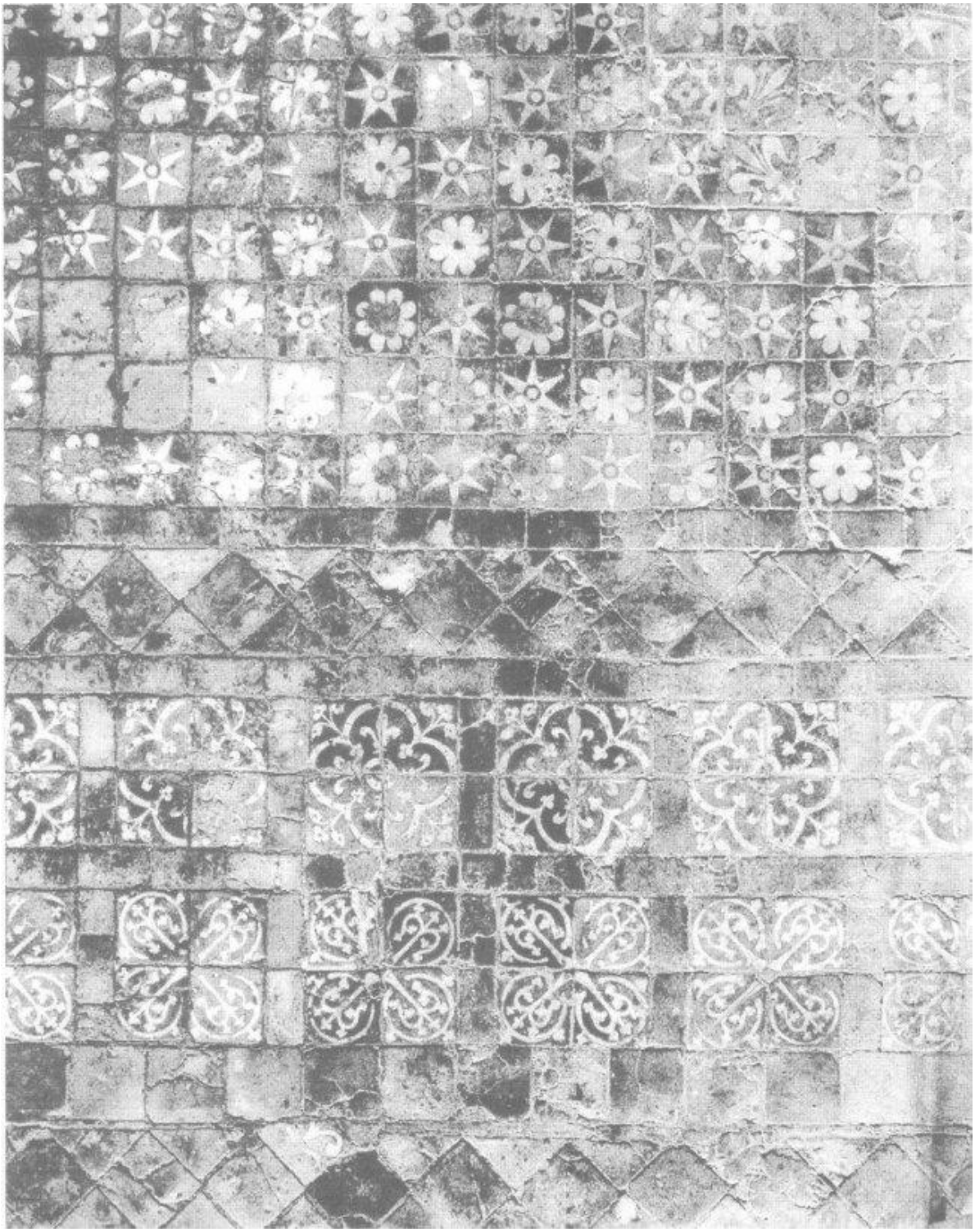
Title Picture - TrustNews Spring 1996



13th Century floor tiles in the Cathedral Retrochoir
(Photograph by courtesy of John Crook)

Chairman's Message - TrustNews Spring 1996

Heritage Centres and Councils

The argument as to whether, and to what extent, party politics should dominate local government has gone on for a long time. There is no doubt that the change of the ruling party in the Winchester District from Conservative to a very strong Liberal Democrat majority has brought about a major swing away from matters of heritage in the City of Winchester. The consequer-e of this, not helped by the serious depletion of Council financial reserves for reasons now well-known, is that there has bee major deflection of funds away from those organisations concerned with heritage.

The proposed cut in historic building grants and, to come closer to home, the original decision of the City Council to neither sell nor lease the Winchester Heritage Centre to the Preservation Trust, nor to continue the 13-year old grant that covered the rent on the building, bore witness to this policy.

The initial decision to refuse to dispose of the building came as a surprise equally to the Trust and to the senior Council Officers who had been advising us since April 1995. The two successive decisions not to continue the grant were understandable in the light of the priority list for grants put before the Council's Grants Committee. Heritage scarcely figured even in the lowest category of priorities for grants - funding was to be devoted to welfare, the young and to selective arts.

However, we believed that in part our double lack of success might have been due to the lightness - or politeness! - of our lobbying of Councillors. We wanted to make them aware that what we were trying to do was to raise funds in order to develop the Heritage Centre, so that what had now become a serious operating loss due to the added expense of paying £7000 per year rent would become at least a break-even situation. By so doing, we would be adding to the bank of attractions in our City and to the means of educating both adults and children about its history - at no cost to the City Council. If we were to fail, then the closure of the Heritage Centre would become a possibility.

We therefore set out on a balanced lobbying campaign. Getting the balance right is not easy and requires a fine judgement - not to do enough is to leave the cause unsung - to overdo it can result in a loss of sympathy and support.

Be that as it may, the result of our efforts was an offer from the Council to take up a 99-year lease on both the existing Heritage Centre building and the adjoining land. It is now "all hands to the pump" to raise the funds to purchase the lease and develop the property, primarily in order to provide a purpose-built viewing arena with son-et-lumiere for the 1870 model of the City.

The Heritage Lottery Fund is, somewhat naturally, an obvious potential source of funds. However, additional funds from other sources will also be required, including donations of materials for use in construction. We are extremely fortunate in having several members of the Trust who are giving their professional services entirely free, and the Trust itself will be contributing from its own reserves. At the same time we must take care that the Heritsage Centre project does not bring about any cut-back in the primary work of the Trust, which is to guard the character of the City.

Peninsula Barracks

It seems a very long time since September 1993 when Save Britain's Heritage (SAVE) and the Winchester architect Huw Thomas convened a meeting in Winchester College to gain support from the councillors and citizens of Winchester for a new development plan involving all the existing buildings of the Upper and Lower Barracks.

Those of a nostalgic leaning might still hanker for the days of the mystique of decay and natural overgrowth doing its best to hide the historic outlines of a cast-off major military barracks - but now all is irrevocably changed.

The first show-house of a new terrace of houses on the old site of the Married Men's Quarters close to St James' Lane was opened on 13 January 1996. The cheap-and-nasty former Canteen Block near the Romsey Road entrance is now a pile of rubble, with a team of archaeologists deep in their trenches talking of 12th century buildings and the foundations of the ancient tower that cannot be found. The 1960's Sergeant's Mess at the southern end of the Upper Barracks parade ground is not even marked by a pile of rubble. When last I saw it in mid-January, three funeral pyres of burning discarded timber were all that remained. The archaeologists from the Canteen Block will be moving there next.

By this time next year, we shall really see a significant change. There will be delights - and there will be disappointments once paper plans become reality. The Trust will continue to study the detailed landscape plans as they come off the presses, making suggestions where we think that refinements to the established plans can be easily made. During the next few months we would also hope that the arrangements for the management of this large area of public and private open space will be better defined.

The bulldozers are there, the "brickies" are there, and above all the will is there. Let us hope that the successful bringing back to life of this fine site will make the major contribution to character of our City for which we all yearn.

Antony Skinner

Development Control Committee - TrustNews Spring 1996

The new **British Home Stores** at the **Brooks Shopping Centre** was discussed in the Spring 1995 Newsletter, in which it was noted that the store had been putting pressure on the City to make a quick decision because of the desire to get started on the alterations without delay it was not until the start of this year that boarding screened the BHS section of the Brooks Centre and work began on internal alterations.

In contrast to these slow starters the new **Tesco at Winnall**, which was given planning permission at the end of May last year, is now fast nearing completion.

As all this shows, until a proposed scheme is actually built, it is never possible to give a sigh of relief and assume that all the problems have been finally resolved, as

the Planning Officers are all too well aware! Sites and premises get sold on, and the new owners present applications that often contain many of the previously disputed aspects that had been ruled out because they were contrary to the aims and objectives of the local area plans. As the Trust has been asking for some years, "Why don't our Planners follow the practice of some other Local Planning Authorities of keeping a list of what is acceptable in the City's conservation areas and what information is expected in such applications and those for listed buildings?"


The threatened cottage in Tower Street

The time taken up considering the various signs proposed in the City's central conservation area seems disproportionate to the end result: would it not be more productive for all concerned to give all applicants in the City's conservation areas a guideline to the rules prevailing in their area? There is a constant flow of applications for premises in the High Street to have illuminated fascia signs and projecting or hanging signs that merely repeat the details already shown on the fascia; as a matter of policy all these are considered unacceptable in the central conservation area of Winchester and will therefore get an almost automatic refusal. There are also many applications for alterations to listed buildings that do not give either a photograph or drawing of the existing building, something that is supposedly essential for such cases and is in fact desirable for all applications, whether the building is listed or not.

If such a policy were adopted by our Planning Department much time - and possibly money - would be saved by everyone involved, and because the number of staff processing-hours would be reduced this might well offset any loss in the fees that would have been paid by the applicants, and would certainly free busy members of the Planning Department for other activities.

Plans are afoot for a housing development on **land at 56 Tower Street**; this involves demolishing the white cottage at the north end of the street because of its bad condition and building in its garden. The cottage is an interesting remnant of Winchester's historic past and acts as an attractive visual stop when looking towards the north, and both the Planners and the Trust would have liked to have seen it retained. However, a careful examination of the building showed that it was indeed in poor structural shape, with the east end of the cottage about to disappear down the hill onto the Scats' building below. The site is long and narrow, and the first proposal to build a terrace of six houses resulted in a three-storey building of uncertain architectural style that was much too bulky and tall for either of its immediate neighbours. The Trust therefore objected to the number of dwellings proposed

because of the detrimental effect there would be on the character of that part of the conservation area, and suggested that a good modern design with proportions appropriate to the other houses on the same side of the street would be better than a building incorporating a variety of period details. We are now waiting to see what the amended scheme will be like.


A view which will be lost if the Bowls Club is built

The end of 1995 saw an application for the construction of an **Indoor Bowls Club on land east of the Recreation Centre, North Walls**, apparently the only location available for the site of this enormously long building that is much the same length as the Great Hall; it is not the site the Trust would have chosen for this single-storey structure because of the impact it will have on this pleasant route from the city to Hyde and to the Recreation Ground. The first scheme proposed a building more suited for a development at Winnall, so sited that it would require the felling of several of the willows (much needed for screening!) that are so characteristic of this part of the Recreation Ground. The appearance and siting of the club has been found unacceptable by the Planning Committee and the development is to be considered by a working party, which will be attended by members of the Trust. As has been shown by the recently-built Stanmore Carroll Youth Centre, there is no rea¬son why a low-cost recreational building has to look like an escapee from an industrial estate, and it is hoped that the design which evolves from these deliberations will be worthy of the attractive surroundings into which it is to be placed.

This is a sensitive position for such a large building, the location of which appears to have been decided for reasons of expediency rather than consideration of the local landscape. The Trust is very concerned at the environmental damage that the building will cause to this part of the North Walls Recreation Ground, which has already suffered as the result of previous ad hoc developments such as the skateboard area. The Trust most strongly urges the City Council to commission a detailed study of the area, so that an overall plan for its future can be drawn up and further incremental damage to this valuable green space can be avoided.

Shione Carden

Archives Committee - TrustNews Spring 1996



WINCHESTER PRESERVATION TRUST
1957

THE WINCHESTER SLIDE COLLECTION

A COLLECTION OF PHOTOGRAPHIC SLIDES UNDERTAKEN BY THE WINCHESTER PRESERVATION TRUST.

During the course of 1995, members of the Urban Studies Group of the Winchester Preservation Trust have been taking coloured slides of all the streets within the City Walls of Winchester. These slides are now kept at the Winchester Heritage Centre in Upper Brook Street and will be available for education purposes and for research. The intention is to update these slides constantly to cover alterations and additions to each street as well as to increase the scope by widening the geographical radius. This will be a growing collection which will be of more historical interest as years go by.

A further set of slides is at present being catalogued. These are all pre-1995.

For a selection of slides from this collection please apply to the Winchester Heritage Centre for an appointment to view. This is necessary as the Centre will be under the supervision of volunteer members of the Trust. The application forms will be available from the Heritage Centre during opening hours. (See leaflet for exact times of opening).

There will be no charge for the borrowing of slides from the collection by members of the Winchester Preservation Trust but there will be a small fee of £5 per set for others. There will also be a fine of £2 per slide for any non-returns or losses.

Winchester Heritage Centre
Home of the Winchester Preservation Trust

Winchester Heritage Centre
30-32 Upper Brook Street
Winchester, SO23 8DG

Telephone 01962 851664

Opening Times
April - October
Tues - Sat 10.30-4.30
Sunday 2.00-4.30
December - March
Sat. only 10.30-3.00

PHOTOGRAPHIC COLLECTION

Winchester Slide Collection poster
which will be circulated to the public

The Trust's Archives committee has recently been reorganised for the purpose of looking after the care of both the photographs and archives of the Winchester Preservation Trust and the Heritage Centre, and to administer the loan arrangements for the Trust's Loan Slide Committee.

An initial project being undertaken is for the presentation of the collection recently donated, of more than 2,000 negatives taken of activities and scenes in the City 1960-80s. These cannot be adequately viewed in negative form so pages of contact prints are being printed for viewing purposes. This will continue for a long while due to the numerous negatives.

Minutes, letters and documents of the work of the Trust and the Heritage Centre from the beginnings 1957-1990 have already been passed from The Trust's office. These are currently being listed.

During 1994 the Urban Studies Committee of the Winchester Preservation Trust decided to form a photographic slide collection on Winchester.

To start with, during 1995 the centre of the City has been photographed, the area being roughly that bounded by the ancient walls. Most of the shots are general views of each of the streets, gap sites, and buildings which look as though they are ready

for refurbishment or rebuilding. More detailed shots of buildings, shop fronts, street furniture etc will be taken during 1996, in addition to the continuation of slides showing changes as these occur. We also hope to widen the scope of the collection by photographing areas immediately outside the walls.

The concept has been widened and enhanced by donations of slides from many people and range from about 1960 onwards. There are some 600 of these slides all of which are dated before 1995 which Harold Sturges accepted on our behalf and kindly catalogued them. No mean task when many of them were undated and not labelled in any way.

All slides in both the pre-1995 and post-1995 collections have been triplicated, one set for loan (see adjoining information), one set as a spare and the third and original sets which are to be placed in the care of the Hampshire County Records Office. Both sets of slides will be on loan from 21 February 1996 and the collection will be in the care of the Archives Committee of the Winchester Preservation Trust. There will be a form available from the Heritage Centre giving details of the loan conditions.

In particular we would like to thank Carol Leaman, Richard Plincke, James Lunn Rockliffe and Kevin Reader for their enthusiastic support, Harold Sturges for his work and for all who have contributed as members of the Archives Committee to the cataloguing and organisation of the whole collection and its preparation for easy accessing.

We look forward to 1996 and the continuation of the expansion of the collection so that it can become an interesting and informative record of the changes in the life of the City of Winchester.

To this end anyone wishing to assist us with photography in 1996 by being responsible for monitoring any alterations, demolitions etc. within a small area of the City, please contact the Chairman, Archives Committee, at the Heritage Centre.

A promotional launch of the Loan Slide Collection will take place in the presence of the Mayor, Cllr P Norris who has kindly consented to attend at 6.30 pm, 21 February 1996 in the Heritage Centre. All interested members are welcome and invited to attend this launch and/or to assist in the running of this innovative project or with any aspect of the Trust archives.

Rosemary Kinnard-Smith,
Keith Leaman

Landscape - The Trust Tree Survey - TrustNews Spring 1996

The tree survey which covers all trees within the Old City Walls was completed with help from members of the Trust in September 1995 and a copy handed to Michael Edwards, Arboricultural Officer to Winchester City Council. He was enthusiastic about having this information which will assist with care of the trees. It will be put onto computer for easy reference and can be updated as necessary.

The survey was divided into four main sections and some areas subdivided and plans enlarged, such as Abbey Gardens, so that trees could be plotted and numbered. The schedule then gives the number on the plan, specie, height, spread and circumference of the trunk at waist height, with comments on condition.

The Cathedral Close had a detailed tree survey undertaken a few years ago (which we were very glad to be able to use) and we updated this where trees had been felled and new trees planted. The Barracks' site also has a recent tree survey, a copy of which is held by Winchester City Council. This is not included in our survey.

In all we covered 1354 trees. If anyone is interested in seeing this tree survey there is a copy kept at the Heritage Centre.

Gillian Bauer

Peninsula Barracks Landscape - TrustNews Spring 1996

The Trust's main concerns now are that the execution and management of the approved landscape scheme should meet the standards of excellence which are necessary for a truly successful outcome in this most important area of Winchester.

So far a careful appraisal has been made of the detailed landscape proposals for the new housing area off St James' Lane where construction is nearing completion, and our comments were submitted to the City planners early in December. At a subsequent meeting with them in mid January our concerns were discussed in some detail. Assurances were given to us that all the points we had raised have been considered and appropriate action is being taken. These were largely to do with walls and paving and some worries about a few of the proposed plants, more as they related to what may be proposed for the large public areas than for this particular residential corner.

Our greatest concern at present is how the public areas will be maintained and managed once the development is finished, since they will not be in the care of the Local Authority. The developers' first Management Plan has been commented on by the planners and a revised version is expected shortly. We hope to see this because of its importance for the future of the landscaped areas as they mature, and for the hard surfaces which must not only look appropriate to start with, but must successfully survive the wear and tear of public use and the disturbances in connection with underground services and future repairs.

Hugh Watson
Sub-committee chairman

Projects - TrustNews Spring 1996

We are still trying to develop appropriate signage throughout Winchester and are in consultation with the Winchester City Museums Services to get these proposals for new signs moving forward. Recently submitted to us was a proposal for an interpretation of the layered street patterns found in Winchester. This was put forward by a mature Winchester School of Art student, Wendy Edmunds, and she is looking into developing this further in conjunction with us and the City. Further to other previously discussed projects, things have gone quiet for the moment and we are hoping to find some other quick short-term initiatives along with new Projects Committee Members who would be able to spend time during the day researching and chasing up important details.

Hyde Gate - TrustNews Spring 1996

The drawing below is by Nicholas McPherson who has recently completed an MA in Art & Design (illustration) at Kingston University. He chose as his major project illustrations of Hyde (his own area) over five centuries. These illustrations, dating from the Dissolution of the Monasteries (1539) to the present day, were recently exhibited at Kingston and Covent Garden are now on display at The Heritage Centre (Saturdays 10.30-4.30 until 15 April.

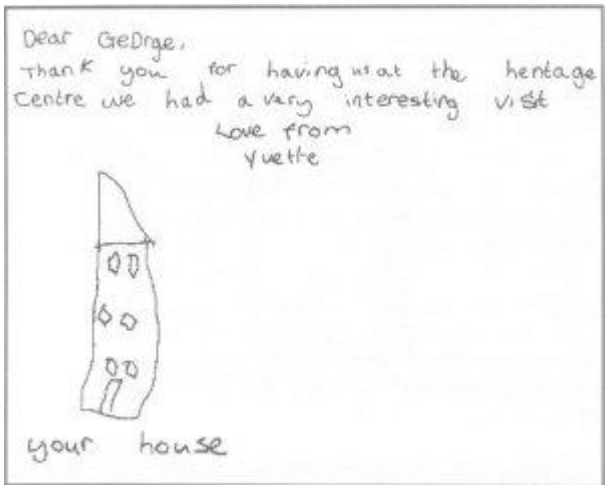


Hyde Gate drawing

Heritage Centre - TrustNews Spring 1996



Heritage Centre sketch by Sir Hugh Casson
Vice-President of the Trust



Letter from Yvette of Lankhills School

Harold Wilson said a week is a long time in politics and so it seems with the Heritage Centre. An almost never ending series of phone calls, meetings and attending various inter locking City Council meetings either raised our hopes or left us in despair. The good news as outlined elsewhere is at long last the future of the Heritage Centre for the next generations is within our grasp.

The Royal Observer Corps Association exhibition 'Winchester Skywatchers' attracted wide interest and drew attention to their Second World War command post in Worthy Lane one of Winchester's few 20th Century listed buildings, ROCA demonstrated how the shooting war turned into a Cold War and the part they have kept in keeping peace. It was rather poignant to hear a few days after the closure of the exhibition that the ROC had been stood down, Our thanks to Neville Cullingford and his ROCA Trustees for an interesting and unusual aspect of Winchester's life. We wish them well in their quest to turn their listed command post into a national ROC Museum. Nick McPerson has kindly loaned us his degree work straight from it's London premiere on Hyde past and present as illustrated elsewhere in this newsletter. We

are grateful to Nick and hope that his dissertation will eventually be printed along with his illustrations. Our Centre Manager, George Burnett received in his post this delightful letter from Lankhills School after their visit to the Centre. The Centre is now open every Saturday from 1030 to 1500 until the start of the season in April when we will have an exhibition of old Winchester post cards. The letter shows the important part the Heritage Centre is playing in educating the young. So this leads us back to my opening paragraph; to bowdlerize a famous American President - Think not what the Winchester Heritage Centre can do for me, but think what I can do to ensure the future of the Winchester Heritage Centre'.

C.J. Webb

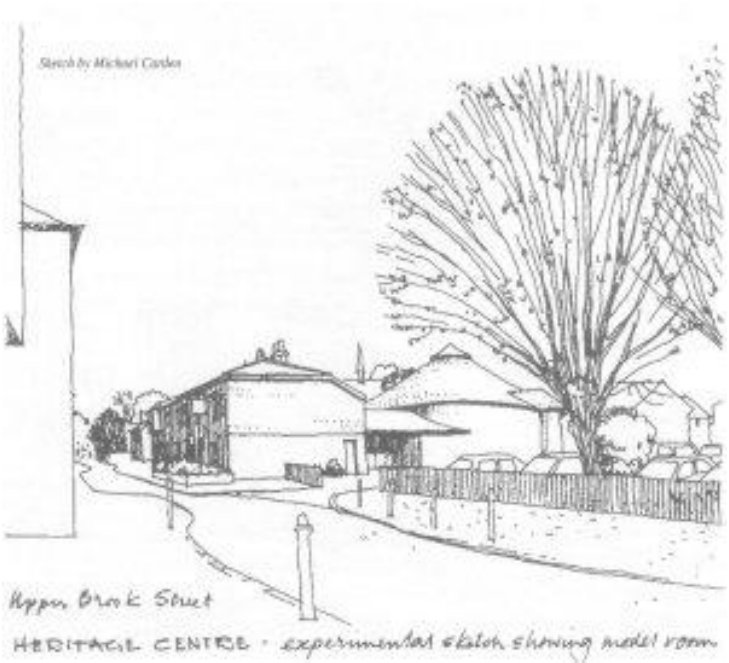
Developments at the Heritage Centre - TrustNews Spring 1996

After seeing the recent press coverage and reading the Chairman's remarks in the last Annual Report, members will no doubt be interested in the latest developments on the Heritage Centre.

The current situation is that the Preservation Trust has been offered a long-term lease by Winchester City Council on the listed cottages (C1820) in Upper Brook Street, which form the Heritage Centre.

The Trust's intention is to enhance the Centre in four main ways:

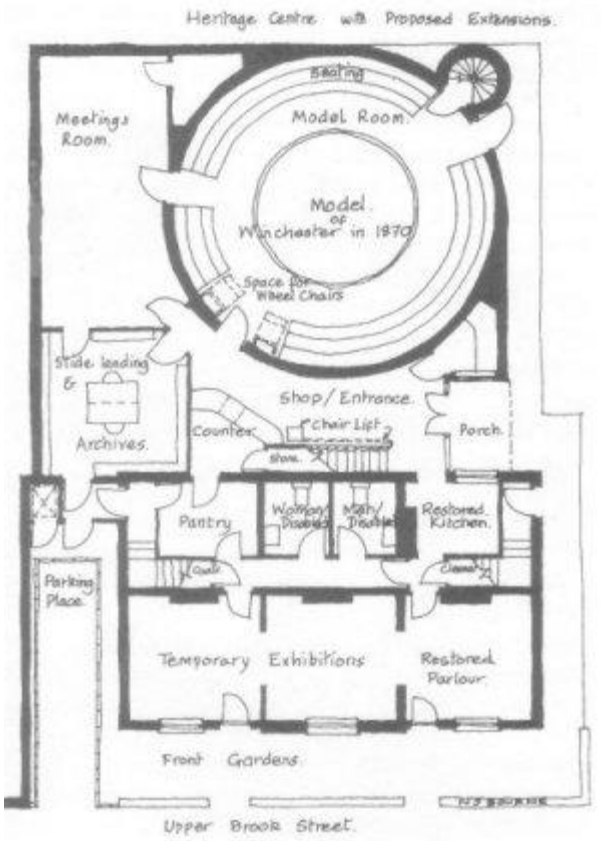
1 By housing Roger Brown's impressive model of Winchester in 1870, with full sound and lighting effects. The model has been temporarily exhibited in the Great Hall, but has no permanent home.
2. By improving the Trust's educational activities by providing a new lecture/meeting room.
3. By creating proper storage facilities for the Trust's archives, including the Slide and photographic lending Library.
4. By restoring the front parlour, bedroom and kitchen in one of the cottages. This will be one of the few remaining Brooks houses in its original condition.



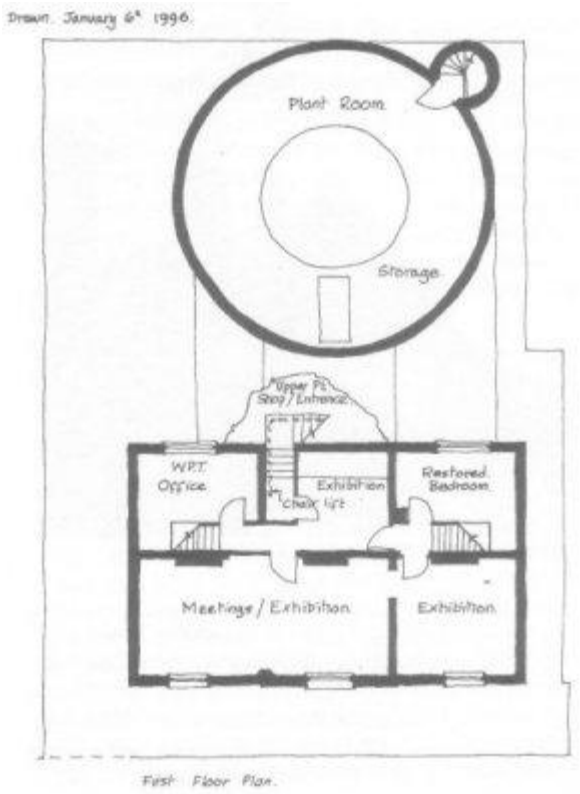
Heritage Centre - experimental sketch showing model room
Sketch by Michael Carden

The Trust has made good progress since 1983. Firstly by saving the cottages from demolition, and then restoring them to a reasonable condition. It raised the funding from the Carnegie Trust to create the panel display of the evolution of Winchester, and the many other schemes undertaken to improve the Heritage Centre.


A corner of the interior of the Heritage Centre



Ground Floor proposal for Heritage Centre and model room drawn by Nick Bourne



First Floor proposal for Heritage Centre and model room drawn by Nick Bourne

Mike Lee

Winchester Preservation Trust, 1957-1995 - TrustNews Spring 1996

Jeffery Smith, a Founder Member and past Chairman of the Trust and of the Heritage Centre Management Committee, recalls the beginnings and development of the Trust.

This very brief history of the Trust deals with a period of some 40 years, and much has happened in that time. It is not possible to mention all the many dedicated supporters of the Trust during that period, and mention therefore will only be made of one, that of Dr Tremellen, first Chairman and generous patron. The Trust came to being in her house in St Giles Hill in 1957. From that beginning events moved very quickly, and at our first AGM on 27 November 1958, membership of the Trust had already reached 170.

These were troubled times. Winchester was undergoing a drastic change, when over five hundred of the older houses in the centre of the city were faced with demolition. However although the immediate task of the newly-formed Trust was preservation, the first annual report stressed that the Trust was taking an active interest in all matters affecting the character of Winchester, and in fact continues to do so.



Canon Street 1960 - threatened with demolition
(photograph by courtesy of A.E. Sollar)

In terms of achievement, areas of Winchester can be pointed out which would no longer exist but for the action of the Trust. Canon Street is perhaps the most notable example. The Trust opposed every clearance order, and members purchased houses from the City Council to protect them from demolition. The top north side of Canon Street was actually demolished, but the Trust ensured that the resulting rebuilding was done to a suitable scale and standard. Another example of the actions of the Trust was the preservation of St Peter's Chesil Church where the cost of repair was met by a Fine Art's auction organised by the Trust. The silhouette of St Peter's Chesil Church is now incorporated into the Trust's logo. And more recently much of St John's Street was eventually saved by co-operation between the Winchester Preservation Trust and the Hampshire Buildings Preservation Trust.

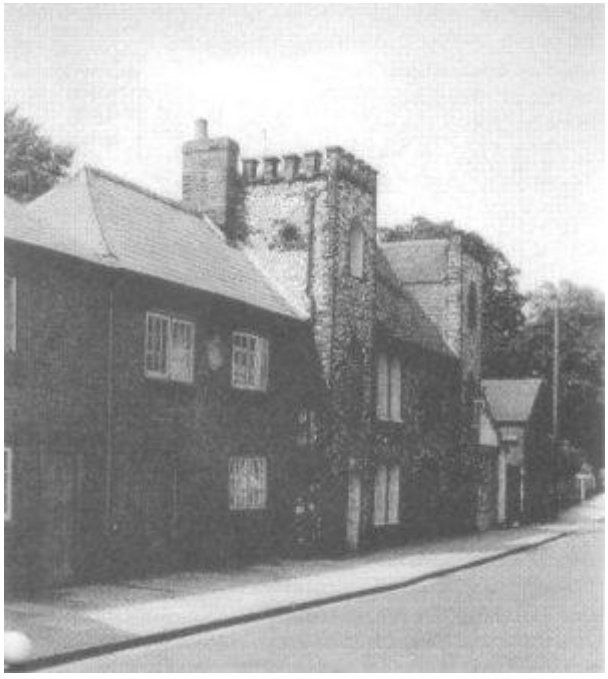
However much was also lost. Five hundred houses were demolished and their sites remained undeveloped for many years. Important listed houses in Upper Brook Street went, as did also the Old Hospital in Colebrook Street. Many little Georgian and Victorian houses in the Brooks area disappeared, including the Flint houses in Middle Brook Street.



Nos. 2, 4 & 6a Upper Brook Street, Winchester. The middle building dates from about 1690, and was the home of the Mayors of Winchester, during part of the 18th century

The Trust could do little to prevent this destruction, but every clearance and demolition order was vigorously opposed. Although it could be said that the Trust was formed specifically to save the listed buildings in Upper Brook Street, no's 2, 4 and 6a and much time and effort went into this, in retrospect the City Council had already obtained a special Act of Parliament to widen St George's Street and construct the Brooks Car Park. It is interesting to note however, that if Trust had been successful, the Brooks Shopping Centre would never have been constructed, and Winchester would not have lost 2000 years of archaeology.

Following Local Government reorganisation, the boundaries of Winchester extended as far as Hamble. The interests of the Trust however remained within the boundaries of Winchester City, but added responsibilities were acquired particularly with regard to planning, where every application is monitored by teams of professional and lay members of the Trust. The Trust has also been active in obtaining the listing of buildings omitted from the original lists, and two notable examples are the White Swan in Hyde Street, and the Rising Sun in Morn Hill.



Flint houses, Middle Brook Street

One of the most important developments in the history of the Trust was the acquisition of the Heritage Centre in Middle Brook Street. In 1978 this building consisted of two small Georgian houses dating from 1820. The City was anxious to demolish them so that the site could be added to the car park, but they were deemed worthy of preservation, and permission to demolish was refused after an Inquiry. By this time the property had become derelict with the front walls shored up, many of the roof slates missing, and the doors and windows boarded up. The Trust however realised its potential and applied for a licence from the Council to use it as a Heritage Centre. Faced with heavy expenditure members gave both money and labour to make it habitable. Following gen¬erous grants from the County Council and the Carnegie Trust, the two houses were converted into one and the Centre became much as it is today. It is interesting to note that the original planning consent was for the Trust's Headquarters and Urban Studies Centre. Finally the Heritage Centre

acquired listed status, which did much to secure its future, and also to control the surrounding development. Of the many Civic Societies in the South of England which meet together once a year, Winchester Preservation Trust is the only Society which has its own Heritage Centre, and it also has one of the highest memberships. Its importance as the Trust's Headquarters can best be realised by those members of the committee who previously had to meet in many different places throughout the City.



The Old Hospital, Colebrook Street, in course of demolition

It is difficult in this short history to describe all the Trust's activities, but mention should be made of the Chippindale Venture which has successfully brought an appreciation of Winchester to the school children of the area. Another development was the Trust's interest in all matters relating to traffic which prevented the dual carriageway inner ring road and helped initiate the policy of Park & Ride. The Westgate has always been a concern of the Trust: when the buildings on the north side of the Gate were removed, it became isolated, and, with the whole area around it paved, lost even the appearance of its original function as an entrance to the City. The Trust has been successful in helping improve the situation with special paving under the arch, and is hopeful that more will be done in the near future.

Other current concerns include the redevelopment of Peninsula Barracks where the Trust contributed £2500 and much effort to ensure adoption of the conservation scheme, and continues to monitor its progress with care. The Trust is interested in the buried kitchens of Charles II's Palace, although this must necessarily be a longer-term project.

Recently the Heritage Centre was nearly lost due to a change in City policy, but should now continue to be a major interest to the Trust. Its role as an Urban Studies Centre is already of great importance, but could be enhanced by proposals to add the model room and photographic archive service. Exhibitions of local interest are held at the centre, a recent example being the reconstruction of Hyde Abbey, the burial place of King Alfred. For visitors there is a video presentation of the history of Winchester, and pictorial displays of such events as the mediaeval fair at St Giles Hill and the siege of Winchester Castle. It is well worth a visit.



The Heritage Centre in 1978
(photograph by courtesy of Hampshire Chronicle)

Organisation - TrustNews Spring 1996

Winchester Preservation Trust...cares for the charcter of the City

The Heritage Centre,30/32 Upper Brook Street, Winchester, S023 8DG
Tel: 01962 851664

President: The Hon Sir Peter Ramsbotham GCMG, GCVO, DL

Vice President: Sir Hugh Casson CH KCVO RA RIBA FCSD

Chairman: Capt Antony L.L. Skinner RN (retd)

Deputy Chairman: Michael Carden AADip, RIBA

Hon Treasurer: I K C Thomson MA, FCA

Secretary: Mrs Flavia Bateson
(Including Membership)

(Full details of officers and committees of the Trust, with a list of members are published each year in the Annual Report).

Newsletter Editor: Gill Collymore

If anyone has any comments on issues in this newsletter or suggestions for future ones, please write to the Editor at The Heritage Centre. The Copy date for the next newsletter is **28th May 1996**

....An Eye on the City - TrustNews Spring 1996





Following his article "... An Eye on the City" in the Summer 1995 Newsletter, Ray Attfield continues his exploration of Ways of Seeing by directing our attention to the ground beneath our feet.

BENEATH OUR FEET

Some years ago I visited Cologne for the first time and was driving into the centre via a side road when, much to my confusion, the paving suddenly changed from asphalt to a chequerboard pattern of polished black and white marble. It was like one of those dreams where you suddenly find yourself somewhere you shouldn't be. Yet the people around me were quite unconcerned at my presence. As I crept forward looking for an escape, tyres squeaking on the shiny surface, I realised that here the car had no rights except those allowed by the crowd. Though I had driven quite legally into a main shopping street, the paving surface alone had dramatically reversed the priorities and changed the space from road to street.

Perhaps because of that occasion, I realise what a different experi¬ence it is to walk in the centre of Winchester High Street rather than being squeezed at the edge, between window and traffic. But in Winchester the wide pavement provides a quite different experi¬ence to that of Cologne where, like most European cities, the streets have a more urban character. In England, because the preferred ideal is a village not a city, 'landscape' is an essential ingredient in the design of urban space, and the ultimate measure of its quality.



The comic scene by Sebastiano Serlio c.1537
Theatre set depicting a domestic city street

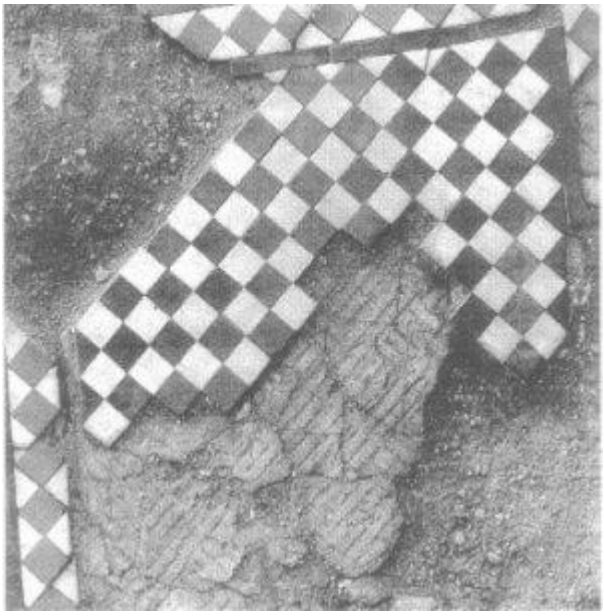
The High Street was immeasurably improved by the changes made in 1976. Removing the right of free passage for vehicles allowed all sign of the roadway to be eradicated and the ground repaved with a material to suit the new purpose - practical but also acknowledging the different value which the space had acquired. Now people behave differently, they spread out into the space and stop without fear of obstructing the flow. Groups form and chat. Buskers, even whole brass bands play to a gathering crowd in the space which has become a place rather than a route. But the removal of traffic also deprives the street of the dynamic which historically was the underlying force behind the apparently random arrangement of buildings and space. Had the High Street been intentionally designed as a place it would have had formal characteristics and an ordered arrangement of its elements, one of them being the paving. The existing paving, an imitation riven York stone, has worked well for twenty years and practicalities apart, is accepted because its rustic surface and random pattern have traditional connotations which fit into the picture most people have of life the High Street. It is also true that real stone would have been preferred because that would be even closer to the absolute value - nature. What the chosen paving doesn't resolve however is the changed character of the space and the absence of both the dynamic practicality of its origin and the formality deserved by its new status as a public place.

Looking at the map of Winchester, it is noticeable that within the line of the Roman city, the spaces of the organising grid are called streets whereas outside they are called roads. On the ground the difference between road and street may not now be very obvious because the medieval development of the City did not include the concept of street. Roads, or carriageways, which for convenience followed the line of the Roman streets, resulted in a space determined pragmatically, by convenience of access and throughway. Buildings were positioned along the roadside and, over time, gradually encroached into, and eventually over the carriageway. The Pentice, for example was probably formed in this way. Space in the city intended for the gathering of people was rarely planned intentionally. The informal, irregular character

which is the familiar picture postcard scene was created by the very basic and disordered forces of the roadway and the traffic it carried.

Characteristically roads go from place to place, are essentially practical and efficient, and not much concerned with what happens along the way. They need strict rules to control and effect their purpose. Kerbs to 'curb' the wheels of vehicles, complex junctions, and smooth surfaces marked with lines and clear instructions to achieve maximum flow. The result is that people need to be protected or kept separate from roads or their effectiveness has to be drastically compromised.

The meaning of street is derived from the Latin strata, literally meaning stones spread across the ground. Streets are first and foremost public places, made by and in relation to buildings, like rooms, varying in importance according to where they are in the city and the importance of the buildings which front onto them. Vehicles have a more ambiguous involvement. They are accepted, and may even temporarily overwhelm but do not determine the purpose or character of the place. When traffic rights are removed the street can recover its humanity without the need for reconstruction.



Study for the broken path - a relief painting by the Boyle family

The difference between road and street is more to do with what type of space was intended and how that concept was shaped and manifested. The fact that cars are allowed into the Cathedral Close does not make the Close into a road; too many other factors are involved for a space to change from one meaning to another merely by altering one aspect of its use. To change a road to a street is not so impossible but it does require an understanding of the difference between the two.

Far more problematic are recent proposals for the High Street up to Westgate because improvements to the road must at the same time make it less effective. The aim is that through the application of aesthetic criteria, the visual characteristics identified with roads will be replaced by those associated with the imagery of places of character. In this way it is hoped the road will be disguised. Paving materials

which reproduce the appearance of being, natural, old, and weathered, would be chosen for their connotations with landscape. For the same reason the preference would be for a variety of materials, curved lines rather than straight, and elaboration rather than simplicity. These materials, shapes and preferences would then be used to express where one can or cannot drive or park a car, ride a cycle, walk or cross the road including, of course, markings required by law. Textures to help the visually handicapped, ramps to carry cars, different ramps for those in wheelchairs, plus an array of signs and street furniture, add up to the formidable list of elements which have to be clearly visible yet absorbed within the disguise of the whole visual landscape. The result is often complicated and contradictory, confusing necessary instructions with aesthetic messages, and all in an attempt to negate the reality of the road rather than create urban qualities more able to accommodate the complex realities.

The materials used in urban improvement schemes are mainly drawn from one catalogue which may go some way to explain the rapid growth of an almost universal type of town centre improvement which has acquired the title of 'Heritage Style'.

The conflicting and contradictory interests which surround the relationship of vehicles to town and city centres is fundamentally important to the future quality of urban life. It is not a new problem and will not be improved let alone solved by a cosmetic dusting of cobbles and bollards.

Summer Walks 1996 - TrustNews Spring 1996

TEN SUMMER WALKS : 1996

After the successful series of Thursday evening walks last year, we have decided to continue the programme, and with the same formula, as follows: Meet at The Heritage Centre 6.30 pm (except for Walks 5 and 6) for an introductory explanation before setting off.

20th June	**Winchester's Trees and Landscape**	**Hugh Watson** Landscape Architect
27th June	**Architectural Detail in Winchester**	**Richard Baker** Chief Planning Officer Eastleigh Borough Council
4th July	**New Buildings in Winchester**	**Keith Leaman** Architect & Joint Chairman of Trust Urban Studies
11th July	**The Eastern High Street**	**Andrew Rutter AADip MRTRPI** City of Winchester Conservation Architect
18th July	**St Cross Hospital** Meet at Porter's Lodge, St Cross	**Michael Carden** Architect & Trust Deputy Chairman
25th July	**Peninsula Barracks** Meet: Romsey Road entrance	**Huw Thomas** Architect

1st August	**Medieval Dwellings in Winchester**	**Dr Tom Beaumont-James** Archaeologist & Lecturer King Alfred's College

The last three walks will be announced in the Summer Newsletter.

Butterfly Conservation at Magdalen Hill Down - TrustNews Spring 1996

Magdalen Hill Down, dominated by four Bronze Age burrows and site of Winchester's mediaeval fair, is an important part of the City's history and downland setting. Part of it is a nature reserve and delightful public open space run by Butterfly Conservation.

Butterfly Conservation have embarked on a campaign to raise £100,000 in order to extend the reserve and preserve the Down for future generations. After searching assessments, the Heritage Lottery Fund, Hampshire County Council and WWF UK have awarded generous grants, but the vital £100,000 goal has not yet been reached.

On the strength of the funds so far pledged, Butterfly Conservation have cast their bread on the waters and completed the acquisition of the additional 32 acres. But more money is needed to meet the heavy cost of restoring the land to traditional sheep-grazed, flowery sward. With this newsletter you will fund Butterfly Conservation's Appeal leaflet. I know you will give generously.

G. Yorke President of Hampshire
Branch of Butterfly Conservation

Summer Lecture 30th May - TrustNews Spring 1996

‘The Fight against Uniformity - Local Distinctiveness - Who Cares?’

This is the title of a Lecture to be given by Barry Joyce in The Milner Hall on Thursday 30 May

Barry Joyce is Principal Planning Officer, Heritage and Design, at Derbyshire County Council. Having trained as an architect, he has spent his working life in conservation planning, and has been with Derbyshire County Council since 1976. In 1982 he was awarded the Royal Town Planning Institute's Award for Achievement for his work on the Civic Trust inspired Wirksworth Project'. He is an active member of the Derbyshire Historic Buildings Trust, and has served on the Derbyshire Diocesan Advisory Committee since 1978. He lives in Wirksworth in a restored Georgian listed building.

Gordon Michell, Chairman of the Trust's Design Award Panel in 1991, knows Barry Joyce well, and guarantees he will be both provocative and have much to say which

is relevant to Winchester's own experiences. We hope members (and their friends) will come to the Milner Hall to hear him. There will be wine available after the lecture.

Membership - TrustNews Spring 1996

We are pleased to welcome the following new members who have joined the Trust since the publication of the Summer newsletter:
George Watts MA BLitt FRHistS
Mrs E Ashlin Wood
Ruth, Alan, Ella and Frances Heeks
Mr and Mrs John Shipton
Mrs Muriel Taylor
Mr and Mrs K Crane
Mrs Enid Boize
Mrs Ann Wadman
Alan & Susie Walker
Mr and Mrs Julian Harvey
Helen Jex
Vivienne Arengo-Jones
Andrew Napier
Martyn & Penelope Wiltshire

Subscriptions - TrustNews Spring 1996

The current subscription rates are £5.00 (single), £7.50 (family / household) and £10 (Corporate). Alternatively, Life Membership is available for a one-off payment of £60 (single) or £75 (Double). The majority of subscriptions are paid by banker's order and this method certainly makes savings for the Trust in Bank Charges. The Membership Secretary would like to remind members that Annual subscriptions for 1996/1997 are due 1 May 1996. .

Diary - TrustNews Spring 1996

Wednesday 21 February 6.00pm

Launch of the Loan Photographic Slide Collection at the Heritage Centre, in the presence of the Mayor, Councillor Pat Norris All members are welcome (see page 4 for details of the Collection)

Thursday 30 May 8.00 pm

The Milner Hall St Peter Street Winchester

The Fight against Uniformity - Local Distinctiveness - Who Cares? A Derbyshire Case Study.

Lecture by Barry Joyce of Derbyshire County Planning Department. Wine will be available after the Lecture. No tickets required.

THE HERITAGE CENTRE:

From 2 April, opening times will be Tuesday to Saturday 10.30-4.30
Sundays 2.00-4.30
Saturdays until

15 April'Hyde as it was and as it is'. Exhibition of Drawings by Nicholas McPherson

Saturday
30th March Book Sale

From 15 April Winchester in old postcards. A further selection from the John Brimfield selection.

Saturday 26 October Book Sale
(The Trust will have a stand at the Book Sales to publicise the work of the Trust. Volunteers welcome to help on the stand).