



ARNOLD'S NEWS

News from Corsham Information & Heritage Centre

Autumn 2010



CENTRE CELEBRATES TENTH ANNIVERSARY

Corsham Information & Heritage Centre has recently achieved 10 years of serving the public; residents and visitors alike. It opened its doors in the summer of 2000 - a fact recorded on the plaque to be found on the inside wall of the Heritage Room.

To mark the occasion, the twosome who originally opened the Centre reconvened at Arnold House on September 23rd to celebrate the event. The very same Lord Lansdowne and Roger Fido were on hand to recognise the successes of those ten years and to wish "many more" to those presently entrusted with the running of the Centre - ourselves, the CADT.

It was fitting that the Centre had just been recognised by Mystery Shoppers from Enjoy England as performing better than ever before. Enjoy England assessed 322 TICs in England in 2010. We were rated 17th overall - and 3rd



in Wiltshire's 18, behind Salisbury and Swindon.

The shoppers had telephoned, e-mailed and actually visited the Centre, rating it on its speed of response, the warmth of its welcome, the degree of local knowledge exhibited by its staff and their eagerness to promote the area to their visitors. Now that really is service. Thank you team!

As well as books, maps and souvenirs relating to Corsham, the Centre books local accommodation. Taken together with evening meals, this is conservatively estimated to put over £20,000 directly into the local economy.

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Corsham Information and Heritage Centre is operated by the Corsham Area Development Trust (CADT), formed in 2006 as a 'meeting of minds' between the Corsham Civic Society and the Corsham Chamber of Commerce.

The CADT's primary purpose is to develop the tourism economy of Corsham by offering information and services to residents and visitors.

LATEST NEWS - AT LAST: GOOD NEWS ON THE FUNDING FRONT

Wiltshire Council has extended our funding. It will now total £25,000 for the year April 2010 to March 2011 - an increase of £6,250 from that previously indicated. Thanks to all of you who have lobbied on our behalf to achieve this breakthrough. We understand it was not an easy decision for the Council to reach. They have a lot of priorities at this moment.

CARDS FOR GOOD CAUSES RETURN

Charity Christmas cards have been around for a while but Corsham shoppers have always made a special effort to raise funds for a wide range of charities, including Dorothy House and Wiltshire Air Ambulance.

Last year the Centre returned a record of over £11,000 to the charities and is hoping to increase this to £12,000 in 2010.



Unlike some charity cards, the Cards for Good Causes range guarantees to return at least 75 pence out of each pound spent to the charities represented. The 2010 range of cards covering 33 charities went on sale at the start of October and our volunteers are offering extra time to help out over the next two months.

“There is a lot of support from the public and obviously people have their own favourite ones. The support for the Wiltshire Air Ambulance was very high last Christmas, so we have increased the display of their cards. Last year, people were slow to buy cards because of the postal strikes but it picked up nearer Christmas. This year the early shoppers will get the best choice.” said Cheryl, one of our two part-time managers at the Centre.

100,000TH VISITOR

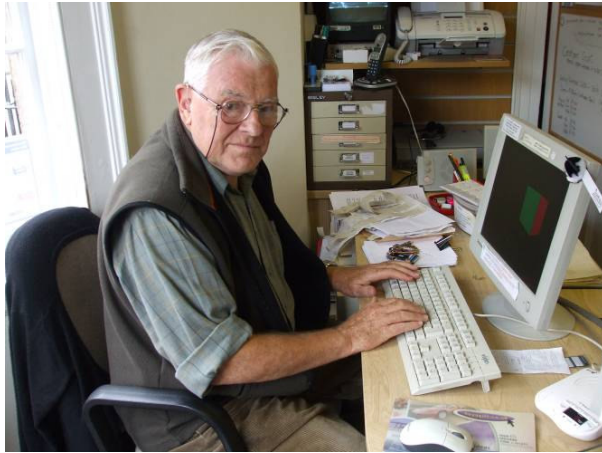
We had the pleasure of welcoming our 100,000th visitor to the Centre in September. Mr Wim Slager and his wife Annemie, from Winterswijk in Holland (right, with CADT Director Ian Storey), found this out to their surprise when they visited Corsham the day before our 10th Anniversary celebration.

Besides being presented with a certificate as special visitors, the couple were also given free admission to Corsham Court by the owner Mr James Methuen-Campbell.



MEET THE TEAM

In our first edition we introduced you to our two part-time managers. Now we bring you the stalwarts of their support team. They are Maureen (right) and Colin (below). Both are part-time. As with Beryl and Cheryl, they both contribute significant additional hours on an entirely voluntary basis.



The result is that our total employee paid headcount is precisely one FTE (full time equivalent). Our funding allows for no more. Without the unpaid time given by these four, and by our loyal band of 16 shop-volunteers, we would not be able to operate at all. We are hugely indebted to every one of them.

LATEST HERITAGE DISPLAYS

With the enthusiastic assistance of the Corsham Cricket Club, we are delighted to have been able to bring together an exhibition of memorabilia charting the 150 years of cricket in Corsham. It really is fascinating.

Started in 1848 the club has played an important role in the community, and has raised some spectacular cricketers, including Septimus Kinneir and 'Big' Jim Smith, both of whom played at county level and for England.

Adding to that, the kudos of the presence of WG Grace at the crease on more than one occasion, the people of Corsham can be very proud of the contribution the club and its prominent ground has made to our town.



Please come along and have a look at the display. You are sure to see a name you know captured amongst the photographs and scorebooks on show there.

NATIONAL EXPRESS

The Centre is an official agent for the National Express coach service. Our online system provides us with the means of generating the ticket you will need to board the coach. Connections are available to many towns and cities. Tickets for Swindon, Bristol, London Victoria and London Earls Court, Heathrow and Gatwick are our biggest sellers.



Prices are very reasonable. Our staff can guide you to the most cost-effective ones - Friday is a day best avoided. Concessions are available. By way of example, a day return to Swindon can cost as little as £6.40 per adult (£3.30 if 60+). A day return to Bristol can cost as little as £6.00 per adult (£3.00 if 60+). The pick up point for all trips is the bus stop in Pickwick, on the main A4, near the Two Pigs.

National Express represents a truly convenient mode of travel. You avoid car parking fees. Journey times are short because pick up points are few.

So why not join our regulars who use the service. Drop in to see us. Who knows, you might even decide to take a day-out to somewhere you've never been before.

FRIENDS OF THE CORSHAM HERITAGE CENTRE

In the very near future, the CADT hopes to be both engaging with a wider public and enjoying the rewards of the support of that community. A Friends group is being established.

Such a group would demonstrate Corsham's support for the Centre very clearly. We will keep readers up to date on developments.



GET INVOLVED

Our need for new volunteers continues. The Heritage Centre is now a registered attraction with Visit Wiltshire. Through it we mean to develop our engagement with the local community, particularly with schools. This could be right up your street. If you feel you could assist in maintaining this most useful town asset, please contact us at:

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