

Ludlow Heritage News

Published twice a year by LUDLOW CIVIC SOCIETY

No.43 SUMMER 2006

www.ludlowcivicsociety.org

FREE

GARDEN HOUSES OR GAZEBOS

Julia Ionides

In our last issue we proposed a series of articles on aspects of building in and around Ludlow. We begin with Garden Houses:

The fine weather of an English summer is probably the best in the world in its own way. At this time the activities of the house spread into the garden. But then it might rain. As we sit and read a book in a comfortable chair in the garden, the rain would not be welcome! Well, maybe we need a shelter of some sort. With a shelter, we could also dine outside and look out at the countryside.

These are not new ideas; garden buildings, of many types are part of our history. They often began as places of retreat or solitary meditation like hermitages but became associated more with pleasure and recreation, and were often buildings of architectural fantasy on a small scale.

A gazebo differs from a summerhouse in that the gazebo is placed in an elevated position so that one can 'gaze about'. This might be the origin of the word, which seems to have appeared about 1752. Or it may be based on a scholarly joke a humorous allusion to the word 'gaze' imitating the future tense, just as the basin used in the Catholic mass is a 'lavabo', meaning 'I shall wash'. Others think it may come from an unknown oriental word. The Scottish or North Country equivalent is the marvellous 'sitooterie'. The well-known Turkish word 'kiosk' also started life as a summerhouse; Topkapi Palace in Istanbul is full of wonderful ones.

Shropshire can boast of many garden houses including two of the most famous gazebos in the country. The oldest and most distinguished is the tree house at Pitchford, dating back to at least the early eighteenth century, built in an ancient lime tree. Originally it was a half timbered cube, but at some time in the eighteenth century it was rendered and was almost certainly worked on by the Shrewsbury architect, Thomas Farnolls Pritchard, as the Gothick interior is very much in his style.

Pritchard may have also designed the other wonderful gazebo, which is in Ludlow itself, in the garden behind 27 Broad Street. He carried out the 'modernisation' of the house itself and probably designed or adapted the gazebo at the same time, around 1764, again in a Gothick style and re using some of the stained glass, which may have come from the Castle. The motifs on the gazebo, the ogee arched windows and the roundels have been compared to the motifs on the Iron Bridge, linking Pritchard with both structures.

The gazebo, which has been meticulously restored by its present owner, Mr George Williams, is a two-storey building with delightful views of the garden, the town walls and Ludford from the windows on three sides of the top storey. There is a fireplace for chillier days. The lower storey may have been used for dining or for the preparation of food, a common practice.

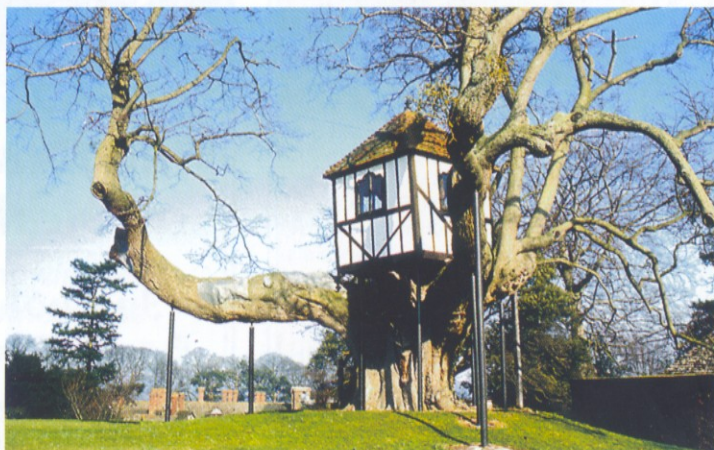
Originally, a banquet meant the dessert at the end of a meal, which was often served in a different place from the main meal. This meant that the servants could clear the dining area in the house, perhaps for dancing later on, and guests could admire the gardens or the views while enjoying wine and delicious sweet food in the gazebo.

Pritchard also designed a 'garden temple' for Francis Turner Blythe at Broseley Hall. It looks as if the columns are made of cast iron, but they are in fact wooden, and the temple is still standing today.

Tucked away in the corner of the garden of the handsome Georgian house, which is now part of Ludlow College, is another eighteenth century gazebo with a pointed roof and dentil course under the eaves. Inside there is a fireplace with a very tall chimney on the outside. As the house was built around 1775, the gazebo



The Gazebo at 27 Broad Street (with kind permission of Mr George Williams)



The treehouse at Pitchford Hall

Photo: Madge Moran

probably dates from that time. Its position on the edge of the Town Wall means that there are spectacular views over the Linney and out to the hills beyond.

Just north of Ludlow was the large Jacobean mansion of Wootton. The only known picture of it is by Mrs Stackhouse Acton, included in our recently published book of her paintings.* Wootton was demolished around 1840, but a gazebo, which appears in those paintings still remains overlooking the river.

There is a different sort of gazebo at Burford House, near Tenbury Wells. Perhaps this pleasing and ornate building was used for music. Its form suggests that it could have acted as an acoustic canopy, projecting the sound out, so that people strolling in the gardens could enjoy the music, while the musicians and their precious instruments were sheltered from a passing shower. Music was an important part of any eighteenth century social event. However, the building started life as a dove cote, and the brick front was added to the stone built at the back. Mr William Bowles of the Vauxhall Glassworks built Burford House in 1728, and the Bowles coat of arms, now on the front of the building, may have come from the old entrance gates.**

So when you build a gazebo or summerhouse in your garden, remember its ancient origins and enjoy your desserts.

*Available from the Dog Rose Press, £25.
Tel. 01584 874567

**With thanks to Peter Baxter, manager of Burford House Garden, for this information.

Among the best gardens in which to see garden buildings in this country are Painshill in Surrey (the subject of a recent delightful talk to the Society by Janie Burford), Stowe in Buckinghamshire and the Rococo Garden at Painswick in Gloucestershire. Closer to home, the tradition is continued by Mr Hepworth at Elton Hall where the garden is occasionally open to the public.



The interior of the Broad Street Gazebo



The Gazebo at Wootton



The Gazebo at Ludlow College



The Garden Temple at Brosely Hall



The Gazebo at Burford House

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Volunteers in St Leonard's Churchyard



Volunteers in St Leonard's Churchyard

FRIENDS OF ST. LEONARD'S CHURCHYARD

The Friends of St. Leonard's Churchyard are a group of local residents who are keen to protect the churchyard, its graves, the wildlife and the picnic areas. A working group was formed which created the 'Friends' and established a programme of ongoing maintenance. The Friends are able to apply for funding to pay for any major expenditure, and they hope to increase public awareness of the importance of this historical and peaceful site so close to the town centre.

The history of the site goes back to the 14th century, when, in 1349, Laurence de Ludlow founded a Carmelite friary, which remained there until its dissolution by Henry VIII in 1538. The friary buildings, which have been partly excavated, were sited under and to the north of the Victorian chapel. In 1824, when the medieval churchyard at St. Laurence's was full, a new burial ground for the parish was opened on the site of the friary. It began as a one-acre site, but was then enlarged to three acres. The present building, the Victorian Chapel of Ease, was designed by George Gilbert Scott and was opened in 1871. Early during the First World War, space ran out in the burial ground, and a new Borough cemetery was opened.

There are five listed war graves in the churchyard, some of which are accessible to view. The Friends hope to clear access to all five graves, thus upgrading the status of the churchyard with the War Graves Commission.

The churchyard has been designated a wildlife reserve the Parochial Church Council co-operating with the Shropshire Wildlife Trust. It has become home to a variety of animals, birds and insects that can shelter in its trees, ground cover and many interesting plants.

In 1990 it was decided to make the churchyard, as well as a wildlife sanctuary, a place that people could enjoy. With this in mind, pathways were created and seats and a

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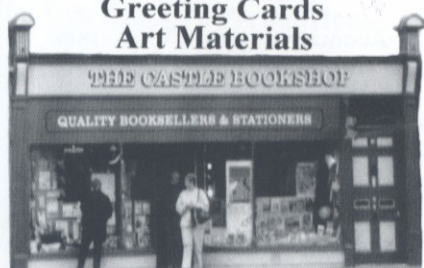
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The Allegheny River

picnic area were installed.

In February this year, many volunteers helped with a clean up in the churchyard. Great progress has been made, and it has been noticed that many more casual visitors are stopping to look at the gravestones and memorials where inscriptions that have been hidden for years, can now be read. In March, trees were felled that had been identified by a Council arboreal expert as diseased, damaged or dangerous. These were mainly sycamores, which were, in any case, self seeded and not really suited to a churchyard. The removal of these trees will allow the ancient yews and other indigenous trees more space and light in which to flourish. The Friends are researching and taking advice on suitable trees to be planted to replace those that have been felled. Incidentally, there is a plentiful supply of wood and mulch available free to anyone who cares to collect it. The Friends need more people to help with the conservation of this lovely place, so please join us today. If anyone would like more information about the churchyard, or would like to join the Friends of St. Leonard's, please contact John Aitken (877279) or Julian Watson (879012).

**LUDLOW USA:
LUDLOW, PENNSYLVANIA AND PORT
LUDLOW, WASHINGTON STATE**
Jim Gosling

The first article in this series on the Ludlows of America focused on a mid western ghost town, the site of the infamous 'Ludlow Massacre' in Colorado, a story closely linked to the westward expansion of the USA, and the supporting flood of European immigrant families during the 19th century. Ludlow, Colorado is an example of an American Ludlow linked to railroad development and mineral extraction coal. The same can be said of Ludlow, California where the main line railroad was also linked to gold and bauxite extraction. In both these cases problems arose when the minerals ran out, leading to the extinction of Ludlow, Colorado. Its Californian twin hangs on as an interstate (motorway) service centre. A similar story can be found with two other Ludlows, in Pennsylvania and Washington State, but with a more satisfactory ending. For both, the lifeblood was timber, not minerals.

Ludlow, Pennsylvania (McKean County).

This Ludlow is found in North West Pennsylvania in the heart of the Allegheny National Forest. A Charles Fox pioneered the timber industry in this part of the Alleghenies some time before the Civil War. He built a 'flash dam' and giant trees were 'swamped' down to the Tionesta Creek and floated down the Allegheny River to Pittsburgh. Foxdam and Foxburg became important logging centres. But once the timber was cleared, Fox had to move his logging operations further north to the area surrounding present day Ludlow.

The town of Ludlow, Pennsylvania owes its site to the coming of the Philadelphia and Erie Railroad in 1863. A stop and siding became the focus of a settlement surrounded by farmland derived from the now empty forest clearings. Fox sold out his holdings to Andrew H. Ludlow in 1870, and when the town was founded a year later, it took Ludlow's name.

Ludlow's one claim to fame was the setting up and testing of the very first electrically operated railroad block signal in the United States, in 1872. It did prosper to some extent subsequent to the finding of gas in 1882. The prospector, David Curtis, was hoping for oil but when he found gas he ensured that, 'fortuitously', he had several barrels of crude oil to hand. These were thrown on to the gas as the well was drilled in, the hope being to raise the value of adjoining leases. However, the gas that was found proved to be prolific, not only allowing the establishment of a carbon black industry in Ludlow, but also lighting up its streets.

From then on, there is not much to be said of Ludlow, Pennsylvania. Like many a town established in the second half of the nineteenth century, it reached its population peak near the turn of the century (1045 in 1888) and then gradually declined. Today it is a small tourist town located on Route 6 within the heart of the recreational forest area. The population of about 500 supports the many visitors who seek the hiking and cross country skiing facilities on offer.

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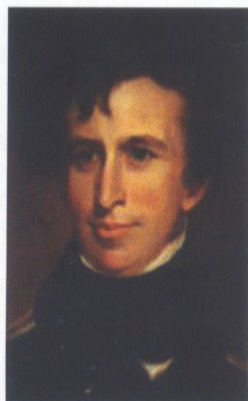
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Port Ludlow, Washington State

Port Ludlow represents the furthest westward advance of a Ludlow to the very shores of the Pacific Ocean, or, to be more accurate, to the shores of Puget Sound just across the water from the city of Seattle.

It was in July 1853 that Captain W.C. Talbot and Cyrus Walker dropped anchor in Discovery Bay, Puget sound, with the aim of setting up a sawmill to access the wealth of the north west's timber forests. In doing so, they established one of America's largest logging and commercial organisations, Pope and Talbot. But they had been preceded the previous year by a William Sayward who had already built a mill in Ludlow Bay. The bay had been named in 1841 by the naval surveyor Lieutenant Charles Wilkes after a hero of the 1812 war between the United States and Great Britain - Lieutenant Augustus C. Ludlow. Ludlow was a native of New York who fell in the epic battle between the USS Chesapeake and HMS Shannon fought off Boston on June 1st 1813 (the battle features in a Patrick O'Brian novel). Sayward's logging mill therefore became known as Port Ludlow. Talbot and Walker had to set up across the water at Port Gamble.

The Ludlow mill had a chequered history over the next eighty years. It was leased to Phinney and Associates in 1858 but eventually passed into Talbot's hands as the Puget Mill Company in 1878. The 1880s saw an



Lieutenant Charles Wilkes

expansion of the mill and the development of a bustling town of some 500 inhabitants with store, post office, school, the Phoenix Hotel and Cyrus Walker's grand 'Admiralty House', later converted to another hotel. There was also a ship building company adjacent to the mill run by the Hall brothers. Some 30 two and three masted schooners were launched over the period 1873 to 1890.

Of particular interest are the census findings over the years 1860 to 1920. The 1860 census shows a population entirely linked to the mill, shipbuilding and the hotel.

Owner: A. Phinney	1
Clerks	2
Engineers etc.	8
Carpenters, sawyers, labourers	18
Lumbermen	51
Seamen, ship's carpenters	23
Merchant	1
Hotelkeeper, cooks etc.	6
Wives(3), children, housekeeper	13
TOTAL	124

This population came from New England, primarily from Maine, with all names having British origin, and also from the UK itself. The 1871 census, population 212, showed similar origins. Later censuses (1912/1920) show a gradual replacement of British names by Scandinavian, and an increasing proportion of wives and families. The intervening censuses are not readily available but will be worth researching to follow up the changes in what was a very local and tightly controlled population.

By the late 1890s the mill struggled to perform and operated well below capacity, and, although modernised in 1905, the land, mill and ship building businesses were sold in 1925 and finally closed in 1935. All was reacquired by Pope and Talbot in 1938 when all the buildings except one were barged to Port Gamble.

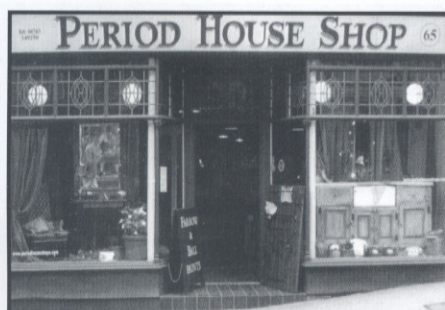
Port Ludlow in effect disappeared just before the war but Pope and Talbot retained title to the land and, post war, they began to realize its value by developing the site as a residential resort. It now boasts a 300



Port Ludlow Marina

slip marina, a 27 hole championship golf course, restaurants, beach accommodation etc. The whole was sold to Port Ludlow Associates in 2001 for \$16.7m. Port Ludlow is today 'A Village in the Woods by the Bay', a retirement and resort community on the Olympic Peninsula.

The village is administered by a voluntary non-profit council and its website can be accessed. Meetings seem very familiar and are primarily linked to planning and development matters! It was awarded the title of the 'Best Residential Community for Active Adults in the United States' by the National Association of Home Builders, a far remove from its logging days. Port Ludlow forms the ideal retirement retreat one offers for a transfer?



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READERS' LETTERS

Sir,

How pleasant to read Mr Holcombe's honest and objective article (Winter 2005/6) explaining the labyrinth of local government. (How pleasant, also, to locate the responsibility for the Craven Arms roundabout.) As I understand it, the 1974 changes were designed to replace the shires and were pushed through in the dying days of the Heath administration. It would be nice to see them reversed. Alternatively, as Mr Holcombe suggests, we could simply abolish the whole lot.

Yours etc. W.H.Grove 1, St. Milborough Close, The Marches, Ludlow SY8 1XS

Sir,

Reading through your Winter 2004/5 issue of Ludlow heritage news, I noticed the extract from 'Country Life' written by Anthony Everitt. What pretentious and patronizing rubbish! Ludlow never was "a run-down backwater". There are many people who fondly remember the Ludlow of old before it became a town full of gastro-pubs and trinket shops and home to "eminent people from all spheres of life" - presumably from the southeast, which, one is led to believe, is the only civilized part of Britain. In the days before Tesco, the new Library and featureless urban sprawl (I refer to your aerial photographs) Ludlow was a bustling market town with a distinctive Shropshire character with a wide range of busy shops and businesses. I used to think that we would like to move back into Ludlow after retirement but those dreams have faded. Neither of us wants to live in the Ludlow described by Mr Everitt, which, unfortunately, is what the town has become.

Yours etc. Bob Flemons, Ford House, Orleton, Ludlow SY8 4HW

Any responses to articles, queries or suggestions will be gratefully received. Please address letters to: The Editor, Heritage News, Broad Gate, Ludlow, SY8 1NJ.

The Civic Society warmly congratulates Alan Poulton and Colin Richards on the award of MBE in the New Year's Honours List.

Alan was born and educated in Ludlow. He then qualified in Electrical Engineering at Shrewsbury Technical College. He spent his formative years enjoying the delights of Whitcliffe and the river. When he joined the Civil Service MOD Engineering Section it meant regular postings away, but he returned frequently to see friends and family. While in hospital he met his wife, Margaret Toop, a Staff Nurse at Ludlow and District Hospital. They married at St. Laurence's in 1966. He retired in 1979 and since 1980 he has been involved with Shropshire BBC Radio Advisory Service, the C.A.B., R.N.L.I., and Ludlow Millennium and Jubilee Celebrations. He continues to be actively involved with Ludford Parish Council, Friends of Whitcliffe Common and the Teme Weirs Trust. Through all these activities and achievements for the town of Ludlow, the enjoyment gained from the people he has worked with has added greatly to his enjoyment of life.

Colin featured recently in Brian Viner's column in the property pages of *The Independent*. This regular column tells of the changes inherent in leaving a life in London for one set in North Herefordshire's countryside. Ludlow is often featured. The article, from which the extract below is gathered, tells of a letter received from Michael Phillips about the burnt timbers recently uncovered at 28 Corve Street. Brian Viner, having visited the house in Corve Street, called on Colin Richards...

...I wandered across the road to the offices of the South Shropshire District Council, and asked for Colin Richards, Ludlow's Conservation Officer. Mr Richards will shortly receive the MBE for his services to conservation in the area, and it doesn't take long chatting to him to understand why. He has spent 16 years encouraging local craftsmen to learn traditional building skills

so that when repairs to ancient buildings are carried out, they are done not only sensitively, but also in a manner that might last another 400 years. He has also overseen the export of these skills to places as disparate as Romania and Sweden, overseeing exchange schemes whereby experts in oak carpentry from Shropshire work alongside Swedish timber framers, learning from each other...

As for Mr Phillips's house, Mr Richards said that the burnt timbers showed that the fire tackled by townsfolk passing pails of water in a human chain from the river Corve had extended much further along Corve Street than had been thought, another reminder that tranquil Ludlow has known intense trauma. He also said that the demolition of the auction rooms next door had enabled him to organise an archaeological dig which finished just before Christmas, and that one of the items unearthed had been a comb made out of bone.

'The Romans had bone combs,' he said, his eyes sparkling as only those of a conservation officer mentioning Romans can. 'But actually we think it dates from the 11th century. We also found pits full of bones, which was quite worrying, although they turned out to be animal bones. Obviously, some kind of butchery took place there, although the strange thing was that one pit was full of front legs, another full of back legs. At first we thought we'd found evidence of some kind of ritual slaughter.' In Ludlow? Never!

Brian Viner, *The Independent* 1st March 2006. See also Brian Viner, 'Tales of the Country', Simon and Shuster.

We are all looking forward to the completion and publication of Colin's DVD/Video that the Society, with others, has sponsored. The title and cover are shown opposite. We hope that it will be available soon in the shops. It is full of interest not only to the conservation expert but also to the layman.

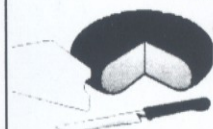
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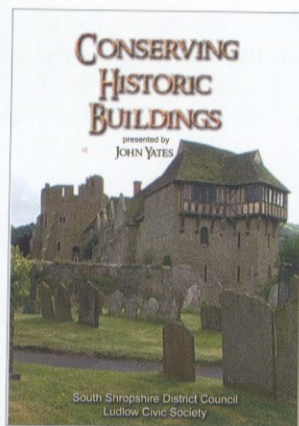


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LUDLOW CIVIC SOCIETY COMMITTEE NEWS CHAIRMAN'S NOTES SUMMER 2006

The end of my four-year stint as the Society's Chairman approaches fast. The AGM is on May 10th and I do hope there will be a good attendance. Several long-standing members of the Committee will also be standing down, so there will be vacancies to be filled. Please bear in mind that nominations for election must reach the Hon. Secretary in writing at least 14 days before the AGM i.e. by 26th April.

Having known and admired Ludlow since we lived in Weobley in the 1950s, it was natural that when Ruth and I came to live in the town in 1990, one of the first things we did was to join the Civic Society. I didn't expect to take a very active part let alone be Chairman. It was an unexpected succession of events, starting with the mad proposal (which angered many of our members) to build an ugly concrete and glass building at 18 Castle Street, and ending with the unforeseen departure of Patrick Beautelement to live in Malvern after only one year as chairman, that led to this outcome. I have always felt myself to be rather poorly qualified for the job, having little knowledge of either architecture or history. Luckily, I have had the support of

a knowledgeable and hard working Committee, so I have been able to learn on the job. I have enjoyed it. I thought it was worth doing and the support from the Committee and from the whole membership made it easy.

Of course we have not succeeded in all we have attempted. We wanted to stop the Eco Park. This was largely because we thought it was the thin end of a very long wedge to develop land on the far side of the by pass. It seems we were right, as planning permission was given last year for an estate of over 90 houses at Rocks Green, beyond the by pass. This development was based on the demand for affordable homes. We shall see in due course how affordable they are and who occupies them.

Amongst other battle honours earned by the Society in recent years have been our resistance to the idea of a retail park on Foldgate Lane, our opposition to the closure of the Raven, our opposition to over development of the Whittles site on Fishmore Road, and, perhaps one of the most critical and unbelievable of all, the proposal to build five dwellings on a cramped site adjacent to St. Laurence's and the Reader's House (now to be the subject of a Public Inquiry on June 26th).

But we don't expect to win 'em all. Losing some, though, is not a reason for giving up. Even now there seem to be two proposals in the wind, not yet formalised, that will require critical scrutiny. One is to sacrifice the green land between the College in Lower Mill Street and the riverbank to the never-ending demands of car parking. The other is to develop the market square with some semi permanent building or buildings, thus putting at risk one of the few extensive open spaces in the town. The pleasing prospect of the Castle might be obscured, and so might the views of Whitcliffe and Bringewood. If there is no opposition, we can be sure that both of these proposals will go ahead.

Of course, we are not on our own in caring about the future of Ludlow, and we have supported the initiatives of others in such worthwhile projects as the Millennium Green, the Weirs Restoration, CittaSlow and improved traffic management. To mark

our 50th birthday, we have sponsored and contributed to the visual record (on DVD and Videotape) of appropriately gentle restoration methods for ancient and historic buildings, initiated by Colin Richards, Conservation Officer at SSDC. This will soon be publicly available.

All in all, it has been a memorable four years for me, and I hope my successors will enjoy their innings as much as I have done. Over 200 years ago, John Philpot Curran wisely said that the price of freedom was eternal vigilance. The same is true of the beauty of Ludlow. It has survived many centuries, but inattention or carelessness or mistaken surrender to passing fashion could quickly destroy it forever.

The Civic Society is not alone in favouring sensible conservation and fighting daft developments, but it has always been amongst the leaders. I feel sure it will continue to be so.

James McFarlane

MEMBERSHIP

The 50th Anniversary edition of Heritage News, published in the autumn of 2004, is still proving popular and supplies are still available at the Tourist Information Centre in Ludlow town square.

Although we will be holding back a box of 200 for use in case of need, the balance will be distributed via the Tourist Information Centre until they run out.

This current edition will also become available at the same place from the end of May.

Annual membership is holding steady at just over 270, but with Life Membership dropping slowly year-by-year, total membership will inevitably decline gradually.

When you have finished with your copy of this edition please pass it on to anyone you think may be interested in joining the Society. There is an application form on the back page.

Michael Coleman Smith

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EVENTS

The New Year began with an excellent lecture by Bill Lloyd-Kitchen on oriental rugs, including many slides and many actual examples. This was followed by Julia Ionides who gave a much appreciated lecture on Mrs Stackhouse Acton, artist, historian and conservationist. Then we had a fascinating talk with excellent slides from Janie Burford on the restoration of the gardens at Painshill Park, Surrey. She dedicated the talk to the well-known architectural historian, Giles Worsley, who had been one of her collaborators until his untimely death earlier this year. We finished with Sir Leslie Fielding, retired diplomat and one of our members, who spoke memorably about global warming.

Prue Bellak

2005-2006 Officers & Committee Members

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LUDLOW MUSIC SOCIETY
2006/7 SEASON

All music lovers will be interested in the new season of concerts promoted by Ludlow Music Society at Moor Park for the new 2006/7 season. The opening concert features the Plane Dukes Rahman Trio on Saturday, September 30th, playing a varied programme including the Mozart 'Kegelstatt' Trio

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Further details can be obtained from the Hon. Secretary Mrs Alma Cogswell (01588 660535) or e mail: alma@inextenso.com

If you care about Ludlow and its surroundings please complete the application form (or a copy) below and send it in now.

I am currently a UK taxpayer.

Address

Postcode