

Annual Reports

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT, 2001, by Robin Morris



"That Herald has just announced the second Dissolution of Blackfriars!"

'Carpe diem, quam minimum credula postero' - Horace

In many ways the year 2000 has been a sad period for us. The deaths of Sylvia Milton and Allan Russell have deprived us of two of our most diligent workers. Keith Savery also died during the year and he in the past had been a keen supporter of the Trust and served on a number of Committees. It reminds us all that we should take to heart the advice of Horace that we should all live for the day.



"When we built the Priory they said it would be near the shops!"

On a very much more positive note I have to report that Gloucester City Council and Gloucester Historic Buildings have appointed Nerissa Kranz as Gloucester Historic Buildings Officer. Nerissa spent some time as Conservation Officer with Mendip District Council before she eventually joined Forest of Dean District Council dealing with Buildings at Risk. She has now prepared a draft Buildings at Risk report of buildings falling in this category within the City of Gloucester. The draft is comprehensive and a copy of it is available at my office for inspection by any member interested in having a look at it.

The work on Well Cross, Well House and Red Well on Robinswood Hill have now been completed and the defects liability period ended on the 19th December last year. Nerissa is currently looking at the unsightly reservoir structure adjacent to the Red Well with a view to seeing whether it can be either relocated or put under ground. The difficulty is that it is used as the reservoir for irrigation of the golf course.

There are a number of other matters being dealt with through Gloucester Historic Buildings at the present time. These include repairs to Llanthony Priory wall, minor holding repairs at St. Michael s Tower and the removal of the TIC lettering from the leadwork. Another interesting bit of housekeeping being undertaken is that a mould of the closing ring off the door of St. Nicholas Church has been commissioned in order that a replica can be produced at a cost of some £550 so that it can be placed back on the door of the church. Further copies could also be purchased if anyone was interested again at a figure of £550. Four new plaques have also been commissioned for The Crown Inn, Kimbrose, Mavardine Lane and Rudhall Bell Foundry. Discussions about the plaques have been going on for a long time particularly as to the wording. Hopefully all has now been resolved and the new plaques will appear in their appropriate sites in the not too distant future.

Our Millennium Project has made great progress since I reported to you in the last annual report. The necessary funding to commission the sculptor has been raised and by the time you read this report I hope that the work will be well in hand. There have been some last minute negotiations regarding the form of the contract and precise location of the sculpture. Again I hope these difficulties have been resolved.

Comparatively recently Nigel Spry told me that the proposed site of the sculpture had been excavated by the City authorities and that nothing had been found in the way of service conduits which would present any difficulties. There were further negotiations with the City regarding the material from which the plinth was to be constructed. It has now been finally agreed that the plinth will be of finely finished concrete which will be more durable and (hopefully) vandalproof rather than natural stone. With the good offices of Michael Pullon, Graham Howell Managing Director of Barnwood Builders has agreed to donate the plinth and to deliver it onto site. We owe a debt of gratitude both to Michael and to Graham for their kind assistance in this context. As I write the sculpture should be in place not later than the 31st October 2001. Once I have a firm timetable I hope to arrange a suitable dedication service and unveiling. I am keeping my fingers crossed it all goes to plan!

Congratulations to the sub-committee who have worked so hard on the Millennium Project and to all members of the trust who have contributed so generously towards the fund. I am sure that once the Sculpture is in its place it will become both a tourist attraction and one of the main publicity logos for the City. Well done to you all.