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# The Leamington Society Newsletter

August 2008

## CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

Station Area brief. WDC consulted widely on how the 40 acre site, stretching from the old Ford foundry to the station forecourt, might be redeveloped. This is a classic brown-field site; Quicks Site (3.3 acres), on Station Approach, was cleared two years ago and the Ford foundry is currently being levelled.

The consultation document, prepared by GVA Grimley, contained 14 plans showing possible developments in the area. This Society made a joint submission with the Friends of Leamington Station and CLARA.

We supported the suggested homes (houses and not flats) on Quicks Site – subject to the relocation of the bus depot. We welcomed the proposal of a north side entrance to the station (while recognising that there would be logistical difficulties with this since the recent installation of the barriers at the main entrance). We supported the possibility of pedestrian access from north of the station through to Lower Avenue. We particularly welcomed a multi-level car park south of the station (on land between the current forecourt and that currently occupied by builders' merchants).

We also supported improving the station forecourt, but had misgivings about the suggested new layout. We strongly opposed the suggested new hotel and shops in the south east corner of the station car park – it would cut into the newly restored station gardens and be a poor location for a hotel.

This site is important for Leamington and we await GVA Grimley's final suggestions, due next month. We hope Chris Elliott will tell us more in his talk to us in November.

### Special events

In addition to our usual programme of monthly meetings we are arranging two special events this autumn and enclose two fliers.

Ian Whittle will talk (in the Spa Centre) about his father, Sir Frank Whittle, "aviation's greatest engineer".

In the following month, Dr Pete Waterman, will speak (in the Town Hall) about the prospects for the railway industry over the next 100 years.

*Archie Pitts*

### *Dates for your Diary*

Meetings and events to  
November 2008

### **Issues facing faith buildings, writ large at All Saints Leamington**

The Revd Christopher Wilson  
Oddfellows Hall,  
Thursday, September 11th, 7.45

### **The story of aviation's greatest engineer: Sir Frank Whittle**

by Ian Whittle

### **Spa Centre**

**Tuesday, September 16th, 7.30**

### **My life in the police**

Jan Wade

Oddfellows Hall  
Thursday October 9th, 7.45

### **The next hundred years of the railways**

Dr Pete Waterman, OBE

### **Town Hall**

**Monday October 20th, 7.30**

### **Contemporary issues**

Chris Elliott, Chief Executive  
WDC

Oddfellows Hall,  
November 13th, 7.45

**For more information see  
the back page of this Newsletter**

**The full programme for the year  
is included with this Newsletter**





new extension is well considered, proportionate and sensitive about how it touches the existing Regency fabric. A great example for all modernists.”

He was also enthusiastic about the Woodward’s store redevelopment: “I’ve been impressed by the sheer logistics. The façade has been retained and beautifully renovated, and the internal spaces have been given a new lease of life – hopefully the latest incarnation of Woodward House will serve for many generations to come.”

Many winners were businesses: in 43 Clemens Street with shop A Taste of Punjab, Lancaster House in Spencer Street, the former George Hotel in Chapel Street, 106 Regent Street, 6 Bedford Street and of course the railway station.



Ticket Hall and buffet at railway station

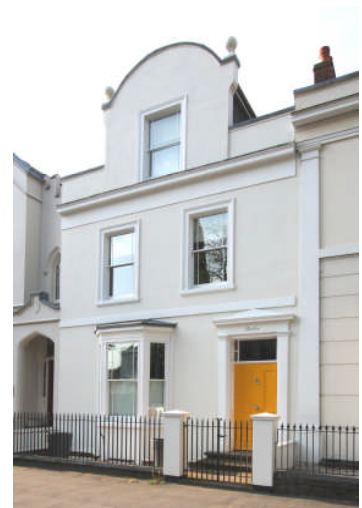
“Whilst catching your London train, the Station Booking Hall now gives you a slice of the Art Deco period. An excellent example of refurbishment in the Art Deco style, ... ensuring access for all. Of particular note are the carefully restored marble walls and the renovation of the joinery details. The Hall provides a great parting image of the town’s residents” and the period style continues in the Refreshment rooms (Pumpkin café).

On 12 Beauchamp Avenue Dhiran said: “This award shows that it’s not only the grand development projects that win recognition, it’s all to do with attention to detail. The judges were impressed by the detailed railing-work and craftsmanship in creating the new Regency style windows.”

Many of the best house renovations were in Old Town. Those of us who live nearby are delighted by the careful and detailed repairs to Priory House (behind All Saints Church) and three houses in Leam Terrace which were honoured: Numbers 15, 39 and 45. All three were “good examples of Regency architecture”, well restored.



15 Leam Terrace



12 Beauchamp Avenue

In addition, Number 15 won the Bill Gibbons Trophy for the best owner-occupied house. As the owners are also responsible for the transformation of Priory House, they particularly deserve recognition.

When the winners learnt of their awards many spontaneously expressed their gratitude to Alan Mayes for his expertise and help in maintaining the



a recent sunny Saturday morning the shops there were almost devoid of customers. This is not problem for Wilson Bowden who sold the development for a very satisfactory price. Presumably that is their aim again with the new development. So will Leamington be left with another arcade of empty shops, which in time will be boarded up like Regency Arcade?

On 23 July the Executive Committee (the core decision making body of WDC councillors) unanimously agreed to continue discussions with Wilson Bowden (now owned by Barratt Developments) on this project, and to start the Compulsory Purchase Order process which will be necessary if any existing property owners refuse to sell to WB.

*Archie Pitts*

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### **Lap and pole dancing clubs in Leamington**

Again Leamington Spa makes the national press for providing lap dancing venues (THE WEEK, August 2nd). Your Executive committee recently reiterated its belief that such venues should be regarded as "Sex Encounter Establishments", like sex shops and sex cinemas. At the moment they are licensed according to the same rules as cafes and pubs; one consequence of this is that only residents living less than 200 metres from such clubs may object. We have written to our MP asking him to support us in parliament.

In London they are already treated as Sex Encounter Establishments. This should be extended to the whole country. Writing to The Times (15 August 2008) Barbara Weed (councillor for Willes Ward) with councillors from elsewhere in England say "lap-dancing clubs need to be recognised, regulated and licensed for what they are: part of the commercial sex industry, not the ordinary leisure industry".

WDC consulted widely on the matter approaching councillors and amenity societies and the Society responded saying we believed the time had come for a change in the rules. We are delighted that as a result of their consultation Chris Elliott, WDC Chief Executive, has written to the relevant government minister (Mr Gerry Sutcliffe – Minister for Sport, *sic*) saying that there is strong support for changes and that increased control should be implemented, as is possible under an Act of 1982.

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### **Binswood Hall**

The redevelopment of the Grade II\* listed Binswood Hall, when it ceases to be part of North Leamington School next year, has been favourably received as it is seen to preserve the fine Victorian buildings while removing the excrescences of the 1960s. However some members of the Society have misgivings about the proposals. Lyndon (Toby) Cave – local architect, local historian, member of the Conservation Area Advisory Forum, and earlier Chairman of the Society as well as almost a founder member – explains his objections:

Leamington College played an important part in the life of the community and its departure is a serious loss to the town. As some of the buildings are of considerable architectural importance (listed Grade II\*) and the result will be with future generations for many years, we have one chance to get it right and the proper approach for an amenity society is to say how this could be done.

Binswood Hall is not like a country house, surrounded by well established gardens. These buildings need special treatment to make the scheme fit into an urban landscape and to become part of the community. The architecture should be friendly to encourage people to stop and look, with the layout having two units, the private parts of the development and its public face.

The main feature of the public face is College Hall facing Binswood Avenue, the sunniest spot on the site. The public will see this before any thing else, so the front should not be a car park but a garden



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Margaret Watkins 425733

**Newsletter Distribution**

Jo Clark

*The Leamington Society is a registered charity. It is affiliated to the Civic Trust and to the West Midlands Amenity Societies Association. It exists to preserve the heritage and improve the character of Royal Leamington Spa and to encourage high standards of planning and architecture*

Charity No. 516078

*Unless otherwise indicated, views expressed in these newsletters are the contributors' own and not necessarily the corporate view of the Society.*

**Events to November 2008****Issues facing faith buildings, writ large at All Saints Leamington****Revd Christopher Wilson, 11 September, 7.45, Oddfellows Hall**

What is the reality behind the reports of concern about the future of All Saints, the Parish Church? What is the state of the building, and who is responsible for funding its upkeep? What options are there for its sustainable development and use?

Christopher Wilson, the Priest-in-Charge, will give a presentation and answer questions about this significant and prominent landmark building, and the issues which face the Church Council.

**The story of aviation's greatest engineer: Sir Frank Whittle****Ian Whittle, 16 September, 7.30, Spa Centre**

The invention of the Whittle jet engine is an heroic story of triumph in the face of Government indifference, lack of recognition and the dissipation of his patents overseas. Today his jet engines and turbofans are an integral part of all commercial and military aeroplanes.

Ian Whittle, who will be giving the talk, shares his father's passion for flying. He has spent his working life in aviation, flying first for the RAF and then for commercial airlines.

**Tickets from the Spa Centre (£7.50 or £5 for students & seniors)****My life with the police****Jan Wade, 9 October, 7.45, Oddfellows Hall**

Jan Wade will look back, perhaps with surprise, on the many aspects of her work in "The Force". At the start of her career some of the things she has done were not open to women, and she certainly did not expect to "do time" helping to organise the police in Lesotho, still less to become in her retirement a part of the entertainment industry by advising on police procedures for drama on television. She promises to be humorous as well as informative. A laughing policewoman, shall we say?

**The next hundred years of the railways****Dr Pete Waterman OBE, Monday 20 October, Town Hall**

Pete (President of the Friends of Leamington Station) has been passionate about railways all his life. As a teenager Pete Waterman spent every Saturday morning train spotting at Leamington Station and is building a scale model of the station.

He believes railways are the transport of the future, and not a relic of the past, and we are living through the biggest revolution in public transport in living memory. He recently presented the television programme "Waterman on Railways" for Channel 4/The Discovery Channel.

**Tickets from Marianne Pitts (£5 + sae)****Contemporary issues for Leamington****Chris Elliot, 13 November, 7.45, Oddfellows Hall**

Chris Elliott is Chief Executive of WDC and is where the buck stops with the administration of our council, whatever the colour of the council. By the time Chris comes to talk to us the final version of the Grimley Station Area report should be public.

He may be able to tell us more about the proposed Chandos Street development and the location of homes to meet the ever increasing government demands for more housing. This is your chance to learn more and to ask questions.

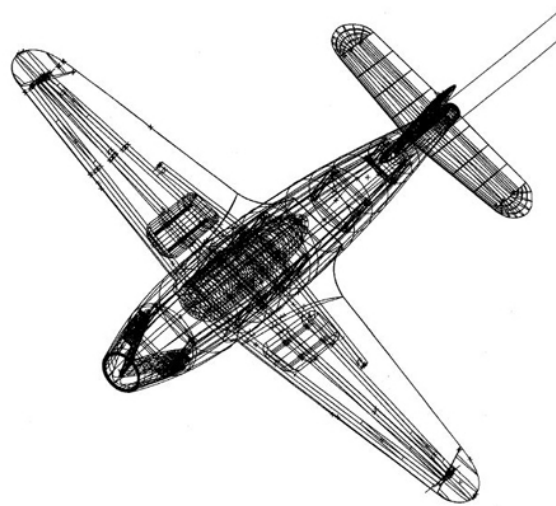
The Story of  
Aviation's Greatest Engineer

# SIR FRANK WHITTLE

Inventor of the jet engine and turbofan

Told by his son

**Ian Whittle**



**7.30 p.m. on Tuesday 16 September 2008**  
**The Royal Spa Centre, Leamington Spa**

Box Office 01926 334418 or on-line at [www.royal-spa-centre.co.uk](http://www.royal-spa-centre.co.uk)  
£7.50 adults, £5.00 students and seniors

Presented by The Leamington Society

# THE NEXT HUNDRED YEARS OF THE RAILWAYS

A talk by

**DR PETE WATERMAN OBE**

President of The Friends of Leamington Station

At Leamington's Town Hall

Monday 20 October 2008 at 7.30 p.m.



Photo by: Karl Grant



Tickets £5, to include a glass of wine or soft drink  
Available on receipt of remittance with SAE from:

**Marianne Pitts, 4 Leam Terrace, Leamington Spa CV31 1BB**  
Cheques payable to "Friends of Leamington Station"