

Hastings Trust

Quarterly

Issue 17

October 1997



Christine Goldschmidt and Michael Foster MP. accepting a cheque towards the Trust's new home from Michael Hayday of Investors in Society

A True Home at Last!

New opportunities, new challenges and the new home with the equipment and extra staff to meet them.

The Trust is moving from 11 Havelock Road to 35 Robertson Street, Hastings TN34 1HT on November 3rd. All those who haven't done so should see the blue leaflet which lists the services to be given by the new Resource Centre that will occupy two floors of the finely restored Victorian building. The Centre will be, as the leaflet says, 'a meeting place where local people will be given effective means to work together for the good of the town'. The superb frontage will also provide a vastly more attractive and welcoming public face for the Trust. There will (eventually) be a Café open from 10am to 10pm, computers linked to the internet, a library and reading room cum meeting space as well as access to the Trust's innovative new databases including the Tools for Community Regeneration database - a world-first. SRB funding, as it stands, means that the full and spectacular complement of IT equipment (at least eight new top of the range computers) will not be in place until the next financial year. The new building will also house, in its excellent dry and spacious basement, workshops for BTCV training.

Phone, fax and e-mail numbers remain the same. A telephone service only will be operating from the moving date till the 9th of November. Our doors will be open to the public from Monday 10th of November.

Civic Pride Award

Receiving the shield and a cheque for £150 for the top organisation in the Civic Pride Environment and Community Awards this year, brought the most enormous grin to my face and lots of backslapping and congratulations. This was both cherry and icing on the cake.

To load the cake even higher, the "Wheels" Project was nominated as runner-up. If my grin was wide, you should have seen Project Manager, Matt Prestedge's.

To be absolutely serious, local recognition of the work that the Trust and its volunteers

and related projects have undertaken throughout the Borough over a number of years, is worth more than shields or money, wonderful though they are. It means that the Hastings Trust is fulfilling its aims within the community.

So, a big thank you to the Hastings Day Committee for its recognition and support for all the volunteers of Hastings, whose numbers are legion.

Christine Goldschmidt

The AGM

The Trust was very grateful to Vassa and his staff at the High Beech Hotel; our hosts of this year's AGM. The venue was just big enough, the amenities were good and the buffet was scrumptious.

80 people attended the evening of which 22 were Trust members and 3 new members were signed up.

In her short talk on the DTA, Christine gave us all a clear picture of how the Trust as a founder member of the Development Trust's Association plays a significant roll on the national stage and an example of the achievements and goals of other like-minded Trusts around the country.

There was a tremendous BUZZ of success and achievement winging out from the stands that were set up by "Buildings at Risk", Resource Centre, "Wheels" "OASIS (Ore Advice Support & Information Service)" and "Projects". I am sure that like me, it gave all members a feeling of pride in being associated with Hastings Trust. It was also evident that the staff and volunteers are up beat, hard working and very conscientious. Special congratulations should go to Matt and his team from the "Wheels" project for a very well presented stand.

On behalf of the Trust, I would like to give a big thanks to all our guests that night. The input, exchange of ideas and offers of support we received during the informal part of the evening were extremely encouraging.

Finally I will leave you all with the request I made to all members in the last sentence of my report. **"SO I ASK YOU ALL TO GO OUT AND PROMOTE HASTINGS TRUST"**

The Trust's Board of Directors comprises:-

George Adams (AJK)
Cllr Pam Brown (HBC nomination)
Dennis Collins
Cllr Godfrey Daniel (ESCC nomination)
Stephen Hinton (Chair)
Professor Michael Hunter
Tim McDonald
Alan Privett
Don Richardson (Vice-Chair)
Paul Smith (Company Secretary & Treasurer)
John F.C. Turner
Christine Wilson (Burtons' St. Leonards Society)

**Rest In Peace
GEORGE HAY
Hastings Trust Member
1991 - 1997**

It was with enormous sadness that we learned of the recent death of one of Hastings' great thinkers, author and "Man of Letters" - George Hay.

George was a cheerful and lively character, with a warm and generous nature; always adventurous with his thoughts and visions.

A friend and colleague, I came to know him through our mutual love of poetry and books and our involvement with Hastings Arts and the Riviera Gallery.

George was a pioneer of many projects, and among his many achievements was Hastings' first Sci-Fi convention and the

establishment of the Sci-Fi library now at Liverpool University.

His most recent project was our collaboration on the formation of LOGOS and the publication of our first booklet (by local novelist Fred Ball on the life of Robert Tressell).

George was a valued and committed member of Hastings Trust. Hastings and the world has lost a great ambassador for the past, the present and the future.

Our thoughts are with Mollie Gillam who has lost a very dear friend.

Dave Arnold



Wheels Workshops

Since the last newsletter, Wheels has made very strong progress. We have completed our first 36 week training period, during which time the first Wheels racing mini was completed. Many employable skills have been taught resulting in 3 trainees finding jobs and another 3 returning to the project as instructors. There has been no conflict between trainees and only one cut thumb is reported in the accident book.

Staff

Caroline Studley has moved on to new pastures and project manager, Matt, now has Sarah "Bubbles" Taylor assisting full time in the office. Mick Prestedge is also a new and welcome member of the team. He will be promoting the project within the commercial sector, organising work programmes and jointly assisting Matt and Sarah in all areas of

fund raising. The project currently has 7 volunteer instructors.

Training

First Aid training is still on offer from the police and will be extended to the new trainees.

Sarah is attending a 10 part induction course at Xtrax and similar training will be sought for Mick.

Current News

We have increased our sessions from 3 to 7 per week. Trainee numbers have been reduced from 12 to 8 per sessions, making the workshop a much safer environment and increasing the attention given to each individual. We are also far less dependent upon our volunteers as a result.

Ex-trainees have been attending motor-cross schooling with Matt, and the results have been good. They will also begin driving tuition sessions on 15th November. The sessions will be held at Hillcrest School and will give Matt a chance to access their ability prior to entering competitions.

Enhancement Projects

Following the completion of the "High Street Garden" the Trust's resources have travelled westward to the Town Centre. In conjunction with the move to our new HQ in Robertson Street, plans are in the pipe line to undertake enhancement work in the "Trinity Triangle" area, just a stone's throw away.

The project includes restoration work to Holy Trinity Church railings, re-decoration of the library gates and railings and decorating bollards and handrails at Claremont Steps. This will prove to be a small slice in a large cake of works currently underway in the area and, once completed, the impact will be dramatic.

Other projects currently in planning and consultation include:-

Pevensey Road / Upper Maze Hill Traffic Island

Plans to enhance this prominent junction are underway and include a new landscaping theme and restoration of the sandstone boundary wall.

High Wickham Steps

This project is currently being undertaken by ESCC Highways Dept following initial ground work by the Trust and includes the refurbishment of the steps and repairs to bollards and railings. Once these works are complete the Trust will undertake the painting of the many bollards and handrails.

Alfred Street Steps / side of former Christ Church School

Hastings Trust is currently negotiating measures to re-instate the gate and railing to prevent rubbish being dumped. The proposed design will replicate the existing balustrade and enhance previous work recently completed by the Trust.

Provincial Passage / Off Havelock Road

Re-surfacing works have been designed and costed and the Trust, in liaison with the Town Centre Manager, will embark on the lengthy consultation process and see the project to fruition.

The Trust goes to America

Or to the America Ground to be precise. Often accused of walking on water, by surviving in the face of one funding crisis after another, we have now gone one better, and bought a building on water!

Or, to be precise again, it was water some seven hundred years ago.

Until the great storms which destroyed old Winchelsea and altered so much of the Sussex coastline, what is now Robertson Street and the Trinity Triangle formed part of the original harbour of Hastings. No other town has its modern centre where William the Conqueror's ships would have moored, and before that those of the men of Hastings who sailed to London to help bring Earl Godwin and his son, later King Harold, back into favour with Edward the Confessor.

After the Conquest, Hastings was a leading and rich member of the Cinque Ports Confederation, with a heyday which lasted until the harbour entrance was blocked with shingle, and the mariners and inhabitants moved over the hill to expand what is now known as the Old Town. The real old town was to the West of Robertson Street, on the White Rock area, with three churches which fell into ruin, among them the church dedicated to St Michael, who appears on the seal of Hastings to this day.

Thereafter, for some four hundred years, the shingle bank gradually solidified, until in 1800 merchants built ship-yards, rope-walks and warehouses there, turning an empty site into a prosperous and vibrant community. When it became apparent that there was no local landowner with a valid claim to the site, other houses and workshops sprang up, some of the earliest being made from the hulks of boats. The outline of those streets and rope-walks still form the basis of modern Hastings today.

However, the local authorities of the day considered the inhabitants of the Sea Beach, to give it one of its many names, a rather rough lot and tried to impose their authority. Whereupon the people hoisted the flag of the United States of America, as a symbol of their independence. America had been, well within living memory at the time, a collection of English colonies, and to hoist the Stars and Stripes was the equivalent of hauling up the Hammer & Sickle flag in the middle of the Cold War. It would

appear that the inhabitants won that battle - but all was lost when, it is said, a house owner wanted to sell, and tried to obtain a proper title-deed for his dwelling.

This started enquiries, and the Crown established a claim, on the basis that the land had been gained from water by a change in the water-line, and as such was Crown property.

The Crown, after due enquiry, took possession of the land, and issued seven-year leases, with matching rents, for the spaces occupied - very few paid the rents, it is recorded. The list of "Americans" makes fascinating reading, and includes names still known in Hastings today. At the end of that period, the land was completely cleared, and the Americans departed. Because some of the houses were nearly new, these were transported to the new town of St Leonards (outside the prestigious estates of the Burtons, of course) and can be seen there still.

The America Ground lay empty until the Crown, in 1849, granted a lease for development to Patrick Robertson, who completed his scheme in under five years, with No 35, the new Headquarters of the Trust, being among the earliest built.

Because the Crown Estate was built in a short time and was therefore of one style and period and then remained in the same ownership until 1995, it has the elements of a time capsule, largely unchanged, apart from a re-building of what is now Debenhams in the twenties, and the construction of Albany Court following bomb damage. It is this which makes it one of the best examples of Victorian streetscape in the country.

The Trust is proud to have been at the forefront of the campaign to have this unique piece of mid-Victorian heritage declared a conservation area, and to be leading the way towards the restoration of the whole America Ground to something of its former glory. Hastings was once second only to Scarborough as a seaside resort, and Robertson Street was known as the Regent Street of the South. Hard to believe now?

Maybe, but watch this space! The America Ground spirit is back.

If you would like to know more of the story of how the former "Derelict Lands" became the centre of the town, visit the Historic Hastings Exhibition on the Hastings Book Centre - open until November 13th.

OASIS

The Centre continues to be very busy and well used by local residents. Several new courses are and will be starting soon (in partnership with the Centre for Continuing Education). These include a course especially designed for people doing any sort of voluntary work but who would like to know more about taking minutes, sitting on committees etc. Our weekly "Pop In" is proving more popular each week. This provides an opportunity for those young at heart to pop in for a coffee and a chat, somewhere to meet and make new friends.

On Fridays we have started a "Drop In Shop", which is open for anyone to come in ask for help with writing letters, filling in forms, homework, etc. As a result of our success and demand for space a new Community Flat has been opened in Farley Bank. This will offer a similar range of activities as OASIS, though

there will be a baby clinic supported by the local health visitors.

Our new modern computer with colour printer is proving a very useful asset for local community groups, who are very welcome to come and use it for typing up minutes, designing posters and letter writing etc.

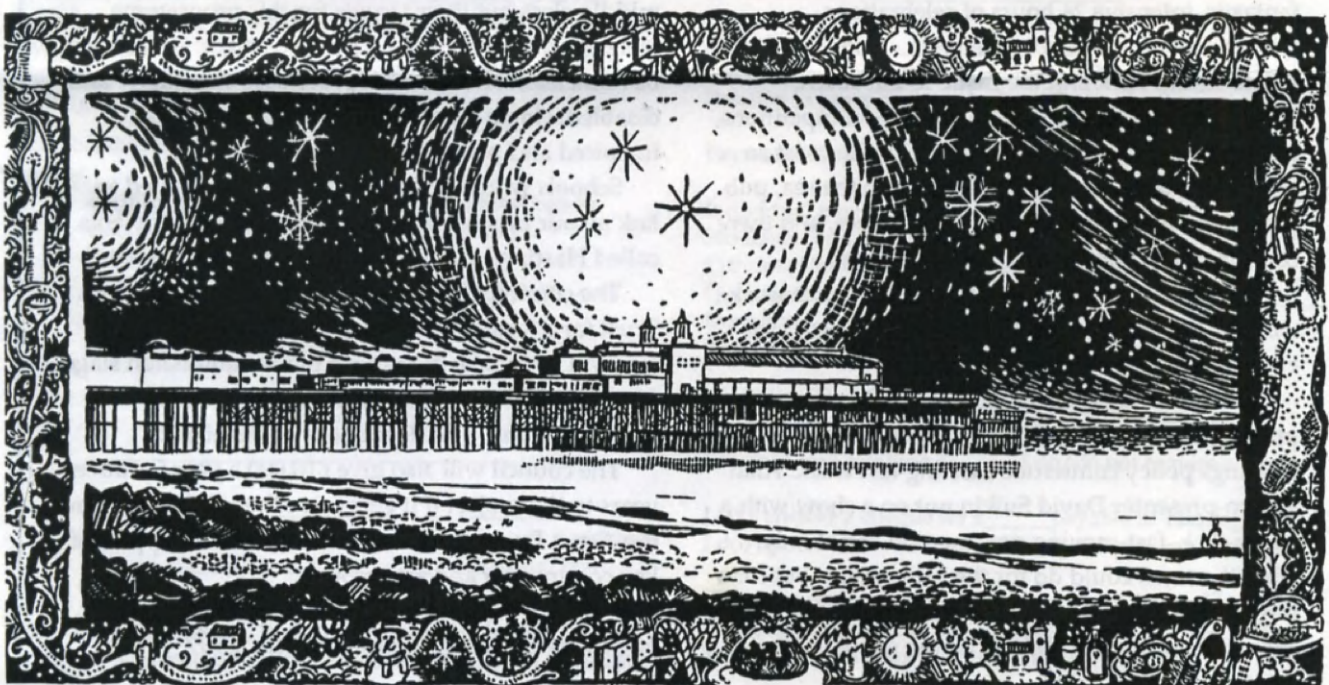
We also hope to start a "Healthy Eating Club" for women in November, where weekly weighing and general advice about healthy eating and various health issues will be available.

For any further information about the activities and services available from the OASIS Centre, please ring Clare on 719080 or leave a message at the Hastings Trust.

Christmas Card Drama

A brand-new range of five exciting and contemporary Christmas cards will be on sale to all visitors at the new Resource Centre. Designed by in-house illustrator, Nigel Harvey, the cards have a "really dramatic wood-cut look" and are striking in black and white.

The cards sell individually at 70p or at £2.80 for a 5-pack set (all different) and proceeds go to charity. For other stockists contact the Trust or reserve yours by contacting the Trust and leaving your name, address (and telephone number if available) and number of packs you wish to collect.



One Zero

A Millennium Celebration of the Arts

One Zero is a broad-based community arts celebration, financially supported by Hastings Borough Council, whose Arts Officer, Paul Ackerley, has helped shape the project. We are preparing to apply for A4E funding in the next round.

One Zero has been conceived on behalf of the Hastings Trust by Alan Privett, a producer and trustee who lives in St Leonards, and David Sulkin, a director, writer and arts education specialist who is a regular visitor to the town.

The project will involve a three-year programme of community arts activity, leading up to and capitalising upon a Hastings millennium celebration - an intensive twenty-four hours in midsummer 2000 beginning before dawn and ending well after dusk. One Zero will also commission a new music-theatre piece as the centre-piece of the day.

Community involvement is at the heart of the project, which sees a key role for the arts in the regeneration of Hastings. While people from all backgrounds will be given the chance

to participate, energy will be directed towards those with special needs. Opportunities will be created for people who are homeless, the elderly, physically disabled people, young offenders and people on probation and mentally disabled people, to explore, create and develop their work with the best amateurs.

One Zero will also link primary school children in Hastings, via the Internet, with children in the other fourteen Hastings around the world, with the objective of creating a response to place, time and difference.

One Zero aims to be one of the most imaginative and well-conceived A4E bids, and will need the advice and support of South East Arts. Hastings as a town is recognised as economically deprived, and has Assisted Area Status. The Hastings Trust already plays a key role in the Hastings Area Regeneration Partnership, and with the help of A4E will develop community arts in Hastings in the most innovative and inclusive way.

Welcome the Millennium with fish and chips!

HASTINGS is set to see in the Millennium with a fantastic, intensive 24 hours of celebrations. Events could go on across the town - from The Stade to Alexandra Park and the castle to the beach.

Events could include shop window competitions, a fish and chip banquet, a pontoon off the coast so people can take snaps of Hastings from the sea, pub presentations on the theme of their names, and there could be earth, air, fire and water features.

And a newly-commissioned music theatre work would be expected to attract national publicity for Hastings.

The welcome to the year 2000 left One Zero project presenter Alan Privett almost breathless at Hastings policy committee meeting last week. Alan and co-presenter David Sulkin put on a show with a super slick, fast-moving presentation of not only what the town could do for the Millennium but for a three-year community arts programme which would stimulate, excite and include all the people of the town.

David said it was often thought arts were for the middle-class but their targets for this programme were specific. They would involve people who might be homeless, offenders on probation, the elderly and disabled, single parents, mentally and physically impaired and people on drug rehabilitation.

Schools would be involved and they wanted to link all our primary schools with all the other places called Hastings around the world via the Internet.

The committee agreed a £3,000 grant to Hastings Trust for a feasibility for the One Zero project. The aim will be to take the project to the submission stage for a £300,000 Lottery application to the Arts 4 Everyone Fund. The deadline is November 28.

The council will also give £10,000 a year for three years to the project if it gets more than £200,000 from the Arts 4 Everyone Fund and if it has the support of key community and arts groups.

Hastings Observer October 10th, 1997

"Here to Stay"

The Development Trust's Association, of which the Trust is a founder member, launched its public policy document, "Here to Stay", at its annual conference in September. The document was the result of an in depth study of development trusts and community based organisations throughout England and Wales funded by the Joseph Rowntree Foundation.

The report examines the current role of development trusts in tackling the effects of multiple deprivation, social exclusion in some of our most marginalised communities, including unemployment, poverty, environmental blight and crime.

The study concludes that community-based regeneration projects require greater recognition and support, not only financially, but with training and good practice. Examples of good practice from around the country are illustrated in the report, with the Hastings Trust highlighted as an example of good practice in community capacity building.

Hastings Trust Vision

"To create active partnerships between the public, private, voluntary & community sectors and to enable them to work together for the economic, environmental & social regeneration of Hastings"

The Hastings Trust, a registered charity, has these aims:

- To help those who live, work or visit here to care for the environment.
- To help the local economy to flourish in ways which won't spoil the place for those who come to us.
- To spread the word to all concerned about how best to regenerate the town and, at the same time, conserve all that's good in it.

If you would like to know more about the Hastings Trust, or would like to help in some way, please contact Heather Smith Tel: 01424 446373, or call in at our new Resource Centre, 35 Robertson Street, Hastings, TN34 1HT

Hastings Trust Membership Application Form

Membership of the Hastings Trust is open to both individuals and organisations.

Individuals - anyone aged 18 or over in the Borough of Hastings District or Rother or any other place at the Board's discretion. **Organisations** - any organisations at the Board's discretion. The Board of Management comprises up to six members elected by the Individual Members, up to six elected by Organisations Members, one nomination by Hastings Borough Council, one by East Sussex County Council, and one by English Heritage.

Membership benefits include:

- Entitlement to vote at Annual General Meetings to elect Board Members and determine policy
- Receipt of annual report
- Receipt of newsletter and other information on Trust activities
- Invitations to Trust events

I/We _____ (name of individual or organisation)

of _____

_____ (address)
_____ (telephone/fax)

apply to become a member of the Hastings Trust, a company limited by guarantee. I/We agree to be bound by the company's memorandum and articles of association (available

for inspection at the Trust's offices) and any rules made under these. In the event of the company being wound up whilst I am a member, or within one year thereafter, I agree to contribute such amounts as may be required, but not more than £1.00.

Dated this day _____ 199

Signature _____

Position in organisation (if relevant) _____

Payment may be made by cheque or cash

Individual membership	£10 per annum	£ _____
Students, Senior		
Citizens, Unwaged	£4 per annum	£ _____
Organisation Membership	£20 per annum	£ _____
Donation		£ _____
Total		£ _____

Payment may be made by cheque or cash:

I enclose a cheque for £ _____ payable to 'Hastings Trust'

I enclose cash totalling £ _____ I do/do not require a receipt

I/We enclose a cheque for £ _____ payable to 'Hastings Trust'

I do/do not require a receipt (Please delete as appropriate)

Please return this form with your subscription to: Hastings Trust, 35 Robertson Street, Hastings, E Sussex TN34 1HT
Tel 01424 446373 Fax 01424 434206

Here & Now working with the Trust

Here & Now is a free, quarterly, non-profit making magazine. All work in producing the magazine is unpaid except for printing costs which are funded by donations, grants and adverts. It has a quarterly print run of 5000 copies and is distributed in Hastings and Rother and to all the libraries of E Sussex. The magazine is a SRB partner in the Trust's new Resource Centre supplying matching funding in kind.

Here & Now aims to stimulate and inform on local environmental concerns; to provide a notice board for all groups seeking to maintain or improve the environment; and to encourage greater participation of the public in creating a sustainable way of life and a better future. To achieve this people need to know how to organise themselves effectively. This is why future issues of **Here & Now** will draw on the Hastings Trust's Tools for Community Regeneration database - the pioneering database that will give easy access to the organisational and planning tools which make projects really work. In the December issue **Here & Now** will be looking at tools that help foster local economies. **Here & Now** will also publicise the Trust's future achievements with a focus on the challenges and triumphs of the new Resource Centre.

Burton's St Leonards Societ News

A major project to establish a Burtons' interpretative centre at West Lodge, at the entrance to St Leonards Gardens, got a boost this month (October) with a grant to the Society of £5,500 from East Sussex County Council to help with restoration.

The Society has been provisionally promised another tranche of grant aid in 1999 bringing the total to £10,000.

Restoration plans for the James Burton building include returning some of the rooms to the Regency style and decoration, with space on the ground floor to house some of the Burton memorabilia currently in store at Hastings Museum.

Other funds for the project will come from Heritage Lottery and the Borough Council.

Meanwhile the Council is proceeding with a parallel bid to the Heritage Gardens Fund for money to restore the gardens themselves, and is finalising negotiations to purchase part of the James Burton colonnade on Marina - formerly the old Hampdens furnishing store - to convert into an international chess centre.

The Society is pressing for part of this huge building to be available for community use. Consultations with the Borough Council, the project consultants, and the British Chess Federation are continuing.



from the 3rd of November our new address will be:

Hastings Trust, 35 Robertson Street, Hastings, E Sussex, TN34 1HT Tel: (01424) 446373 Fax: (01424) 434206

E-mail post@htgate.demon.co.uk

Registered Charity N° 1007410

WORKING TO REGENERATE HASTINGS