



# ARNOLD'S NEWS

News from Corsham Area Heritage & Information Centre

Autumn 2011



## CIVIC DAY 2011 - CORSHAM'S ENTENTE CORDIALE

Saturday 25 June marked the launch of a new national event: Civic Day. Centrally co-ordinated by Civic Voice, the CADT had joined forces in February with Corsham's Civic Society to register the town's interest.

It happened to be the day upon which Corsham's Twinning Association had run its French Market Morning for several years. We asked them if they would join forces to make Civic Day an event for the whole community and they jumped at the idea.



A programme of seven activities was devised with the Twinning Market taking centre stage. The High Street was closed, the bunting was resplendent and several town centre shops took the opportunity to set up stalls outside their premises, including the Heritage & Information Centre. The weather cooperated and townsfolk turned out in their hundreds. BBC Wiltshire Radio sent a roving reporter. Duncan Hames, MP, dropped in.

James Methuen-Campbell led a guided walk for primary school children around the gardens of Corsham Court. Two Toddler Workshop sessions were held at the Methuen Arms Hotel, and The Pound Embroidery Group staged a marvellous exhibition of its contribution to the 14,000 pennants being made for the 2012 Olympics by "Quilts 4 London". **The Question is ... Can we do even better next year? Saturday 23 June 2012 is its Civic Day.**

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*Corsham Area  
Heritage &  
Information  
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

## CADT AGM

The Corsham Area Development Trust currently plans to hold its AGM for the FY 2010/2011 in November 2011. We can only trail it here - this edition of Arnold's News must go to the printers before the end of October.

Previous AGMs have taken place in April. The AGM held on 27 April 2011 decided that holding AGMs so many months after the end of the preceding Financial Year - 31 July - made little sense. While the focus will be on the year already ended, the FY which started 1 August 2011 will undoubtedly occupy the meeting's attention.

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## RECENT DISPLAYS IN THE HERITAGE ROOM

The Heritage Room has seen continual change since we mounted that display of Corsham Cricket Club memorabilia last autumn.

Pat Whalley has been busy researching Corsham's post-war activities. The Community Centre played a major role, being the venue for numerous events and the home from which many clubs operated.

Another project for Pat has been the Town Band, formed in 1888. As for the Community Centre, Pat's display provides a wealth of detail. Please come and take a look. You could spot someone you know.



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## FRIENDS GROUP LAUNCHED

The Inaugural Meeting of the Friends of the Corsham Area Heritage Centre was held at Arnold House on 19 September 2011. Those present decided that the group should be a projects-driven organisation, with the intention that the Heritage Centre should be developed to be more informative, attractive and welcoming through actions which were of a "capital" nature, rather than of a "revenue" nature.

The meeting had been convened following a sustained recruiting drive by the Friends Establishing Team - with paid-up membership having now reached a level where the constituting of a recognised Friends group was possible and necessary.

Various investigations were identified as being needed, these being taken onboard by individuals who agreed to form an Action Group.

## CORSHAM CELEBRATES HODs 2011

Once again Corsham participated in the national Heritage Open Days festival, now established as something not-to-be-missed every September. As previously, Corsham's involvement was led by its Civic Society, whose Organising Team had assembled a most interesting programme of events for the period 8 - 11 September.

Events ranged from a trip underground to view the Octavian Wine Cellars at Gastard, to a Guided Walk around the historic centre of Corsham, led by Dr Negley Harte - the picture below shows Negley pointing out the finer details of the properties to be found in Church Street - to a talk on the GWR presented by the Society's Chairman, Michael Rumsey. All were well attended. Full coverage of the festival will appear in November's *Corsham Spotlight*, the Society's newsletter.



As previously, we were pleased to assist in administering the year's HODs. Tickets for those events where space was limited, and numbers were bound to be restricted, were made available by our staff operating out of Arnold House - with Michael pitching in on the first Saturday of the ticket-availability period.

This year English Heritage had requested that the names of those attending should be recorded. A dedicated table was set up in the Heritage Room for the purpose.

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## OUR NATIONAL EXPRESS COMPETITION - WHO WON IT?

The draw was duly made on 1<sup>st</sup> August - and the lucky winner was a regular customer from Priory Street. The prize is a pair of adult return tickets to anywhere in the UK of the winner's choice, subject only to it being used by the end of February 2012.

When we have the winner's instructions we will book the journey and NX will foot the bill. It is pleasing to have our efforts recognised by a leading supplier - and for a Corsham resident to be the beneficiary!



## MAKING THE CONNECTION - Geoff Knapp

**Y**ou may recall that we have received an original copy of Corsham's "Parish Magazine" dated 1883. (We subsequently described the document in greater detail in the July edition of *Spring Spirit*.) The document has now taken on a new meaning for us.

Francis Baines (Stationer) was declared to have been the Magazine's printer. It transpires that Francis Baines had followed in his father's footsteps, becoming a chemist and stationer while living at 36 High Street.

We have now discovered that Geoff Knapp is a descendant of Francis Baines. Geoff farmed at Great Lypiatt Farm, Neston and has been active in Corsham's Civic Society and the CADT for many years. His grandfather, Richard Knapp, was married to Winifred Baines, the daughter of Francis. Geoff has provided us with some fascinating details about life in Corsham's High Street in the late 1800s. We'll piece it all together in another article in *Spring Spirit* shortly.

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## CARDS FOR GOOD CAUSES - and other Christmas Things

**B**y the time you read this, we will be well into our annual 'Cards for Good Causes Season'. Quite honestly, we love it! You visit our little emporium in your hundreds, and it gives us the opportunity to deliver a service to our local supporters - one that you all seem to appreciate.

Every year our sales increase. More than ever before, this year we have other festive items to offer you. Please drop in to see it all for yourselves.



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## SEEKING YOUR ASSISTANCE - The Stagecoach Motel

**A**n enquiry from a resident of Chestnut Grange has given rise to another research project for our Heritage Centre. He had heard that a "hostelry of questionable repute" had once stood upon the very site now occupied by his home. Was this true, he asked? What could we tell him about it - and did we have a picture? The story is coming together - but can you help us with a picture?

*Arnold's News* is published by the Corsham Area Development Trust.  
Printing donated by Corsham Print ([www.corshamprint.co.uk](http://www.corshamprint.co.uk))

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