



# THE CHEPSTOW SOCIETY

*Members Bulletin*

*January 2017*

## Notes from the Chair

I am writing this as 2016 is drawing to a close and you will be reading it as 2017 starts. 2016 has been a year of political surprises and I imagine that 2017 will be little different.

So it is comforting to have a place where things go along much as before and where you can relax among friends. I refer, of course, to your Chepstow Society where I hope that you will find, as previously, a monthly gathering of like-minded individuals meeting to listen to ( I hope) interesting talks on a variety of topics, and proposals for tours to a variety of places.

I am well aware that, apart from the talks and the very thorough overview of local news collected by our Secretary, many of you enjoy the opportunity to meet and discuss matters with other members and friends over tea, coffee and biscuits at the half-way stage of our meetings. Indeed, from the reluctance many of you show to return to the hall, I wonder if that is not the highlight of the evening!

2017 is being recognised as the 950<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Chepstow Castle. Numerous events are being planned to celebrate this and I hope that your Society will play its part. We'll keep you informed of proposals.

So I do hope that you will continue to support the Society through 2017. We will try and ensure an interesting programme for you and details of the first series of talks are shown in this newsletter. As mentioned before, any suggestions or advice would be most welcome.

Best wishes for a happy 2017.

*Geoff Sumner*

**The Society is looking for members to run the day excursions. If you are interested in taking on this role please contact a member of the committee.**

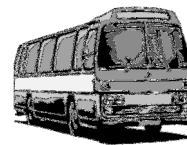
## Honorary Secretary's Report

The Civic Trust Cymru (formerly The Civic Trust for Wales) has been closed down and put into administration. No solution could be found to an inherited Pension Fund deficit, so an organisation which has advised and served the Civic Societies of Wales in their efforts to enhance civic pride and protect our built environment over more than fifty years ceases to exist. Until a substitute organisation can be set up we will have no central organisation nor advice on Planning matters etc.

The planning application for 200 houses off Mounton Road, (last seen in 2013), has been reactivated and re-advertised by MCC. This could mean that they are being pressed to determine the application. We have renewed our previous objections and pointed out that nothing has changed since 2013 except bigger traffic problems on the High Beech roundabout.

Notice has also been given in the press to close off part of The Back for building works and part also of Hocker Hill St. In both cases the closure will begin on 9<sup>th</sup> Jan and could last some time.

*Henry Hodges*



## EXCURSIONS

**Happy New Year to all our fellow travellers.**

2017 is off to a flying (bussing) start with the planned holiday to Llandudno in April. There are still some spaces available and we would welcome a few more members in order to keep the cost to a minimum by maximising discount for numbers.

**Monday 24<sup>th</sup> April to Friday 29<sup>th</sup> April  
Evans Hotel, Llandudno  
Half board**

Excursions: Anglesey and 2 spectacular train journeys

**Please contact us to book a place  
or for more information.  
Keith and Sallie James  
01594 529713 or kp.james@btinternet.com**

## CHEPSTOW SOCIETY

### MEETINGS AND SPEAKERS

Weds. 18 January

*Witchfynder!* – John Putley

Weds. 15 February

*Lady Llanover* – the Lady Llanover Society

Weds. 15 March

*The Curre Family of Itton Court* –  
Naylor Firth

Weds. 19 April

*Saving the Severn Princess* – Tim Ryan

*All at 7.15 p.m. in the Drill Hall*

*Feast the eyes and expand the mind -  
discover the changing Art of  
Landscape with Chepstow Museum's  
popular art history course*

Thinking of doing something different, trying something new in the New Year? Try feasting the eyes (rather than the body!) and expanding the mind (rather than the waistline!) by joining Chepstow Museum's popular Art History course.

This new series of art appreciation classes starting on January 23<sup>rd</sup> in Chepstow's Drill Hall, will explore some of the most beautiful and memorable images in art history, looking at how painters have represented the landscape over the centuries.

You don't have to have any knowledge of art history, or to have been before and there is no coursework or homework. This is about learning something new and having an enjoyable afternoon once a week looking at wonderful images and gaining new insights and understanding.

Join us at the Drill Hall, Chepstow on Monday afternoons (2-4pm from 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2017) with popular Monmouthshire lecturer, Eleanor Bird, to examine 600 years of representations of the landscape.

To reserve a place at Chepstow, contact Chepstow Museum, tel. 01291 625981

## FFINIAU / BORDERS

**Four Welsh Artists  
in Raymond Williams' *Border Country***

**Chepstow Museum  
26 Nov. – 26 February 2017**

*Border Country* by Raymond Williams is one of the great Welsh novels. Published in 1960, this influential autobiographical novel explored the changing lives of people on the Welsh borders, in town, village, farm and industrial valley, from the 1920s to the 1950s.

In this exhibition, originally created for the 2016 National Eisteddfod but now showing at Chepstow Museum, works by four Welsh artists, Joan Baker, Charles Burton, John Elwyn and Bert Isaac, all contemporaries of Raymond Williams, have been brought together. They represent a fascinating period in South Wales in the 1930s, 40s and 50s when artists wanted to record ordinary life around them in direct and truthful ways.

**The Museum is staging two special events  
in association with the exhibition:**

**Wednesday 1st February, 7.30pm, The Drill Hall  
'Border Country in Paint'**

Peter Wakelin talks about the works and the artists selected for the exhibition. Peter Wakelin is a writer and curator, specialising in Welsh art and heritage, previously head of Royal Commission on the Ancient & Historical Monuments of Wales, and a director of National Museum Wales.

Tickets £3 (deductible from catalogue bought on night price £6), free tea & coffee

**Saturday 18th February, 2pm, The Drill Hall**

Raymond Williams' biographer Professor Dai Smith and one of the four artists, Charles Burton, in conversation with exhibition curator Dr Peter Wakelin

Followed by tea and a special viewing of the exhibition at Chepstow Museum

Tickets £4/£3