

LIPTON-UPON-SEVERN CIVIC SOCIETY
Annual Report by the Chairman for the year 2009-10

It is a pleasure once more to thank the members of the Civic Society Council, who have worked so hard to develop the Society through the past year, and who continue to support me in the chair. Upton is a beautiful place in which to live and work, and the Civic Society is always pleased to support the town whenever possible. We were able once again to make a small contribution to "Upton in Bloom", and this year were pleased to be able to offer our award for environmental improvement to the owners of the beautifully restored timber-framed properties in Court Street. Although our previously reported plans to place markers in commemoration of the 2007 flood have been delayed through difficulties in getting quotes for the work, we hope we are now at a stage where the necessary consents for installation can be obtained. We have examined and commented on plans for the proposed flood defence scheme for New Street and environs, and now await more information on proposals for the riverside areas and their potential impact on the town. The Society thus continues in its efforts to preserve the character of Upton for visitors and residents alike.

The Council meets regularly throughout the year to discuss different aspects of the Society's work. Our new-look programme card with its striking image of the Pepperpot, which echoes the design of our posters and advertisements, has brought the work and activities of the Society to the attention of more local people and resulted in new members. Peter Booth deserves a considerable vote of thanks for his hard work in producing such high quality publicity material for the Society. We also thank our Treasurer, Geoffrey Moore, for all his hard work and patience in keeping the Society's finances in order during the year. As Secretary, Eleanor Grigson deals with a variety of correspondence, not least the important task of communicating our comments on planning applications to the local authority. Simon Wilkinson, our President, continues to offer sound guidance to Council members, whilst also conducting research on often unusual aspects of Upton's history. His talk on the 'sweet pea lady' fascinated us at the last annual meeting. Kate Chester-Lamb continues to develop our archive of oral history, whilst Bob Chester-Lamb's recording of local photographic collections is beginning to yield some interesting discoveries. All this work is both valuable to the Society and to our understanding of Upton as a place.

The Society has once more enjoyed a full programme of excursions and talks throughout the year. Thanks are due to our Social Secretary, Valerie Reynolds and the members of the Social Committee, who have continued to maintain the reputation of the Society for holding interesting events, lectures and outings. During the year the Society made enjoyable visits to the Wye Valley, Tyntesfield, Weston's Cider and two more local churches, but regrettably a planned outing to Oxford had to be cancelled through lack of support. However, the Christmas party was enjoyed by everyone there. The splendid refreshments, challenging quiz, and delightful recitations of Cynthia Baron made for a most memorable evening. Kate Chester-Lamb organised our varied and most interesting season of evening talks on topics ranging from Arts and Crafts in the Cotswolds to aspects of local

country houses, including an update on Croome. Most evening meetings continue to be held in the Baptist Hall, with larger events in the Memorial Hall.

Members of the Technical Committee regularly consider planning matters to assess their likely effect on the architectural heritage and character of Upton. We continue to submit comments to the local authority when necessary. Following up our comments and persuading the Council to pursue enforcement actions is becoming an ever more important part of the work. We have become increasingly concerned during the year at the apparent reduction of official resources to monitor what is happening to our heritage, whether this be proper compliance with conditions of planning consent or providing an effective challenge to unauthorised works. We also continue to be consulted on strategic decisions for future development across the county in a changing economic and political scenario. Our President and other Council members represent the Society in the Upton Town Partnership, and so we are pleased to be involved in this form of support to this unique historic town.

We will continue to pursue the aims and objectives of the Civic Society in encouraging good architecture and town planning, preserving and enhancing the historic character, and stimulating public interest and awareness in the remarkable heritage of Upton-upon-Severn. I look forward to your continued support over the coming year.

Tim Bridges, April 2010