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FROM THE CHAIRMAN

In the last *Newsletter*, we dwelt at some length on the proposal to refurbish the middle section of South Street, and in particular on the problem of whether or not it was advisable to replace the existing trees. As we now know, at its January meeting the East Area Development Committee threw this application out by a decisive 11 votes to 3. Those of us who attended the meeting were dismayed by the lack of real debate that preceded the vote, which made us wonder - once again - whether our elected councillors really pay much attention to the arguments put forward to them. If, as was suggested by Scottish Enterprise Fife, the money that was to be spent on South Street is now deployed elsewhere, we shall have to live with the consequences of this short-sighted decision: the usual piecemeal repairs to our uneven pavements and road surfaces, the continuing jumble of signs for different purposes, the incredibly ugly street-lighting, etc. Certainly, we agree with those councillors who argued that transportation problems must be solved before the road lay-out is altered; but this was not a reason for dismissing the whole package. Trustees believe there was much that was good in these proposals, and we commissioned our Tree Report in order to have a second opinion on the matter. We repeat what we said in our various press releases about the failure of SEF to persuade the public of the value of their plans, and we only hope that the same mistakes are not about to be repeated for Market Street.

The same East Area Committee meeting released for public consultation the draft of the new St Andrews and East Fife Local Plan which will set the planning context for this area for the 10 years from its adoption (probably in 2006). We are still digesting the implications of this Draft Plan, but it looks as though any new housing in the St. Andrews area will have to contain as much as 45% affordable housing. This is good news for local people provided that such housing can be kept within the affordable range after first ownership and is indeed allocated to local people. It is high time that developer-led expansion was curbed in St Andrews.

At the time of writing the Council has not yet released the maps showing its proposed Green Belt boundaries. However, we are dismayed that the outline planning application for the new hospital on the Largo Road site (on what is obvious Green Belt land) proposes building *up* the hill (towards Pipeland Farm Steadings) rather than *along* the contours, as has always been the pattern of development in St Andrews. This will not only create a series of obtrusive buildings alongside a major road into town, but may - we fear - open up a whole swathe of hillside for possible development... We have asked if the site lay-out cannot be swung round through 90 degrees to sit along the contours.

Trustees are delighted to report that Lesley-Anne, our popular and highly successful Curator, has been appointed to the post of Curator at the St Andrews Museum, Kinburn, and we congratulate her on this much deserved achievement. She is sorry to be going

and we are sorry to be losing her, but this is good news for her career, and she will still be on hand to help her successor, if needed, with the extensive knowledge of our collections that she has built up. We thank her for throwing herself into all our activities at the Museum over the last two and a bit years, and our best wishes go with her.

In December we held a Winter Reception in the Museum, at which - following Marlene Matthews' lovely refreshments - Hazel Gifford and John Williams drew on their considerable experience to entertain us with a wide variety of recitations. Also, January's Coffee Morning, held with the aim primarily of attracting new members, brought in a pleasing handful of new members and was well worth Trustees' effort in organising it.

FROM THE FINANCE CONVENOR

Giving through the Self-Assessment Return

I think we all know about the Gift Aid Scheme whereby donations and subscriptions to charity from taxpayers include the tax that would have been charged on that particular sum. But members should be aware that the Inland Revenue have agreed that for those who make Self-Assessment returns there is available in the 2003/2004 Self-Assessment return and henceforward a method whereby any individual may nominate a charity to receive their tax repayment as a donation. For the purposes of this scheme our charity has been allocated a unique code **JAK34BG**.

I suggest that any questions on this new development should be directed to one's accountant and this note is simply to draw to your attention this new step taken by the Inland Revenue.

EVENTS

Conducted tour of St. Andrews Cathedral Museum by the Curator*

Wednesday 9th March, 10:30am

Visit to Cambo House, Kingsbarns*

[by kind permission of Mr & Mrs Peter Erskine]

Tuesday 10th May, 6:00pm

*See enclosed form

If you have suggestions for future visits or events do please contact Marlene Matthews at the Trust's Office in Queen's Gardens

FROM THE PLANNING CONVENOR

New Community Hospital and Health Centre:

The Planning Committee of the Preservation Trust has responded to the application for Outline Planning Consent to build a new Community Hospital and Health Centre at Largo Road, St. Andrews.

The Committee accepts that a hospital can be developed at this site but were surprised that the preferred option for the layout of buildings was the most obtrusive of three options initially considered by the design consultants. We have suggested that all building takes place on the lowest part of the slope and is as inconspicuous as possible.

While we are well aware of the urgent need for the new facilities we see no reason to accept a poor design layout when it is possible to produce a good design while still protecting this important landscape setting.

Disappointing Development:

The Strategic Study for St. Andrews states that the views into and out of the town must be protected and enhanced. This study was produced some years ago and I have found it both interesting and disappointing to observe what has been allowed even though this statement must be taken into consideration when planning applications are being assessed by planning officials. Why were the flats at West Port allowed to be so high, obliterating an important view from the town? Why are these flats occupied when work around the building has not been finished, the partly laid new pavements are dangerous and cracked, the boundary wall is less than half built and the front garden has yet to be landscaped and is strewn with litter? I have not had a satisfactory answer from Fife Council but shall continue to remind them of the situation. This year St. Andrews is host to the Open Golf Championship and this development in its present state is no credit to the town. The planning committee of the Preservation Trust tries hard to make convincing arguments when we believe an application is not appropriate for an Outstanding Conservation Area but when we fail the town and its visitors soon become aware of that failure.

Structure Plan and Local Plan

It seems no time at all since we were working on the last Local Plan but ten years on we will once again be scrutinizing the draft plan and new Structure Plan for Fife. We shall keep members up to date on both. I expect that we shall ask you to put pen to paper during the consultation period which begins in March.

Green Belt Forum News

The St. Andrews Preservation Trust along with the St. Andrews Green Belt Forum are two of the founding members of the newly formed Scottish Green Belts Alliance. This Alliance is intended to ensure that the voice of Scottish communities is heard when the Scottish Executive deals with green belt issues. As well as giving St. Andrews its own green belt via our new Local Plan, 2005 will see the Scottish Executive publish proposals for revising the 1985 Circular on Scottish Green Belts, and the Alliance will be making its views known on this. Its first report has already been published and delivered to the Scottish Executive. This is entitled 'The Future of Green Belts in Scotland' and can be accessed via the website: www.greenbelts.ukos.com/greenbeltfuture.php

Museum Report

The Preservation Trust Museum at 12 North Street got off to an early start in 2005 with the second annual Art and Craft exhibition, 'Assemblage II'. Providing an opportunity for talented local artists to show their work, the exhibition featured painting, photography, etched glass, hand painted tiles and a variety of needlework including embroidery, patchwork and cross-stitch. Around twenty-five Museum Volunteers and Trust members took part in the exhibition. The show was well received by the visiting public and a considerable number of the items on display were sold. Also popular with visitors was a stall run by well-known local artists, Morag Harrison and Anne Lightwood, selling their own prints and ceramics.

The Easter Exhibition 'Fashion - The Pursuit of Beauty' will feature the Museum's considerable collection of costume and accessories, supplemented by loans and donations from private lenders. Spanning the period 1800 to the 1950s, the display will feature everything from 'Jane Austen' style day dresses and beaded Victorian corsets to a Fortuny dress and a wartime nightdress made from parachute silk. Also on display will be hats, gloves, stockings, cosmetics and hair decorations from various periods.

Summer sees the Museum in collaboration with

nine other museums across Fife producing a series of exhibitions and events on the theme of food and drink. Covering farming, fishing, tea production, shopping trends, fruit growing and more, the exhibitions will be advertised using an 8-page, full colour leaflet. Funding for the leaflet has been secured from the Russell Trust and it is hoped that the Tourist Board will provide funding for distribution costs outwith Fife. The overall title for this venture is 'Munch! Food and Drink in Fife'. Each venue will also have an individual title for its particular exhibition.

The Trust Museum will have a display relating to shopping in the days before the advent of the supermarket on the ground floor (making use of the Aikman & Terras display) and an exhibition of items relating to food preparation and consumption on the upper floor - tea pots, dinner services and other tableware, time-saving gadgets, glassware, kitchen utensils, textiles etc To highlight the domestic theme of the exhibition, the title will be 'Where The Heart Is'.

If any members can lend or donate items for either of these exhibitions, please contact the Curator, Lesley-Anne Lettice, on 01334-477629 or email curator.saptmuseum@virgin.net. Items should be in good condition as they will be on public display.

100 Club 4th Draw

Mr Ian Connelly £60
Mrs Isabel MacArthur £40

The 100 Club will not be held during 2005. It is proposed to hold a Grand Raffle with a book of tickets sent to each member with the July Newsletter. However, tickets will be on sale at the Museum from 28th May, the date of the Summer Exhibition opening.



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The St Andrews Preservation Trust Ltd.

4 Queens Gardens,
St. Andrews,
Fife KY16 9TA
Telephone: 01334 477152

