

# Cockermouth & District Civic Trust Newsletter

President: The Lord Egremont, Chairman: Phil Campbell  
Secretary: John Dent, Treasurer: Ian Dodsworth.

50<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY SPECIAL EDITION – No 134, May 2017

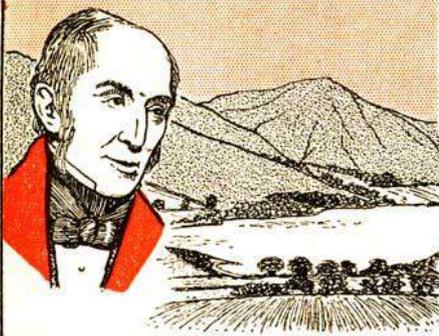


## ★ MY HOME TOWN ★

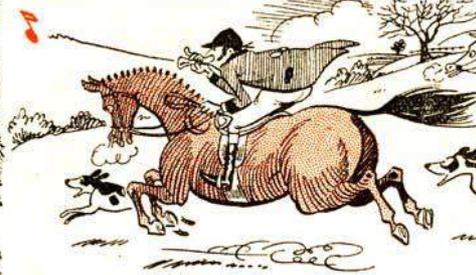
# COCKERMOUTH

A small town a few miles in from the coast of Cumberland, in North-West England. It is in the Lake District National Park and serves as the market centre for all the farms in the district.

**A DANDY PRIZE FOR EVERY READER WHOSE ENTRY IS FEATURED ON THIS PAGE** ★



William Wordsworth, the Lakeland poet, was born on April 7th, 1770, at Cockermouth. Wordsworth came from a family of landowners and his deep love of country life and the surrounding Lake District influenced most of his poems. His rise to fame was slow, but in 1843 he was made Poet Laureate.



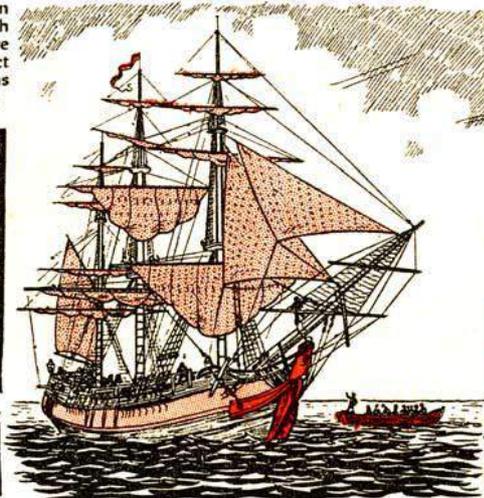
John Peel, the renowned huntsman, came from the Cockermouth district. He has been immortalised in the song, "D'ye Ken John Peel?"



John Dalton, the scientist, was born at Eaglesfield, near Cockermouth. He is most famous for his Atomic Theory, which became the basis of modern chemistry. One of Dalton's discoveries was an interesting one about himself. He found he was colour blind. This led him to publish in 1794 the first scientific paper on colour blindness.



Fearon Fallows, the first Astronomer Royal at the Cape of Good Hope, came from Cockermouth. He planned the first observatory there and made a catalogue of the southern stars.



Fletcher Christian, the leader of the mutineers on board H.M.S. Bounty, was born and brought up in the Cockermouth district. After setting Captain Bligh and a few loyal seamen adrift in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, Christian and the mutineers took the Bounty to Tahiti. From there, some of them moved to the Pitcairn Islands, where they settled down, and today their descendants still live there.



Farm labourers come to the market square in Cockermouth to be hired.

### SEND YOUR ENTRY TO—

"MY HOME TOWN"  
"The Dandy"

12 Fetter Lane,  
Fleet Street,  
London, E.C.4.

Does any famous person live in your town?

Do they make wooden legs in your town?

Are donkeys' false teeth made in your town?

Write about your home town and win a DANDY prize. Anything interesting or out of the ordinary—that's what to write about. And just two or three items are enough.

### THIS WEEK'S WINNER—

JOSEPH TUNSTALL, 21 DERWENT STREET,  
COCKERMOUTH, CUMBERLAND, wins a £1  
Postal Order.

Remember to put your name, age and address on your entry and say which prize you would like from the list.

COMPLETE COWBOY OUTFIT, NURSE'S OUTFIT, BALL-BEARING ROLLER SKATES, £1 POSTAL ORDER.

Image courtesy of the 'Dandy' from a 1963 edition.

**COCKERMOUTH & DISTRICT CIVIC TRUST**  
1967 to 2017

Member of Civic Voice. Registered charity number 254362

## SOME KEY EVENTS IN THE LIFE OF COCKERMOUTH CIVIC TRUST

### 1967 to 1999 – The 20<sup>th</sup> Century

1967	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- On 25<sup>th</sup> February, the West Cumberland Times reported that the Chamber of Trade is 'likely to strive for the creation of a Civic Trust scheme to give a general facelift to the town'.</li> <li>- The first public meeting of the Civic Society was held on the 13<sup>th</sup> September 1967. It agreed a constitution, elected an executive committee &amp; considered a programme of work to be done.</li> <li>- In October, the committee recommended that several areas of the town should be established as Conservation Areas.</li> </ul>
1968	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 240 photos were taken by members Mr Kelt &amp; Mr Mounsey to form an historical record of the town. These were added to in later years and used for exhibitions at occasional coffee mornings. The photographs were all passed to the 'Museum Group' on its formation.</li> <li>- The Civic Society recommended the setting up of an advice centre for visitors. This was agreed by the Urban District Council for a trial in 1969, &amp; was supported by society members.</li> <li>- On May 18<sup>th</sup>, 1568 Mary Queen of Scots visited Cockermouth &amp; stayed at the Old Hall. In 1968, the Civic Society established a fund for a memorial to this visit to celebrate its 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary. After the demolition of the Old Hall, a plaque was erected on a plinth in the now Bitter Beck car park.</li> </ul>
1969	Our first member's newsletter was issued. We have now reached the 130s & currently issue 3 per year. Technology has changed though. Two thirds of our members now receive their newsletter by email and it is available on our web site.
1970	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Society expressed concern about the lack of public access to the castle &amp; approached Leconfield Estates. After a period of time, it was agreed that Bernard Bradbury could lead occasional tours. These have continued to the present day, being continued by Mary Bradbury &amp; then in 2011 passed to Civic Trust members.</li> <li>- The Urban District Council wanted to demolish buildings on the south side of Market Place. This was strongly resisted by the Civic Trust &amp; the County Architect was engaged in determining the cost of conservation of the buildings. A repainting scheme for Market Place was also progressed.</li> </ul>
1972	The present Lord Egremont agreed to become President of the Civic Trust.
1973	The 'Civic Society' was changed to the 'Civic Trust'. This was to allow the potential purchase of a then derelict building on Gote Road – the flax drying building, now St Leonard's House.
1975	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- At the request of the Council, 4 members made a study of Waterloo St, discussing with residents the restoration of their property &amp; grants available. At this time, the future of Waterloo St was at stake, with demolition a real possibility.</li> <li>- We received a Cumbria Countryside Conference Award for special attention to tree planting.</li> </ul>
1976	Border Engineering agreed to our request to retain the water wheel and as much of the old fabric as possible in their redevelopment of the Old Corn & Linen Mills at Papcastle.
1985	The Civic Trust took over responsibility for the 'Cockermouth Literary Festival', until 1988.
1990	Allerdale BC applied for planning permission to demolish the former All Saints School to extend the car park. The Trust contested this & campaigned for its use as a civic resource. Eventually, the building was sold to the Trust for £5 & the Kirkgate Centre was born.
1991	Civic Trust volunteers undertook refurbishment work on the river confluence area, repairing walls & seats & cutting back vegetation. A new scheme with Allerdale BC started in 2016.
1992	The Rope Walk area off Kirkgate was restored. With the help of Project UK 2000, the Trust cleared the area & then helped the rebuilding of the wall by the Groundwork Trust.
1994	After years of campaigning for the old railway line through Cockermouth to be made into a public footpath, the 'Cockermouth Greenway' was included in the Allerdale Plan.
1995	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- It was decided that a way-marked Town Trail should be created and guide booklets made available. An interpretation Panel for Kirkbank was commissioned.</li> <li>- We held our first 'reinstated' annual dinner, now lunch, which has continued uninterrupted for 21 years. This first dinner was at the Trout Hotel &amp; our speaker was George Bott.</li> </ul>
1997	The 'Fearon Fallows Society' was established to celebrate the life of our famous son who was born in 1745. The society lasted for a few years with the occasional public lecture. After it was wound up, the remaining funds were used to fund the Fearon Fallows art work in Lowther Went.
1998	Stanger Spa is an ancient spa well south of Cockermouth. Over the period 1998 to 2002, the Trust arranged for the spa to be fully renovated & put back in working order.

## 2000 to 2017 – the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

2000	We erected an 'interpretive panel' on the town trail viewpoint at the 'Bleaching Green', Kirkbank. A panoramic view of Cockermouth can be seen from here.
2003	The old grammar school at Strawberry Howe had been used as a business centre for a number of years, but planning permission was being sought by a developer to convert the building & to build houses on site. Fearing the loss of a heritage building, the Trust successfully applied for it to be Grade II listed.
2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The Market Place restoration project was started. The Trust had campaigned for years for the Market Place area to be revitalised as the centre of town had shifted onto Main St.</li> <li>- The Trust took on the responsibility for updating and publishing Bernard Bradbury's 'History of Cockermouth', his series of books, 'Cockermouth in Pictures' and 'Walks from Cockermouth'.</li> <li>- Our website, '<a href="http://www.ckermouthcivictrust.co.uk">www.ckermouthcivictrust.co.uk</a>' was first posted on the internet to provide interested parties with information about the Civic Trust.</li> <li>- We organised the first Bernard Bradbury Memorial Lecture in association with the Museum Group &amp; the Lorton &amp; Derwent Fells Local History Group. This became a 2 yearly event.</li> </ul>
2007	We organised our first Heritage Open Days event. We have now organised 10 events with 2016 being the most successful, celebrating the 250 <sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of John Dalton.
2010	The Cockermouth Shop Front Heritage Grant Scheme was launched following the 2009 flood to encourage & facilitate the replacement of poorly designed frontages with ones more in keeping with Cockermouth's heritage. Several awards were received & a booklet illustrating the outcomes was published – 'Main Street reborn'.
2011	Cockermouth & District Civic Trust joined Civic Voice.
2012	We introduce our first 'Walk of Pride' where we lead a walk around a section of town & write letters of commendation to the owners of building that 'we are proud of in our town'. We also identify some areas of improvement that we would like to see.
2013	2 murals were commissioned to enhance the electricity substation in Lowther Went. The artist was our very own Victor de Quincey
2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Cumbria CC proposed to introduce on-street parking charges in the town centre. We successfully campaigned against this on the basis that it would adversely affect town centre shopping &amp; encourage out of town shopping.</li> <li>- We participated in the national project, 'Britain from Above', &amp; organised an exhibition of historic aerial photographs of Cockermouth.</li> </ul>
2015	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- We undertook condition surveys of all of the Grade II listed buildings in Cockermouth as part of a pilot project for English Heritage.</li> <li>- We developed a process for a Local Heritage List as a pilot for Allerdale BC. We then submitted our first batch of aspects for consideration for the list.</li> </ul>
2016	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- We marked the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the birth of our famous son, John Dalton, with a number of activities as part of HODS, centred on Eaglesfield and Cockermouth.</li> <li>- We undertook a condition survey of all known war memorials in our area, 29 in total, as part of a national campaign for the WW1 Centenary, organised through Civic Voice.</li> <li>- We led a public campaign to persuade the Town Council to produce a Neighbourhood Plan. An action group was established &amp; submission made to the January 2017 Council Meeting, followed by a more detailed .</li> </ul>
2017	<p>We celebrate our 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary!</p> <p>We also celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Conservation Areas.</p>

## **How, when and why was The Civic Trust set up in 1967**

**by David Sekers**

*David was born in Whitehaven & came to live in Cockermouth in 1966. He was active in the setting up of the Civic Trust while working in the family firm in Whitehaven. Several years later, he devoted himself to conservation, setting up a museum in the Potteries, and later established Quarry bank Mill at Styal, Cheshire as a working museum. He then worked for the National Trust, becoming head of policy & planning and director of operations. He now lives in Somerset.*

I recently rediscovered my jottings from three preliminary meetings in the summer of 1967 which refer to the beginnings of the Civic Trust. An original aim was to help ensure that the vitality of the town centre could be preserved and enhanced. We discussed the boundary of our area, the need for a broad membership, and the many bureaucratic procedures necessary to launch a society. But my notes also remind me of the personalities and the conservation issues which seemed to act as catalysts.

Who was involved? There was a surprisingly wide range of support: not just off-comers like me; but staunch Cumbrians, local business men and women, and professionals such as teachers, doctors and solicitors, as you would expect. A guiding voice at the start was Graham Ashworth, then director of the Civic Trust for the North West. His enthusiasm and evangelising spirit inspired us to get going, and I remember contacting the Faversham Civic Trust which he recommended as a model.

Immediate support soon came from local residents and businesses people. With apologies to those whose names I have failed to recall, among the founding figures were: Jack Jackson well known even then for his collections at Messers Banks in Market Place; Jackie Bell, who recalled and recorded the changing face and personalities of the town; Joe Mounsey, reticent by nature, but tenacious in retaining relics of his family business and loquacious when recalling episodes of recent Cockermouth history; David and Angela Winkworth of the New Bookshop; Gordon Rushton; Philip Slater of the shoe factory, who said the Trust should be alert to threats, lest we be taken unawares; Nigel Wingate, manager at United Steel and a strong supporter of Boys Clubs; Mr T W Macdonald, the rugby playing solicitor, who prevented us from straying from proper procedures; Dr Ashley Abraham, very quiet and much respected; Stewart Hamer the Head of the Grammar School, and Mr Sanderson the Head of Derwent School; Mrs Goodlad who wanted the Trust to be useful to one and all; Archdeacon Pugh who always had a judicious comment; Mr Williamson of Thomas Armstrong, the builders; and among the gentry Mrs Curwen and Lord Egremont. Pat Senhouse looked on from the Fitz with bemused detachment. Mr and Mrs Bradbury could even then underpin discussions of issues with detailed historical knowledge; Mr Smyth, the custodian of Wordsworth House, said he hoped the inaugural meeting had been called in time to save the town before it was too late. On the sidelines but generally supportive were UDC Councillors, such as Mr Todhunter.

Kenneth Steen, the distinguished but approachable County Planning Officer was supportive. Mr. Jennings, the Town Clerk of the Urban District Council was wary.

## **Origins of the Civic Movement**

The origins of the Civic Movement go back much, much further than the 50 years of Cockermouth Civic Trust! One of the early successes, for example, was the enhancement of the esplanade at Sidmouth, Devon in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century. The Kyrle Society was founded by Miranda and Octavia Hill in 1876 to 'better the life of working people by laying out parks, encouraging house decoration, window gardening and flower growing'. (*The Kyrle Society was named after John Kyrle, an English philanthropist living in Ross on Wye in the late 17<sup>th</sup> century. He was known for living a frugal lifestyle and investing his wealth in the greater good of his locality & the community that lived there*).

With its origins in the Kyrle Societies, the civic movement grew slowly initially, maturing in the period after the Great War and mushrooming after the Second World War. Balancing the need for housing and the regeneration of our towns and cities against the desirability of conserving and even restoring many of the country's finest buildings became a major issue for civic societies in the 1960s and 1970s.

## **To Save A Building**

**by Peter Colley**

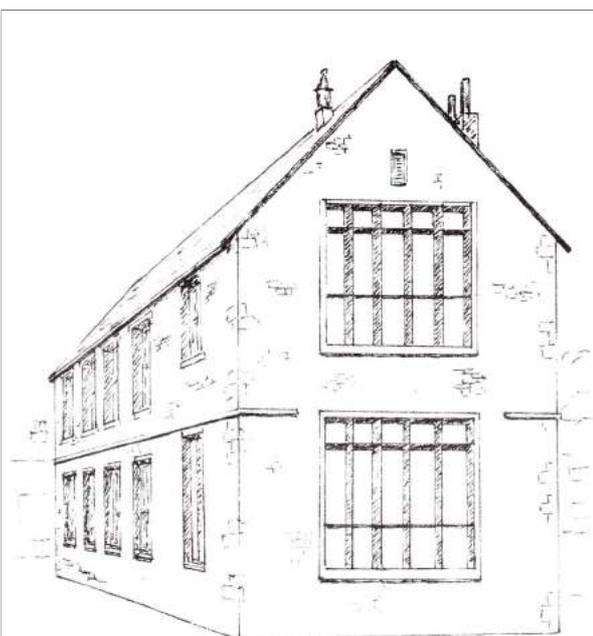
*Peter & his wife Barbara were both very active members of the Civic Trust in the 1990s. Peter was Vice Chairman & Chair of the Environment Committee. Barbara was Secretary. They both led the campaign to save the old All Saints School building & develop it into 'the Kirkgate Centre'. At the end of the decade, they moved away to live in Stavely near Kendal. Peter became chair of NWACTS.*

In 1990 Allerdale District Council applied for planning permission to demolish the former All Saints' school in Cockermouth. This was a prominent two-storey red sandstone building in the Conservation Area of the town that had stood neglected since it had been passed on to the council at the time of local government reorganisation in 1974. This seemed an extreme decision, since the council had previously refused permission for even a chimney at the back of a house to be demolished. The civic society, of which I was vice-chair, therefore objected.

This meant that the council could not give itself planning permission and the application would therefore have to go to a public inquiry. When I asked the council why they wanted to demolish the building, the answer that came back was that it was a dangerous structure. At the end of its life as a primary school, the building had been in use by a youth club and then Derwent Athletics. It had been neglected during that time, but I did not consider it was in a dangerous state. I therefore approached English Heritage on the matter and they sent up an engineer from London who crawled all over the building with me amid dilapidated timber and pigeon droppings.

At the end of his visit he said quite firmly in answer to my question, "No, it's NOT dangerous" adding "And I will give evidence for you at the public inquiry, against the council!" When the council received this news, they hastily withdrew their application because they did not have any qualified engineers on their staff who could support their case.

Since the council had given the Athletics Club notice to quit and, having taken over the former Jehovah's Witnesses prefab, they no longer required the building, the council then offered to rent it to our civic society. However, when we examined the demanding terms of the proposed lease, we decided that this was not the way forward. The council then eventually offered to sell the property to us, warning us that we would have to accept the district valuer's valuation. We were aware that the town lacked a cinema, museum or other large assembly rooms so, encouraged by the response of a well-attended public meeting, we agreed to this condition. We knew that its location well away from the shopping centre and its high ceiling levels would make it difficult to divide the building into residential units or convert it for business use. We also knew that there was some evidence of rot and other problems that would need to be addressed and had made sure that the scale and cost of such works were known to the district valuer, but then we had to wait.



All Saints School on Kirkgate was built on land donated by Lord Leconfield in 1869 at a cost of around £2,000. It replaced premises on New Street which had become too small. It was a 'National School', operated under 'The National Society for the Education of the Poor according to the principles of the established Church'. The building was of dressed stone with substantial sandstone windows. In 1973, the school again moved to new premises, now on Slatefell Drive.

The school building remained empty & unused for 17 years until Allerdale BC proposed to demolish it in 1990.

Following the purchase of the building by the Civic Trust, it was handed over to the Kirkgate Centre Trust to develop into the thriving arts and community centre that it is today

## Then and Now

by John Dent

Although I was brought up four miles down the road to Workington, I have always seen Cockermouth as my “home town”. I moved away in 1965 not returning until 2000 - so what has changed since my childhood days that I can remember?

The by-pass didn't exist so all the traffic came through Main Street. I can't remember there being any problems - there weren't any pedestrian crossings but I can't remember anyone being knocked down. There are now two pedestrian crossings plus central refuges. In 1964, a runaway lorry knocked the Mayo statue down – I still don't understand how the driver managed to negotiate Castlegate and Cocker Bridge safely only to hit Mayo at the widest point of Main Street. Happily Mayo is back up again though you can still see the joints. Even though it was a through route, Main Street was closed when the Fair came to town. Dodgems and Waltzers in Market Place! How did the HGVs get round that? Now the Fair is in Sainsbury's car park. I attended the Grammar School where Stewart Hamer, a founder of the Cockermouth Civic Trust was Headmaster. I was taught maths by Bernard Bradbury in the 6<sup>th</sup> form but didn't know then that he was interested in history. That school is now split up into residences. The designated outfitter for the school uniform was Fletchers of “Fletchers Fearless Clothing” fame. The sign is still there but the shop is now a hairdressers. Pupils were not allowed to go down to the town during lunchtime until we were in the 6<sup>th</sup> form – the furthest we could go was to the Tuck Shop – that is now Rose Cottage B&B. I played cricket at the cricket club, cycling the 8 mile return journey for practice in the evenings. I always saved a bit of energy to cycle as fast as possible past the sewage works because the smell was horrible. Now the smell has gone but I still wouldn't buy a house on the Laureates Estate because of the memory of that smell.

The Cattle Auctions were still in the town and I used to love going there on market days to watch the bidding. The Auctions have now moved away and the site is occupied by Sainsburys. The Grand Theatre was a picture house and I used to go to the children's Saturday morning shows – it is now the Limelighting store and has been sold. I remember the Derwent to be much wider between the confluence and Gote Bridge with a large shale bank in the middle. The rivers were managed then by a River Board which I think did a better job, using local knowledge, than the current Environment Agency. I can't remember any floods happening then. The river is now narrower and seems to flow much faster when it rains. The main meeting point in town then was Luchini's Ice Cream Parlour. That shop is now occupied by Cockermouth Travel and everyone meets in one of the many coffee shops to chat and conduct business. The places to meet girls were the regular dances, either at the Public Hall in Station Street, burned down and rebuilt as Natwest Bank, or, for the big bands like Eric Delany, the Drill Hall, now part of the Leisure Centre.

Perhaps the biggest change in scene has been the disappearance of the pretty little railway station which formed the background to the War Memorial. The space is now occupied by the Fire Station and Mountain Rescue HQ with the railway bed forming the Greenway.

To sum up, the town appears much brighter and feels more vibrant than I can remember from my childhood. More traffic but more events are being held like the Taste Cumbria festivals. So – better than it used to be and the efforts of the Cockermouth Civic Trust over the years has made a large contribution to this result.



Main Street, 1960s



Main Street 2017

## Publicity

It has always been important for the Trust to achieve publicity on its activities and achievements. This is key to maintaining public support and an enthusiastic membership. A few newspaper extracts from over the years follow.

### IT'S FESTIVAL TIME

Organised by Cockermouth Civic Trust, the town's festival was opened on Saturday at the Victoria Hall by the Mayor Stan Mercer (right), and George Harland (second left) as Charles Dickens. Others from the left are Ian Dodsworth (Secretary), Bernard Bradbury (Chairman) & Mayoress Pauline Wilson.



*West Cumbrian Gazette, 11<sup>th</sup> September 1986*

### THE UNVEILING OF THE INTERPRETIVE PLAQUE

Phil Campbell, Chairman, together with committee members Shirley Campbell, Tom Hughes and Barbara Barker at the unveiling of a panel interpreting the view from the bleaching green at the end of Kirkbank. This is at the site of one of the plaque stations on the Trust's Town Trail.

*Cockermouth Post,  
13<sup>th</sup> June 2003*



### MURAL HONOURS COCKERMOUTH ASTRONOMER FEARON FALLOWS

Cockermouth Mayor Philip Graham unveils the Lowther Went Mural depicting astronomer Fearon Fallows, thanks to an idea by the Civic Trust. The mural was designed by Bothel artist & Civic Trust member, Victor de Quincey.

*T&S  
July  
2013*



### NEW CHAPTER AS MAIN STREET BOOK EARNS NATIONAL HONOUR

A book that was brought out to celebrate the transformation of Main St since the 2009 floods has won a national award. 'Main Street Reborn' was compiled by Eric Apperley of the Civic Trust, (right in picture), to show how the town had benefited from the Shop Front Heritage Grant Scheme. TV presenter & comic Griff Rhys Jones presented the award to Phil Campbell at the Civic Voice AGM.

*T&S  
Nov  
2013*



## **Main Street Reborn**

**by Darren Ward**

*Darren sits on our Committee and is architectural adviser to the Civic Trust. He has undertaken this role since around 2000 when he first joined the Trust. He has 3 degrees in Architecture from Liverpool School of Architecture. Professionally, he runs Red Raven Design Ltd and specialises in contemporary design that is sympathetic to its surroundings.*

No one will need reminding of the events of a particular Thursday in November 2009 as that day will be etched on the minds of many for years to come. As those who know the history of Cockermouth will know, floods are very much part of the town's past and present. But the floods of 2009 had far greater impact, devastating the town centre and making hundreds homeless. Involved as I was in the initial safety surveys immediately after the floods, one could have been forgiven for thinking the town was destroyed and could never fully recover. However, the story that could have ended so differently began a few days after that eventful day.

Trained as an architect, I see opportunity where others see dereliction. Cockermouth town centre gave that in spades in late November 2009. Being flooded myself, it was hard to comprehend the task ahead, but to prevent a nervous breakdown, or at least some serious black dog days, I brought together as many people as possible including local businesses, town and local councillors and formed the Cockermouth Shop Front Group. Its task was to encourage, enthuse, persuade, cajole and facilitate any rebuilding work to take a form that didn't just repair the town but improved and enhanced it. To achieve that, resources needed to be pooled, actions coordinated, and irrelevant bureaucracy controlled. The result, a town that gained national and international recognition for its resilience, community strength and complete refusal to be beaten.

It's easy to forget what has been achieved and, in part, that is one of the achievements as no glaring scars of the devastation are obvious to remind us. Some lessons have been learnt and some have been forgotten, but overall we are in a better place now than we were prior to 2009, even after the déjà vu of December 2015.

The only thing that disappoints me is the return of the eagerness of the authorities to follow policy like some sacred text. What the floods of 2009 and the aftermath showed is that when common sense is allowed to reign supreme, the world doesn't fall into chaos. In fact, a great degree of order follows and as a result great things are achieved, as Cockermouth's restoration is an excellent example.

### **Shop Front Heritage Grant Scheme**

The scheme was launched to facilitate the replacement of modern, poorly designed shop fronts with ones that were more in-keeping with Cockermouth's Heritage. Owners of commercial, flood damaged properties were encouraged to submit an application and Allerdale's Conservation Officer undertook a prioritisation exercise to identify those shop fronts that were particularly detrimental to the character of the streetscape. Funding was then allocated to bridge the gap between the like-for-like shopfront replacement costs paid out by the insurance companies and the cost of installing a more appropriate and sympathetic shop front. By the end of the scheme, a total of 31 properties had made such grant aided improvements\*.



Before the flood

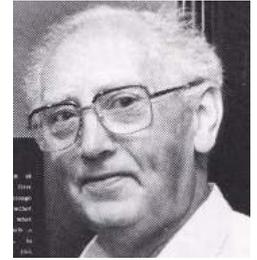
The same shop after post flood renovation.



*\*All of the grant aided shop frontage improvements are recorded in the Civic Trust publication, 'Historic Cockermouth, Main Street Reborn', dated 2013.*

## **People – Bernard Bradbury**

Bernard Bradbury was born in Cheshire and moved to Cockermouth in 1947 to teach maths at Cockermouth Grammar School. He was Head of Department here for nearly 30 years. Bernard always took an active interest in Cockermouth and was fully involved through organisations such as the Quaker Meeting, the Civic Trust, the local history society and the Worker's Education Association. In the 1960s, Bernard produced his first 2 booklets, one a town trail & the other on country walks from the town. When the Civic Society was started, his wife, Mary was a founding member. Bernard joined a bit later.



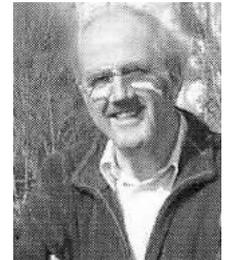
He attended a course on Cockermouth's industrial archaeology, which inspired him to make a photographic record. This led to requests for him to give slide-shows and then to lead further education classes on local history. One thing led to another as his interest in Cockermouth's history further developed. When he retired in 1975, he found the time to write up his researches in his book, 'A History of Cockermouth'. He also produced a series of booklets 'Cockermouth in Pictures'. All of these publications are still available, now updated and published by the Civic Trust. Bernard's research on the Castle enabled him to pioneer the castle tours that continue through to today.

Bernard was always at the centre of things in the Civic Trust. He became Secretary in 1970 followed by Treasurer, and was Chairman from 1985 to 1990. He often led member's activities such as tours round local villages and other places of local historical interest. He was also always at the centre of things whenever anything of historical interest was going on, such as Papcastle archaeology with the Time Team.

Sadly, Bernard died in 2002. He left a fantastic legacy to Cockermouth in terms of his historical research, books and photographs and in the fond memories of people who knew him. He also was responsible for keeping the Civic Trust alive by his gentle persuading of people to join and do things for the civic movement.

## **People – Tom Hughes**

Tom is a Liverpool lad and proud of it. He came to Cockermouth in 1963 when Mr Sanderson at Derwent School 'head hunted' him to come and teach Chemistry and Physics. His wife, Joan, was reluctant to move north at first as she was a 'city girl' at heart, but she came to like it here. When Tom & Joan first arrived, the town was a lot different to what it is now, with a significant number of derelict properties in areas like Waterloo Street and in the yards and courts. Tom taught at Derwent School until 1972, then taught at Salterbeck, later Southfield School in Workington until he retired from teaching. He then spent a few years back at Cockermouth School running the Reprographical Department.



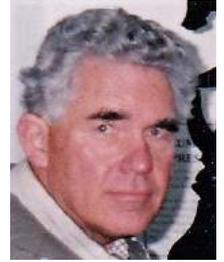
Tom joined the Civic Society in about 1970 when it was still young. He says that he was 'head hunted' by a lady member who lived on Brigham Road. He later joined the Committee and in 1990 he was 'gently persuaded' by Bernard Bradbury to become Chairman. (Bernard had a reputation for 'gently persuading people to do things and take on roles!'). Tom was Chairman for 10 years and kept to his promise that 10 years would be enough.

Tom had a deserved reputation for being 'fanatical' about transport, particularly trains; he was also a keen member of Derwent Railway Society. As a Civic Trust member, Tom campaigned regularly for better transport links for Cockermouth. His biggest campaign success was the instigation of a regular through bus service from Cockermouth to Penrith, linking up with the main railway line, which still operates today. However, his biggest disappointment in Cockermouth is the overall poor public transport links in and around town, and in particular to Carlisle, our County Town, (and beyond to Newcastle). When asked what he would like to see in Cockermouth if he could wave a magic wand, he initially said free beer in the pubs! He then reverted to form and settled on bus shelters at more bus stops around the town.

What Tom likes best about Cockermouth is the tree lined, wide Main Street.

### **People – David Winkworth**

David Winkworth was born in Sidcup, Kent in 1929 and spent his early years in London, Cambridge and Norfolk. He went to work in Bahrain in the 1950s, followed by a stint in Ecuador in the oil industry. He arrived in Cocker mouth in 1967 when his job as a contract chemical engineer with Bechtel brought him to the area to work on the building of the then Ectona Fibres plant near Siddick. When the project was completed, David and his wife, Angela, decided to stay in Cocker mouth.



In 1968, the Winkworths established the New Bookshop in the old Timothy Whites Chemist Building. Angela Winkworth continued to manage this business until she passed it over to their daughter and son in law, and today it still continues to develop.

The idea of a printing museum started in 1979 with the purchase of a largely derelict building next to Wordsworth House. Many items of printing significance were gathered, initially locally, then nationally. By 1993, a purpose built building was completed and the Printing House Museum opened its doors to the public. David enjoyed the acquisition and collection of new objects and kept adding to the museum until his death in 2008.

David had a lifelong interest in books and literature and it was in this context that he helped establish the Cocker mouth Festival in 1981 as its first chairman. The festival has continued through to the present day, although in changing guises.

David was committed to the health and well being of Cocker mouth and as such was an active long term member of the Civic Trust as well as the Chamber of Trade. He served on our committee for many years and undertook roles of Chairman and Deputy Chairman.

### **People – Gordon & Peggy Barnes**

Gordon & Peggy Barnes were stalwarts of the Civic Trust over many years. Gordon was on the Committee and Peggy organised the refreshments. They were a very generous couple. Ian Dodsworth remembers that when he and Maureen first came to Cocker mouth to manage Wordsworth House, Gordon called on their first day here to invite them round for a meal, (*and Bernard Bradbury called later to invite them round to tea!*). Their generosity extended to them leaving a legacy to the Civic Trust. Gordon taught History at Cocker mouth Grammar School and was a colleague of Bernard Bradbury. He also wrote a bit of poetry. Peggy taught PE, (physical education), and enjoyed art.

### **People – John Chakko**

John Mazhuvancheri Chakko was born in 1927 as a British National, but his roots were in Cochin in Kerala, India and he visited India regularly. He was a retired chartered engineer, having worked on the East Coast Main Line electrification scheme. He latterly lived in Cocker mouth, and as a Quaker, was a big supporter of local charities. John was very committed to local causes, being Director of West Cumbria Carers for a period. He was very supportive of Cocker mouth Civic Trust and was a member for many years, although was never persuaded to join the committee. He died in 2009 and left a legacy to the Civic Trust. This was primarily used to both replace a dead tree in Kirkgate and part fund the Town Trail Display Boards.

### **People - Ian Dodsworth**

I was not thinking of mentioning members still serving on committee, but Ian has to be the exception. For one, reaching the age of 80 this year, he has finally decided it is time to resign his role as Treasurer and leave the Committee, giving him more time to pursue his other interests and look after his wife, Maureen. Ian & Maureen came to Cocker mouth for Ian to take up the role of Custodian at Wordsworth House. This role later passed to Maureen, but he continued to take an active interest in the Town and the Civic Trust, serving as Secretary for 3 years and helped organise the Festival. They had a few 'gap years' from Cocker mouth when Maureen became custodian at Rufford Old Hall, but he rejoined the Committee, along with Maureen, after they retired back to Cocker mouth. In recent years he has been Treasurer and, continuing his lifelong interest in books, he became custodian of our books.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Roman</b></p> 	<p>The existence of the Roman Fort of Derwentio at Papcastle has been known for a long time &amp; there have been occasional archaeological digs. However, the Time Team dig in 1999 &amp; more recent investigations by Grampus Heritage Ltd, have shown the very significant extent of the vicus or settlement below the fort down to, and across, the river. The Grampus digs have been community based involving local people and have been open to local school visits. Artefacts are now on display in the Town Hall, a booklet issued and information boards displayed in the village. The Civic Trust has organised public lectures and open days at the digs through Heritage Open Days.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Norman - Medieval</b></p> 	<p>The first written mention of Cockermouth after the Romans left was in 1150 after the Normans had arrived. The building of the Norman Castle on its current site began in the mid 12<sup>th</sup> century and the town developed below it into a typical, planned medieval town, with a broad main street and burgage plots along both sides leading to a back lane. This medieval structure of the town centre carries through to the present day. Bernard Bradbury began castle tours in 1970 &amp; these were continued by Mary Bradbury until 2011. Since then, castle tours have been led by a number of members of the Civic Trust. A key feature of our town trail is the yards and courts that originate from the medieval burgage plots.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Tudor to Jacobean</b></p> 	<p>Very little direct evidence remains of buildings of this period. An exception is Percy House on Market Place. Its origins lie in the early to mid 16<sup>th</sup> century, (Tudor), and it received a, still visible, plaster ceiling in the principal first floor room in 1598, (Elizabethan). The rear wing was probably added at the same time. 'Old Hall', a once attractive Elizabethan mansion, was demolished in 1973, but a plaque recording the visit of Mary Queen of Scots in 1568 remains in Bitter Beck car park.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Georgian</b></p> 	<p>Cockermouth is often referred to as a 'Georgian Town', not because its origins are from this period, but the significant rebuild and expansion due to the industrial revolution at this time dominate the architectural landscape of the town centre, so much of what you see on the Town Trail is Georgian. This includes mills and workers houses in the yards &amp; courts, which have more recently been converted into modern day usage such as accommodation.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Victorian &amp; early C20<sup>th</sup></b></p> 	<p>There are a number of individual buildings remaining around the town from this period. Examples include the now Manor House Hotel (1847), All Saints Church (1852), Christ Church (1865), Kirkgate Centre (1869), Old Police Station (1894), library (1903), The Grand Theatre (1913)</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Modern</b></p> 	<p>There has been significant new build in Cockermouth in modern times. Housing estates, commercial &amp; industrial units have expanded the size of the town along with infill &amp; conversion of usage with the town centre. The Civic Trust throughout its life has strived for quality of build, whether for new or conversion of existing properties, and to ensure that the character of the town as a unique place to live is maintained. This does not mean 'pastiche', but does mean that new build &amp; modernisation should be of good design and should complement the existing buildings. The Civic Trust has issued certificates of commendation to a number of such projects over the years. Cockton's Yard received a National Civic Trust Award for its restoration &amp; conversion. We nominated the new health centre building for a Civic Voice award in 2015.</p>

### **And finally, if Cockermouth hadn't had a Civic Trust for the last 50 years:**

- The south side of Market Place may well have been demolished and replaced
- Waterloo Street may have been completely re-developed
- There would be no Kirkgate centre, just a larger car park
- Main Street would probably not been revitalised to the same extent following the 2009 floods
- We may well have had on street parking charges introduced in the town centre
- The confluence area would have remained neglected
- There may not be a Town Trail for visitors and locals
- Castle tours may never have happened
- And there may not have been an equivalent organisation campaigning for the future heritage, ambience and pride in our town of Cockermouth.

**So here is to the next 50 years and hoping that Cockermouth Civic Trust continues to live on and achieve for the good of our historic town.**

### **So what are we doing now?**

Our terms of reference have been updated over the years, but are essentially the same now as in 1967. In summary, the Trust is established for the public benefit for the following purposes:-

- (a) To protect and preserve and stimulate public interest in the area comprising the town of Cockermouth and its surrounding area,
- (b) To promote high standards of town planning and architecture
- (c) To secure the preservation, conservation, development and improvement of features of general public amenity or historic or public interest in the area of benefit.

Our current activities to meet these aims include:

- Monthly members meetings during the winter months, with reviews of topical issues & lectures on subjects relevant to the Trust's aims
- Reviews of planning applications with formal assessments of significant developments
- Member's visits to other towns or places of interest
- Member's annual lunch with speaker
- Pro-active reviews of the development of Cockermouth as a place to live in & be proud of
- Representation on relevant groups established by the local authorities, (etc), as invited
- Maintenance & development of publications, including JB Bradbury's 'History of Cockermouth' & the 'Cockermouth in Pictures' series.
- Maintenance of the Town Trail & offering occasional tours to both locals & other interested groups.
- Leading tours of Cockermouth Castle.
- Organising Heritage Open Days events in Cockermouth each September.

Specific objectives for 2017 include assisting in the development of the Neighbourhood Plan, working with Allerdale BC to achieve a satisfactory Local Heritage List and promoting the town's Conservation Areas as part of the national celebration of 50 years of Conservation Areas.

### **So if you are not a member, why not join us?**

Your membership supports the objectives of the Civic Trust in Cockermouth and enables you to participate in our activities. It also gives you membership of Civic Voice, the national organisation for civic societies which has a voice at parliamentary level. Individual membership costs £7.50 per year, with additional members at the same household of £5 per person. If you would like to join, please write to 'The Treasurer, Cockermouth & District Civic Trust, 1 Banks Court, Market Place, CA13 9NG, enclosing your fee and details of your name, address, telephone number & email address.