

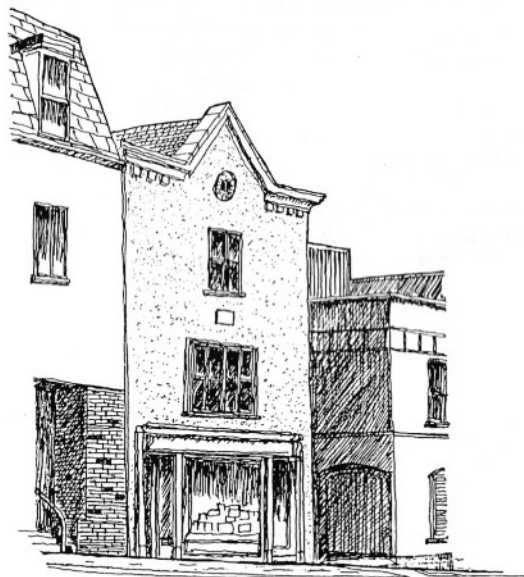
THE BURY ST. EDMUNDS SOCIETY

Registered Charity No. 263230

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WHO IS JUGGLING IN BURY ST EDMUNDS?



Woolhall Street -
Bury Society H.Q.

John Clibbon.

THE BURY SOCIETY'S NEWSLETTER

August - October 1997

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Peter Hough

Thursday 18 September	Conservation of Buildings in Bury St Edmunds - Update & Future Planning. (Illustrated talk by Jenny Carlile - Conservation Officer for St Edmundsbury Borough Council).
Thursday 23 October	Redevelopment of Moyses Hall Museum & Relocation of Suffolk Regiment Museum Artefacts. (Illustrated talk by Maggie Blake - Curator for St E.B.C. Leisure Services).
Thursday 27 November	Archaeology of Bury St Edmunds. (Illustrated talk by Bob Carr of Suffolk County Council Archaeological Services).

Thanks to the hard work of Peter Hough and his sub-committee we have a programme of interesting talks on a variety of subjects and we hope to see many members on these evenings so as not to disappoint our speakers. - Ed.

NOTES FROM THE CHAIR

Reg Sharpe

A new year has dawned for the Society. As I became your new Chairman, I was very conscious of the long and distinguished line of managers I was succeeding. My thoughts turned to the early days of the Society; the stress and anger in which it was conceived; the struggles of its childhood; its growth and development.

I was not here at the time. Bury St Edmunds for me was just a beautiful old town over the border from Essex, where I was born and had always lived. Much of the background was revealed in the Society's 25th Anniversary publication, which I studied with great interest, and with equal admiration. Many of the names associated with the Society's beginnings are still members, and I must struggle to follow their example, to maintain their enthusiasm and to emulate their perspicacity.

It is a never-ending task. The town has reached its present status because it has been allowed to expand carefully, in a mixture of creation and preservation. Our task is to try to influence decisions which will allow that to continue, with any costs to the town at least matched by benefits. With the expected end of the recession always in sight, we can expect renewed pressure for central area development, especially if the growth of population materialises as forecast, and we must remain for ever vigilant.

When the music stopped at the end of the AGM, those who had previously been sitting on the chairs round the Committee table found that they had new colleagues.

We are sad to have lost the services of Barbara Hill, Mark Pawling, Sir Reggie Harland, Dr. David Dougan and Dr.

Margaret Robinson. All have worked long and hard in the interests of the Society; their contributions are greatly appreciated, and they will be much missed.

Their places have been taken by Joan Parry, Ian Pryer, Dr. David Rees, Sarah Rowling, Joan Walls and John Wilson. All bring their own talents and we look forward to working together in the interests of the Society and of the town.

Ian Pryer fills the post of Planning Officer. He is qualified as an architect and town planner and has lived in the town for the last 22 years. His broad experience covers a number of posts in local government, finally at Forest Heath, where he was Planning Officer. In 1986 Ian set up practice in Bury St Edmunds as architect and planning consultant, a business which he still conducts. He has thus served at both ends of the planning spectrum, and we are pleased to welcome him aboard.

Joan Parry has taken on the task of Editor. She, in particular, needs the support of all Members. The Newsletter is a vital part of our structure; it is a forum where ideas can be exchanged and debated, whether as articles or letters to the Editor. An article does not need to be long or learned, technical or tendentious, so long as it is relevant to the Society and its interests. If not, but it can raise a smile, then that is welcome too. Please help. Joan's contact details are on the back cover and she will be only too pleased to receive your contributions.

We are again indebted to John Clibbon for the illustration on the front cover which shows the building at 3 Woolhall Street which houses the Society office. The room is approximately three times as large as the old premises and allows us to hold Committee meetings in our own property. Records and the copying machine are to hand and car parking is available close by.

Naturally, the Office is not manned, and to avoid vitiating the insurance, the key will no longer be left outside the room. Keys are held by several Committee members living in the town centre, and access can easily be made available to Members if they have reason to go there.

I would like to take this opportunity to deny the wicked rumour that an office on the second floor of a building without a lift was deliberately chosen in an attempt to replace the present Committee with Members who are more agile, virile and nubile.

With more storage space now available it would be valuable to compile a collection of back numbers of the Newsletter, for interest and research. If any Member has such a collection now surplus to requirements (however large or small) and would like to donate it, I should be pleased to collect, if you would kindly telephone me.

For Members who were unable to attend the AGM on 29 May, we print elsewhere the accounts prepared by Lawrie Lockey and the Auditor's report.

An obituary to Beatrice Tupling, kindly contributed by Monica Place, is also included in this edition of the Newsletter.

JUGGLING INTO A NEW JOB

Eloise Harris

When you start a new job, everyone naturally wants to know what you did before. In Bury St Edmunds people want to know a great deal more. In the last year my personal life and professional pontifications have been splashed across the media such that I don't know whether to feel honoured or embarrassed. Either way, I find it rather reassuring that local residents still have the time and human care about who's new in town. Although I'm not so new, these days, I hope that you can take just one more introduction.

Anyone whose first job is that of Events Organiser for Literature and Street Theatre with a National Garden Festival can be fairly sure that their subsequent career may not be straightforward but will always be unusual. I started out working in the Welsh Valleys with a line-up of artists that included jugglers, stilt walkers, poets, storytellers, Peter Rabbit and the Townswomen's Guild. Peter Rabbit and I have met a few times since those days, and I've added Rupert Bear and Trusty the Hedgehog to my collection of animal business contacts. But the real theme of my career has been the juggling. In one way or another, I have been juggling ever since those wet and windy days in Ebbw Vale.

My latest juggling routine, as Tourism and Visitor Services Manager is one that I picked up at the National Trust while working on large-scale events and public relations activities. Gone are the diabolo and firebrands as nowadays I have to manage rather weightier clubs such as Conservation, Development and Access. Given a brief of bringing in the visitors (and their cash), it is natural for local people to view me with some suspicion and wonder just how good at juggling I really am.

I'll say straight away that I'm all too conscious of our habit of destroying the things we love, be they country footpaths eroded by the feet of eager ramblers, wild flowers uprooted from woods and road sides, or beauty spots disfigured by ugly car and caravan parks. Fortunately, Bury is far from ruination, thanks to the thought and foresight of local people. The last thing I aim to do, as the new girl in town, is to turn Bury St Edmunds into a Brother Jocelin Theme park. But there's a world of difference between killing the goose that lays the golden eggs, and feeding it super-nutritious grain.

Take a deep breath, and I *will* confess that at the NT I was responsible for open air concerts with audiences of up to 8000 people, who would trample through mature wildflower meadows, picnic in historic gardens and dance among antique statues. I let off fireworks worth thousands of pounds over farms and deer parks. I made historic houses echo with the sounds of the Sixties and with Latin American salsa. In fact, I did things at NT properties that - on the surface - sound too outrageous to be true. But the regular risk assessments, consultations and planning meetings that took place between each event ensured that there was no damage. In fact, the deer were so unconcerned that they would queue up for a nibble at the ropes around the parked cars, and the geese would borrow the odd Pringle from our picnicking audiences.

Around 75000 people a year attended NT events in our one region alone. The events were a valued means of raising awareness, generating vital funds for conservation projects and - importantly - dispelled the idea that NT properties are dusty old museums where you can't have fun.

St Edmundsbury is a gift of a borough for a Tourism Manager, with a combination of architecture, history, countryside, events, shops and flowers which few other towns can boast. Coming from the stuffy South of England, I am also sure that the friendliness of local people is part of the charm of Bury St.

Edmunds, where popping into the newsagent's can be a major social occasion. We have a cache of treasures so diverse that my biggest challenge is to capture the essence of Bury St Edmunds in some neat little marketing sound bite. (I'll give a prize to anyone who can give me the perfect, all-encompassing slogan for St Edmundsbury.)

My work has ranged from parking Bugattis on Angel Hill and setting up Flower Market pitches to selling tickets at the Bus Station and escorting Kit and The Widow round Bury for their 30 minute "Grand Tour" on Radio 4 in July. Tourism and Visitor Services is a rather flexible concept.

As the months go by and I write my Tourism Strategy for the coming five years, I am trying to keep the balance right for Bury. My objectives for the year ahead include:

- ▶ Increasing national media coverage.
- ▶ Developing rural tourism opportunities.
- ▶ Creating relationships with coach and bus companies to bring in visitors and to divert traffic from Angel Hill to the Bus Station.
- ▶ Extending the visitor season.
- ▶ Working with neighbouring districts to raise the area's profile as a tourism destination.
- ▶ Creating partnerships with business and the community to pool resources and expertise.

The more feedback and ideas I have from local bodies such as the Bury Society, the more polished the juggling act will be. Please do come and talk to me - or pass your comments through your Tourism Forum representative, Syd Rutland. Based at the Tourist Information Centre, my door is open to all and my telephone number is 01284 757094.

MORE ON WHEELS

Peter Plumridge

In the last newsletter Trisha Mellor told us she and Harold had given up their car, she refers to a past Chairman who had previously taken that step; that Chairman must be me.

I'll rise to the bait and say what led to that decision, taken in October 1990; it was really a number of factors not all financial.

In my working life I was covering 36000 miles plus per annum in a metal box on crowded roads, any enjoyment of motoring I used to experience in my distant youth, when sports car driving, did not apply. Despite that, for the first few years of retirement I assumed a car was part of one's household accoutrements even though annual mileage had dropped very substantially, then in the Autumn of 1990 the truth dawned, we were behaving in an irrational way.

After the expense of buying a car there are costs arising from the loss of interest on the capital used, (and now tied up), depreciation, road tax, insurance, AA / RAC membership, servicing and spares; there may also be garage costs. These outgoings didn't make sense against any so called benefits, add the costs together and you'll reach the bottom line of money never recovered.