



Dear Rye Conservation Society member,

I am writing this on the Summer Solstice and we are enjoying some very fine summer weather so far this year with the Rye and Winchelsea Garden season in full swing. Col Everett, one of our committee has been helping organise a coffee morning each Monday in a different Rye garden attracting a regular crowd and raising money for local charities. This leads me to remind people that our next event is our Annual Summer Garden Party on Sunday 30 July, which as usual will be held at Little Orchard House in West Street, courtesy of Andy and Niki Stuart. A publicity flier is attached to this letter with details and I hope that we will enjoy a good turn out in the fresh air. The party is not restricted to members so you are welcome to bring along family and friends

Report from Annual Meeting

The Society AGM was held in Rye Town Hall on Friday 19 May and attracted a good attendance of around fifty five members who heard reports on our activities from the officers and were able to formally approve the Accounts. In line with recent policy we invited our guests to speak and then take questions on various topics. So we had contributions from Sally-Ann Hart MP, Cllr Keith Glazier, Leader of East Sussex Council and Andi Rivett, Rye Town Mayor. Among topics raised were difficulties caused by heavy traffic entering the town damaging our pavements and bollards, motor cycle speeding and noise and the state of the cobbled streets which seem to have become overgrown. Whether or not by chance, the cobbles have been cleaned up since then and are now looking much neater.

At the AGM a new Committee was formed and a proposal that Committee members automatically be trustees adopted, the 2023/4 Committee is as below:

David Bookless	Chairman
Tim Gorman	Hon Secretary
Stuart Harland	Hon Treasurer
Andy Stuart	Publicity & Membership
Col Everett	
Trevor Gooding	
Scott Brotherton	

Julian Lockett and John Spencer were elected Honorary Vice Presidents

Alan Dickinson continues to provide valuable assistance as our Historical and Architectural Adviser.

Following the AGM a convivial Members Luncheon was held in the Tudor Room at the Mermaid continuing a lengthy tradition of Society Luncheons and members were pleased with the menu and service provided.

The Committee continues to meet at the Mermaid Hotel on the second Thursday afternoon of each month and I am grateful to the owners for providing us this facility in what seems a most appropriate venue for the Society to hold its meetings.

Good Works in the High Street

Walking along the High Street recently it was encouraging to see so much repainting and renovation taking place. We are aware of the current economic problems associated with high energy prices and generally high inflation, not to mention the awful problems occasioned by the war in Ukraine, but here in Rye at least there is plenty of signs of life in the High Street.

The four former banks, Nat West, Barclays, HSBC, and Lloyds have all been reconfigured for new purposes. The old NatWest Building, Langford House and the former Barclays, Longer House are both being restored

as private residences which is how they were originally constructed. HSBC became Ryebank Gallery to which we gave an Award in 2019, but has, sadly, recently closed and Lloyds is now a commercial oriental carpets business.



The frontages of the old Ashbee butchers building shown left with a man hard at work polishing the brass and the ex Swan Cottage Tea Rooms which is now Swan Cottage, are excellent examples of restoration while several other buildings have had been repainted and updated.

I don't want to name or shame but this does mean that a few buildings stand out as needing a bit more care and maintenance both in the High Street and other parts of the town. Maybe they also will get a bit of care and attention.



Awards



The Society is pleased to offer awards for sympathetic restoration and other development which catches our eye and the support of the committee. This year it was agreed that the recently completed redevelopment of the Granary Club was a worthy nomination and deserving of receiving a certificate. It has retained many features of the old granary building while at the same time providing interesting and unusual modern apartments for sale.

In 2019 we were pleased to give the Waterworks Micropub an award for an outstanding change of use. I was pleased to note that the owners have had our award upgraded to a brass plaque now proudly displayed at the entrance. We are very glad that commercially,

judging by the large number of local customers and tourists, it appears to have been a great success.

Membership Matters

After the pandemic years, which saw the closing down of the Society's normal business – summer and Christmas parties and the AGM, we are delighted to have reinstated these social events in the last year. Nor did we actively seek new members, but now we are keen to boost numbers, so if you know anyone who might be interested in joining the Society please put them in contact with the Membership Secretary at 3 West Street, RYE, TN31 7ES.

With Best Wishes *David Bookless*

Published by Rye Conservation Society 3 Faraday House The Mint Rye TN31 7EW. Registered Charity No. 283888

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