

# THE CHEPSTOW SOCIETY

Members Bulletin      March 2022



[www.chepstowsociety.co.uk](http://www.chepstowsociety.co.uk)



## ***BACK TO THE DRILL HALL !***

**Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> March,  
7.15 p.m.**

### ***Martha Gellhorn***



**Pioneer war correspondent...  
and local resident**

### **A talk by Nancy Cavill**

**The Drill Hall, Lower Church  
Street, Chepstow NP16 5HJ**

**All welcome**

**Members £1      Non-members £3**

**We are intending that the meeting  
will also be streamed via Zoom**

**<https://zoom.us/join>**

**Meeting ID: 562 383 2571**

**Passcode: Waters**

## **Notes from the Chair**

Members,

As mentioned last month, to mark what I hope will be the start of our permanent return to the Drill Hall, I am delighted that Nancy Cavill will come and talk to us about Martha Gellhorn on 16<sup>th</sup> March.

Described as a 'trailblazer' for female journalists and a role model for women who pushed many boundaries, her association with Monmouthshire, where she lived for 14 years, is little known. The former wife of Ernest Hemingway she lived in Kilgwrrwg, in what is now Yew Tree House but was then known as Catscradle.

The house is now marked by a plaque which is part of the Purple Plaques Cymru scheme of which I had not heard. This scheme is apparently the brainchild of Cardiff North MS Julie Morgan, supported by a cross-party group of women Senedd members and was launched in 2018. The plaques are designed to mark the achievements of women from all walks of life across Wales to help tell their inspiring stories for the next generation.

Please come along to hear Nancy. The start of her talk may be a little delayed as Nancy is travelling from a new **(contd.)**

# **MEMBERSHIP**

## **RENEWAL**

As you are all aware, our membership year runs from April to April.

This means that renewals, for 2022/23, are due shortly.

Sadly, after many years, and as with all things, membership has had to increase to £12.00 per person.

I am sure that you will agree this still gives value for money.

This can be paid either by BAC's to

Chepstow Society  
sort code 30-98-90  
account number 18173668  
(don't forget to include your name as a reference)

or by cheque  
payable to Chepstow Society  
and sent to me.  
Angela Middleditch, Pen y Morfa,  
Mathern. NP16 6JD

If you joined with a new membership during or after December 2021, your membership will run until April 2023.

If you have any questions please email [chepsocmemb@gmail.com](mailto:chepsocmemb@gmail.com)

*Angela Middleditch*

## **Notes from the Chair (contd.)**

job in Cardiff but I am sure that Vice Chair Keith James will be able to hold the fort. Alas my Parkinson's will prevent me from being there but I will be following on Zoom.

Our Secretary Guy Hamilton and I would still like suggestions for subjects on which you would like to hear talks. I can be reached on [chair@chepstowsociety.co.uk](mailto:chair@chepstowsociety.co.uk) or 01291 624758 and Guy on [secretary@chepstowsociety.co.uk](mailto:secretary@chepstowsociety.co.uk).

Finally I understand that the Town Council discussed the William Marshal statue on 23<sup>rd</sup> and supported the proposal. I gather that Ned Heywood spoke in favour of the proposal and am very grateful for his support.

*Geoff Sumner*

## **Forthcoming monthly meetings**

***Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> April, 7.15 pm***

Paul Barnett

***RMS Carpathia and RMS Titanic***

***Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> May, 7.15 pm***

***Annual General Meeting***

and talk by Guy Hamilton on

**James Stephens - Chepstow's Chartist**

***Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> June, 7.15 pm***

Peter Strong

**Crossing the Severn**

***Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> July, 7.15 pm***

Brigadier Robert Aitken CBE

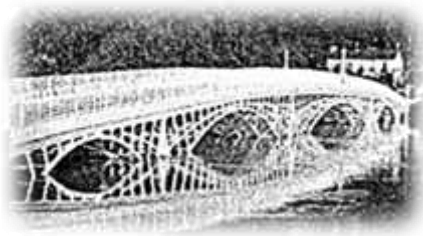
**The Lord Lieutenant of Gwent: my role**

***Wednesday 21<sup>st</sup> September, 7.15 pm***

Rebecca Tyson

**William fitzOsbern –**

founder of Chepstow Castle and Priory



## CIVIC AND AMENITY NOTES

The County Council is undertaking consultation on future arrangements for the High Street. The closing date for this initial consultation exercise is 16<sup>th</sup> March. The survey can be completed online through [www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/shop-local/chepstow/](http://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/shop-local/chepstow/), and forms are available at the library. Information provided by MCC is in the box to the right. Members are urged to comment as individuals!

Separately but relatedly, there are consultations taking place on 12<sup>th</sup> March on Chepstow's "place making plan" – which overlaps with what used to be called the "place plan". – see below.

**Future Chepstow**  
Cas-gwent y Dyfodol

**From Issues to Ideas**

**Saturday, 12<sup>th</sup> March**

**Help to shape ideas for Chepstow town as part of place making plan**

- Meet designers
- Sketch ideas
- Complete survey

**3pm Leisure Centre**

**12noon Bank Square**

**10am Bulwark Shops**

To find out more please email [chris@chrisjones.studio](mailto:chris@chrisjones.studio) or phone Chris Jones on 07968943084

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monmouthshire sir fynyw

### FROM MONMOUTHSHIRE CC WEBSITE:

On Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> February 2022 a survey was launched seeking views on how residents, business and visitors currently use and would like to use Chepstow High Street and the surrounding shopping area. High Street in Chepstow has been closed to vehicles since March 2020 other than for access to the disabled parking bays on Bank Street and for deliveries between 4pm and 10am. This change was made to enable shoppers to socially distance, to support outdoor trading and to support walking and cycling. There have been wide ranging opinions on this closure, so now as the council is considering longer term options as part of the Chepstow Placemaking Plan and Active Travel proposals, it would like to gather the up-to-date feedback from as many people as possible in order to shape future plans.

No decision has been taken on the future of High Street yet. There are potentially many options including fully opening up High Street to two-way traffic 24/7, two-way traffic at restricted times, one-way traffic, restricted access or full pedestrianisation. Each option will have advantages and disadvantages which need to be fully considered. Options will require traffic modelling to assess the impact of any changes on the wider road network and this will be undertaken by traffic consultants Arup as part of their study focusing on Active Travel across Chepstow.

The Society held its latest Zoom meeting with local councillors and others on 2<sup>nd</sup> February. We had an excellent attendance, and very helpful contributions, from town and county councillors and officers.

It is likely that the 20mph speed restrictions introduced in Bulwark will be extended to other parts of the town in coming months. We now have a zebra crossing at the bottom of the High Street, which is good news.

The county council is considering how best to respond to the Welsh government's proposal that it should reduce its housebuilding targets.

Consultations are also taking place on how best to improve road access to Severn Tunnel Junction station.

It is proving difficult to get landowners to take action over the poor state of the Wales Coast Path and adjacent areas in Bulwark.

# COMMITTEE NEWS

The Society's committee met in February.

It was decided that, from March, we will return to meetings in the Drill Hall.

We are very aware that some of our members will be unwilling or unable to attend – and if possible we will arrange Zoom coverage - but the general feeling was that we should now encourage attendance at physical meetings (subject of course to remaining COVID regulations).

We need to try to promote the Society more widely in the community, with a view to attracting new members.

Once physical meetings are firmly re-established, this bulletin will revert to its previous frequency, rather than being produced monthly as it has been for the last two years.

As Angela says elsewhere in this bulletin, we reluctantly decided to increase our annual membership fee to £12, to cover increasing costs. This is subject to formal ratification at the AGM in May. We decided against having a higher membership rate for those accessing meetings via Zoom.

The next committee meeting will be on 21<sup>st</sup> April.

Notes from all recent committee meetings are included on our website at [www.chepstowsociety.co.uk/officers/](http://www.chepstowsociety.co.uk/officers/)

**Guy Hamilton**

## **A reminder...**

The Chepstow Society is not just about its meetings, excursions and publications – excellent though we think they are!

**ALL** the Society's activities would run more smoothly, and we could achieve much more, if more people volunteered to help run the Society

There are several areas in which we would like to do more to stimulate awareness of local history and amenities, in line with our charitable aims and objectives.

At our AGM in May, as usual we will seek nominations for all our committee positions.

Even if you think that there are people already in those positions, they may not wish to continue, or the work could be shared out – or you may simply think it is time for a change!

Current ideas for new initiatives include:

- stimulating more interest in Chepstow's history among younger people
- having more input into local environmental issues
- working towards the suggested William Marshal statue
- possibly developing an oral history project on Chepstow in the 1950s-80s

**BUT if these ideas – or others – are ever to happen, we need more volunteers to give some of their time, to help.**

If you have ideas that might help us, or experience in grant applications, or you might be interested in helping – or know someone who might – please contact our current secretary, Guy Hamilton, for a chat!

07786 500609

[secretary@chepstowsociety.co.uk](mailto:secretary@chepstowsociety.co.uk)