

DOVETALES

19th Edition – March 2019

NEWSLETTER of the NAUNTON DOVECOTE TRUST



PHASE I COMPLETE AT LAST

It is difficult to believe that it is two years since the last (18th) edition of Dovetales which focused on our Wildlife Area and the bat survey by Colin Menendez, commissioned as part of our upcoming building project, and laid out details of what we were proposing to undertake in Phase I of that project.

I am pleased to say that Phase I is now complete thanks to a great deal of hard work by trustee Stuart Corbyn, who has worked with our architect, Andrew Townsend and builder, Peter Hawkins to complete routine repairs to the Dovecote building and the southern wall of the lean-to, replacement of the asbestos roof sheets on the lean-to with a steeper pitched welsh slate roof (as shown on early photographs of the building) and restoration of the turbine shed, as a ruin.



The turbine shed after restoration
(Dovecote Day 2018)



Turbine in situ
(Dovecote Day 2018)

These works included excavating the sites of the head races and exit leats of the former watermill (lean-to) and the generator shed (by the river), restoration of the old turbine mechanism and replacement into its position and alterations to the building to exhibit as much as possible of these two examples of small agricultural engineering mechanisms to visitors to the site. Trustees were amazed and delighted to see that, not only were these features still intact to be discovered and displayed by us, but that they were in all cases surprisingly well-structured, using cut stone to a high standard of building. Martin Watts, the SPAM Wind and Watermill expert, who was asked to visit the site and comment on what was revealed, was completely amazed at the beautifully crafted

headrace to the lean-to former watermill for grinding corn for the animals, made in the shape of a horseshoe to direct water from an artificially dug leat upstream of the Dovecote into what would have been a very small and relatively low-powered mill capable only of grinding a very limited quantity of corn for use for the farm animals.



Horseshoe headrace to lean-to (Dovecote Day 2018)

Even more extraordinary perhaps is the fact that the turf which was planted on top of the walls of the turbine shed (it having been decided not to replace the roof structure) survived the driest, hottest summer that we have had in the Cotswolds for many a year and greened up nicely as soon as we had a drop of rain!

Completion of the project was celebrated (rather later than planned due to the intervention also of one of the coldest winters we had experienced in the Cotswolds for many a year - November 2017 to April 2018) on Dovecote Day which was held on 18th August 2018. The usual celebrations were held with people bringing their own picnics, supporting the NDT Bar and Merchandise Stalls and, of course, Duck Racing, that great traditional sport on the finest course in the country. The photograph below shows the joy of Harry Fremantle winning 1st prize with his duck "H" and literally leaping for joy in the Tremendous Turbine Restoration Race. They were a very lucky family as Grandmother Binny won 2nd prize with 'Meg' in the Wonderful Watermill Restoration Race which followed:



A most articulate speech by Stuart Corbyn outlined the main features which had been exposed by the project and participants were encouraged to go and see for themselves the results of our restoration work and rural industrial archaeology now open to view.

Our many thanks to all supporters of the Dovecote over the past 10 years who have purchased our merchandise, attended our fund-raising events, supported the Trust by becoming 'Friends' and also those who made specific donations to this project which cost almost £75,000, including building work, architect's fees, surveys and reports. Fund-raising - although the project had been planned for many years - unfortunately coincided with financing the renovation of our village hall and we were fortunate to receive some very generous donations, a good proportion of which were from outside the village. In particular, we would like to thank the Pilgrim Trust, who awarded a Grant of £10,000 towards the project.

We would also like to thank Coombs Property Services Ltd., for a generous donation. Thanks are also due to them for lending us security fencing to fence off the turbine building for a considerable period, and also for lending us use of a lifting machine and operator to lower the cleaned and re-painted turbine machinery back into its position in the recently renovated turbine shed. This was a delicate and difficult operation supervised by Douglas Hanks and, by necessity of time-scheduling, carried out in extremely muddy conditions. Thanks to him also for arranging the cleaning and painting of the turbine and organising its reinstatement.



Re-installing the turbine with the help of Coombs Property Services Ltd.

Thank you also to Breedon Quarries (formerly Huntsmans Quarries) for a generous donation to the scheme.

We are extremely grateful to David Hanks of Cotswold Images for letting us have sight of all the photographs of the Dovecote which he had collected, which have been an important aid in helping to understand the significance and history of the features of each aspect of the Dovecote site and thence enabled the Trustees to bring them to public attention. We believe that the uniqueness of these additional features of interest at the site will increase visitor interest and help sustain the future of this much loved place in our community. Thanks also to David for allowing us to use various photos which he took on Dovecote Day 2018 in this publication.

Corrinne Powell

Shortly before our last edition of 'Dovetales' was distributed, one of our Trustees and a very well-loved member of our village community, Corrinne Powell, died unexpectedly on 27 February 2017. I had known Corrinne personally for very many years as her daughter, Christiana, used to ride with my late mother in law, Judy Hanks, and spent a considerable portion of her school holidays in residence at Swell Hill Farm. My introduction to Corrinne was as the occupant of a caravan on site for the annual gymkhana which she organised as a birthday celebration for Christiana. Corrinne being the person she was, did not allow this party to be a self-indulgence for her daughter, but directed it as a fund-raising opportunity for C.L.I.C., at the time a little-known charity formed by a friend of hers to provide sleeping accommodation for the parents of children who were undergoing chemotherapy in Bristol and which has now, as we know, mushroomed into a major cancer charity. In this caravan Corrinne had every single item that might be required for a fund-raising event in a field in the middle of no-where – from rosettes to red pens, sellotape to sticking plaster, drawing pins to duck-tape – she had it all and from this I learned everything I later in life needed to know about organising an event outside.

Corrinne was a Speech Therapist and it was plain when talking to her that she was very dedicated to her profession and to trying to help people less fortunate than herself in a quiet, determined and effective way. This is not, however, to underrate her most evident quality which was her wacky and witty sense of humour, mostly based on her hilarious observation of English village life from the point of view of a southern Texan 'belle' – imported as a young bride and brought to a very small village in the Cotswolds. Her stories of her early days here in Naunton trying, from the point of view of a 'foreigner' – albeit English-speaking – to fathom out the vagaries of behaviour in such a place were side-splitting.



Corrinne and Graham
(taken for the Millennium Book)



Trying in a few words to paint an adequate picture of a woman who did so much in our village and helped so many people during her life, I can do no better than take some words from a tribute written by Christiana, first on the subject of her extraordinary ability to 'make' things - things which encapsulated the moment, such as the ornamentation to the top of the list of runners in the Great Inaugural Duck Race (see left), made from the cardboard supports used in supermarkets to hold melons ("I saw them and I saw ducks" she told me) and the crazy-eyed duck hat complete with beak which she made to be worn when unleashing ducks into the sluice.

“Mother will be remembered and admired for many things but coupling her sense of fun and her creative talent, I think was pretty much acknowledged by all who knew her; from little poems and rhyming ditties on hand-made cards, village show costumes and duck hats to all manner of weird and wonderful other creations. Mother painstakingly created the most wonderful things for me too. My devoted Nurse Susan who is a comfort to me still - and for 45 years has been loved more than any shop-bought teddy or doll could ever have been. A doll’s house that was a replica of Kiftsgate Cottage inside and out, down to the pictures on the wall and the furniture. There was Dinky, the horse made from rabbit skins who was complete with an orange rug with his name in white stitched on felt, matching leg and tail bandages with little white ties. The hunting horse wearing his Pink jacket, stock and jodhpurs - the list could go on. When I was older, she made me a huge embroidery of a house - the time it must have taken and the intricacy were not the only impressive things - Mother had added her special touch to it. Daddy, Mother, Nick and I featured as the family and even Pepper, our first dog, was included. Fabrics and little mementoes of people we loved had cleverly been worked into the design.”

One of her more memorable wardrobe creations for the Naunton Players was for the children’s performance of ‘Puff the Magic Dragon’ which included all the village children, placed in order of size - from Jonathan Urry (in the paper mache dragon’s head) to Robert Langley (at the end of the tail). Green velvet curtains were draped over the children, their heads appearing through holes in the top, capped with tall ‘witches’ hats denoting the spines down the dragon’s back. Much to the children’s amazement, when they trundled on to the stage, it brought the house down!



Corrinne, with Joan, at home in Kiftsgate Cottage

On the subject of her work:

“Mother genuinely liked people - she loved helping, supporting and pleasing. I have no idea how many children my mother worked with over the years. It was an added bonus that she happened to get paid for the time she spent doing it. Through her expertise, her patience, with her personality and sense of fun she made a huge difference to so many. From helping children to talk and believe in themselves through to being a friend and mentor to their parents. Mother loved what she did and I think felt fortunate to have met each and every one of ‘her children’ as she would call them. I would even suggest that she remembered the names of pretty much every one of them. I know when she was out and about some times she would see one of ‘her children’ or their parents and she would be delighted to hear of their achievements. The importance of achievement was something that Mother understood. It wasn’t about being academic, material things or doing something that others would consider to be amazing. Achievement was about your own unique personal amazingness and it was the credit for having had to put mental or physical effort into something to make it happen.”

On Naunton:

“Although Mother hadn’t played for years, in younger years she had played the flute to a high standard. She enjoyed music and Naunton Music Society concerts provided a huge amount of pleasure to her. At one time or another, in some way or another, over the nearly 50 years in the village, I think Mother was involved in just about everything in Naunton, the Youth Club, WI, Dovecote, Parish Council, Village Shows just to name a few. Her extraordinary propensity for making a difference, always with sincerity and good grace and often in her very own creative and amusing way, made her truly remarkable and absolutely unforgettable.”

As a Trustee of the Naunton Dovecote Trust we very much miss her at our meetings. In the latter years, her very poor eyesight made reading our paperwork extremely difficult for her but she was very committed to the aims of the Trust and the importance of the Dovecote in our village life.

Other Lost Friends

Dr. Joan Marsden

We were very sorry to hear of the death in March 2018 of Joan Marsden, a long-term supporter of the Trust, from her daughter Vivian Barraclough. Joan used to come to stay at Longford House with her daughters, Vivian and Susie, many years ago and continued to come back to visit Joyce Hanks and other friends in the village during the subsequent years.

We are very pleased however that Vivian and her husband have kept up the link with Naunton and are ‘Friends’ of the Naunton Dovecote Trust.

Diana O’Brien (née Ballantyne)

Diana was born in Naunton but for most of her life lived in Cumbria, where she raised a family of 4 children. She was a first cousin to Geoffrey Hanks: her mother, Irene Chater-Lea, known as ‘Auntie Rene’ in the family was a Hanks by birth, and sister to Geoffrey’s Mother, Ruby and Mary Macklin’s mother, Mabel. Diana was a very feisty lady who had strong emotional links with Naunton and, together with other family members, used all her influence at the time to persuade Geoffrey Hanks not to sell the Dovecote site for development in 1997/98. Fortunately for us, she prevailed and the Dovecote remains the beautiful unspoilt building which we all love. She always kept in touch with Dovecote matters and was a most entertaining and colourful companion. She died in June 2018 aged 91.

NEWS UPDATE since March 2017

Plain correspondence cards: We have an exciting new product for sale in aid of the Trust. It comprises five paintings of the Dovecote reproduced on plain cards, sold in packs of 10 with good quality envelopes. Combinations include 2 each of 5 different images, 10 of the same image and 5 each of 2 images by Sam Wilson, who has designed Christmas Cards for us. Please apply to Penny Hanks, or at Thursday Coffee Morning if you would like some.

Other products: We also still have jotter pads, postcards, blank folded cards, letter cards, tea towels, and of course Christmas Cards.

Dovecote Website: We are working with Chris Goll to set up a Dovecote website, which will contain some history of the building, information on how to become a Friend, the Nesthole Sponsorship Scheme and Entries in the Great Dovecote Book as well as details of our merchandise. We are hoping that this will extend interest in the site outside the village and help us widen our supporter base.

What next at the Dovecote Site?

We are currently investigating creating a small working model similar to that displayed at the National Trust house 'Cragside' in Northumberland to demonstrate how electricity is made from the power of water. It is intended that this should be placed in the lean-to and hoped that it will interest visitors and encourage them to visit our own turbine at the site. It is also hoped that this will be of interest to local schools as an educational tool and a pleasant place for a school trip.

Trustees are still working on their wish to bring mains water to the site and convert Unit 4 of the stable block into a small kitchen, disabled W.C. and an area in which to display some history, the Great Dovecote Book, and any other items of interest to be considered. Planning and Listed Building Consent have been granted and plans drawn up. We are currently awaiting some costings before making decisions.

Whilst clearing the river prior to Dovecote Day the Trustees uncovered some large stones on the dovecote riverbank which had been seen in old photographs. These had become very overgrown with silt and thick weed and grass and hadn't been seen for very many years. They appear to have been placed there when the turbine was installed in approximately 1929 and presumably kept the river bank well defined at that time.



Large stones on the riverbank, uncovered in Summer 2018

New Trustee:

We would like to welcome as a Trustee Rosemary Parker, who was appointed on 19 March, 2017.

Current Trustees and Officers/Sub-Committee Members 2019

Naunton Dovecote Trust: Trustees: Penny Hanks (Chairman), Donna Renney,
Rosemary Parker, David Pickup and Stuart Corbyn
Secretary: Diana Woolley **Treasurer:** Gerard Hanks

Supported by Sub-Committee Members:

Pat Boulton, Barbara Steiner, (Fund-Raising, Events and Publicity) Keith Russell
and Peter and Gill Bell (Site Maintenance)

David Hallsworth

Sadly, I have to report the loss of yet another village stalwart, David Hallsworth, also formerly a Trustee of our Trust, who died on 12 November 2018. It is difficult to think of a significant village organisation in which he was not involved to a lesser or greater degree and where it was the latter, he was an incredibly effective operator and in several cases team leader, always getting on with the job and making sure that delegated tasks were done on time and that matters moved forward.

He was one of the founding committee members of the Naunton Dovecote Conservation Society formed in 1997 when the planning application for development of the Dovecote was first submitted. This group, led by Peter Morton, campaigned fiercely, with very strong village backing, to oppose this proposal and David, having lived in the village since the early 1980's, was well known and respected amongst residents. His presence on the Committee reinforced the strong support which local people gave them. He was also one of the founding Trustees of what was initially the Naunton Village Trust, which purchased the Dovecote. His files show that he was much involved in securing financial and other support amongst local people and organisations.

Alongside this role, he was a most effective Chairman of the Parish Council for many years, Chairman of the Village Hall Committee, he set up and ran Neighbourhood Watch in the village for 21 years and was Chairman of the Naunton Cricket Club. In all these roles he was a real 'do-er'; a man of strong opinions, but always open to persuasion and a good manager of people and projects. He was a great person to have on your side being strong, determined, persistent and vocal and one of his most important contributions to village life was to support the maintenance and improvement of the Cricket Ground/Recreation Field, including managing and obtaining funding for the building of our current Cricket Pavilion. Having effected its building, as a Vice-President and later three-times Annual President of the Club, he continued to be its most frequent visitor, attending virtually every Sunday cricket match, rain or shine, with Fiona. He will be much missed at the Club where we hope Fiona will continue to support us.

His roles as both Chairman of the Parish Council and the Village Hall Committee were both challenging and time consuming and he must have worked virtually full time for this village in one position or another over many years. He was a major fund-raiser for the previous large extension at the Village Hall .

He was also a very sociable man - a supporter of the Black Horse, Film Club, Cricket Dinners, Cheese and Wine evenings, Dovecote Days, Naunton Players and St. Andrew's church - and indeed was to be seen at most village social events.

P.A.H.

