in the country to so have. This year marks the centenary of the shop's modernisation and beginning of its trading under the name P & G Wells. The building work was carried out in the summer of 1891 and the shop was ready for the new term that September. The exterior has not changed since, and the interior is still fitted with the same mahogany counter, desk and shelving that were there in the nineteenth century. However this is recent in terms of the shop's history for the business has roots as early as the 1720s.

Ambrose Holloway - writing master at Winchester College

There has been a bookseller and stationer trading in College Street since at least 1729 when Ambrose Holloway ran his business from there. He was the writing master at Winchester College and also supplied the boys with school books, note books, ink, pens and paper as well as dealing in antiquarian books. After his death in 1745 the business was run by Richard Holloway until 1757 when brothers Thomas and John Burdon took it over. After the first few years Thomas sold his share of the business to John and for the next forty years John built up a solid reputation as bookseller, stationer and publisher. The first records of Burdon's business are in Winchester College archives and are for binding and repair work on a book in 1757. John Burdon continued the Holloways' links with the College, indeed the fact that there was a bookshop in College Street at all, outside the city walls and away from the main trading street was probably due to the presence of the College in the first place. He supplied the boys with text books and stationery, and regularly bound books for the school, either new books into leather bindings or repairing old books. A number of the new books acquired by the College that were bound at the end of the eighteenth century still survive in their original bindings in their Fellows' Library. As a publisher Burdon was responsible for over sixty titles. The majority of these were school texts 'for the use of Winchester school', but he also published some books of local interest and some sermons. Burdon also had a strong interest in antiquarian and secondhand books and regularly issued catalogues of these for sale. John Burdon died in 1803. His sons Thomas and Charles ran the business until 1806 when it was sold to James Robbins.

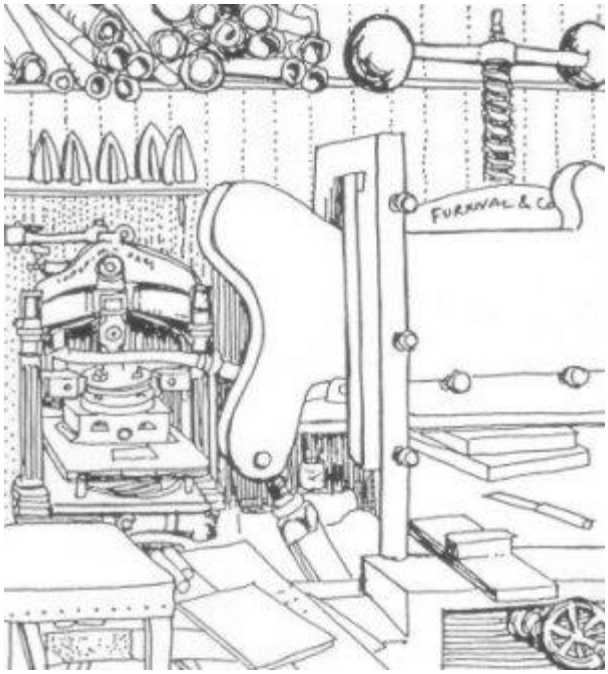
Home to the Hampshire Chronicle



A corner of the Bindery showing storage of finishing tools

Robbins was a printer, chiefly remembered for his 'magnum opus' Milner's History and Antiquities of Winchester published 1799 - 1801. In 1805 he had bought the Hampshire Chronicle and on buying the bookshop the following year he moved his presses there. For the next six years the Chronicle was printed in College Street, probably in the downstairs of the building that houses the bindery today. Robbins had many other business interests and was owner of the Wykeham Arms as well as a pub and brewery in the Square. In the 1820s he went into partnership with Charles Wheeler and in 1827 the two partners were instrumental in setting up a subscription library, called the Public Library. For the first six months of its existence in 1828 the Library was operated from a room in the bookshop as the proposed new premises in the High Street (above what is now The Body Shop) had not been completed. Trade with the College continued as previously. In fact through the centuries the College has always been responsible for about a third of the shop's turnover. Robbins and Wheeler stressed the College connection further and the imprint on books they published stated boldly 'bookseller to Winchester College'. Wheeler died in 1830 and in 1842 Robbins, then aged 82, went bankrupt. He died two years later and in 1845 the bookshop was sold to London bookseller David Nutt.

The beginning of the Wells family's long involvement



Guillotine with arming press behind

David Nutt remained in London for the most part and the shop was run by his assistant Joseph Wells who had begun work as an apprentice to Robbins. This is the beginning of the Wells family's connection with the shop that they were to own for the next 120 years. In 1862 David Nutt took Joseph Wells into partnership. An inventory of both the bookshop and the bindery was taken at this time and gives a fascinating insight into the stock of a mid-Victorian bookshop and the tools and equipment of the bindery. Another document from this period is a small book showing the bookbinder's finishing tools. Many of the tools in the book still survive and are in use today. On Nutt's death Joseph Wells became the sole proprietor in 1866. Joseph started the College journal The Wykehamist that year. The bindery continued to be an important part of the business throughout its existence. Apart from the general work of binding new titles into leather bindings the workshop was also kept amply supplied with work from the College. Throughout the nineteenth and for the first half of the twentieth century the bindery made every exercise book that was used at the school. They bound all the prizes and, in the nineteenth century, they bound all the books for the newly-founded Moberly Library.

On Joseph Wells death in 1890 his sons Philip and George, who had worked with him in the shop, became joint partners in the business. They extended the shop from being one room at the front of the building back into the downstairs living quarters and modernised the front, installing the windows that are still there today. Members of the Wells family continued to run the business through the twentieth century. George died early in 1905 but Philip was joined by his children, Margaret and his elder son Philip. In 1911 the business expanded upstairs and a new staircase was built in the front shop. A small staff joined the family and remained with the shop through all their working lives. Elkins joined at the turn of the century and finally retired in the 1960s. Spicer joined in 1925 and Banning in 1926 both of them working until retirement age. Philip senior died in 1929 and his son Philip in 1942 leaving his daughter Margaret in charge on her own. Her younger brother John joined the firm

after the second world war and then his daughter Monique and her husband Jan Fuchs making a fourth generation of the Wells family running the business.

Wells Bookshop Today

After Margaret's death in 1982 the building was sold to Winchester College and the business to a new partnership, under the management of Matthew Huntley, to continue trading under the name P & G Wells. The bindery is still in operation although the back garden that once separated it from the rest of the building has long since been covered over. The production of exercise books for the College has ceased but regular repair work for the College libraries is still done. Most of the work in the bindery today is restoration and repair with the occasional short run edition of new books.

Records and documents pertaining to the business are unfortunately scant. Almost all the records were housed in the cellar, which flooded regularly reducing them to a pulped mass. What few have survived are unique enough to give some insight into the nature of the business, both shop and bindery, through the centuries.

As a bookshop Wells is perhaps atypical. As was stated earlier it is not in a main commercial street but stands in a quiet backwater. Because of the presence of Winchester College, its one large customer, it has been partly sheltered from pressures of commercial change but this is to our benefit. This is not to say that the shop has stood still, for what has been preserved is not a museum piece but a modern bookshop with the latest computer technology happily housed in a Victorian setting with its bindery attached.



A full history of the bookshop and bindery is to be published as a limited edition by the Alembic Press, 139 Upper Road, Kennington, Oxford OX1 5LR on September

16, 1991 from whom a prospectus is available. A more detailed study of the binding tools, and some of the bindings in Winchester College Fellows Library on which they were used, will be published as an Occasional Paper by the Bibliographical Society in 1993.

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Ted Cullinan - TrustNews July 1991



Winchester College Theatre

The Trust is very fortunate to have Ted Cullinan to speak at the AGM on 21st October. The title of his talk is 'Responsive Modern Architecture'. (See Programme for time and place).

He is an architect well known to Hampshire for his three schools at Fleet, Crookham and Farnborough Grange, for the residence for single homeless people at Basingstoke, and of course for the New Art Centre and Theatre Workshop (right) at Winchester College - all built in the mid-eighties. A Science Park for Southampton University has recently been completed at Chilworth Park.

Ted Cullinan's practice has won numerous awards from the RIBA, Civic Trust and other bodies, for a large variety of building types, which in addition to being innovative and inventive, especially succeed in sensitive and historic surroundings.

Current projects include a development of the important site on the south side of St Paul's Cathedral, London; (proposals for this are now on display at the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition), a Visitors' Centre for a World Heritage site at Fountains Abbey, and a Theatre complex at Charshalton, Surrey.

Prince Charles has shown considerable interest in the work of Ted Cullinan and in 1988 opened his new Community Care Centre for Lambeth.

Members of the Trust are strongly urged to come and judge for themselves how successfully a skilled modern architect manages to reconcile the latest functional demands of clients with the need to produce humane structures that fit readily into their setting.

Concrete or Countryside - TrustNews July 1991

The Dever Society is an amenity society, dedicated to the conservation of the countryside in the parishes of the Dever valley, from Northington and Micheldever through to Sutton Scotney.

It strongly believes in the retention of a designated Area of Particular Landscape Importance running across central Hampshire and acting as a buffer between Basingstoke and Winchester.

The Society also supports the views of the County and City Councils that there is plenty of building land available in Hampshire for the number of new houses needed in the next decade without the development of new settlements on green field sites.

Both these policies are at risk from Eagle Star's plans to build a new town of 5,000 houses on about 1,000 acres of open farmland at Micheldever Station. The Society believes that a halt should be called to the covering of Hampshire's fast-reducing countryside with bricks and concrete.

Furthermore, to place a town about the size of Alresford in the triangle of country between Basingstoke, Winchester and Andover would surely lead to those towns and Micheldever Station joining into one vast urban conglomeration before many years have passed.

The Dever Society thinks the Downlands and Hampshire's countryside are worth fighting for and is spearheading the opposition to Eagle Star's plans. The fact that the planning authorities are also against the new town is not enough. The people living in the area likely to be affected, and this includes Winchester itself, must be seen to be strongly opposed to it.

The Society therefore welcomes new members and anyone interested in this fight to save 1,000 acres of green fields is invited to apply for membership. The annual subscription is £1 per person.

Application should be made to the Membership Secretary:
Mrs Sheila Rodger,
Velindre,
Northbrook,
Micheldever,
Winchester.