

SALTASH AND DISTRICT OBSERVER

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Feb/March 2023 - Issue 370

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Marvel At The Splendour

Isambard Kingdom Brunel, the great engineer who sought to connect the world through his masterpieces in iron, would surely approve of the galvanised steel and copper bench inspired by the Royal Albert Bridge that has been installed opposite the Brunel Inn, half way up Fore Street.

Called the Saltash Bridge during the design phase, Brunel's bridge was completed in 1859 and is the town's most famous feature. At first, Brunel intended to construct a bridge with a single span but the Admiralty stipulated that the deck had to leave 100 feet of headroom so that the river remained fully operational to the Navy at all times. Brunel then devised a plan for a bridge with four spans, but found that there was no suitable bedrock to build the three piers that would be required. This led him to design an innovative bridge with a single pier mid stream that would support two spans. But there was nowhere to

secure the tension chains, so Brunel's revolutionary solution was self-supporting, arched trusses that rest on top of the piers, combining the three classic types of bridge: beam, arch and chain. Construction work took six years and the spans were floated into place.

The impressive new bench celebrates one of the spans, showing the upper tube acting in equal opposition to the chains of a more familiar suspension bridge construction. It was funded by money gained through planning permission for out-of-town retail units, delivered by Saltash Town Team working in partnership with Saltash Town Council, and created by Thrussells, father and son metal sculptors based on Bodmin Moor who design functional artwork to create impact,

inspire storytelling, and leave lasting impressions.

Sitting on the magnificent bench, you have a view towards the river and the monumental legacy of Brunel's engineering genius. Rest a while, and connect with the story of Isambard Kingdom Brunel, whose parents met during the French Revolution. A towering genius who was just 5 feet tall, Brunel worked with his father to design and build the incredible Thames Tunnel, the first subaqueous tunnel in the world. He designed the Clifton Suspension in Bristol when he was just 24 years old, and his ship the SS Great Britain was the first iron steamer to cross the Atlantic Ocean.

Brunel was unable to attend the grand opening of the Royal Albert Bridge due to ill health. He died a few months later, but his legacy lives on inspiring generations of engineers, sculptors, artists and Saltash residents.



Shaping the Town for Generations to Come

Get ready to share your ideas on creating green, multi-use community spaces in the retail heart of the town, and help make Saltash a better place to live, work, visit and shop.

The retail centre of Saltash is predominantly influenced by the grey infrastructure of a built environment. The vision for the multi-use community spaces includes integrating green areas like plants and trees with blue elements like watercourses to make the urban space more resilient, pleasant and healthy, delivering climate change adaptation and providing a green venue for events that bring the community together.

The appointment of Bristol-based Architecture by Studio Hive, a team of urban designers and landscape architects, follows an award of funding from Cornwall Council's Town Vitality Fund to the Town Team working in partnership with Saltash Town Council. A rigorous selection process whittled down the nine companies who submitted a bid to four who were invited to interview. "All the companies were exceptional," commented Councillor Hilary

Frank, who chaired the interview panel. "Choosing just one was not a simple task, but the four members of the interview panel were unanimous in their decision to appoint Studio Hive. The team's enthusiasm for the project really shone through, and we particularly liked their nature-based focus and their dynamic methodology of engaging with the general public, retailers and community groups."

Studio Hive has already started working with stakeholders to develop innovative ideas. Their final report will be delivered by the end of August and will form the basis for bids to funding pots like the Shared Prosperity Fund. Public consultation events will be held in the middle of June, so start reflecting on how you would make Fore Street and the retail centre into a stage for regular markets, events and outdoor relaxation.

Mayor's Fundraising Bash

On Friday the 31st March, starting at 7.30pm, there will be a fundraising event at Saltash Social Club in aid of the Mayor's charity fund. Councillor Richard Bickford would love to see a full house on the night. Live music will be provided by 'Cornish Jam' a fabulous local five piece band, that perform a range of music from jazz, blues, folk, country rock and well known traditional and modern covers.

Tickets are £15 each and available from Saltash Guildhall or Library Hub, or email sarahbickford@googlemail.com for more information.

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Chamber Chairman Peter Ryland Keeping us Updated...

Saltash Chamber of Commerce is a growing group of business members who pride themselves on listening to local businesses and supporting the Saltash community with events and initiatives.

Town Team

Executive members of the Saltash Chamber sit on cross-organisational groups within the town to influence the decisions that will impact the town's retail community – on Fore Street and off. One of those groups is the Town Team, where the Chamber works with representatives from Saltash Town Council, Cornwall Council and Community Enterprises PL12 to develop projects to benefit the retail heart of the town

Green Realm

At our February meeting, Hilary Frank, a Chamber member whose translation business is based in Saltash, updated us on the Town Team project to develop 'a new green realm in the retail heart of the town'. Members were pleased to hear of the appointment of the urban design firm Architecture by Studio Hive to drive forward with the project. Their final report is due to be delivered by the end of August, and the Chamber will remain fully involved as the Town Team works with Studio Hive to consult stakeholders and develop option appraisals and cost plans.

Brunel Bench

The new Brunel Bench on Fore Street celebrating the engineering genius of the Royal Albert Bridge has received widespread acclaim. This is another Town Team project delivered with funding from Section 106 planning contributions, and it is hoped that its installation on Fore Street will boost footfall in to the shops of our town.

Increase In Parking Charges

Chamber members expressed concern about the impact of the uplift in car parking charges that Cornwall Council is proposing to introduce. It was acknowledged that Cornwall Council has to meet a budget shortfall but members declared that increases above an inflation rate that is already high are not acceptable. I was tasked as Chairman to ensure that Saltash Chamber's voice is heard when public consultation takes place in early March, and I have undertaken to liaise with other local chambers to ascertain their views.

Improved Pedestrian Safety



A 'virtual footway' has been installed by Cornwall Council to make it safer for pedestrians to walk across the top of the slipway in front of Ashtorre Rock.

Similar to a cycle lane and far cheaper than a physical pavement, a virtual footway is where a section of road is marked out to highlight an area for pedestrians. The scheme across the top of the Saltash slipway was proposed by Saltash Town Council and delivered through Cornwall Council's Gateway Community Network Area.

Saltash Mayor, Councillor Richard Bickford, commented: "It has achieved exactly what we hoped it would and should offer greater clarity to road users and pedestrians in an area often frequented by young children."

Rewind Social Group

Rewind was launched on 1st February 2022 at Burraton Community Centre. A few like-minded friends who felt there were people out there who were isolated or in need of company after the pandemic, and to meet people and make new friends in a friendly relaxed and happy atmosphere set up the group.

The idea was to have fun and to do things that everyone was happy to be involved in. Everyone is important and able to give his or her own input on a regular basis.

The activities include raffles, bingo, quizzes and sing-alongs with a lovely lady who provides the music and leads the singing.

There are also outings. We have been to Ten Pin Bowling and lunches out as well as a Christmas dinner and party. We are always open to new ideas and look forward to new experiences.

We meet every Tuesday afternoon and everyone is welcome.

Saltash Mission to Stop use of Plastic Bags

Eco-crafters at the Community Enterprise PL12 are celebrating this month as they have created over 300 environmental bags for the local community.

The bags, known as Morsbags, are made from material that is no longer of use, and often ends up in landfill. A Morsbag is a recycled, reusable, fabric, washable bag that is used instead of a plastic bag and is always given away for free.

"We've made around 320 Morsbags," said Community Enterprise PL12 Marketing Director Melanie Cowie. "It's a staggering achievement by our talented volunteers and members of the eco-crafters club. They work tirelessly to create these reusable bags and be part of the Morsbag globally community."

Morsbag is a worldwide, not for profit organisation after seeing the damage that plastic bags were doing to wildlife and the environment.

Globally, more than one million plastic bags are consumed per minute, which marine wildlife mistakes for food.

More than 391,268 morsbags have been made by over 2000 pods, including the Saltash CEPL12 group, replacing more than 100 million plastic bags.

"We've had 25 duvet covers, 8 sets of curtains, plus some odds and ends being donated and turned into bags," adds Melanie. "We have a core group of 8 people, one of whom had never sewn before but with guidance from the more experienced members, she's now whizzing along!"

The Community Enterprise PL12 Morsbags are available in the Community Shop and at special events.

Support for Saltash Heritage

When 74 year old Grandmother, Linda Tout was accepted into this year's London Marathon, she decided that she wanted to support the Saltash Heritage Centre. The hard working staff are all unpaid volunteers and a more dedicated bunch would be difficult to find.

Training for a marathon takes weeks of hard work pounding the streets. Linda, a member of Tamar Trotters Running Club, can usually be seen running around the town early each morning.

Should anyone wish to support her, it is very easy, they need to find the Saltash Heritage Website and the Donate button. Any donation will go directly into the Centre's bank. We really hope the good people of the town will get behind Linda and show their support, not only for her but the Heritage Centre as well.

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Time To Think Big

Cornwall Council is actually the third largest unitary local authority in the country by measure of population, and the second largest by area. Huge. It was formed in 2009 after Cornwall County Council and the six district councils were abolished, and their powers and responsibilities concentrated into one unitary authority.

Cornwall Gateway Can

While this increase in size gave Cornwall Council the scale and resources to provide higher quality

services over wider, strategic areas, the bigger council needs to be underpinned by town and parish councils who can connect with local communities and the issues they really care about.

Back in 2009, it was felt that there should be a formalised governance structure of smaller units to support partnership working with towns and parishes, as well as with community groups, the police and other stakeholders, so 19 Community Network Areas (CNAs) were set up. Saltash is part of the Cornwall Gateway CNA, and I've been



Councillor Hilary Frank
cllr.hilary.frank@cornwall.gov.uk

chair of it for the last couple of years. Alongside the towns of Saltash and Torpoint we are joined by parishes such as St. Germans, Landulph and Maker with Rame – 11 in total. It has been a privilege

to see the parishes come together to support each other and share best practice, giving us a sense of connection and purpose.

Ever Evolving

Getting local government infrastructure right is an ever-evolving process. A new policy introduced by Cornwall Council in 2018 gave CNAs an annual budget to deliver highway improvement schemes, like the virtual footway that has just been installed on the road in front of Ashtorre Rock. Then last year, Cornwall Council's Cabinet decided to strengthen the area partnership model by giving CNAs the power to allocate funding from the Levelling Up Fund and the Community Capacity Fund.

Cornwall Gateway Cna R.I.P.

So far, so good. But, ironically for a proposal that seeks to make areas better able to take, drive and influence action on priority community issues, Cabinet has decided that the number of areas will be reduced from 19 areas to 12, and regrettably it seems that their driving factor on settling on a dozen as the optimum number was 'to meet the challenge of resourcing area partnerships'. In other words: to enable the Council to cut down on the number of staff.

And while an arbitrary number of 12 might suit Cornwall's reduced staffing budget, it doesn't necessarily suit

community identities and means there are inevitably going to be some larger areas. One is ours. Cabinet has decided that our area will merge with the Liskeard and Looe area, who currently have 18 parishes in their network, so we will be having meetings of 29 parishes. Setting aside, just for a moment, the headaches inherent in chairing meetings of 29 parishes, I want to highlight the glaring imbalance across Cornwall: with a total of 212 parishes, the average number of parishes in 12 new areas should be 17.66 in each, yet we will have 29 while there is one new area with just six! T'isnt proper.

I have consistently said that an area of 29 parishes is too large. Saltash Town Council has written letters making the same point. I tried attending a Cabinet meeting to argue the case for better parity in size of the 12 areas, but minds had already been made up and it all got voted through without debate.

Rising to the Challenge

At least the funding will be allocated based on the number of Cornwall Councillors in an area, and since we will have ten Cornwall Councillors this will be double the amount of funding of somewhere like Helston and South Kerrier, who will have five Cornwall Councillors in their new patch.

Although I strongly object to the way this has been pushed through, I have already been actively engaged in meetings developing the delivery framework and identifying possible investment opportunities. It'll be challenging, though, with an area this big and this diverse to bring everyone to a mutual agreement on how the funding should be invested.

The initial SWOT analysis prepared by Cornwall Council's consultants, for example, identified a 'strong hospitality and tourism sector' as one of the strengths of our new area. Do you recognise this as a strength? Do you think this is an area where we should be investing? Let me know. It's time to think big.

Should There Be a Referendum on the Proposed Deal?

A proposed Devolution Deal between Cornwall Council and central government was announced in December last year. The Deal brings new powers and funding to Cornwall, as well as the requirement to change to a governance system where someone who is not a councillor can be directly elected to the position of Mayor.

There will be a meeting of all 87 Cornwall Councillors on 18th April when councillors will vote on whether there should be a referendum to ask residents of Cornwall whether they want to change to a model of governance where there is a directly elected Mayor. If there is no referendum, the final decision on whether to accept the Deal will be taken by the 87 Cornwall Councillors in July. If the Deal is passed, the first Mayoral election would be held in May 2024 using a 'first past the post' system, and the Mayor's first term of office would last until 2029.

Following the Devolution Deal presentation in Saltash Guildhall at the end of January, the Saltash and District Observer asked three local Cornwall Councillors for their thoughts. Here are their responses:

Cllr. Martin Worth (Cons)

Q1 - Do you think there should be a referendum on the proposed Deal?

A - Ask me this today and it is so difficult to answer with a yes or no, without knowing the precise wording of the actual referendum. Secondly, the choice to hold one which I would support is down to either a council resolution, local petition or central government intervention. I can't be predetermined on any potential council resolution until I see the wording and in particular hear the full debate in the chamber. If there is a valid local petition, then I understand that will take precedent along with any government intervention.

Q2 - In your view, do the benefits of the proposed Deal merit changing to a system where there is a directly-elected Mayor in Cornwall?

A - From what I have seen, my thought at this stage is "Yes". Cornwall has the chance to be at the top table now and into the future, to Trailblaze our way to secure the best Deal as the first Unitary Authority to do so. To have a directly elected figurehead internationally, to represent us as we expand our Green Energy, Natural Resources, Technology and Tourism to attract long term global investment to Cornwall and grow our Economy, will be invaluable. I do believe that the best Mayor for Cornwall is probably someone who grew up here, someone who is passionate and committed to making a difference for the future of Cornwall.

Cllr. Kate Ewart (Lab)

Q1 - Do you think there should be a referendum on the proposed Deal?

A - Yes, I absolutely do. For me this is about consent and democracy. Not a single Councillor that sits on Cornwall Council stood on a manifesto promise of changing the governance of Cornwall. And I do accept the argument that we are elected to make difficult decisions, but this is a decision that should have the voices of Cornish residents heard on it. There is a cost to a referendum of course, but what about the cost of not letting the people of Cornwall have a say?

Q2 - In your view, do the benefits of the proposed Deal merit changing to a system where there is a directly-elected Mayor in Cornwall?

A - No, I don't believe they do. I have read the deal from Government and it is simply not ambitious enough and nor is it proper devolution. This is a County deal, it doesn't recognise the distinctiveness of our Cornish heritage or culture, it doesn't offer us meaningful devolution in the areas we need it, like planning, transport and health. It's not good enough, and we deserve better. Under the next Labour Government, we will offer deeper, broader devolution without the imposition of Mayor's or other unpopular governance models, instead we will let local communities decide what is best for them.

Cllr. Hilary Frank (Lib Dem)

Q1 Do you think there should be a referendum on the proposed Deal?

A - Yes! It is unthinkable that such a radical change in the way Cornwall is governed could be decided by a handful of councillors.

Q2 In your view, do the benefits of the proposed Deal merit changing to a system where there is a directly elected Mayor in Cornwall?

A - I'll start with my conclusion and say: no! I'm certainly in favour of meaningful devolution. In fact, Cornwall Liberal Democrats have consistently campaigned for the introduction of a Cornish equivalent to the Welsh Assembly. But I've read through the proposed Deal carefully and there are just two functions that central government is suggesting will be 'devolved': responsibility for administering an Adult Education budget, and the power for a Mayor to designate a Development Area. This is not meaningful devolution! Especially because the Adult Education budget itself will still continue to be decided by central government. And, not only do the Development Area powers risk giving a Mayor the opportunity to bypass normal planning processes they also carry the risk of leading to disparity in the way towns and parishes across Cornwall are treated. For areas like Saltash that are geographically far from County Hall it can already feel like it is hard to get our voice heard. If political power were to be concentrated in just one person who is given extra planning powers it risks exacerbating that situation.

And it worries me that the first chance to remove a Mayor at the ballot box would not be until 2029! Compare that to the current system where the Leader is a Cornwall Councillor who is elected by fellow councillors on an annual basis. This is actually the first time I am stating my position in public. I wanted to listen to the views of residents first. But after attending the presentation in Saltash Guildhall (where the mood was overwhelmingly negative about the Deal) and after a range of straw polls and discussions that I've conducted, I still haven't found a single Saltash resident who thinks this is a good enough deal for Cornwall.

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Coronation Colouring Competition

Pop into store and ask for a competition page

for more details see article in this month's Observer

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Big Lunch And Big Screen At the Coronation May Fair Weekend Saturday 6th & Sunday 7th May

A large screen on Fore Street to broadcast the moment when the St Edward's crown is placed on the head of King Charles III and a Sunday picnic as part of the Coronation Big Lunch - these are just a couple of the highlights of the Coronation May Fair weekend, when the May Fair committee is inviting Saltash to join the nation in celebration and share friendship, food and fun. The May Fair Committee was set up in its present form in 1980 with the express aim of 'continuing the revival of community spirit in Saltash generated by the Silver Jubilee of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II', prompting lead organiser Hilary Frank to say: "It feels fitting that May Fair this year coincides with the coronation. Of course we are still working hard to deliver all the elements of the traditional Saltash May Fair like the Parade of Youth and the market on Fore Street. And we're building on the elements we introduced last year like the Youth Village in Victoria Gardens and the Wellness Day in Longstone Park, but we're also excitedly planning for extra highlights to help the community celebrate the coronation together in style. And we're delighted to have booked a professional Queen tribute act called the Good Old Fashioned Lover Boys to headline our Coronation Concert in Longstone Park on Saturday 6th May." The committee is inviting any schools or community groups with ideas to help celebrate the coronation to contact them via their Facebook page or via mayfairsaltash@gmail.com.

Saltash Town Council Organise Historical Beating of the Bounds Event

In celebration of His Royal Highness King Charles III's coronation Saltash Town Council are organising a Beating of the Bounds event to take place on Monday 8th May 2023. Traditionally the event is undertaken to celebrate national events and was very popular when organised in 2022 for Her Late Majesty Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee. Beating of the Bounds is an ancient custom which dates back to Anglo-Saxon times. Members of the community would walk the boundaries of the parish to share the knowledge of where they lay.

The walk will be approximately five miles and take three hours, passing each of the five boundary stones.

The walk will include a brief stop at the Notter Bridge Inn and end with a cream tea at Isambard House. The Saltash Red Bus will be used for transport.

Tickets will be on sale at Saltash Library Hub and the Guildhall at the end of February.

Love was in the Air

Romantic songs serenaded shoppers in Saltash on the Saturday before Valentine's Day as music was played through the speakers that have been installed on Fore Street.

Intended primarily for major events such as May Fair and the Christmas Festival, town councillors have resolved to also play music through the speakers on Saturday mornings once a month to boost footfall into the town's retail centre. Cornish music is planned for the Saturday before St Piran's Day.

Initial reaction has been extremely encouraging, with one visitor saying she wished her home town had similar outdoor speakers.

Scrapstore Coronation Colouring Competition

We are doing things a bit differently this year, as the King's Coronation is on the same weekend as the Saltash May Fair.

We are inviting all children to take part in our Coronation Colouring Competition. There will be 2 age categories.

1. Aged below 10 years
2. Aged 11 years - 15 years
All entries will be judged by one of our Trustees, with the winners from each category being announced on our Facebook page and their entry piece being displayed in the shop window.

First prize in each category

A Free large scrap bag

Second prize in each category

A Free small scrap bag
Just pop into store and ask for a competition page, then return it to us once you have finished it ready for judging.

Closing date is 29th April 2023 so that they can be judged and announced at Saltash May Fair

Saltash Town Council Civic Parade at Saltash May Fair

In honour of His Majesty King Charles III's coronation Saltash Town Council are pleased to accept the invitation from the May fair Committee to hold a Civic Parade at the event on Saturday 6th May 2023.

In addition, the Town Council will have a stall at the May Fair where residents can obtain advice and guidance, offer their ideas for the town and meet their Councillors.

Saltash Town Council have created a Working Group to meet with the May fair volunteer committee to discuss other ways in which the Town Council can be involved in the celebrations and support the event to properly mark this historic occasion.

Children and Adults Eagerly Enter Revived Saltash Festival

Musicians and orators of all ages from primary school children through to senior citizens had the opportunity to hone their talents at the 31st Saltash Music, Speech and Drama Festival. Returning for the first time in three years due to Covid restrictions, the number of entrants may have been down slightly, but the high performance standards bode well for the future.

Competitors not only have the opportunity to compete for silverware and perform in public, the first time for many of them, they also have their performance judged by a professional adjudicator who offers constructive criticism to all entrants. This year's adjudicators were Rachel Gregory, herself a winner in over a hundred classes in competitive music festivals, Jenny Thornton, who has led performing arts teams in schools and been a LAMDA examiner, and Maria Jagusz, who is a vocal consultant for the International College of Music in London.

Following an official opening by Mayor Richard Bickford, the Festival began as ever with verse speaking. It is always a special delight to hear the sense of fun which bubbles over as the younger competitors recite their chosen humorous voice. This was followed by solo actors from year 7 upward, performing for the Mayor's Drama Award.

After this came the vocalists, with choirs and soloists from junior school age to adult and repertoire ranging from popular through

Sue Hooper's article about the history of St Barnabas Hospital in last month's Observer was both wonderful and timely. Now we must together think about its future. St Barnabas Hospital in Higher Port View was closed to in-patients by faceless NHS managers, without warning or consultation, in December 2016. Its long-term future has not been settled after over 6 years - which is utterly disrespectful to the people of the town. In so doing, the NHS in Cornwall has consequently undermined its own policy of developing alternative local services to take the pressure off Derriford.

This is what the town lost:

- 9 hospital beds, previously mainly used for recovery after treatment at Derriford or for avoiding the need for admission there - services

show and film to classical. The second week brought instrumentalists to the stage. Even the youngest entrants impressed the audience with their poise as well as their musical skills, from 6 and 7 year olds plucking their first publicly played guitar notes to polished senior school woodwind and brass solos. The young members of Saltash Training Band led by Christie Smith claimed a trophy on their first ever public performance. All entrants had the chance to hear their music resound through the spacious Wesley church.

Our own Saltash Observer Cup was won by the Lipson Saxophone Quartet from Lipson Co-operative Academy in Plymouth, who included in their performance an innovative rendition of Queen's Bohemian Rhapsody set for four saxophones.

Once again, the Festival concluded in fitting style with its Grand gala concert, with winning entrants in all fields and of all ages invited back to delight a highly appreciative audience. Festival Chair Phil Taylor told the Observer: "After a three-year break it is fantastic to be back. We never knew how many would participate, and were delighted to have over 330 entries - far more than we expected. This promises well for the future of the Festival."

Voice of Saltash Patients St Barnabas Hospital Future

always in demand, and reassuringly near home for patients and convenient for visitors

- All the nursing staff, mainly transferred to Liskeard Hospital initially

- The Minor Injuries service

- Many out-patient clinics

For different reasons, local GP services have now come under great pressure, and losing St Barnabas, plus our increasing population, have made experience of NHS care worse. As patients we need to help our GPs sustain the services we need and value - and we also understand that a majority of Saltash people now turning up at Derriford A&E could have been treated locally with better access to services. The way forward is obvious!

Our own surveys of patients clearly indicate that there are strong wishes for modern services in the town, including not only re-establishment of beds, but a walk-in centre, linked to the 2

Practices, to provide easy access to blood tests, dressings, etc, supported by out-patient clinics, minor procedures, physio, and a wider range of diagnostics services, eg scans and X-rays.

Please join our campaign to find a way to use existing NHS buildings to achieve this. Tell us what you think would be best. You can contact us at: patient.voice@icloud.com or drop a note or letter into our postbox in the Community Kitchen, 8 Fore Street, Saltash.

Prepared by Patients at Port View Surgery and Saltash Health Centre, together with members of the League of Friends of St Barnabas Hospital. We are trying to collate the views of more patients and citizens to inform our contribution into an imminent review of the 4 NHS buildings in the area (St Barnabas, the 2 GP Practices, and the Peninsula House office).



HOPPER TRIPS - March - April 2023

Friday 10th March

Darts Farm Village Topsham

An award winning site which offers so much for all ages with walks animal corner bird hide pick your own and a restaurant with a lunch menu that will leave you spoilt for choice
Leave Saltash 10.30 Return 16.00 - Travel only £13

Thursday 16th March

Otter Nurseries Brixton

A very popular trip with a great shopping area café and restaurant offering a great choice for lunch then will take a look at the sound from Jennycliffe visit the café for afternoon tea.
Leave Saltash 11.00 return 15.30 - Travel Only £5

Sunday 19th March

Sunday Lunch Lyneham Inn Plympton

A traditional pub offering a value for money Sunday Carvery just outside of Plympton followed by a visit to Endsleigh Garden Centre for shopping or a cream tea
Leave Saltash 11.30, return 16.00 - Travel Only £5

Friday 24th March

Torcross Fish & Chips

If you like Fish and Chips this is the place to visit 4 star rating in a great position with the beach just steps away should you like a walk after your meal then a scenic drive back to Saltash
Leave Saltash 10.30 return 16.00 - Travel Only £9

Tuesday 4th April

The Cider Press Centre Dartington & China Blue Totnes

At Dartington look around the many shops watch some glass blowing enjoy lunch in one of the restaurants then China Blue for afternoon tea and a look around the shop
Leave Saltash 10.30 return 16.00 - Travel Only £8

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Historic Coronation Medals

Tamar Trotters have released the designs for the medals in the Saltash Half Marathon, 5K and Fun Run, and they all feature the coronation emblem for the new King, a design that was inspired by King Charles' love of the planet, nature and his deep concern for the natural world. "We are excited that the runs will take place on the coronation weekend, on the second day of Saltash May Fair," said Colin Bunting of Tamar Trotters, "and we wanted to reflect that in our medals."

Sunday 7th May

All the runs will start and finish in Longstone Park on Sunday 7th May. Runners in the Fun Run, which is a distance of 1.8 miles and will incorporate the Primary Schools' Half Marathon Challenge, need to be in Longstone Park for a start time of 10am. The Half Marathon and 5K runs will both start at 11am.

The Half Marathon and 5K run are limited to 200 runners in each event so enter early to secure your place and the chance to get your very own Coronation medal. Visit the Tamar Trotters website for details, including videos and maps of the courses.



Our Final Conundrum Corner

Taking the initial letter to the one-word answers to the following ten questions can you re-arrange them to make the name of a well-known celebrity? 4,6
 1 Which of the Great Lakes is wholly in the United States of America? (8)
 2 Valkyries are Warrior Maidens in which Mythology? (5)
 3 Which London Borough shares its name with a horse-drawn Carriage? (7)
 4 In which University city can the Ashmolean Museum be found? (8)
 5 In which Country is Shakespeare's play Titus Andronicus set? (8)
 6 First used in World War 1 what was a Sopwith Camel? (8)
 7 What is the triangular muscle of the shoulder called? (7)
 8 How many Dots and Dashes make up the SOS distress signal in Morse Code? (4)
 9 What is the Capital of the American State of Texas? (6)
 10 The song A Whole New World comes from which Disney film? (7)

Thank you John - RIP
 Answers P7

Parking Problems Endanger Walkers and Drivers

There is evidence of increasing numbers of drivers and pedestrians being endangered by vehicles improperly parked on the streets of the town, prompting Saltash Town Council to resolve to draw up a list of the most hazardous areas in the town. Meanwhile, work is anticipated on what was described by one town councillor as "one of the worst sections of road in Saltash."

The section of Albert Road around the station approach was described by Cormac's network highway officer as having "pavements of poor quality with both sides often obstructed by vehicles parking on them, making it dangerous for pedestrians." It was noted that this is the main route for those walking to and from the railway station, and it is particularly hazardous after dark as the road is unlit. An initiative to install double yellow lines on a 40-metre section of Albert Road was proposed at a recent meeting of the Cornwall Gateway Community Network Area at

Sustainable Saltash

A regular column on changes Saltash residents are making to confront climate and ecological breakdown.

14 years ago, I decided that I'd try never to fly again – it seemed too damaging for our planet. I thought this would be the end of exciting holidays, how wrong I was! The common reasons given for flying are that its quicker and cheaper than a train, or it's the only way to get somewhere.

If the latter only you can decide if the journey's essential! Flying may be quicker for long haul but seldom for short journeys, where 3-hour check ins often make trains quicker. Rail from London to Amsterdam takes under 4 hours, Brussels is under 2. Probably the most quoted excuse is that trains are too costly, is that

environmentally costly or costly for the pocket? Environmentally, flying is arguably the costliest form of motorised transport. Emissions at altitude have a far greater warming effect than those at ground level and the levels of nitrous oxide are very high. This is shocking as flying is often cheaper. Unlike all other transport fuels, aviation fuel is totally UNTAXED! In effect, those that don't fly subsidise those that do. This is madness! The true cost of flying should be reflected in its price.

If you decide to stop flying, overland travel will be an adventure. You'll swap sitting in a box eating packaged food and seeing almost nothing for a journey where countryside, architecture, food and language are always changing!

I know many are worried about how to book and how to use trains. Fear not, we all have the amazing Mark Smith. He runs The Man in Seat 61 website. This tells you all you need to know about worldwide train travel, not just how to book tickets, and

yes, he thinks that seat 61 is the best seat on a train! It's fascinating.

Many of my best holidays have happened since quitting flying. Using trains, much of Europe can be reached in a day from London. Ideally, I'd recommend you travel light. We take one small rucksack or case each. We've visited Venice, travelled through Italy to its toe where the whole train has been shunted onto a ferry to cross the Straits of Messina to Sicily – what an experience! Last Easter we bought 4-day interrail passes. 2 days took us to the south of France, then ferry to Corsica where we walked the old dilapidated mule trails and used public transport to explore the island. We returned by a different route using the rest of the pass.

So flyers, what about going online, maybe to www.seat61.com? Get some ideas and maybe you'd like to quit too?

Marianne Beale

This column is a conversation starter for our whole community. If you have comments on the subject, ideas of your own or suggestions for future content, please do get in touch at sustainable.saltash@protonmail.com

an estimated cost of £10,000.

Parking on pavements is not of itself an offence outside London, and parking enforcement officers can only take action if it can be proved that an obstruction is being caused or a police officer witnesses the vehicle being parked. Where there is yellow lining on a road, however, Cornwall's enforcement officers can take action and issue a ticket. Saltash Town Council agreed to make funds of £5000 available towards the £10,000 Albert Road scheme, in the hope that the remaining £5,000 will be delivered through funding from the Community Network Area.

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Four Ways to keep your New Year's Resolutions

It's already February – and it's probably worth reflecting on how many of our New Year's resolutions we've kept! Some would've been harder than others. If you find that you've already broken some of your resolutions, there are ways to make achieving your goals that little bit easier.

Make a budget – and stick to it

Our finances dictate our way of life. To keep things manageable, it helps to make a budget. With so many things going out during the month – from one-off expenses to direct debits – how can we keep on top of it? Knowing your finances really helps make sure you have that safety net for when times get tough.

You can find great tips online with sites like moneysavingexpert.com/banking/budget-planning.

If you're struggling to create a budget, there are free money management courses like Christians Against Poverty's CAP Money course.

Plan ahead

No matter what your resolution, making a plan is the key to getting it done. Having a step-by-step strategy means that you're far more likely to be able to stick to it. If you plan to eat healthier, create a meal plan. If you plan to exercise more, schedule your workouts.

Keep things simple
 It's easy to overcomplicate

simple things. When your mind becomes clouded, take some time to reflect. Whether that's going for a walk or checking in with a friend, you need a clear head and a balanced mindset to keep any resolution or hit any goal. Remember why you started, and don't put too much pressure on yourself by chasing perfection.

Ask for help

You don't have to go at it alone. Having someone to talk to or check in with can really put things into perspective. Sometimes, getting tied up in the pursuit of goals can distract us from looking after ourselves. At Saltash Baptist Church, we want to help and support you, so here are just 2 opportunities.

Drop in morning – 10.30-12 every Wednesday morning during term time, - come for a chat, a coffee, a warm space, with or without children.

Money Course – 1-3pm over 3 Wednesdays starting 22nd February – run in person by our very own Jane Davies, come and get help and ideas on budgeting or saving for your next goal. You can find out more at capuk.org/get-help/cap-money-course.

Both are open to everyone and we'd love to see you. Let's continue the year with hope! *Christians Against Poverty (CAP) is a UK charity with over 580 services across the country delivering debt counselling, money management education, job clubs, life skills groups and more. Visit capuk.org to find out more.*

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Tamar Reflections

Sir Arthur Thomas Quiller-Couch and his association with Saltash bygone

An intriguing lecture given by local historian Martin Lister recently at the Saltash Old Cornwall Society meeting; which readers of the Saltash Observer will note that I have penned elsewhere in this publication; which also led me to conduct further research on one of Martin's referral to a famous writer, Cornishman, Sir Arthur Thomas Quiller-Couch (pseudonym Q) a famous British author, poet and critic, best known for the monumental publication of *'The Oxford Book of English Verse' (1250-1900)*, of which I am the proud owner of a copy.

Q was a great friend of Kenneth Grahame, the author of "Wind in the Willows" – and it is generally accepted that due to their close association and interest in the natural environment, Q was the inspiration and the character of "Ratty" in "Wind in the Willows."

Whilst researching my vast collection of Saltash and Cornish history memorabilia, I came across a short story written by Q which I found fascinating; and as I delved more deeply into the story, I found that he was writing a fiction based on Saltash's own Ann Glanville and her all woman Gig Crew. Q, however, gave

all the people and places within made-up names. Q writes fictitiously about Saltash life at that time in the mid and late 19th Century embracing Saltash Fore Street and its Public Houses and Livestock Markets; then transporting his readers down to the Saltash Waterside and the nationally renowned Regattas, and the famous all-women rowers.

Sir Arthur Thomas Quiller-Couch, born in Bodmin in 1863 was very much a Cornishman and was a Cornish Bard of the Cornish Cultural Society Gorsedh Kernow.

"Ye Sexes Give Ear"

Q was the author of a number of popular novels and short stories with Cornish settings. Indeed, the beginning of his story the Saltash song - "Ye Sexes, Give Ear" based on life in Saltash; conveying the knowledge that Q featured within his Saltash story, it mysteriously indicates the strong possibility that Q visited Saltash on various occasions; certainly this cannot be ruled out!

Lyricaly, "Ye Sexes, Give Ear" was a "Chimney Corner" story and Q sets the fictional scene in a Saltash Public House. The story teller speaks firstly of a fisherwoman; he named her Sally (Sal) Hancock and also gives mention to her close powerful Waterside womenfolk friends that eventually made up the crew of an all-female famous winning rowing Gig. Sal's 'mates' were rough and could *bawl* out to sell their fish, shrimps and cockles, like any man. That said, they



were respectable and Church womenfolk - mainly Wesleyan Methodist; where after the Service, over a cuppa they had a good gossip, and put Saltash to rights.

Moreover, the storyteller speaks of Trematon and the hayfields beyond; and the war-ships in the Hamoaze; and the line of prison-hulks, where in those days he said, incarcerated French prisoners.

The narrator spoke of Saltash Fore Street and the Public Houses including the "Green Dragon" this being the true name, of which Saltash still boasts its emblem above the Coop today.

Sal throws down the gauntlet

Within the story there were boozy goings-on with the menfolk, with no womenfolk in the Public Houses; two of them fictitiously named the "Fish and Anchor" and the "Sailor's Return" - and Q uses such occasions to display some of his wonderful humorous verses with a Saltash theme and making the womenfolk fun targets; but there was a price to pay, when Sal got to hear about it! When she threw down the gauntlet, and challenged the jovial and intoxicated men to a Gig race challenge of the 'menfolk against the womenfolk.'

The crowds gather

The story continues with the aggrieved womenfolk taking on the menfolk in an arranged Gig race on Regatta day, racing from the Quay to near Torpoint and back. When news got out, there was mention of many hundreds of people lining the banks of the Tamar to watch from Saltash, Plymouth and Callington and further afield. The boat-builders on the Waterside had a mention; and so too, the Mayor of the Borough.

The womenfolk win the race

On this particular Regatta day, there was much excitement building up and the men beginning to worry what the outcome would be. The race began with the men several lengths ahead, but they tired themselves out on the way back from the Hamoaze, and the women raced ahead, much to the cheering of the gathered hundreds on the river banks and the Waterside Quay. The womenfolk won by almost a hundred yards and the crowds ashore loved every minute of the race. It is possible that Q may have been there on that

momentous day.

And the Band played on The Band played, so too, the hurdy-gurdies and the drums and cymbals outside the Penny Theatre, and Showmen bawling and swearing with beer jugs in their hands.

Q's intriguing fictional story describes *Press Gangs* running riot in Saltash and touring the Public Houses off Ships moored in the Hamoaze or the Sound.

Daphne du Maurier and Robert Louis Stevenson links

Sir Arthur Thomas Quiller-Couch captured the history of Saltash and its historic Waterside in so many detailed ways, whether he was a visitor or not. I appreciate that he probably would have referred to Saltash history books and periodicals. That said it is quite remarkable that this internationally renowned Cornish literary scholar and writer of scores of publications, who also had strong links with other notable authors, such as Kenneth Grahame, Daphne du Maurier and Robert Louis Stevenson; included our beloved Saltash in his works.

Q became Mayor of Fowey in 1937, and remained an integral part of the Fowey community and Cornish population until his death in 1944.

Memorial Fund

In Cornwall there is "The Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch Memorial Fund" which was set up as a charitable trust in 1945. The Fund awards small grants for research work in literary or allied subjects with a Cornish connection. Grants may be used to support travelling, obtaining transcripts or other expenses in conducting research, or to contribute to production costs, including editing, design and printing. The Committee is keen to promote diversity, excellence and creativity in Cornish literature and humanities, all in Q's name! Sue Hooper MBE
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Conundrum Answers:

1 Michigan 2 Norse 3 Hackney 4 Oxford 5 Scotland 6 Airtrath 7 Deloid 8 Nine 9 Austin 10 Aladdin. Re-arranged the letters spell Adam Hanson.

Just Thinking Aloud

I feel like a bit of a rant. To find out why, read on. An online publication, which I shall not embarrass by naming it, recently published the following, which it instantly followed by assuring readers that it did not agree with the views expressed, which purported to be those of an anonymous resident:

"Saltash, on the face of it appears to be a middle class, family orientated town which welcomes visitors with open arms. But, behind the smoke lies a cruel, jealous, vindictive town that can strip the few decent residents bare in seconds, should they ever show any level of decency in public.

"The shop owners reflect the face of the many residents by outwardly being rude, obnoxious, duplicitous, unwelcoming and that is on a good day. The pubs are dead, there is no social life, but then again with the town folk all hating each other why would they want to socialise."

That person added: "This is a family trait that has been passed down to the current younger generation. One secondary school to accommodate the whole town, where all the kids hate each other as much as the adults do. This is a two faced town, where one face is ugly and the other is rotten.

The town has much going for it. It's called the Tamar Bridge, which leads back into civilisation."

The words I want to address

Victory for Late Afternoon Shoppers

A victory for people who enjoy calling in to shop in Cornish towns in the late afternoon has been achieved after lobbying spearheaded by Saltash Town Council and Saltash Cornwall Councillors.

Cornwall Council is intending to standardise parking charges throughout Cornwall, placing its car parks into three zones. The plans call for all car parks in Saltash to be placed in category B, where the minimum charge will increase from 70p to £1.

Initially, Cornwall Council had proposed that the parking charges would be levied until 6pm, not 4pm as at present. But Cornwall Councillors Hilary Frank and Martin Worth joined colleagues representing towns as far afield as Helston and Penzance in lobbying to retain the introduction of free parking at 4pm, emphasising that charging until 6pm would have an adverse effect on high street businesses. Saltash Town Council sent a strong letter to the Portfolio Holder at Cornwall Council, and were delighted to hear that the plans had been revised in response, with free parking to start at 4pm, as is currently the case.

All the proposed zones and charges are subject to consultation which will commence on 2nd March, and if agreed will be introduced in April this year.

to this anonymous resident are not ones which Editor Mary would have any truck with, except for wielding a censorious pencil, so I shall content myself with some advice:

Dear Anonymous Person – if you are at all concerned with facts, look at our Town Council. It has a maximum of sixteen volunteer members, the overwhelming majority of whom work for a living, who donate an enormous amount of their "spare" time by working their socks off in the service of their fellow citizens. Have a look, too, at Saltash Town Team, information about which you will find online. It might help you to understand just how wrong you are about our town. Try to get your head round the tremendous number of voluntary organisations

which add to the life of fair Esse. Understand that numbers of us came here meaning to stay not very long, but who were welcomed and encouraged to stay. Why? Because we were into community involvement. I came in 1975, meaning to stay for just five or six years..... My children were all educated in local schools. They worked hard. They got on. I am proud of them. This is my 48th year of shopping locally. I regard many of the shop owners and workers therein as friends. As is mine host of a local pub and the committee of a local licensed club.

Dear Anonymous Person – if you really believe the claptrap you have spouted, do reveal your identity.

Bob Munro

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Saltash Old Cornwall Society presents ... 'Wind in the Willows' and its strong Cornish connection

'Wind in the Willows' written by Kenneth Grahame in 1908, is one of the best loved children's novels of all time, and is still read and enjoyed by millions of children and adults today, despite being written over 100 years ago. 'Wind in the Willows' was based on the animal kingdom on, and adjacent to the banks of the River Thames and featured such delightful animal characters such as Toad, Rat, Mole, Badger, Weasel, Rabbits, Field mice and a Horse; all of whom Kenneth Grahame brought to life as loveable, talking and scheming characters.

Martin Lister, general secretary of the Saltash Old Cornwall Society, certainly conveyed such intriguing imagery of the story and cleverly concentrated on the sometimes tragic life of the author Kenneth Grahame, and his only son Alastair (nicknamed Mouse).

Martin was the keynote speaker at the January meeting of the Society and gave a most vivid and fascinating lecture to the members about the life and times of Kenneth Grahame; and his strong association with



Cornwall.

Kenneth Grahame a British born writer was born in Edinburgh March 8th 1859.

The family with three children eventually moved to Argyll fishing village, where Kenneth began "Messing about in boats." When Kenneth was five years old, his mother had a fourth child but sadly died two weeks later. His father who had a drink problem packed all the children off to their 'Granny Ingle' in England at Cookham Dean, so he grew up near the River Thames, abutted by wonderful countryside and scenery. Aged nine Kenneth went to boarding school in Oxford, still near the river. He had hoped to go to Oxford University, but there was no money available so he was given a job in London at the Bank of England.

During his childhood, there were times when Kenneth became quite ill, during those times his sister Helen took him to Torquay but he didn't like it there, so she took him to Fowey, in Cornwall and Kenneth loved it there. Their hosts, friends of the family, Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch and Edmond Atkinson (commandore of the Fowey yacht club) took Kenneth rowing, picnicking and fishing.

Whilst Kenneth and Helen were in Fowey, the engagement of Kenneth and Elspeth was announced, much to the surprise of friends and family. Elspeth immediately came down to Cornwall and they married 1899 in St Fimbarrus Church, in Fowey. The couple had a three day honeymoon at St Ives; then

and an unlikely romance began.

Ill again with pneumonia, Helen took him this time to Torquay but he didn't like it there, so she took him to Fowey, in Cornwall and Kenneth loved it there. Their hosts, friends of the family, Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch and Edmond Atkinson (commandore of the Fowey yacht club) took Kenneth rowing, picnicking and fishing.

When Mouse was four years old, Kenneth started telling him bedtime stories. Mouse asked for a story about a mole, giraffe and a water rat; which eventually included a toad.

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the loss of bedtime stories, so Kenneth promised to mail them to him. Of these bedtime stories, fifteen letters remain, which basically are the full tale of 'Adventures of Toad.'

When Kenneth and Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch had a picnic with Austin Purves (American Artist) on Fowey River, he claimed that the idea of Mole and Ratty became a vision for Kenneth in his novel "Wind in the Willows."

Back in London Constance Smedley a literary agent contacted Kenneth urging him to write another book influenced from Mouse's bedtime and Toad stories. Kenneth reluctantly agreed.

Mr Mole and his fictional creatures— firstly named "Wind in the Reeds" and eventually "Wind in the Willows." The Chapter "Wayfarers" added last has description of Fowey, which gives a very clear indication of the influence of the Fowey River and its evocative animal life.

Kenneth had admirers in extremely high places, President Theodore Roosevelt had admired 'Dream Days' and Golden Age, and invited Kenneth Grahame to the White House. Furthermore, another great admirer was Kaiser Wilhelm II the German Emperor.

"Wind in the Willows" was first published by Methuen, the Publishers doubted it would sell and critics panned it. The Times said that it was negligible as a contribution to natural history. However, President Roosevelt loved it, and persuaded Kenneth Grahame to publish in the USA and consequently, sales soared!

In 1911 Kenneth and Elspeth took Mouse to discover Cornwall, they stayed in the Lizard, and then onto Fowey, it was an idyllic holiday for them all. Kenneth described sailing to Lerryn with Mouse and rowing back. Kenneth recalled that Fowey was busier with larger ships; but the town looked just the same.

When Mouse got back to



Rugby he hated it; he left after six weeks to study at Eton, he completed only three terms before having a nervous breakdown. Kenneth wanted Mouse to have the chance of education that he missed out on; public school and Oxford, though Mouse was temperamentally unsuited to either.

At Oxford Mouse did little work, he lacked enthusiasm educationally and never socialised. On May 7th 1920 aged twenty; Mouse walked over the meadows to the level crossing, and was knocked down by a train. The Coroner declared that it was an accident; however, it was generally believed to be suicide.

Following Mouse's death, Kenneth and Elspeth closed down their Berkshire home near the Thames and lived for ten years in Italy. They then returned to England living in a new home in Pangbourne near the River Thames.

Two years later 1932 Kenneth died aged seventy two. Elspeth died in 1946 aged eighty four.

In her vote of thanks to Martin, Sue Hooper, President of the Saltash Old Cornwall Society, remarked on the genius of Kenneth Grahame and added that Martin's lecture was intriguing, fascinating and captivating all at the same time. Further, Sue said how ironic it was that Kenneth Grahame had written fictional thrilling stories based on animals displaying human behaviour to a captive audience of children and adults alike; yet his own child was sad and lonely most of his life, which almost certainly resulted in him losing his life at the tender age of 20 years.

John White Remembered ... With Great Affection

There's no other way of putting it – with the recent death of John White at 86 this paper has lost a long-term stalwart. Editor Mary explains: "John actually worked with the Observer for the last 30 years. He provided the Conundrum Corner every month as well as delivering papers for 25 years. A wonderful and very private man. His selfless input and straightforward personality were boons to the team and (anonymously) a bonus to you the readers.

Every month for about 25 years he delivered around 2000 copies of your paper. At our busiest times he was amazing. As soon as the papers arrived, he was onto it. Within a few days all papers were in a letterbox somewhere ...he was meticulous, never missing a single house. He will not thank me for saying how good he was as he preferred to do things quietly without the fuss of telling everyone ... (Sorry John it has to be done).

He was also the author of our famous Conundrum Corner that everyone has looked forward to almost since the inception of the Observer. Our March issue will be the last one from John as he sent off the copy to me before he died.

John was a very special and valued member of the Observer family team, I looked upon John & Ruth as good friends over many years. John will be sorely missed (especially by me), and by our readers who have enjoyed his conundrum each month."

Mary has asked me to add a few words. Here they are:

It was my privilege to be invited by Ruth to deliver the eulogy at John's recent funeral at SS Nicholas & Faith Church. I was able to speak of his love for his family, his community, plus the town in which he lived for his entire life and which made him its Citizen of the Year in 1992. John literally spent his life in the service of others. He served his country wearing a green beret as a Royal Marine national serviceman, partly in Northern Ireland. There is no room here to go into detail of his local and further afield commitments, but let us mention in passing his contributions to the scouting movement which in 2007 awarded him its most prestigious silver acorn, to Burraton Community Centre, to hockey, cricket and football (not forgetting his early mornings as a golf caddy for younger son Richard!), his on stage side-splitting cameo performances for YoungStagers, his encouragement to tyro bellringers at St Nick's (including me!), and how his Christian faith quietly informed so much of what John was about.

The John I knew for nearly half a century could be solemn, deep, unswerving in


his views, uncompromising and not infrequently stern with anyone for whom he particularly cared if he felt that a line had been crossed. But underneath all that was something which frequently bubbled up to the surface, revealing the essential John, the John recognised by so many of you:

"Wonderful, private, amazing, meticulous, very special, valued, lovely, kind, fantastic dry sense of humour, remembered with great fondness, always had a smile and a nice greeting for everyone".


I shall remember John above all for his impish sense of fun, his pixy-like grin. More years ago than I care to recall he and I were in a conversation about a mutual acquaintance who had vexed him. In the end, in exasperation I said "John, for heaven's sake do remember that not one of us is a saint". That reduced him to a thoughtful silence. Several years later, we were in another conversation, this time about a mutual acquaintance who had "got up my nose" in a big way. John looked at me, his eyes twinkled and he grinned, saying "Bob, for heaven's sake do remember that not one of us is a saint". It rang a bell. We fell about laughing.

God bless him.
Bob Munro





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