

# The Chertsey Society

Registered Charity No 235402

www.chertseysociety.org.uk

## Newsletter: January 2015



The Society's Aims  
*The Chertsey Society is a non-political organisation dedicated to enhancing and preserving the town's heritage and amenities.*

### CONTENTS

page

1

1

2

2

3

4

5

6-7

8

8

8

8



### PROGRAMME 2015 Monday evenings 7.45pm

- 26th Jan Town Forum
- 23rd Feb Museum Visit (at *The Cedars*) with the Curator and Friends
- 30th Mar How are we celebrating 800 years of Magna Carta? & The AGM
- 27th Apr "Eyots and Aits of the Thames" by Miranda Vickers

To contribute towards the costs of hiring the hall and speakers expenses members are asked to contribute £1  
**Visitors / Guests are Welcome - £2.**

*Please note the meetings will be held in St Peter's Church Hall, Windsor Street, unless otherwise indicated.*

### TOWN FORUM

This years Town Forum will start at 7.45pm on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> January 2015 and this year it will include a report on SCC & RBC matters including The Borough Plan, the Green Belt, road repairs, flooding issues, housing targets etc. It is also your opportunity to raise issues with Councillors and RBC Officials. Visitors are welcome.

### Meeting Reports

#### General

The monthly speaker meetings are held on the last Monday of the month and usually start with a report by the Chairman of activities that have been undertaken since the previous meeting. Issues covered are recent significant planning applications, updates on progress of the Runnymede Local Plan, progress on fundraising for the Christmas lights etc.

The meetings were followed by discussion and thanks were conveyed to the presenters. Individual reports of the meetings will be posted on The Society's website.

#### Autumn Meetings 2014 :

The following Autumn meeting were well attended and were greatly appreciated by all present.

#### Monday 29th September 2014

**"The Basingstoke Canal Restoration"**  
 Roger Cansdale

#### Monday 27th October 2014

**"Ottershaw Church 150th Anniversary"**  
 Sheila Binns

#### Monday 24th November 2014

**"WWI in Colour by Artists in the Front Line"**  
 Victor Spink with readings by Peter Anderson

## Chertsey War Memorial Wreath Laying Ceremony Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> November 2014

The Wreath Laying Ceremony at Chertsey War Memorial was led by Rev'd Tim Hillier accompanied by Rev'd Christine Pattinson. The following names of men recorded on the Memorial who lost their lives in 1914 were read out by Major Robert Marshall ( see below). Cllr Chris Norman read the stanzas from Laurence Binyon's poem '*For the Fallen*' published in September 1914: '

*They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:  
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.  
At the going down of the sun and in the morning,  
We will remember them'.*

Well over 100 people attended the ceremony and more wreaths were laid this year than in living memory. Wreaths were laid on behalf of the following organisations and families: SCC, RBC, Surrey Police, Surrey Fire Services, Chertsey Rotary Club, Chertsey Chamber of Commerce, Chertsey Scouts, The Chertsey Society, Chertsey Agricultural Assn, The WI, Runnymede St John's Ambulance, Weybridge St John's Ambulance, Pycroft Grange School, Chertsey Social Club, SSRN, the Saise-Marshall family and the Cook family. In addition the two Poppy Crosses and a small wreath were still in place from the August Ceremony commemorating the start of WWI. Also approximately 20 individual small wooden crosses had been placed in the grass box on the steps of the memorial.



Well known Chertsey resident Roland Hurley is shown alongside the War Memorial whose relation, Lt Sgt. Rowland Charles Hurley of the Kings Royal Rifle Corps. died on 17/09/1914. ( photo: MSL)



A large turnout on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2014. ( photo: Dave Stockle)

**Sgt H W Hunt, East Surrey Reg. ( 09/09/1914)**  
**Sgt R H Hunt, East Surrey Reg. ( 09/09/1914)**  
**Pt F J Remnanat, Kings Liverpool Reg (15/09/1914)**  
**L Sgt. R C Hurley, Kings Royal Rifle Corps. (17/09/1914)**  
**Pt H H Higgins, West Surrey Reg. (27/10/1914)**  
**Pt W G Grinstead, Manchester Reg.(29/10/1914)**  
**Pt F J Alford, West Surrey Reg. ( 31/10/1914)**  
**Pt A G Hollick, West Surrey Reg. ( 7/11/1914)**  
**Pt J White, East Surrey Reg. ( 23/11/1914)**  
**Capt P E Viney, Leicestershire Reg.(17/12/1914)**  
**Pt W E Moore, West Surrey Reg. ( 18/12/1914)**

Please note: The WWI exhibition, *Runnymede Remembered*, is on display at the Museum until the summer.

## Scout Post & Goose Fair



Congratulations to the Chamber of Commerce for organizing the Goose Fair in Guildford Street which attracted over 20 stalls and brought a bit of colour to the town prior to Christmas. In addition thanks are expressed to the Scouts who once again organized the 'Scout Post' for the delivery of Christmas cards in the Chertsey area for 25p i.e. half the price of the Post Office.

Zane Gbangbola parents and supporters of **'The Truth About Zane'** Campaign also had a stall outside the Church seeking support for a proper investigation into the cause of Zane's death during the flooding in January/ February 2014.

On 8th February 2014, seven year old Zane Gbangbola died a day after his home in Chertsey was hit by severe floods. His parents think that he may have died from a dangerous gas called hydrogen cyanide.

Hydrogen cyanide is a poisonous gas that is linked to landfill sites. Spelthorne Council has acknowledged the presence of a disused landfill site next to the family's home. But they are refusing to test for dangerous gases which may have caused Zane's death on the basis that it is a matter for the Inquest Coroner to deal with.



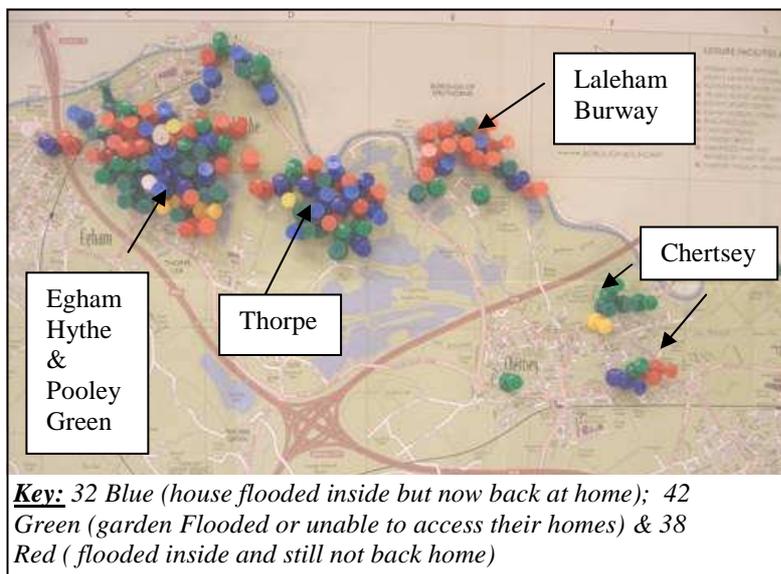
It is pleasing to report that finally the Minister responsible for Defra and the EA has now intervened and instructed that that an investigation of the site should take place.

On the day that would have been Zane's eighth birthday - Tuesday 21st October – supporters marched on Spelthorne Council to hand in a 15,000 signature petition requesting a public debate and an investigation of contamination of the landfill site to make sure that measures are put in place to avoid another tragedy of this kind.



## Runnymede Community Flood Fair Tuesday 1<sup>st</sup> October 2014, The Hythe Centre

Over 600 residents (some say 1000) visited the Runnymede Community Flood Fair which proved to be a useful networking event. Representatives from all the major relevant agencies were on hand for one-to-one conversations and visitors could study the various displays. On arrival staff from RBC distributed a folder containing information and contact phone numbers which could prove useful in the next flooding incident. The Chertsey Society & ThamesAwash invited local residents to put a pin in a map if they had been flooded in January/ February 2014.



112 residents responded who had been affected by the floods and of the 70 who had water inside their homes over 54% are still not back in their dwellings! If these results were

extrapolated to cover the 700 homes in Runnymede that were affected by the flooding then it is likely that well over 200 families are still not back to normal in their homes. However many residents came away disappointed and frustrated that more has not been achieved to prepare for the next flood event. Local flood plans are still not available and although the Environment Agency undertaken some limited remedial action to local rivers and streams, little progress has been made on the major flood relief scheme for *The River Thames* mainly due to funding constraints. It appears that some £14 million has now been released towards improving the downstream weirs on *The Thames* but it is unlikely that the EA will be ready to submit an outline planning application for the routes of the three channels of the River Thames Scheme which will provide significant flood alleviation from Datchet to Shepperton. The scheme was estimated to cost £256 million in 2009 and Central Government is only willing to contribute £136 million leaving a shortfall of £120 million. Even if money becomes available it is unlikely that the scheme will be completed for at least another ten years.



*Malcolm S Loveday, Chairman, The Chertsey Society & Member of the ThamesAwash Committee.  
3/10/2014*

Meanwhile RBC have recruited approximately 25 volunteer Flood Wardens and has held a training session. In addition a flood emergency plan has been drafted so hopefully residents will be better equipped to deal with the next floods. Unfortunately the Eastworth Road residents have already been flooded again this Autumn and suffered with the same surcharged sewer problem which requires approximately £300,000 spent on improving the storm drain and Thames Water does not have any plans or budget to solve the problem. Both SCC & RBC have published their reports into the January 2014 flooding events.

During the 2014 the EA have undertaken some remedial clearance of the small rivers, watercourses and ditches / culverts in the area including the Abbey River, the Chertsey Bourne & Medlake ditch.



## Thames Awash

The Chertsey Society is affiliated with Thames Awash and is represented on the Thames Awash Committee. The Committee has held meetings with the Environmental Agency officials responsible for the development of the scheme and with local MP's who have lobbied to get the extra £60 million pledged for the construction of the project. I had the opportunity to thank the MP's, including Philip Hammond, on the BBC TV London News in early December when a short item was broadcast live from St Peter's Church. I also pointed out that although additional money was on the table there is still a substantial shortfall. A lot is going on behind the scenes with meetings taking place with the Thameside Borough & County Councils and it is hoped that funding will be shortly to ensure that the scheme can progress.

### **The following is an extract from a Press Release issued by ThamesAwash – 9/12/2014**

#### **River Thames Scheme ( RTS) Funding - Positive News But "Mind The Gap"!**

Listening to the Chancellor's Autumn Funding Statement, you could be forgiven for thinking that funding for the RTS was now secure and that the money would now be available from Central Government to finance the long term solution to flooding in the Lower Thames Valley. The headlines point to an extra £60m from Central Government to help build the scheme that will protect up to 15,000 homes at risk from the Thames flooding from Datchet to Teddington. However, the extra £60m offered by George Osborne will not be available until after 2021 and remains subject to Local Funding being put in place.

#### **Partnership Funding Still Required By Central Government**

Central Government is still sticking to the principle that, for the RTS to be built, Local Government must make a significant contribution to its funding. During the Summer, the National Audit Office under Oliver Letwin reviewed the Partnership principle to determine whether or not the calculation that only 53% of the cost of the funding scheme should be met by Central Government was reasonable in light of competing demands for flood alleviation in other parts of the country.

The review appears to have confirmed that Local Government and other Partnership funding sources will still be expected to contribute 47% of the £302m estimated costs, now a total of £142m.

The Thames Regional Flood and Coastal Committee has also contributed £29m to which Surrey County Council have added £1.5m. Take into account the £60m extra now promised by the Chancellor after 2021, we estimate that it means that a total of £51.4m has to be found locally to fund the construction of the long term solution to flooding in the Lower Thames.

#### **Funding Still A Stretch But Now "Do-Able"**

The Environment Agency has said that it needs a further £21m until 2021 to continue the planning and preparation work it is doing to ensure that RTS can be built after 2021 if all the funds are made available - it currently has some 60 staff working on planning and development of the RTS.

Spread over the next 7 years until 2021, this represents just £3m per Council or just £430k per year for each of the 7 Councils affected. After 2021, we calculate that, with the extra £60m from Central Government, there remains a total of £30.4m to be supplied by the 7 Councils or just £4.3m per Council. This is definitely "do-able".

#### **Time To Get Real About Local Funding**

Since the Partnership Funding principle was established by Central Government, ThamesAwash has argued consistently that the amount which it expected Local Government to contribute of £120m (47% of £256m) and now £142m (47% of £302m) was too great to be realistically found by local sources. These points were made to Dan Rogerson, then Minister for Defra, and Phillip Hammond, then Defence Secretary.

However, the £60m now offered by the Chancellor, albeit after 2021, does make a significant difference.

Moreover, given the obvious pressures on Central Government (whatever the outcome of the General Election in May) driven by the huge National Deficit, it is ThamesAwash's view that this is the best deal we are likely to get from Central Government. Now is the time for Local Government to get real about finding the funds to get the RTS built and to challenge also the Utilities and Business to contribute as well.

#### **Local Councils Must Take Up The Funding Challenge NOW**

Realistically, even with funding in place, it will take at least 14 years from now to get the RTS built.

**With a total of £51.4m to find, ThamesAwash estimates that this is only £1.03m per Council per year to find to fix flooding for good in the Lower Thames.**

With the cost of borrowing now at an all-time low, and with the long term borrowing options open to Councils for infrastructure projects of this type, Local Government has a range of funding strategies available.

ThamesAwash is appealing to everyone affected from Datchet down to Teddington to register their support. It's imperative that everyone interested registers with the site.

**ThamesAwash registration is:** [www.thamesawash.com](http://www.thamesawash.com)

**Twitter:** @ThamesAwash [www.ThamesAwash.com](http://www.ThamesAwash.com)

**General press enquiries:** [press@thamesawash.com](mailto:press@thamesawash.com)

Chris Bertram, Chairman 0743654220 [cb@thewish.org.uk](mailto:cb@thewish.org.uk)

# Magna Carta

The 15<sup>th</sup> June 2015 will be the 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the sealing of Magna Carta. A number of national and local events will be taking place to commemorate the occasion.. The Magna Carta Trust and the Magna Carta 800<sup>th</sup> Committee lead by Sir Robert Worcester with Mark Gill as the Executive Director is leading the national celebrations, see [www.magnacarta800th.com/events](http://www.magnacarta800th.com/events) and [www.runnymede.gov.uk/portal/site/magnacarta/Home](http://www.runnymede.gov.uk/portal/site/magnacarta/Home)

Surrey County Council (SCC), Runnymede Borough Council and The National Trust have hosted a number of 'stakeholders' meetings at Strodes College in Egham with interested parties to discuss possible local events to celebrate the 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Magna Carta. Meanwhile SSC and the NT are taking the lead to plan some events to take place in Runnymede and other parts of Surrey. Proposals have been put forward for re-signing the Runnymede Meadows and the surrounding area as '*Magna Carta Country*' with brown signs to encourage tourists. Details of the events that will take place within Runnymede Borough are now emerging, including a River Pageant and Jousting on Runnymede Leisure Grounds. The Chertsey Society is involved with plans to have the Beacon on St Ann's Hill lit at 9.00pm on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> June 2015 – All welcome

A special exhibition will be on display at Chertsey Museum from 31st January until the end of the year relating to the legacy of Magna Carta and the Salisbury copy of Magna Carta will be on display in Guildford Cathedral during July.

RBC has now formally set up a 'Magna Carta 2015 Sub-Committee' comprising of Cllrs Alderson, Heath, Meares, Roberts, Taylor and Tuley (*Chairman*). The topics under consideration can be seen in the Agendas & Minutes on the RBC website at [www.runnymede.gov.uk/article/8811/Magna-Carta-2015-Sub-Committee](http://www.runnymede.gov.uk/article/8811/Magna-Carta-2015-Sub-Committee)



King John sealing Magna Carta with Archbishop Langton & the Earl of Albemarle. On permanent loan to Chertsey Museum by The Oliver Trust.

## The Surrey copy of 1297 Magna Carta

The manuscript held by the Australian Parliament is one of four surviving originals of the 1297 Inspeximus issue of Magna Carta and was sent to the Sheriff of Surrey, Robert de Glamorgan, to be proclaimed in the county court. Thereafter the provenance of the manuscript has been a matter for conjecture, other than at some point it came into the possession of King's School in Bruton, Somerset, where it lay undisturbed until the 1930s. It was purchased for £12,500 sterling by the Australian Government in 1952 and taken to Canberra, where it has remained in the custody of the Australian Parliament. See [www.magnacarta.senate.gov.au/](http://www.magnacarta.senate.gov.au/)

## Guy Fox Charity

The London based Guy Fox Children's Educational Trust are producing one of their books for young children to commemorate the 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary of **Magna Carta**. We are hoping that additional copies can be printed for distribution to Chertsey primary school children.

### 'Happy Anniversary, Magna Carta!' • June 2014 to March 2015

We are celebrating the 800th year since Magna Carta was sealed by King John at Runnymede. Working with children from John Donne Primary School in Peckham, volunteers from the local community, barristers from Blackstone Chambers and a team of creative people, we will be producing educational resources that explore the history and impact of Magna Carta.



See: [www.guyfox.org.uk/OurWork.php](http://www.guyfox.org.uk/OurWork.php)

**Magna Carta mania is starting to sweep the land with radio & TV programmes and the publication of several books have been announced.**

## DAVID WHEELER R.I.P



*David Wheeler in Knock, Ireland 2004*

David Wheeler died after a prolonged illness on 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2014, two days before his 74<sup>th</sup> birthday. David Wheeler, was a local man who lived in Chertsey all his life, he was educated at Step gates School Chertsey and at St Charles Borromeo, Catholic School in Weybridge.

David served between 1960-1987, in the Regular and Territorial Army of Her Majesty Forces. He served with Special Forces, becoming a senior Non-Commission Officer and though out his service he made 69 parachute jumps. He was awarded the Territorial Army Medal and the General Service Medal (1962). David subsequently worked for British Railways in the Signal and Telecommunication Department as a Senior Technical Officer.

He was one of the founder members of Runnymede Borough Council's Tenants Group in 1999 and became it's first Vice-Chairman. He served on the committee of the Friends of Chertsey Museum from 2000 - 2013 and filled the post of Chairman from October 2002 to October 2005. He was also on the committee of the

Chertsey Society, serving as Vice Chairman from 2002 -2012. For several years he served as a volunteer driver for Runnymede Age Concern.

David took an active interest in local affairs particularly local history. He restored the chapel next to Holland Cottage, St Ann's Hill and single handed cleaned up the Abbey arch doorway in Colonel's Lane shortly after being retired from the regular army in the 1980's for which activity The Chertsey Society made him an Honorary Member. He co-wrote with Dr James Lander '*Faith in a Small Town*' about the Catholic Church in Chertsey. He also wrote '*The History of St Ann's Hill*' a manuscript held by Chertsey Museum. Through *The Chertsey Society* he instigated the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary service, of the TA in Chertsey on 6<sup>th</sup> April 2008 at St Peter's Church, resulting the TA being granted the Freedom of the Borough July 2009. He received the Rotary Club of Chertsey Community Award 2006 "for his outstanding service to the Chertsey community over many years".

David's funeral was held at St Ann's Church on Friday 14<sup>th</sup> November 2014 at 11.15am and afterwards at the Crematorium, Woking.

***Sadly Chertsey has lost another of its well known characters.***

Malcolm Loveday, Chairman, *The Chertsey Society*, 6<sup>th</sup> November 2014

## Surrey Heritage

The Society supported the Surrey Heritage Showcase event by exhibiting a display stand focusing on local matters and included a rolling slide show.

The event was held on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> October 2015 held in Chertsey Hall and attracted many visitors from various parts of North West Surrey.



## Other News

As usual the Committee have been busy reviewing Planning Applications and planning our future programme etc and numerous letters and e-mails have been sent on your behalf. Full details are available on request.

I should like to take this opportunity to express thanks to Debbie Greenwood for all her hard work over the last few years as our very efficient Membership Secretary. Debbie has now decided to stand down from the post so we will be looking for another volunteer to take over the role.

### Other Dates for Diaries

#### Sunday evening -14<sup>th</sup> June 2015 Magna Carta Beacon

The Chertsey Society is liaising with Runnymede Borough Council to arrange for the St Ann's Hill Beacon to be lit by the Mayor. More information later.

#### Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> February 2015 at 8.00pm - 'Life After Death- Stories From Local Wills'

Talk by Jill Williams Literary Institute, High St, Egham [ Egham by Runnymede historical Society. Visitors £2 ]

## Concluding Remarks

### Society Archives

It was reported in the previous Newsletter that following the move of Voluntary Support North Surrey (VSNS) office, formerly Runnymede Association of Voluntary Services (RAVS) to a smaller office it was necessary to find a new home for our archives.

The Beacon Church kindly offered to provide some temporary space in the former Chertsey Bookshop building in Guildford Street. Having installed a new staircase and refurbished the upstairs of the building for Church and Community use, including the Foodbank, they are now close to the second phase of refurbishment and will revamp the ground floor and will not have sufficient space for our archive. We are grateful to Andrew Ryland and his colleagues for helping us out during this period.

We have liaised with AgeUK and RBC who have agreed that some limited space can be made available in The Orchard so we intend to relocate shortly and to downsize the collection.

Thanks are expressed to all involved.

### OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE 2014/2015

<b>Chairman</b>	Mr Malcolm S. Loveday Phone 01932 561576
<b>Vice-Chairman</b>	Mr Brian Hunt
<b>Treasurer</b>	Miss Valerie Lane
<b>Committee:</b>	Stephanie Hunt, Thelma Lake, Sue Lambert, Margaret Nichols, Gerry Drake, Clive Osborne, Victor Spink
<b>Membership Secretary:</b>	vacant
<b>Independent Examiner:</b>	Richard Mason

### **2014/ 2015 MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTION :** **Families £10** **Single £7**

**Subscriptions were due on**  
**1<sup>st</sup> September 2014**

Payment by Standing Order minimises administration and guarantees the Society's cash flow.

Please sign the gift aid declaration if you are a tax payer and the Society can then benefit by approximately a 30% increase in the value of your subscription with no additional cost to yourself.