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SANDBACH NEWS 2015

Written / Pictures by Stewart Green for Newspaper articles
including "The Saxon" Magazine.

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LATEST PICTURES

For Article see end of the file.



GOING?



GONE FOREVER



Demolition of Abbey Fields Lodge 9 Aug 2015



Brook Wood volunteers clear river



Play in the Park 5 Aug 2015



Union of South Africa Visits Sandbach Station
in Secret 23 / 24 July 2015

13 January 2015

CRASH BLOCKS OFF SANDBACH

At about 4pm on Monday the 12 January 2015 two cars and a lorry were in collision on the Sandbach By Pass near the High Street traffic lights leading to the road being blocked off and tailbacks as far as the Arclid traffic lights delaying motorists for 45 minutes for less than a mile and a half's journey This was not all as there was

also an oil spillage which meant that the road was unusable and had to be resurfaced the following day with again led to delays back to the Motorway until mid-afternoon. This is not the first time a road traffic accident has closed off Sandbach and will probably not be the last as new developments at the Motorway Junction and opposite Waitrose are both having access roads to the Bye-Pass at busy junctions and this could potentially be detrimental to the town as visitors are unable to get into Sandbach without delays.



25 January 2015

M6 JUNCTION CLOSURE

On the weekend of the 23rd to the 26th of January the M6 Junction was closed to traffic and pedestrians as work took place to install a new roundabout and traffic lights (To follow) on the road to easy traffic in a new development. Engineers have also uncovered the gas and electric mains and cables to clean and recover them to give them a longer life.

Work commenced at 8pm on the Friday and continued until 6am on Monday morning hoping to have the road clear for traffic to flow between Sandbach and Congleton along with workers access to the M6 and the businesses to the North and South of Sandbach.

Work will continue on the junction until March according to the Highways agency so we can expect more delays until the junction is completed.



25 January 2015

INTERNATIONAL CONDUCTOR TALKS TO SANDBACH CONCERT SERIES PATRONS

Having conducted the Foden's Band at the Royal Northern College of Music in Manchester on Saturday and making a recording for part one of a CD to be released later in the year with the band on Sunday, Bramwell Tovey rushed to Sandbach to give a talk about his life to a small but appreciative audience in a special interview conducted by John Barber of Foden's Band, Sandbach School and the Love Music Trust for the Sandbach Concert Series at Sandbach School.

Bramwell Tovey was born in Ilford in London and now lives in Canada. He travels the world conducting various orchestras as well as the National Youth Brass Band, which he recently conducted at his first BBC Proms.

Bramwell started playing in his home town of Ilford on the Euphonium, Bass and Trumpet before moving into the conductor's position with his School, a job which led on to work with the London Festival Ballet, who at that time had Rudolf Nureyev as Principal Ballet Dancer. He has also held various positions with some of the major orchestras and companies and has become an internationally sort after conductor. Since 2000 has also been an Associate Conductor with the Sandbach based Foden's Band.

Talking to John Barber he reminisced about his life and he talked about his time working at Covent Garden, conducting the Winnipeg Orchestra and Luxembourg Philharmonic Orchestra as well as conducting the music of Leonard Bernstein at a festival of his music at which Mr Bernstein attended. The event was videoed and will be available on the internet later in the year, a programme well worth seeing as it was an entertaining evening of Music on the piano and memories of a life in music. The next major concert in the Sandbach Concert Series will be on the 25 February 2015 and will be Jazz players Mike Hall and Dan Whieldon



25 January 2015

SANDBACH CUTS PARADE FROM TRANSPORT FESTIVAL

The Sandbach Transport Festival will be dropping the parade from the festivities this year after problems policing the event.

10 March 2015

SANDBACH LIBRARY TO CLOSE FOR IMPROVEMENTS

On Saturday the 14th and Monday the 16th of March Sandbach library will close its doors for the start of improvements to the building that have been given the go ahead by Cheshire East to improve the look of the 45 year old building.

Opened on the site of Marriot House on the 17 March 1970 the current library is the latest in a long line of libraries in the town going back to before 1899 when there was a circulating library in R.A. Thomlinson's shop in the high street next to the Town Hall a building that is now the Handy Household shop. This bookshelf had the latest popular authors of the time and books could be borrowed for a cost of 2d for between four and seven days depending on the value of the book.

In 1897 the Marriott family donated to the people of Sandbach their land in the town centre which is now the park and their house which was on the site of the current library. The staircase at the back of the current building was part of that original house along with a fireplace that is now in the Marriott Room upstairs.

On the 29 March 1926 a library was opened in the Marriott building by the Cheshire County Council and had about 70 books on its shelves. By 1933 this number of books had increased and some 31,231 books had been issued in that year. By 1966 there were 10,000 books in the library and over 84,000 issues to subscribers.

In October 2011, Cheshire East Council who had by this time taken possession of the service, decided to move its information point from Westfields to the Library area next to the main staircase while moving its public computer bank upstairs in the building.

In November 2013 the final votes were cast after a consultation as to what the public would like the library to look like in the future and the results were put to the Council for final approval. It is this suggestion that is being implemented over the next few months with builders working hard to keep the disruption to the borrowers and users of the library to a minimum.

The closure over the weekend I am told should be the only time the building is closed while the improvements are made. After 45 years I am sure the people of the town will be looking forward to the new look library.



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20 March 2015

SOLAR ECLIPSE OVER SANDBACH

On the 19 Mar 721BC the first recorded Eclipse took place on this day. It was recorded by the Babylonians according to Ptolomy and 2736 years and one day later the latest Eclipse took place just above Scotland with a Partial Eclipse being seen in Sandbach.

Stewart Green took viewing equipment around the town to show shoppers and staff the eclipse, the first to be in the area since the 4 January 2011 when a partial eclipse was seen over London and the rest of Britain. It was also the first total eclipse since the 11 August 1999 when the moon covered the sun over the Cornish coast when Cheshire had one of the best views of the event as cloud covered the sky above the South West. The Eclipse on the 20 March 2015 had its centre over the Faroe Islands where again clouds covered the event only allowing a short glimpse of the moon covering the sun. Clouds in Sandbach made it difficult to get pictures of the sun but projections of the sun were clearly visible to those in the town.

The eclipse was projected using a set of binoculars, a pin hole camera made from a cereal box and a piece of baking foil for the hole and a set of special eclipse glasses which passer's by used to view the event along with staff from Williams Delicatessen, Chatwins Bakery and Sandbach Library.

The next opportunity to view a similar event will be on the 12 August 2026 when a partial event will be seen in the UK and the next Total Eclipse will be on the 23 September 2090.

TOTAL ECLIPSE 1424 -1433 - 1598 - 1652 - 1715 - 1724 - 1927 - 1954 (Shetland only)

Previously Seen in England 29 June 1927 (23 Sec Totality) (Path of Totality - Cardigan Bay to Stockport, Giggleswick to Darlington)

England 11 August 1999 at 11.11am (2m 2sec) (Path of Totality - Penzance to Falmouth)

The Next time in Uk 23 Sept 2090 (Path of Totality - Southern Tip of Ireland to Cornwall & Devon)

TOTAL ECLIPSES IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

20 Mar 2015	Faroe Islands only (2 m 45 Sec)
3 Sept 2081	Channel Islands (Just Clips south) (3 m 45 Sec)
23 Sept 2090	(See above) Southern Tip of Ireland to Cornwall & Devon) (2 m 10 Sec)
3 June 2133	Hebrides,Northern Scotland, Shetland Islands (3m35 Sec)
7 Oct 2135	Southern Scotland & Northern England (2 m 45 Sec)

ANNULAR OR PARTIAL ECLIPSES SEEN IN THE UK

31 May 2003	Shetland Isles 3. 47pm Inverness 3.45pm (Annular) (Totality not seen lower than Inverness)
3 Oct 2005	London (1st contact 6.48 / 8.01 Max / 9.18 Last phase) (Partial in London Annular in Braca, Portugal, Madrid , Spain, Algiers, Africa) (Annular)
1 Aug 2008	London (8.32 /9.17Max / 10.04) (Total over Europe)
4 Jan 2011	London 9.30 (Phase 2 only) (Partial Eclipse)



 11 April 2015

NEW MARKET FOR SATURDAY'S

Sandbach has a new style Saturday Market which began on the 11 April with a large crowd of people spending money from when the market opened at 9am to it new closing time of 3pm, a time that seemed popular with shoppers.

There has been a regular Thursday Market in the town since it was granted a Royal Charter in 1579 by Queen Elizabeth 1st. The market moved from Market Square next to the Saxon Crosses to the Common in 1879 when the Rt. Hon. Hungerford, Lord Crewe gave the land to the town along with the perpetual rights to all market tolls.

By the 1990's a Saturday Market was introduced to the space in the Town Hall and on the 12 June 2010 a Farmer's Market was added to the Market Square on the Second Saturday of the month with a 'saxon' or Artisan Style market being added for the 4th Saturday from the 27 Apr 2013. However by 2014 the Artizan Market was closed and amalgamated into the Farmers Market. It is this monthly event that has been taken over from the Town Council by a new company called "Makers Market" who have experience of running specialist stalls at Middlewich (Last Saturday of the Month), Cheadle (1st Saturday), Knutsford (1st Sunday of the Month) and Didsbury (Last Sunday of the Month) with over 40 stalls bringing unique products to the town.

The previous suppliers were not forgotten on Saturday with Sue Jackson Glassware, Powells Pies and others being welcomed along with 36 new stalls including Treats Bakeshop (Marsh Mellows and Brownies), Peacock Stoneware, Congleton Cushions, Great British Cheese and Northwest Game. Sandbach "Art Room" were also on hand to entertain the children with activities and a wood carving stall showed just what could be done with a tree stump while Jordy's Wood Fired Pizza showed what could be cooked over the chippings.

Music was provided by Altringham, Didsbury and South Manchester based "Loose Change", who raised funds for Cancer Research at various markets after the death of two of its members from the disease. So far they have raised £163,000 over four years and had a successful day gathering change from shoppers.

Daniel Williams from STAR (Sandbach Traders and Retailers) said at 2.45pm that there were as many shoppers at the Market as there were during the busiest period of the previous markets. Stall holders also told of a rise in sales possibility due to the increased interest in the market or the good weather which shone on this venture. Let's hope that the sun continues to shine and the shoppers continue to attend the market.



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15 April 2015

BBC DAILY POLITICS COMES TO SANDBACH

The BBC's Flagship daytime Politics Show came to Sandbach on the 14th and 15th of April to film and produce a live programme insert as part of a series of articles. Giles Dilnot a reporter for the programme, goes round the country talking to ordinary people at work or doing their hobbies and on this occasion he visited the Foden's Band members during a rehearsal and the following day the BBC broadcast live to the studio from Sandbach. The day picked for the broadcast turned out to be a significant one as the latest policy release was to do with schools and in particular the impact it would have on the teaching of music within the education system a subject that is close to the heart of many members of the band including Ian Raisbeck (Cornet) who took part in the programme. Ian was joined by Dave McGlynn (Bb Bass) and Stewart Green (Band Archivist) to discuss the issues of the day for three minutes on BBC2 and then a repeat performance live on the BBC News Channel. On the Tuesday the BBC crew turned up to film the band perform its signature tune "The Cossack" which was recorded three times along with bits of the rehearsal which were then used to great effect when Giles added a narration to the introduction for the live broadcast on Wednesday when the three people connected to the band were asked their opinions as part of the Daily Politics look at what normal people think of the 2015 election. During the 2005 election coverage the Daily Politics programme decided to find out what the electorate in the marginal constituency's really thought of the coverage of the election and what their views were. The format of going out to meet people in their place of work or play worked and the programme repeated the format in 2010 and again this year. Giles said that this election is a very different one as the voter really does have the chance to make a difference as it is going to be a very close run election with the public having more choice of candidates as different parties have joined in the mix. The new dynamic of the race has changed the view of the traditional voter who was brought up in a one party society to them having more choice than ever before. The programme put a list of policies on a board and asked voters to decide how they would make their choice based on the policy only and surprisingly no one party came out on top but a mixture of all the different parties. This year Giles Dilnot and the BBC team have spoken to Aquarium workers in Plymouth, Cheese makers in Cornwall, Film Prop makers in Bristol, Stone masons in Somerset, Iron workers in North Yorkshire and after the broadcast from Foden's Bands rehearsal room at Flowcrete in Elworth they went Water rafting in North Wales.





18 April 2015

YOUNG MUSICIAN OF THE YEAR

On the Saturday of the Sandbach Transport Festival (18th April 2015) there was an added bonus. A show of musical excellence that rivalled the entertainment provided on the square. It was the first “Young Musician of the Year” competition held by the Sandbach Concert Series organisers who this year have decided to hold an event to showcase local talent of all ages with ten players in the Senior Section and five in the Junior Section. All the players have featured in the Concert Series during the year and have come from local schools to compete for prizes which were judged by professional musicians Sophie Rosa and Sally Wigan who like the competitors have featured in the concerts at St Mary’s Church Hall.

Audiences were amazed at the high standard of performance and it was a difficult decision that the judges had to make with prizes being awarded to Billy Proctor on Guitar who came third with a £25 prize, Matthew Brett who was second on percussion winning £50 and the overall winner in first place was Alex Flanders on Trumpet who picked up £100 and the title of the first Sandbach Young Musician of the Year.

There was also a special prize donated by international conductor Bramwell Tovey who on the 25 January 2015 gave an interview to John Barber of Fodens Band as a special event for the Concert Series which is now available to view on the Brass Band website ‘4 bars rest’. When he heard about the competition he decided to donate his fee for the January event to provide a special prize for the player who in the eyes of the judges was of special merit. The first award was given to Richard Rhodes who played the Bass Tuba.

The prizes were handed out by Sandbach Transport Festival Organisers and Mayor and Deputy Mayor of Sandbach, Elsie and Graham Alcock along with Fiona Bruce.

Organisers of both the Transport Festival and the Concert Series hope that this will be the first of many competitions held in the Town Hall during the annual April event.



18 April 2015

SANDBACH TRANSPORT FESTIVAL 2015

Sandbach celebrated the 25th anniversary of the Transport Festival with a slightly different format due to the road improvement scheme at the M6 junction. This didn’t deter exhibitors as more vehicles registered than usual making this one of the most impressive weekends of the year in Sandbach. The event also included live music and a number of free events for the family in the park including rides on Thomas the Tank engine.

On Sunday local celebrity Tom Seals provided the music for the final concert on the Market Square while Fodens Band continued the tradition of a parade through the town. The band had played at Scotch Common

before marching to the middle of the town pausing in front of a number of Foden and ERF trucks in the High Street before heading towards the Old Hall to give an hour long concert for a very appreciative audience. Saturday had been a day for a display of cars, music and the events in the park. Graham Alcock one of the organizers said that it had been a good weekend and it had been sad that they had not been able to have a 25th anniversary parade. “What will happen next year with the parade I do not know, it depends if there is a change of Police policy with regard to covering events like the festival. Hopefully next year we could have a parade on the normal scale depending on the police. If not then we could have a mini parade or one at the end of the day when the vehicles leave the event”. “We will be back next year. There have been rumours that 2015 will be the last transport festival which is untrue and I can assure the public that it will be back next year as for as long as Elsie and myself are able to organise the event”. We all look forward to the event and the co-operation of the Fire Brigade, Police and the numerous owners of such wonderful machine celebrating the history of transport in particular the history of the part Sandbach played in it development.



 23 Apr 2015

FODENS BAND PLAY SANDBACH TOWN HALL

This was advertised as a St George’s Day Concert and it certainly lived up to its promise with tunes ranging from The Standard of St George by Kenneth J Alford to a selection from the last night of the proms. The band also played two tunes from the supposed pen of King Henry VIII, ‘Greensleaves’ and ‘Pastime with Good Company’. There were also two birthday celebrations of people of a mature age, one of a lady called Rose and the bands ex driver Tom who both attended the concert with their respective family members.

The last time the full band played at the Town Hall was the Inaugural Concert of the Patrons Association back on the 26 November 1987 with an ensemble version of the band appearing on the 15 March 2014. About One hundred and forty people turned up to the concert at the town hall with flags on hand for the Pomp and Circumstance March No 1. The audience enjoyed this celebration of our Patron Saint's day and hoped that the event would be repeated next year. The audience even enjoyed the solos from Helen Williams and Stephen Ridler. They even enjoyed the solo by Glynn Williams when he played 'Brillante' even though he included a bit of 'Men of Harlech' in the arrangement, a Welsh tune from his native country. The band's next appearances in the town will be at Sandbach Girl's School on the 23 May, and the 2 July at Sandbach School with the 'Party in Sandbach Park' on the 4 July 2015.



23 Apr 2015

ARGOS AND HOMEBASE JOIN STORES TOGETHER.

Troubled Argos and Homebase stores have joined together to create 20 digital catalogue stores within the Homebase superstores including Sandbach. The signs have been put up for this new venture on behalf of both companies parent company, 'Home Retail Group'. Last year both stores were threatening closures and this move will hopefully bring in more customers to help the group in its fight against Amazon and the internet revolution of collection points by Amazon in places like the Post Office and small stores around the country. Situated in the main entrance the new Argos will bring in a new type of customer to Homebase and will save many from having to go to Crewe or Congleton to pick up items ordered on line or directly in store.



23 Apr 2015

HISTORIC BUILDING UP FOR SALE AFTER FAILURE TO GET BUILDING PERMISSION

A historic building in Dingle Lane has been put up for sale with an asking price of £650,000 after its current owners failed to get permission to build houses on its land. Protesters in Sandbach have made their views very clear that they didn't want six to eleven new houses on the land joining the grade 2 listed building and now have the problem of finding a buyer for the Dingle Farm building who will keep it in its historic context. As reported in the Saxon, Planning permission for the site was originally put forward in 2013 and in November 2014 the protesters finally won their fight to stop development leaving its owners with a choice to make about the sites future. Let's hope that new owners can be found soon before the building becomes another historic eyesore on the landscape of Sandbach.



24 Apr 2015

HUSTINGS AT SANDBACH ST MARY'S

Hustings at St Mary's sounds like another problem where funding is needed to fix part of the building. However the definition of Hustings is a 'Platform from which Parliamentary Candidates are nominated or Political Campaigning' and it is the latter that has been happening in South Cheshire to help in the decision making process before the election on the 7th of May. Churches Together in Sandbach have managed to get the candidates up for election on that date together for an informal debate where they can put forward their points of view before a large audience in the pews at St Mary's on Friday the 24th April.

Fiona Claire Bruce (Conservative), Alec Heath (Green Party), Peter John Hirst (Liberal Democrats) and Darren Anthony Price (Labour Party) were given a few minutes to outline their political aims and to tell the gathered interested bodies what they had to offer if they were elected. Unfortunately Lee William Slaughter of UKIP was unable to attend the evening due to a family bereavement and the wishes of those at the meeting were passed on to him and his family by the arbitrator for the evening the Rev. Thomas Shepherd who again took on the role he played five years ago.

As the audience came into the church they were given the option of asking a question of the candidates and these were put on cards which were then sorted out by the organisers to pick ten questions to ask the candidates for their views on the subjects.

After an opening speech where Fiona Bruce told the gathering of her good work over the last five years in Parliament including helping locally with the Save the Old Hall in Sandbach group and a bypass for Congleton as well as pushing for improvements to Junction 17 of the M6, work that is nearing completion. Fiona also spoke of her wish to continue in the role of MP for the area for the next session. It was then the opportunity of Alex Heath to put his points over for his chance to take Fiona's place in Parliament. He had been asked by a school child and a taxi driver during this campaign which party he would like to work alongside after the election and he replied that the Green Party was one that believed in democracy and would work with all the parties in the hope of changing the way we get to run the country. He quoted Switzerland who have proportional representation and allow its citizens to vote on big issues giving them the opportunity to have a say on how their country is run.

Peter Hirst (Liberal Democrats) had stood for the seat in the 2010 election and as his party was part of the coalition he said that they were not to blame for the way the country had been run and that he believed that people had the right to protest about issues. He was a supporter of issues to do with climate change and the environment hoping for a better world so he like many others could enjoy walks in the countryside and gardening.

Darren Price of the Labour Party said that he was opposed to fox hunting and was a supporter of making life better for the poor having worked with them. He had been an architect but in 2011 had been made redundant due, he said to coalition cuts made by the current government, a point he didn't expand upon. He then went on to talk about the numerous cuts made by the last government in the hospitals, the NHS and the increase in food banks and bankers getting tax breaks etc. He ended by saying that he wanted a society that was fare for all. It was then the job of the Rev. Shepherd to ask the questions submitted earlier and started with 'should Sundays be kept special'?

Fiona Bruce (Conservative) said she wanted to keep it special and had voted against extending the Sunday hours during the Olympic period. Alec Heath (Green Party) agreed he didn't want Sunday working but did want people to have the choice if they wanted to work on this day. Peter Hirst (Liberal Democrats) also wanted Sunday's special while Darren Price (Labour Party) didn't want workers to be forced to work on Sundays and would have voted against working Sunday Hours.

The issue of the elderly was discussed with all the candidates wishing to help them in various ways including keeping the free TV Licence (Fiona), Allowing them to have a disposable income (Peter), getting them involved

in the community (Alec) and for them to put something back into the community when they retire (Darren) a point that they all agreed was good for them to pass on their knowledge and experience to a younger generation. The young were the next topic and all the candidates seemed to want to encourage them into getting more involved with politics and life in general, giving them more of an understanding of issues and they all wanted to increase the funding of schools to improve the children's general education.

The NHS and health was another subject they were all in agreement that there should be more funding and were all passionate about keeping it free at the Point of Delivery (Peter), with an increase on those seen by the NHS (Fiona) and a passion to keep it (Darren) without funding going into the pockets of the private sector (Alec) but going back into the NHS to serve patient's needs.

Immigration was next and points raised included putting back our involvement in the search and rescue of those trying to come to Europe (Darren), trying to stop the illegal trade in migration and trafficking (Fiona), the tackling of the root causes of why they want to come to Europe (Alec) and putting money into third world countries to increase their standard of living with the hope they would stay in their countries rather than come into Europe looking for a better way of life (Peter).

The next question was "Is the Economy Stupid"? To which there were many replies none of which answered the question but they did talk about what they would do to help the economy if they were elected.

The question of should we stay or should we leave Europe was then discussed with Fiona wanting to leave Europe, with Darren, Alec and Peter all wishing to stay in the union.

HS2 had them all in agreement that we didn't need the new track and would rather have the money spent on roads (Fiona and Peter), a better existing rail network (Alec) and better links to cities in the Northwest (Darren).

Question 9 was "what would their priorities be for the constituency if elected"?

Fiona Bruce (Conservative) would support local businesses, the young in employment, health in the community, school funding and local issues like a new bypass for Middlewich.

Alec Heath (Green Party) wanted new buildings only on brownfield sites and 100% efficiency (Energy Saving) while Peter Hirst (Liberal Democrats) also wanted to stop developments on green field sites and Darren Price (Labour Party) wanted to make sure that the Cheshire East Local Plan was finally put in place.

The final audience question was inevitably "Who would the MP's rather not work with in Coalition"? Answers seemed to follow the usual lines with the candidates then being asked to sum up their issues before the meeting closed and a private chat was afforded to those in the audience who wanted to stay along with a cup of coffee or tea.

The five candidates had been in Alsager and were going along to a meeting in Congleton for another chance to put the questions of the day towards the next prospective MP for the Congleton area.



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RESULTS OF THE ELECTION ON THE 7 May 2015

7 May 2015

The next Sandbach Town Council Meeting will be on the 21 May 2015 and should see the new Mayor installed into her position when Gill Merry takes over from Elsie Alcock who gives up her chain and seat on the Council as she has also resigned as a Councillor this year by not putting her name forward to be elected on the 7 May. Five Councillors have decided to leave behind their places on the Council since the last election with two of their positions being uncontested at the election and three being replaced with a vote by the electorate which sees the return of Keith Haines to the chamber since he lost his seat in the last election (2007 to 2010).

Cheshire East is still represented by the same Councillors in the Sandbach area and Fiona Bruce has been returned to her seat in the Houses of Parliament holding onto her original votes from 2010 the first year she was elected to represent the area and increasing them by about another 4,000 giving her 27,164 voters in the election.

RESULTS of the Elections

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CONGLETON CONSTITUENCY MP ELECTIONS

CANDIDATES for Sandbach / Congleton Constituency **MP 70% Turnout.**

Fiona Bruce (Conservative) 27,164 Votes (4,000 Vote Gain)
 Darren Price (Labour) 10,391
 Lee Slaughter (UKIP) 6,922
 Peter Hirst (Lib Dem) 4,623
 Alec Heath (Green) 1,876

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SANDBACH TOWN ELECTIONS

CANDIDATES – Sandbach Town Council – Ettley Heath and Wheelock Ward 68.33%

Kate Southwell	Conservative Party	1085 Elected
Richard Martin Wait	Conservative Party	888 Elected
Gemma Louise Sandra Barker	Labour Party	762 Elected (NEW)
Kevin Anthony Carroll	UKIP	671 Elected (NEW)
Alan David Smith	Labour Party	589 Elected
Jennifer Fiona Wells	Green Party	503 N/E
Andrew John Wood	Independent	446 N/E

CANDIDATES – Sandbach Town Council – Town Ward 72.86% Turnout

Michael Peter Benson	Conservative Party	1,270 Elected
Keith Edmund Haines	Labour Party	918 Elected (NEW)
David Jack	Independent	506 N/E
Carolyn Denise Lowe	Conservative Party	1,267 Elected
Barry Edward Moran	Conservative Party	1,336 Elected
Glynn Robinson	Independent	382 N/E
Eddie Williams	UKIP	646 Elected (NEW)

CANDIDATES – Sandbach Town Council – Sandbach Heath and East Ward

No Contested Seats (5 Seats all Filled)
 Justin Cartlidge Labour (NEW)
 Sam Corcoran Labour
 Sid Holland Labour (NEW)
 Geraint Price Jones Labour (NEW)
 Tasha Simpson Labour (NEW)

CANDIDATES – Sandbach Town Council – Elworth Ward

No Contested Seats (5 Seats)
 Richard Hoffmann Labour
 Gill Merry Conservative
Unkn
Unkn
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Conservative Votes	5846
Labour Votes	2269
Independent Votes	1598
UKIP Votes	1263
Green Votes	503

COUNCILLORS

Conservative	6 (5 Elected 1 Not Contested)
Labour	9 (3 Elected 6 Not contested)
Independent	0
UKIP	2
Green	0

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CHESHIRE EAST ELECTIONS

CANDIDATES – Sandbach Ettley Heath and Wheelock Ward

Gemma Louise Sandra Barker	Labour Party	527
Kevin Anthony Carroll	UKIP	395
Gail Wait	Conservative Party	1,108
Jennifer Fiona Wells	Green Party	139
Andrew John Wood	Liberal Democrats	292

CANDIDATES – Sandbach Elworth Ward

Eileen Farne	Liberal Democrat	228
Richard John Hoffman	Labour Party	656
Gill Merry	Conservative Party	1,236
Michael Edward Richardson	UKIP	482

CANDIDATES – Sandbach - Sandbach Heath and East Ward

Jillian Burgess	Liberal Democrats	213
Sam Corcoran	Labour and Co-operative Party	1,142
Michael Joseph Muldoon	Conservative Party	952

CANDIDATES – Sandbach Town Ward

Phil Goode	Liberal Democrats	247
Keith Edmund Haines	Labour Party	671
David Roman Jack	Independent	82
Barry Edward Moran	Conservative Party	1,414
Eddie Williams	UKIP	322

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Town Councillors that Resigned before the election.

Elsie Alcock (/ 2014-15 Mayor)	Sandbach Heath and East Ward (Liberal)
Graham Bell	Sandbach Heath and East Ward
Lyndsey Chadwick	Town Ward
Miss Stella Furlong (2010-2014)	Ettley Heath and Wheelock Ward (Conservative)
Les Morris	Sandbach Heath and East Ward (Liberal)
Denis Robinson	Sandbach Heath and East Ward (Liberal)
William Scragg	Elworth Ward (Liberal)
Vaughan Thompson	Town Ward
Miss Ingrid Victor	Elworth Ward (Unknown)

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9 May 2015

CHESHIRE VILLAGES GREAT WAR SOCIETY EXHIBITION



On the anniversary of the Battle of Aubers Ridge (9 May 1915) the Cheshire Villages Great War Society brought an exhibition to the Masonic Hall in Sandbach about the brave men and women who lost their lives or served our Country during the First World War. Member brought items relating to the soldiers who are commemorated on the war memorials all over East Cheshire.

John Dines of the society said that they had brought information about seven villages and towns in the area including a stand by Connor Reeves who last year helped to install a Memorial Garden at Sandbach School. There was also information on another 25 areas represented in stories covering about 800 men.

The group come together to find out about the people killed in the Great War and feature on the War Memorials in the area. They then try to find pictures and the story of those soldiers so that they live on as people rather than just becoming a name on a piece of stone in the middle of the towns. With more information appearing on the internet it has made it easier to find out about those who served this country.

The group meet in one of the local pubs of the next village or town they are visiting with their November exhibition being at Gawsworth they are busy talking to locals about their area for a Remembrance Day (weekend) Exhibition.

Harry Carlisle another one of the organiser said the events were a great opportunity to fill in the gaps of local names as many relatives of those who were lost come along and bring photographs and stories to add to the collection which members of the group then published in local books. At the Sandbach exhibition Harry was introduced to a lady who gave chapter and verse of a man whose family moved to New Zealand.

The event was helped out the local organisers of the Royal British Legion who had their own stand and also provided refreshments to the 200 plus visitors.

(Picture L to R – Jean Carlisle, John Earl, Harry Carlisle, Alison Moseley, John Dines and Connor Reeves.)

27 May 2015

POET VISITS SANDBACH LIBRARY



2015 Cheshire Poet Laureate Joy Winkler visited Sandbach Library on Wednesday evening (27 May 2015) for a Poetry Evening and talk about writing. Her latest book called ‘stolen Rowan Berries’ contains a number of poems about plants and so along with her poems she brought some postcards from the RHS Collection with flowers on them for the audience to write down their thoughts, memories and if they were in the right frame of mind a poem. This idea started with workshops that Joy had held with various writers groups and has moved into her readings around the area gaining experiences from the audience which Joy hopes will someday make a meadow of memories to all to share.

The inspiration for the title of the new collection of poems comes from one of poems in which she reflects on her time during the school holidays when Joy and a friend used to steal rowan berries from a neighbour's garden and then put them on a thread to make a necklace.

The next project for Joy is a drama based in the 1950's for two people that she hopes will be seen in the area. This event was the start of a number of readings and talks by local writers at Sandbach Library with Janice Madden a Crewe writer now living in Australia (10 and 16 June) reading from her latest books "Granddad's Letters" and "The Red Carpet". Sarah Ward (15 July) launching her new book "In Bitter Chill" (A Thriller) and Nicholas Booth (23 Sept) reading from his new book and talking about writing, "Thieves of Threadneedle Street". The evenings start at 7.15pm and you can contact the library for more information.

27 June 2015

FAMILY FUN DAY AT SANDBACH PARK

Saturday was time for fun in the park for an event supported by Sandbach Town Council to entertain people of all ages from the young through the teens and older as the Mercian Regiment were on hand to recruit prospective soldiers and to support the event after being given the Freedom of Sandbach last year. Unfortunately they were not available to attend the Sunday Armed Forces day parade in the town but the event in the park did support the Armed Forces Week with a stand manned by the Royal British Legion. Another stall was manned by Mike and Kathie Benson on behalf of the Air ambulance which had been in attendance in Sandbach four times in the last two weeks including a major crash on the M6 with two lorry drivers being airlifted to hospital. Sandbach Mayor Gill Merry also took part on the stand with a name the Bear Competition that launched her fundraising year in support of the Air Ambulance and other local charities.

The local fire station and community police officers were on hand along with other stands including local Guiding with a hit the rat and peg holding competition, along with a chance to go Zorbing, face painting and old fashioned games.

Hundreds turned up for the event in the park which is now becoming an annual event.

(Picture Sandbach Mayor Gill Merry and Kathie Benson on the Air Ambulance Stand / Stalls at event)



27 June 2015

ARMED FORCES DAY PARADE AND SERVICE

Supporters of serving members of the Armed forces turned out in Sandbach for the Armed Forces Day parade which first took place on Sunday the 27 June 2015 and event which has taken place in the UK since the 27 June 2009 when it replaced Veteran's Day which had started in 2006.

As in previous years the procession was led by the Silk Brass from Macclesfield who played both on the march and at the church service in St Mary's.

Members of Sandbach Town Council including the Mayor Gill Merry were in attendance along with representatives of local organisations and local cadets.

The parade also introduced a new standard for the Royal British Legion, who this year paraded two standards in the march from Westfields in Middlewich Road with the new flag wrapped up until the service at the church when it was officially dedicated and revealed to the public ready for the march back to the Cheshire East offices. Pausing at the Cenotaph for the laying of three wreaths to respect the fallen of past conflicts the parade continued amid the sunshine of what turned out to be a perfect day for the people of Sandbach to show their own respect of those serving the Army, Navy and Air force.



 3 July 2014

WAITROSE PARTNERSHIP DAY

This day was a chance to meet groups supported by Waitrose over the year with their green disc collections. Among the groups attending the event were St Luke's Hospice, Rotary Club and Interact who informed shoppers of the groups within the town and what they had to offer for new members. This was the second year the company had held the event and it was so oversubscribed by organisations that some turned up a day early to do their promotion including groups like the Friends of Sandbach Station.

On Friday the Sandbach Voices didn't quite raise the roof at the Sandbach Waitrose Partnership Day (3 June) as they were drowned out by the Lions Youth Brass Band during their allotted time, but did manage to get some interest from prospective new singers and higher their profile ready for their new season of concerts.

The Lions Youth Brass Band also didn't bring the house down, but they did give the public the best shopping experience in years with tunes from Robbie Williams to Frozen and my favourite at the moment "It had Better be Tonight", a new arrangement from one of the Pink Panther films "A Shot in the Dark".

It was also a good opportunity to let the shoppers hear them before they celebrate their 25th anniversary at Sandbach School on Sunday the 5 July.



 4 July 2015

INDEPENDENCE DAY - COUPLE LEAVE FODENS

Brass banding celebrity couple Glyn and Helen Williams gave their final solo performances with Foden's Band after a successful number of years with the band. Glyn has been with Fodens for 20 years and Helen for 15 years of playing with the successful winning band including becoming the Double Championships in 2012. The Party in the Park organised by Sandbach Town Council was the most successful in the four years it has been running with thousands turning up to see the Sandbach School Big Band conducted by John Barber who swapped shoes (Literally and figuratively) to join Foden's Band for the 8pm performance. Performing an American Themed show in celebration of American Independence day the 4th July on which date the show took place. In the second half of the Brass Band concert, Helen Williams played an emotional version of 'Lady in Red' giving the performance of her life to rapturous applause from both the audience and her fellow players. Glyn a few tunes later played current favourite and difficult piece 'La Belle Americaine' before playing was interrupted by Mark Wilkinson (Foden's Band), Mike Benson of Sandbach Town Council and Town Mayor Gill Merry to perform a presentation to Glyn and Helen of Certificates to celebrate their years with the band and their invaluable support to Foden's and in turn the Town Council by helping promote the town and taking part in numerous events over the years. The concert finished with the Last Night of the Proms Selection before the band gave a personal fond farewell to the couple who are moving to South Wales to take up new challenges with the Cory Band.





 5 July 2015

LIONS CLUB BRASS BAND CELEBRATES 25 YEARS WITH SPECIAL CONCERT.

The Lions Club Brass Band celebrated its 25th Anniversary with a very special concert at Sandbach School on Sunday 5 July 2015. Organised by a team of helpers and Band manager Nigel Birch they managed to get together a number of ex members who made a return to the band and during the second half performed many of the tunes they had played during their period of time with the band plus a number of new tunes.

The first half started with the Beginners Band playing a tune written for the anniversary with young band members making the introductions to the pieces.

The spotlight then moved to the Lions Junior Band who started their session with ‘Eye of the Tiger’ from the Rocky films and an announcement that the previous day they had been in a competition in Whiston , Yorkshire and come 2nd.

The main band then took the baton under Nigel Birch to play the theme to ‘Raiders of the Lost Arc’ and enjoyed a solo by the bands flugel player before Fodens Band Principal Cornet player Mark Wilkinson joined them for “La Belle Americaine” and a duet with Georgina Williams, an operatic tribute called “Caruso”.

The second half had past members in a reunion band with Mark joining them for ‘Spring Song’ and a Cornet feature with all of the bands principal cornet players playing ‘12th Street Rag’.

A reunion of members from the Lions Band who went onto join the Roberts Bakery Band and various awards were handed out including the “Bandsman of the Year” which was celebrated this year by the handing down of the award from the first recipient to their successor and so on until it came to the award for 2015 which went to Jordan Edge.

The celebration ended with a fun version of ‘Can, Can’ with members of the Junior and Beginners band dressing up in funny hats to do the Parisian dance with members of the combined bands joining in with various moves a fitting end to a wonderful concert celebrating the best in young talent from all over the area including the bands

home town of Sandbach.



Rehearsals for the Reunion Band



11 July 2015

BRERETON BEAR FESTIVAL

The Brereton Bear Festival started on the 11 July 2015 with a parachute jump from the Church Tower by various bears along with a number of montages including bears over the area of Brereton including a mysterious

appearance by a blue police box on the Congleton Road along with a Cyberteddy and DALEK who are battling the 11th Doctor including his fez.



11 July 2015

MIOLA ANNIVERSARY EVENT

This year's celebration of the opening of Miola on the 11 July 2015, included CBeebies continuity presenter Alex Winters who made his second appearance in the town after a five year gap. Alex first appeared in Sandbach at the 2010 Transport Festival to entertain the children and he did the same this time with various activities at the shop in Ettley Heath. Alex is currently working on new projects for the BBC as well as his duties on the children's channel and has made a number of appearances in the area recently which he will be continuing to do over the summer months.

Other activities at the event included a number of stalls connected to the site with a bouncy castle, hook a duck and entertainment provided by characters from Frozen and an ABBA copy duo who sang the hits from the group.

This is the third year of Miola's birthday celebrations with their opening on the 26 May 2012. That day they had celebrity guests, Tom Lister from Emmerdale and Kitty Brucknell from the X Factor and at their 2nd Anniversary they invited Adam Thomas also from Emmerdale as the guest.

Owners were unsure if they would do a similar event next year but those who attended from all over south Cheshire certainly enjoyed themselves and there were still a lot of visitors when I arrived at about 3pm.



Alex Winters and Miola Owner at the event.

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11 July 2015

ELWORTH PARK FUN DAY

Elworth Park held a Fun Day with the theme of Alice in Wonderland on Saturday the 11 July 2015. The event included a coconut shy, picture hunt and various other stalls including a Cheshire Cat and a cake stall where no doubt the cakes were delicious rather than magical as in the books which when eaten made you grow or get smaller I can never remember which.

Jenny Baker dressed as the Mad Hatter and had the first clue in the picture competition on her hat while Sandbach Mayor Gill Merry and her husband manned the Coconut shy a popular activity in the park.



11 July 2015

RUGBY CLUB DONKEY DERBY

The 16th annual Donkey Derby event at Sandbach Rugby Club's ground was free for the first time with various activities taking place including of course the Donkey Derby which was run during the day only pausing for a local band California Blue to play a few tunes from the 1960's between races.

This year also included a number of stalls at the far end of the site including the Air Ambulance and Cancer Research fundraisers. Other activities included the Community Police display stand, the annual plate smashing stall and a hit the rat game along with Zorbing and Bubble Football.

The day was not as successful as in previous years, according to some of the stall holders but fun was had by those who attended and the races were again a great success.



Air Ambulance and Cancer Research Fundraisers.

17 July 2015 9.11am

BOSLEY MILL WOOD FIRE

Bosley Mill Fire

Cheshire Fire Brigade were called out to the biggest fire in the area for many years which resulted in a month long investigation and numerous fire investigators looking for 4 victims of a series of explosions at the Wood Mill.

The Sandbach Fire engine was one of the first on the scene despite having attended a fatal crash on the M6 at 23.24pm the previous night when 3 heavy goods vehicles and a light good vehicle collided between Junction 17 and 18 on the North-bound carriageway an incident which blocked the M6 until after 10am.

Five had been trapped in their vehicles with one having to be removed by the Fire crews from Sandbach, Winsford, and Holmes Chapel.

The incident at Bosley Mill happened just before 9am with Congleton appliances attending first with a second call to Sandbach and the surrounding area. 4 people taken to hospital and by 12midnight 4 people were still missing.

23 Fire Engines attended on the first day =

- 12 Cheshire
- 9 Greater Manchester
- 1 Derbyshire + Water Tanker engine
- 1 Staffordshire
- 2 Arial Appliances
- 1 Command and Control Unit
- 1 High Volume Pump
- 1 Environmental Protection Unit

Sandbach crew's attended the incident on more than eight occasions to help find the bodies of the four victims and to put out fires in the area.

22 July 2015

SMART MOTORWAY IN SANDBACH EXHIBITION

On Wednesday the 22 July 2015 Highways England (The old Highways Agency) hosted an exhibition at Sandbach Town Hall to show the proposed alterations to the M6 between junctions 16 and 19.

This new 'smart Motorway' will involve the use of the Hard Shoulder as a fourth lane along with electronic signs that will govern the speed of the motorist depending on road conditions, volume of traffic and any accidents in the area. Kate from Highways England told me that the scheme would increase capacity, provide more reliable journey's and help relieve congestion which will be done in a number of ways including the permanent fourth lane and in-forcible speed limits as well as changing the centre reservation barrier from metal to concrete which is less likely to be damaged in a crash thus saving money in the long run. To allow emergency vehicles access to both sides of the reservation they will be installing gates at strategic points to allow the fire, police and ambulance personnel to cut through to the alternate traffic flow on the north or south bound carriages. These gates will also allow traffic to be moved onto the other carriage after a hold up to allow access to a junction or service station where they will be able to bypass the hold ups and thus stop queues of traffic building up after an accident.

The scheme will use existing land and facilities to make the most of what is already in place with less disruption to the environment. The cost benefit will also be on a 4 to one ratio with every £1 being spent on the improvement the public will gain the equivalent of £4's worth of benefits in travel time saved and less delays.

I asked about the Pinch-point improvements that are already being made at Junction 17 and 16 and was told that Highways England know about the road-works and will incorporate them into the Smart Motorway making no more changes to that part of the M6. I also asked about the problems of crashes at the service station and the stretch of road between Sandbach and Holmes Chapel / Middlewich and was informed that although the slip roads onto the M6 were not ideal they would not be making any changes to the area but with the reduced speeds this should make the area safer and hopefully less fatal accidents will occur.

The plans will cost £200 Million for this stretch of the M6 and should start later in this year with a date in October pencilled into the diary and a proposed two year construction by Carillion and Kier with a completion date in the autumn of 2017 also pencilled in. Disruption will be kept to a minimum, with three lanes open during the day and closure of areas during the night-time rather like the work at Junction 17 at the moment with hopefully the Smart Scheme being completed on time.

The plan is designed to last until 2031 when it may need updating, but with Google bringing in driverless cars and HS2 plans alongside plans for cars to be put onto trains the future could be a very different one from the road schemes of today and so by then a new set of needs may have to be put into place.

More information can be found on the Highways England website.



Kate Beirne of Highways England showing what a Smart Motorways is like to drive on.

 23 July 2015

UNEXPECTED VISITOR TO SANDBACH STATION

Thursday the 23 July 2015 was the scene of a great mystery at Sandbach Station as 50 or so people turned up to the station to see a steam engine that shouldn't have been there. Social media got wind of the 'Union of South Africa's' visit to the station as part of a speed test the engineers were doing after it had its wheel bearings repaired at the Heritage Centre before the engine goes onto the main line to run regular heritage trips for its Scottish owner John Cameron (Purchased in July 1966). Currently based at Thornton Yard the engine is currently in BR Green for its commercial trips.

Charles Winterton one of the financial managers of the project told me that the trip was supposed to have been top secret and they were very surprised when they turned up at Sandbach Station at 12.25 to find so many people wanting to take pictures of the engine as it steamed into platform 3 backwards at 35 MPH on the first trip to run in the new bearings. After an initial check of the engine it was then uncoupled from the support carriage and driven up to the next set of points before passing through Sandbach again, this time on platform 2 to be positioned at the Crewe end of the carriage having gone over another set of points and reversed back to Platform 3 and the waiting crowd who then got to see the engine in all its glory. Some also persuaded the driver to allow them onto the footplate for a brief moment, an experience many would not forget. Work completed and the engine sounded its whistle a couple of times before setting off back to Crewe Station ready for it to run the same Crewe to Sandbach route in the afternoon at 60 MPH with further runs planned for the following day, again held in secret.

Originally called 'Union of South Africa' it started its life controversially as the problems in that country meant that it had to be renamed "Osprey" on its maiden journeys with number 4488 on its front and 60009 hidden in the drivers footplate along with the name plaque. It was officially named Osprey on the 17 April 1937 and released from the paint shop on the 19 June 1937 having been designed by Nigel Gresley for the LNER Doncaster Works. It is now one of only six Gresley A4s currently operational. Another A4 is the famous Mallard which holds the world speed record for a steam train at 128 Miles per hour.

The engine is the only steam loco to have had two names before it went into service and also the only steam train to have travelled over the Forth Road Bridge and Forth Rail Bridge in service as a preservation engine and on its way by low loader to Bridgnorth for repairs in May 1994.

Currently at Crewe for its overhaul it is no stranger to the town having had an 'on train monitoring recorder' fitted in January 2007 and in 2010 Pete Waterman's LNWR workshop at the Heritage Centre gave it an extensive overhaul and boiler certificate tests.

The Thursday afternoon times seemed to have been altered as the few who turned up were disappointed when it seemed the engine had done its test at 3pm rather than 4pm leaving only a strong smell of a bygone age behind for those to re-live the wonderful memories of a long lost era and photographs on the internet from the morning visitors.





 26 July 2015

CIVIC PARADE AND SERVICE

A rainy Sunday afternoon on the 26th July welcomed various Mayors to Sandbach for the Annual Civic Service and Procession. In honour of Gill Merry the Mayor of Sandbach, the parade started on Scotch Common and followed the road through the town past the Town Hall and on to the War Memorial where Gill laid a wreath before heading to St Mary's and a service conducted by The Revd. Thomas Shepherd which included readings from the Mayor of Sandbach and Councillor Natasha Simpson (Sandbach Heath and East Ward). An invitation was then given for light refreshments at the Town Hall.

Those in attendance included the Mayor of Cheshire East, Cllr Hilda Gaddum, Congleton Mayor, Cllr Elizabeth Wardlaw and her Mayor's Cadet Charlotte Frost, Knutsford Mayor, Cllr Tony Dean and Winsford's Deputy Mayor, David Edwards along with representatives of the British Legion and leading the procession the Cheshire Police Band.





5 August 2015

PLAY IN THE PARK

What is now becoming an annual event in Sandbach Park is organised by the Sandbach Partnership to entertain youngsters during the Summer Holiday and is the “Play in the Park Event”. Held on the 5 August this year the event not only included the usual face painting, wild animals, games, wheelchair basketball, tennis and trampoline, but also a chance to do some pond dipping with Sandbach Park’s own Wildlife expert on hand to identify the stickleback and lava trawled from the bottom of the established ponds at the far end of Sandbach Park.

Also in use this year is the newly installed table tennis facility and boules court which both seemed popular with children and adults who were waiting for their youngsters to return from seeing the albino hedgehog, snakes and lizards.

Supervised sports also proved popular in the park with hundreds turning up on the bright day to enjoy the facilities.

Another popular attraction was the small fire engine Wellie 1, registered after Welephant the Fire brigade mascot which was the inspiration of Greater Manchester Fire service who used him to promote awareness of the dangers of Fire to local school children.

In 1978 local school children submitted drawings in a competition and the winner by a 14 year old girl became Welephant. In 1984 Greater Manchester County Fire Service launched the Welephant Club with 250,000 members in the first month. In 1985 eighteen other services applied to use Welephant in their area and soon it became a national character.

In 1996 the Welephant Club was renamed the National Fire Safety Charity for Children and although in the 2000’s Welephant has been phased out by Fire Brigades around the country a costume is still kept by Cheshire Fire service at Crewe and the mascot has also been used by the Children’s Burn Trust to spread its message and Staffordshire Fire and rescue still has a Welephant Club. In 1986 the Singing Fireman, Graham Walker produced a single about the red elephant and a video to accompany it featured the Crow from Saturday Superstore on BBC1, Paul Daniels, Margaret Thatcher and Frank Bruno along with his wife Denise and Pop sensation Claire and Friends (‘It’s ‘orrible being in love when our eight and a half’ released in 1986). Graham had been a fireman with West Yorkshire Fire Service since 1976 and was asked to transfer to the headquarters and take on the responsibility of teaching fire safety to schools. The character Welephant was ideal to help with this and as an entertainer Graham was asked to compose a song to put into his show for schools and later theatres. The song sold over 40,000 copies and reached number 87 in the charts. Graham left the Fire service in 1990 but still sings in shows with his wife and is still booked for various Fire Safety events, unfortunately without Welephant.

The little fire engine designed and built in Cheshire was housed at Crewe but has recently become the responsibility of Sandbach cadets who were looking after the engine at the event. Due to insurance problems the display appliance has become the property of the Cheshire Fire Heritage department along with many old appliances which are on display at various events in the County and housed at various stations where they are always popular. Wellie 1 was so popular at the Sandbach Park’s event that it was a full forty minutes after the event closed that they were able to put it back inside the station after children who had played on it and rang the bell on the way into the event also wanted to play and ring the bell on the way out.

Organisers described the event as another great success in the park which has also recently gained Green Flag status as an outstanding area.



 9 August 2015

LODGE HOUSE AT ABBEY FIELDS

Passing down Middlewich Road I came across a site I didn't want to see. A JCB digger outside the Lodge House of Abbey Fields and a half demolished building. Having recently been sold I had hoped that this old building would be renovated and used as a house once more but this doesn't seem to be the case as yet another historic building is violated with plans to update its structure and so lose the character of our history. In July 2015 the Lodge House (202 Middlewich Road) permission was granted for the building to be partly demolished, sadly after many years of neglect to have an single story extension put in place and the removal of the garage at the rear of the building with work starting in August 2015 for Mr Peter Brackley of Park Real Estate Ltd, 167 Bradwall Road, Sandbach CW11 1GP (Architect Darren Curry Architects 19b Jack Lane, Davenham, Northwich CW9 8LA) this is another example of developers thinking of profit instead of renovation and local government is unable to stop it. According to the planning applications website, Sandbach Town Council and Cheshire East had no objections to the redevelopment of the building. Recent applications to Cheshire East included the Signalman's cottage in Elworth which has been updated so much that it has lost its original character, the buildings at 44-46 Congleton Road have been gutted to make way for a hairdressers and the house on Congleton Road at the entrance to the new estate has been demolished while plans for development of the garden area behind Dingle Farm were thrown out after a second application was turned down for houses. So much of Sandbach's history is being lost to developers that it is sad that another building will bite the dust with a new extension and modern windows and doors. The estate of Abbey Fields is situated on the Middlewich Road and the large house was owned originally by the Abbey of Dieulacres (Monks) in the 13th Century. However the land around Sandbach was held by Richard De Sandbache, who in 1230 was High Sheriff of Cheshire. By the late 1700's Abbey Fields was the home of Colonel John Ford and it was he who rebuilt the main house in the early 1800's to its present Grade 2 listed building along with improvements to the estate layout. "Abbey Fields" now had its own Gate House (which is being partly knocked down) and a Coach House (Again not listed). Recently a poster was released on the internet showing that on the 21 June 1909 at the Royal Hotel, Crewe the main house and estate was sold by Henry Manley and Sons, Ltd at 3pm. The Estate consisted of a Picturesque Mansion and Agricultural Property with a total area of 341a or 39p lying in a ring fence. The Mansion had modern domestic offices, excellent stabling, garage, coach house, large walled garden, ornamental grounds, large lake, modern sanitation with filter beds and a good water supply obtained on the property. The residence

was approached by two carriage drives with lodges at each entrance and stood in the midst of beautifully wooded grounds with a large lake. It is thought that the estate was purchased by Sir Randolph (or Randle) Crewe the Marquess of Crewe K.G., P.C. at this time. In 1929 Abbey Fields was purchased by Percy Finlow (Owner of John Pring and Son) from Carl Brunner of Brunner Mond fame and was soon converted into flats. So much of the original building and estate has changed and now it seems the Lodge will also lose its historic status.



 9 August 2015

VANDALS HIT BROOK WOOD

Officially opened on the 28 March 2014, Brook Wood between the Homebase roundabout and Coronation Crescent off Third Avenue was a pristine area for walkers to enjoy the country pathway but this week vandals have hit the area, dumping branches into the river along with barriers from road-works on the adjoining estate. According to Cllr Mike Benson there was also evidence of drug smoking with drug spoons being removed from the rubbish in the water. The general lack of respect for this area includes evidence of crisp packets, sweet wrappers and general litter strewn over the walkways as well as the benches made for walkers to sit and enjoy viewpoints and a shopping trolley being thrown into the river. One of the areas had also been set on fire which could have got out of hand and made the hard work on the project into a pile of charcoal and the beauty spot would be lost forever.

Chris J Chapman a local resident was so incensed with the vandalism he posted a picture on the Sandbach Past and Present Facebook page asking for help to clear the river and surrounding area. Dick Macaulay of the Woodland and Wildlife Group, who along with others made the area a natural beauty spot, offered to arrange a gathering of volunteers to clear the area and on Sunday the 9 August 2015 at 10.30am, Dick, Chris, Mike and Andrew Winter started work on the river blockage. They were later joined by about eight more volunteers including Daniel Williams who provided coffee for the workers.

Once the river had been cleared Dick set the volunteers on a litter pick and general tidy up for the area putting it back into shape.

The project cost between four and five thousand pounds when it was first installed. It is a great pity some people do not show the respect needed to keep it beautiful.

Dick Macaulay of the Woodland and Wildlife Group told me that he was also looking for volunteers to help keep the area looking good as well as extending the trail towards the Brook Bridge next to the traffic lights on the Sandbach Bye-pass and anyone interested in helping should contact the group c/o d.macaulay@talk21.com.



Vandal's hit Brook Wood.



Volunteers help clear up the Mess.

Names L to R = Chris J Chapman / Cllr Mike Benson (In Hat) / Andrew Winter / Dick Macaulay (Woodland and Wildlife Group)

15 August 2015

GOING, GOING GONE

Having been subjected to numerous bids by developers to build on land in Sandbach it is not surprising that they have decided to bring in the bulldozers to make way for new houses. The problem is they are all arriving at the same time and knocking down some of the iconic buildings in the town.

Previously we have lost Westfields one of the homes of the Foden family, The Elworth Wire Works (14/5254c) and recently 130 Congleton Road to make way for 160 dwellings and the Abbey Fields Lodge House on Middlewich Road which was partly demolished for an extension. Plans are also in place to knock down the Wrights Printing Works leaving the main house to be converted into flats with an extension at the back. Middlewich Road has also seen the demolition of buildings this week with the relatively new offices of Charles Church being raised to the ground and next to them this week we saw the demolition of the old Magistrates Courts and Police Station in Sandbach opposite the Cheshire East building which doesn't always have good memories for those who have been within its walls as many were sent down for various sentences over the years.

Recently used as offices the building was offered for sale by Right Move on the 16 October 2013 for £275,000 but withdrawn for sale only to be offered to HB Community Solutions Living Ltd who put in an application to demolish the building and erect a three storey accommodation building with 15 supported living apartments (Application 14/5285c) for people with physical and learning disabilities. This application was approved by Cheshire East on the 30 March 2015 and on Wednesday the 12 August the bulldozers moved in to knock down this historic building in the town.

The building has a colourful history which starts in June 1965 when the Sandbach Police did a "Moonlight Flit" from their offices in Bold Street to rooms behind the Courtrooms in Middlewich Road which were formally the

Congleton Rural District Council Offices and were built by John Stringer. The first enquiry at the new offices was at 3 O Clock when a man asked them where the Police Station was!

By the end of the 1980's court proceedings were moved to Crewe and soon after it was decided to sell the building to create a new temporary Police station opposite and later the building we have today. This left the building in a state of flux until this week when it became a pile of rubble alongside the offices previously owned by Charles Church and now McCarthy and Stone propose to build a number of one and two bedroom retirement units with a residents lounge and office for a house manager (14/2289c). Approved by the Council on the 25 February 2015 they are now also a pile of new bricks waiting to be reborn.



130 Congleton Road – Before



After



Magistrates Court before Demolishment



The Old Police Station Entrance at the back.



NO OFFICES



NO MAGISTRATES COURTS



 17 August 2015

NEW METHODIST MINISTER FOR SANDBACH

With the departure of the Rev'd Kim Stilwell at the beginning of August the Methodist Circuit have been waiting for its new Minister to take up the position which will happen on the 1st of September 2015. The Reverend Jeremy Tresise, his wife Lis and their 3 sons Joseph, Nathaniel and Nicholas will be moving from St Andrew's Church in Bramhall where he started as a probationer a few years ago and where they had a Saturday Club, Tea Dances, Creative plays, advice and information for youngsters as well as beauty treatment sessions in the church hall, so he should feel at home with the many activities held at the Wesley Centre in Sandbach. He was also the co-ordinator for the New Horizons project based at St Andrews Manse, Wythenshawe in Manchester, which served 348 people with 17 volunteers and 37 church members which was designed to meet the needs of all members of society showing sensitivity and respect to all by providing facilities and activities tailor made for everyone including those with disabilities, impairments and learning difficulties.

Jeremy had been with the Bramhall and Wythenshawe circuit for the past 5 years covering the Heald Green, Brownley Green and St Andrew's Churches and will take his first service in the Sandbach Circuit on 6th September at 10:30am at Elworth Methodist Church, Middlewich Road. There is also to be a Sandbach Mission Area welcome service at Elworth on the evening of 13th September at 6:30pm to officially welcome him to the area.

In his final newsletter for the Bramhall and Wythenshawe Methodist Circuit in June he quoted the story of the Ascension of Jesus as recorded in Acts 1:6-11 which reminded us that we need to move on if we are to develop and grow and that we cannot cling on to the way things are. With his wife Lis recently becoming an accredited Local Preacher and the move to Sandbach it is just the sort of chance he has to develop and grow within the Methodist Church and community of Sandbach.



 17 August 2015

MORE HISTORY DESTINED FOR THE SCRAPHEAP

I have just discovered that BT wish to remove the shell of the K6 phone box in Platt Avenue, Sandbach phone number 01270-759060 on the 10 September unless Cheshire East turn down the application to dismantle this iconic structure in the town.

Sandbach has another example of the K6 outside the Town Hall which has Grade 2 National Heritage Status because of its association with the designer Sir Giles Gilbert Scott who was the Grandson of Sir George Gilbert

Scott the architect of many buildings in Sandbach including the Literary Institute, Savings Bank, Alms Houses and Grammar School.

Designed in 1935 by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott the kiosk has become an iconic part of many towns in the Country but is now being lost due to the increase in mobile phones and so the need for phone boxes is becoming less and less. However we need to keep these historic structures in our towns to remind us of a previous era and for people to appreciate them in situ. Although it is in need of a bit of paint and the replacement of some of the glass it would be nice to keep it in the town as a feature of the past.

Many of the K6 Kiosks have been converted into book lending posts or made into a feature in an area so it would be nice to save this penultimate example in Sandbach for future generations to enjoy if not on the corner of Platt Avenue and Sweettooth Lane then maybe in the Park.

Anyone wishing to put their views forward have just 42 days from the 30 July 2015 to contact the Cheshire East Planning Department before it is taken away and turned into scrap.

This icon of British life was designed in 1935 to commemorate the Silver Jubilee of King George V and is sometimes known as the "Jubilee Kiosk". It was the first red telephone kiosk used outside of the London area with a total of 16,000 being installed between 1935 and 1940 bringing the total number of phone boxes in the UK at that time to 35,000.

Initially the phone box was not loved by all Councils and the public as many thought the Post Office red to be intrusive in the area and so the GPO (at the time) allowed some areas of natural beauty to paint their K6's in grey with red glazing bars. However in most areas the colour scheme was kept red and is now reproduced in models, coin boxes and on tourist postcards and tea towels becoming as British as the bulldog or the red London bus or even the iconic Police Box used in Dr Who.

Sandbach is losing much of its history and so it would be a shame to lose another item of the past from this "Historic Town".





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12 September 2015

DANCING IN THE RAIN

The fifth annual “Day of Dance” took an unexpected turn when torrential rain fell on Sandbach while over 100 Morris Dancers took part in the event around the town on the 12 September 2015. Organisers Lynn Purcell and Ray Archer have arranged for eight teams to attend from Stoke on Trent, Stockport, Thelwall, Manchester and the Boarder Counties. Dances included the Cotswold dances with sticks and are the ones usually featured in TV programmes like Dad’s Army, while the Northwest Dance involves clogs and the Molly dancers get their name from one of the dances when on Plough Monday in January they dress in women’s clothes and are called Molly. The dancers also paint their faces in disguise which seems to be a feature of many of the Morris Dancers. The Boarder dancers wear tatters or rag jackets and have their faces blacked out. This tradition of blacking up has nothing to do with the minstrel shows but is more a disguise as dancers were usually workers who were forced to beg for extra money and would find themselves dismissed if their employers found out they were begging or because you could be deported for begging in the streets. The dancers would “Black up” to disguise their faces so they wouldn’t be recognised and sacked or deported for trying to get extra money to live on. Last year the Day of Dance was attached to the Council’s “Farmer’s Market” and this year with the Maker’s Market taking over the role of running the specialist markets the organisers were pleased to join forces to hold this year’s event.

Rain failed to stop the dancing as the Morris men and women who went inside the Church Hall and a tent at the Old Hall to continue dancing until the sun came out and shone brightly at the end of the day making the event another success with many dancers and public looking forward to next year and another colourful “Day of Dance”.

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17 September 2015

FODEN’S BAND INTRODUCES NEW PLAYERS TO SANDBACH AUDIENCE

Foden’s Band returned to Sandbach Town Hall on the 17 September 2015 to introduce new players to the followers of the band for the first time after a gruelling few weeks playing including taking part in the “British Open” competition at the Symphony Hall, Birmingham where they played the test piece “Reflections on Swan Lake” by Stephen Roberts.

Sandbach however was treated to a selection of slightly easier tunes with the same quality of playing that they offered in Birmingham and included an arrangement of songs from ‘south Pacific” and “West Side Story” along with solo performances of “I dreamed a Dream”, “Live and Let Die”, and “We have all the time” from the band’s usual performers. During the second half the audience were treated to a solo performance by David Thornton on Solo Euphonium one of three new band members appearing at the concert. Having taken over from Glyn Williams who left in the summer to go to the Cory Band David showed he has the talent to fill such illustrious shoes with the Variations by Andrew Lloyd Webber. New member David Gillson on Flugel played band favourite the Concerto d’Aranjuez by Rodrigo and Kathleen Gaspoz has joined the Cornet section having been principal cornet player with the European Youth Band and National Youth Band of Switzerland. Kathleen is studying for her Masters in Performance at the RNCM (Manchester).

The band also honoured one of its two librarians Granville Jennings who celebrated 67 years with professional Brass Bands having started with the Wigan British Legion Band in 1948 and moving on to the Coppull Band in 1951, Wingates Band (1953), Haigh Band (1960), Lower Ince Band (1962) and Foden’s Band in 1964 as Solo Eb Soprano Cornet player helping the band to win during the 1964 British Open playing “Lorenzo” a piece relying on the soprano player with Rex Mortimer conducting. Granville stayed with Foden’s for ten years before Ted Gray coaxed him away to join the Royal Doulton Band (1974-1978) and the opportunity to conduct the

Congleton based Beresford's Band (1978-1990) which he made into a popular local feature at many concerts and appearances.

Granville then returned to Foden's Band in 1990 as assistant librarian with Jimmy Charles, keeping his lip in by playing with the Winterley Methodist Band (1990 to date) and from 2012 he joined the Sandbach U3A band.

The Diamond Award by the North West Area Brass Band Association was presented by Mark Wilkinson to Granville during the show in appreciation of his long service and is given for 60 years of service to the Brass Band world which he surpassed seven years ago. The presentation was witnessed by Granville's daughter and granddaughter at the Concert as well as the large audience and the band.

Foden's Band at Sandbach Town Hall. New Band Members with Mark Wilkinson and Michael Fowles.

(L to R) MW / David Gillson / Kathleen Gaspoz /

MF / David Thornton

Granville Jennings with Kathleen Gaspoz Granville with Mark Wilkinson

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19 September 2015

SANDBACH TODAY EVENT 2015

Organised by the Sandbach Partnership the annual "Sandbach Today" event held on the 19 September was a great success with 32 groups aimed for adults in St Mary's Church Hall and for the first time a separate youth section on the Market Square with 8 organisations showing what is available for the people in Sandbach to take part in.

Dot Flint of the Sandbach Partnership arranged for Cheshire East Mayor Hilda Gaddum to open the event in the hall and Sandbach Town Council Mayor Gill Merry to officially open the Youth event outside before she swapped her Chain of office for a pinafore to make the bacon sandwiches and serve drinks.

Formed in 1997 the event is now in its 18th year and still has the same aim to introduce the public of Sandbach to new ways of spending their free time in entertaining ways and also ways of making a contribution to the area with groups like the Woodland and Wildlife Group and the Friends of Sandbach Park, Sandbach Station and Elworth Park as well as the Sandbach Talking Newspaper and Transport Festival Organisers.

This year has also seen the introduction of some new groups to the event including Grass Roots Disability who will be looking for events and pastimes that the disabled can join in. They are looking towards established groups or ones specially formed to cater for its members to make it easier to access things to do in the community.

Another new group recently formed is the Sandbach Footpath Group which like the Woodland and Wildlife group and Friends groups look towards cleaning up the town and improving access to various areas of Sandbach overgrown and previously unavailable.

Having arrived at 9.30am and staying until the end at 1pm I found there were so many groups to talk to that I could only manage to find out about 14 of the 40 groups in detail at the event but all the groups had a lot of interest from members of the public who came into the hall throughout the morning and hopefully many of those who came along would join in with the Cinema, Day of Dance, Concert series and U3A along with getting help from the Parkinson's UK, HANFA (Disabled Support Group) and Age UK.

Various clubs were also in the hall with the British Legion, Art Club, Probus and Rotary clubs showing us what they do as a group and for the community while outside the young were represented by the Fire Cadets, Interact, Royal Air Force Cadets and Cheshire Youth Theatre.

GROUPS in ST MARY'S CHURCH HALL.

Age UK

Ashfields Patient Participation (Group)

Cheshire Marshalls

Cinema (Sandbach)

C.V.S.

Day of Dance

Friends of Sandbach Park

Friends of Sandbach Station

Grass Roots Disability (NEW GROUP)

Multiple Sclerosis Society

Parkinson's UK

Probus Club of Sandbach

Probus Club of Sandbach Crosses

Rotary Club of Sandbach

Rotary Club of Sandbach Crosses

Royal British Legion

Sandbach Allotment Society

Sandbach Animal Rescue
 Sandbach Art Club
 Sandbach Clean Team
 Sandbach Concert Series
 Sandbach Footpath Group (NEW GROUP)
 Sandbach Garden Trail
 Sandbach History Society
 Sandbach Photographic Society
 Sandbach Sew and Sews (NEW GROUP)
 Sandbach Striders (Running Group)
 Sandbach Transport Festival
 Sandbach Voices
 Talking Newspaper (Sandbach)
 U3A (Sandbach)
 Woodland and Wildlife Group (Sandbach)

YOUTH (Outside)

Aquarius
 Cheshire Fire Cadets (Sandbach)
 Cheshire Police / Community Officer PCSO
 Cheshire Youth Theatre
 Everybody
 HANFA (Disabled Support Group)
 Interact (Rotary Club of Sandbach)
 Royal Air Force Cadets
 Sandbach Today opening.
 Cllr Gill Merry / Dot Flint / Cllr Hilda Gaddum Sandbach Fire Cadets
 Sandbach Allotments Probus Club of Sandbach
 Royal British Legion Parkinson's UK
 Sandbach Concert Series stand
 Sandbach Cinema

 23 September 2015

CAR ACCIDENT BRINGS AIR AMBULANCE TO SANDBACH PARK

On Wednesday the 23rd September 2015 at about 3pm a white Mini and a blue Renault collided side on causing possible neck injuries to the driver of the Renault and a woman from the Mini which required the presence of the Air Ambulance which turned up at the scene of the accident just before the road ambulance arrived possibly from Congleton. This was despite there being an ambulance station not 100 yards from the accident taking a full 15 minutes or more to arrive on the scene. Cheshire Police turned up first with the community support officer attending to the scene and securing the area for his colleagues to find out about the accident and to attend to the driver of the Renault who complained of neck pains and was given a brace to make sure he didn't move from the car before the ambulance arrived. In total three marked police cars were on the scene along with an unmarked car with officers who asked questions of those involved in the accident and witnesses to the crash. According to people at the scene of the accident the Mini was travelling towards Offley Road to collect a child coming from school when the Renault backed out onto Congleton Road from the elderly bungalows (Congleton Rd) near Tatton Drive and was hit by the Mini in the back passenger door causing the car to be turned around onto the footpath opposite and the back wheel to fall off. Looking at the damage caused many of those at the scene thought that the Mini was travelling faster than the permitted speed limit for the road and was unable to see the car backing out onto the road due to the amount of parked cars in the area.

Cheshire East have just proposed to put double yellow lines on the corners of Congleton Road between number 60 and 62 in preference to a larger plan to stop parking on Tatton Drive. The plan only covers both corners and would not have prevented the accident as there would still be cars blocking the view of drivers coming out of the estate on the same side of the road as "Grill Corner" (Formally Café Symphony). A local resident told this reporter that there have been a number of crashes at this point on the road and on one occasion there were four accidents in one week. Thankfully none of these have been fatal or has needed the Air Ambulance before but it raises the question that more measures should be taken to make it a safer junction around the Tatton Drive entrance and the 100 yards each side.

The Air Ambulance landed in Sandbach Park about 500 yards from the scene of the accident as this was the nearest piece of land available with the Paramedic walking the short distance to the cars to attend to the victims of the crash. The man in the car had according to witnesses not been wearing a seat belt as he reversed into Congleton Road and sustained neck injuries which were dealt with initially by the Police and then the Air

Ambulance Paramedic and ground Ambulance staff who on this occasion has a spectator on board the vehicle monitoring what was happening. Next one of those in the Mini complained of neck pains and after checking the neck for possible damage and her general state of health it was felt that she should also be given a neck brace and be strapped into a stretcher before both of them were taken to Leighton Hospital by road.

The man in the Renault was later discharged from Leighton while the woman was kept a little longer for observation.

Having decided that there was no immediate problem with either of the injured the Paramedic from the Air Ambulance returned to the North West Air Ambulance, a Eurocopter EC135 from Bond Air Services and the only Red coloured one in the fleet, and it took off, going back to its base at Manchester's Barton Airport using Jodrell Bank's Radio Telescope as a landmark to guide it home.

One little extra bit of information about the Aircraft in the park. Just like the road ambulance having a spectator on board the Air Ambulance also had a passenger, a teddy bear who sits in the front window next to the paramedic and I am told is a vital member of the crew. If a child is involved in an accident the bear administers to their comfort on the flight to hospital.

It is comforting to know that the Air Ambulance is available when needed and when it landed in Sandbach Park the noise from the engines brought out Cllr Mike Benson and his wife Kathy who live not far from the Park and whose daughter was involved in an accident that needed the air ambulance to take her to hospital. Since then the Benson's have raised money for the Air Ambulance at various events and it is also the chosen charity of current Sandbach Mayor Gill Merry who has seen the good it does in the Sandbach area and this vital role was seen again with its attendance at the accident on Congleton Road.

25 to the 28 September 2015

SANDBACH WAKES FAIR

Sandbach Wakes Fair returned to Sandbach with the usual mix of sideshows and features including a new Ghost Train and old favourite the Waltzer. 41 different attractions came to Scotch Common for the weekend of the 25 to the 28 September under the wing of Joe White who has been coming to the town for the last 71 years since he was born, with his family business coming to the town earlier than that. Joe White Snr has been the owner of the fair since 2006 but has been lessee of the fair since he took over from his father many years previous. It has been family business that has brought rides to Sandbach for many, many years.

This year like most years has started a debate into 'should the Fair be Stopped' with reports on Facebook of riots and stabbings, but as usual they were unfounded reports with the only incident being a 16 year old who was cut by a broken bottle during a small scuffle on the Saturday night an event that could (and has) happen occasionally (Not very often) on any Friday and Saturday night in the town.

Having been to the fair most nights I found it less crowded than usual due to the Facebook scaremongering and talking to the stall holders they also said takings were down. However those who did go enjoyed the magic of the fair just as many have in the past. One person on Facebook based in Australia looked at pictures of this year's event and remembered fondly the times she had been to the fair in Sandbach. Those who call for the fairs removal should note that only a couple of flower pots were displaced during the weekend and the Police and Security put in place by the organisers made sure that it was a safe environment for children and adults to enjoy the fair. Let's hope it comes back for many more years.

28 September 2015

FIRE AT BARCHETTA

Opened in 2014 in an old Mill next to the canal at Wheelock the "Barchetta Restaurant" was found to be on fire at about 3pm on Monday the 28 September 2015 with the upper floor space being the seat of the flames.

A fire engine from Sandbach, two from Crewe and one from Congleton attended the scene with six fire fighters in breathing apparatus using three hoses to fight the fire. Cheshire Police closed the road while the fire brigade tackled the blaze and at about 6.30pm the road was completely cleared.

The building has been a restaurant for many years and since the beginning of the 21st Century has been the Old Mill Restaurant, San Marco and previous to its current owners it was empty for a while before being renovated and opened as Barchetta. The fire damaged most of the upper floor of the building leaving the owners unable to open the building until it has been confirmed safe. A fire crew from Sandbach stayed on the scene for a number of hours after the fire had been extinguished to make sure there were no more hot spots and to start investigations into the cause of the fire.

30 September 2015

SOPHIE ROSA IS BIG HIT WITH VIOLIN FANS IN SANDBACH

The opening concert in the "Sandbach Concert Series" sees the welcomed the return of Sophie Rosa (.b. 1988) who graced the stage back in the 4th season in October 2013.

Sophie is a prize winning violinist from Cheshire who at the age of seven played solo violin in front of HRH Princess Margaret and was later a competitor in the 2006 BBC Young Musician of the Year competition (won that year by Mark Simpson on Clarinet) at the Sage in Gateshead at the age of 18.

Sophie was joined on stage by pianist Ben Powell and played the Allegro Vivace from Beethoven's Sonata No 2 in A Major op 12 No2, the Allegro Risoluto, Romance Andante and Allegro non troppo from the Elgar Violin Sonata in E minor op 82, Elgar's Chanson de Nuit op 15 No1 and Tchaikovsky's Valse Scherzo op 34.

The evening started with a performance from young musicians in the area and they impressed the many who attended the evening including the Deputy Mayor of Cheshire East Olivia Hunter and Sandbach Mayor Gill Merry along with their consorts.

3 October 2015

TEA WITH THE MAYOR

Started three years ago the annual Cream Tea with the Mayor event has been a great success raising funds for the Mayor's Charity and this year is no exception. Gill Merry the Town's Mayor held her event in Sandbach Town Hall on the 3 October with many people from the local community coming along to partake in the scones, carrot cake, cream cakes and tea served by a number of volunteers and Councillors including Carolyn Lowe and on the door Mike Benson.

Helping to organise the event with the Mayor was Dot Flint of the Sandbach Partnership who continually supports events like this to raise funds for local charities and awareness in the town.

The cakes were made by many friends of the Mayor and the Mayor's Charity which this year supports the Air Ambulance and Local Groups. Thanks go to all those who volunteered to make this event enjoyable especially those who baked cakes and made such a good job of them as they looked and I am told tasted as good as those on the Great British Bake Off.

Music for the event was provided by guitarists William and Leo Newton who performed on stage at short notice and by arrangement by Lauren Scott of the Sandbach Concert Series.

Along with a raffle the event was tipped to raise over £400 for the Mayor's Charity.

13 October 2015

DESTRUCTION OF SANDBACH HISTORY ON COUNTDOWN

Destruction of two of the historic sites in Sandbach has been approved by Sandbach Town Council this month despite proposals in the Neighbourhood plan which states that any development in the town should "Respect the historic landscape character and contribute to its conservation, enhancement or the creation of appropriate new features. The adaptive re-use of redundant or functionally obsolete listed buildings or important buildings will be supported where this does not harm their essential character".

Field House on Congleton Road the former Mill Owners House, Maternity Hospital and Unemployment Benefit Office has been before the Town Council for demolishment and the building of new homes on the site. The Town Council "Had No Objection" to the Development of the site in contravention of their own Neighbourhood plan to reuse important buildings. Various objections to the plan were put to the Council in writing as well as via the local newspapers and on Facebook but all have been ignored by those on the committee. Sandbach Town Council objected to the use of words saying they had agreed to demolish the building as it is now down to Cheshire East to make the final decision in November. However if the Town Council with its local knowledge has "No Objection to the Plans" then they will rubber stamp the demolition and that will be the end of another historic building.

The same has happened to the Platt Avenue K6 Phone Box which had numerous plans put forward by individuals to save the box, but because no „group“ has agreed to take over the Phone Box it will be taken away from the town and lost to Sandbach forever after the Council found no reason to keep it. BT, I am told will not re-site the box to another area according to the planning meeting, however I am sure that if they were asked properly then they would be willing to take out the box and drop it off at the Park rather than take it to be scrapped. It would then have to be positioned by volunteers into a permanent base just like one at Gawsforth Hall, so that it could be kept for the people of Sandbach to enjoy. Warmingham (Part of the Town) has kept their Phone box and made it into a lovely Tourist Information kiosk showing previous and future events in the village so why can't Sandbach Town keep its box and put it to good use?

On the one hand the Neighbourhood Plan talks about conservation of the area while on the other hand the Council are agreeing to build on sites that are of historic value and to remove historic structures without a single thought of saving "Historic Sandbach". There are a lot of sad people in the town wondering which building will be demolished next.

16 October 2015

UNBORN ACTS AT TOWN HALL

The idea of Richard Husdan the new conference and events manager at Sandbach Town Hall, "Unborn" is a chance for new bands and singers to be seen by a wider audience and in the future hopefully some talent scouts are in the audience to discover them. On Friday the 16 October 2015 the first event in town hall took place with help from John Barber (Love Music Trust and Sandbach School) and Sandbach School who provided the bands for the evening. Eric Ball played some of his own songs plus cover versions while Ollie and Maliek filled in the middle slot plus joining other friends to play in the band Remedies who ended the evening with a loud 'set' of music including new tunes and favourite covers.

Richard had tried the event out when he was working at the Corn Hall in the Cotswolds with great success and asked Sandbach Town Council if they would like to run a similar event in the Town. Keen to help local people the Council agreed to allow him to run the event at the town hall with minimum cost and gaining what expenses were spent back by charging £4 for a ticket to see the bands.

Eric Ball was influenced by Fleetwood Mac, Queen, Ed Sheeran as well as music his dad played in the car from the Beatles, Van Morrison and Bruce Springstein. Eric has been a busker in Crewe and played gigs in Sandbach and Crewe for a while. When he was busking he found that the audience wanted more ballade type music and moved from the rock influences in his writing to a quieter more meaningful song. Eric wanted to play the guitar after watching Jack Black in the film 'school of Rock' and now has expanded his solo performance to include a loop pedal which records a few bars of guitar or vocal music and plays it back on a loop to become a backing track to his vocals, a system that has been pioneered by K T Tunstall after she was seen on the Jools Holland programme on BBC 2.

The Remedies have been going for about 6 months and was the combination of two bands that Oliver Boon was in. Influenced by the Smiths, Guns and Roses, Catfish and the Bottle Men, Queens of the Stone Age and Nirvana the group cover songs by their favourite bands as well as writing songs like "All your standing for", "Betrayal" and "Truth" which they performed on stage having opened with "Little Monster" (by Royal Blood), which they added their own twist to the original music.

The band has played at various pubs in the area but only with Sandbach School have they played the bigger venues including the Edinburgh Fringe Festival which they played as part of the School Big Band a group that has recently had a concert at the Sports Hall in the school with BBC Singer Matt Ford a type of music that is totally different from the rock like sound they played at Sandbach Town Hall.

Richard and the Sandbach Town Council hope to join with the Love Music Trust to present four "Unborn" events each year with musicians and singer from all over the area including Crewe and Alsager as well as home grown talent from Sandbach.

Remedies rehearsing Eric Ball (R) and the Remedies

17 October 2015

CANCER RESEARCH SUPPORT GROUP 60 years old.

Sandbach Cancer Research Support Group celebrated 60 years in the town with a Cheese and Wine event at St Mary's Church Hall on Saturday the 17 October 2015.

Formed at a time when a pint of milk cost 6d (2½p) and the idea of a mobile phone was laughable, the treatment and survival of cancer patients has changed a lot in the 60 years of the Sandbach and District Local Committee. In 1955 cancer killed as many people in one year as men were killed in the whole of the six years of the Second World War now chances of survival have greatly increased with new treatments being discovered every year thanks to fundraisers all over the world.

Paula Jones (Senior Local Fundraising Manager) from Cancer Research counted up the amount of hours of dedicated fundraising that has been donated by the current members of the committee and the time given to raising funds for research amounted to a combined time of 255 years.

Chairperson Pauline Minshull, who has been in the post for the last 15 years introduced her predecessor and now President Margaret Park who has been on the Sandbach Committee since 1967. Margaret praised the team in Sandbach for its efforts over the many years she has been part of the group.

Edna and Ian Alexander two previous members of the committee also joined the celebrations which not only celebrated 60 years in Sandbach but a staggering £390,000 raised in the town for this worthy cause.

When President Margaret Park came to live in Sandbach 50 Years ago there were six charity committees in the town with Barnardo's, Save the Children, Cancer Relief, Lifeboat and the NSPCC of which only the Cancer Research Committee still exists.

The evening's celebration also raised money for the charity and was greatly helped by the donation of all the cheese by Daniel Williams of Williams Delicatessen on the Square. Wine, Soft Drinks, Bread and Chutney's for the evening were donated by Chris and Carolyn Lowe with the Co-op on Lawton Way, Elworth, Park Lane Deli, Waitrose and Mrs Darlington also supplying some bottles and food. The Celebratory cake was provided by Chatwins Bakers (Sandbach Shop and Nantwich).

Music for the evening was provided by Robert Glassonbury and Karen Foster who played Piano and Harp during the anniversary evening which was organised by the Committee.

The event raised £1,000.43p for Cancer Research.

2015 Committee

Music from Karen Foster and Robert Glassonbury Mayor Gill Merry and First Prize winning team Paula, Pauline, Margaret, Ian and Edna Daniel Williams and helpers with Cheese

Cutting the Cake (Provided by Chatwins)

Margaret Park, Paula Jones and Pauline Minshull

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15 October 2015

COMMUNITY PRIDE WINNERS AGAIN

At a ceremony in Ellesmere Port on the 15 October 2015, Sandbach were awarded the Community Pride Award for the Best Market Town in Cheshire for the third time in succession beating Knutsford (2nd Place) and Congleton (3rd Place) in the category for towns with population of over 10,000.

The town also won a "Little Gem Award" for Dingle Lake, Sandbach and Sandbach Railway Station was Highly Commended in the Best Community Initiative Category along with the Brereton Bear Festival which was also Highly Commended. They were beaten by the Rainow Village Bus who won the class but as the Friends of Sandbach Station was only formed in 2012 this is a remarkable achievement and will have pride of place along with the 2013 Cheshire Best Kept Station award for "Most Improved" station.

The project to enter the Competition each year is undertaken by the Sandbach Town Council's Tidy Town Group with support from the Town's Councillors, members of the Sandbach Clean Team, Sandbach Woodland and Wildlife Group, Rotary Club of Sandbach, Sandbach Crosses Rotary Club, Sandbach Interact Club, Sandbach Allotments Society, Care4CSE, Sandbach U3A, and the Friends of Sandbach Park, Friends of Elworth Park and the Friends of Sandbach Station. Help was also given by Cheshire East Council and ANSA Environmental Services.

Sandbach now has seven plaques it can proudly display on the Town Hall and in the Literary Institute having won first prize in 1992, 1993, 1998, 2003, 2013, 2014 and now 2015 putting them in joint 5th place in the overall league table of winning towns in Cheshire with Crowton and Wistaston in joint 1st place with 11 wins, Tarpорly in 3rd place with 9 wins and Nantwich in 4th place with 8 wins. Congleton and Audlem join Sandbach on the 5th podium with 7 wins each but Sandbach's 3rd win in a row shows they have the same drive as Lewis Hamilton who has three "back to back" Drivers World Championships under his belt and is destined to win more in the next few years.

Started in 1956 by the "Cheshire Community Council", the competition was then known by the name of the "Best Kept Village". It was used as an incentive to improve the towns and villages of Cheshire and to celebrate the best looking towns in the area a purpose that it has continued to do with a few changes in the format until the current year.

In 2003 the name changed to the "Community Pride Competition" and from then on it has incorporated many new competitions which are changed each year to reflect the needs of the community. Awards now include the "Best Website" which was added to reflect the towns reliance on new technology and the awards for "Community Initiative" and "Work by or with Young People" being added in 2013 to keep the competition at the forefront of its community involvement.

Judging for the Cheshire Community Action Awards takes place in July each year with the Awards Ceremony being held in a different town in October, so we can look forward to next year and hopefully a win again for Sandbach.

Picture – Mayor Gill Merry, Cllr Mike Benson, Bill Whittaker (Rotary Club of Sandbach), Cllr Barry Moran, Jenny Baker (Friends of Sandbach Station), Roamina Iruthayanthan, Alan Jones, Jenny and Keith Haines, Grace Milner and Kathie Benson.

31 October 2015

FODEN'S BAND SOLO COMPETITION

75 Players from around Great Britain and Belgium came to Sandbach to perform in the 5th Annual Foden's Band Solo Competition.

Started in October 2011 the event has attracted numerous players from around the world to compete for a number of prizes for solo performance, duo and for quartets.

This is an opportunity for many players to find out how to improve their performance with adjudication from international players Owen Farr, Florent Didier, Helen Williams and Anthony Mann.

Owen Farr is a Tenor Horn Player who has helped develop new horns for instrument manufacturers Besson, one of the sponsors of the event. He has also made broadcasts on "Listen to the Band" (BBC Radio 2) and "Friday Night is Music Night" and has played for the Pontypool Brass from his native Wales as well as the National Youth Brass Band of Wales and Solo horn for Tredegar Town Band.

Florent Didier is also connected with Besson and comes from France where he played Trombone and in 2008 was appointed the Musical Director of the Paris Brass Band and has recorded with such names as Michel Legrand, and Vladimir Cosma.

Third judge is Anthony Mann who plays timpani with Foden's Band and is building a good reputation as a Teacher, Player and has studied at the Royal Northern College of Music under previous percussionist with Foden's, Simone Rebello. In October 2010 he joined Foden's and this is a great opportunity for Anthony to pass on his experience to the percussion classes in the competition.

The final judge or adjudicator for the competition is no stranger to the Solo Competition having been involved in the event since it started but was usually found allocating rehearsal rooms for competitors. On Saturday the 31 October Helen Williams swapped roles as she became adjudicator for the Slow Melody, Vintage Class, Duets and Quartet sections. Helen was until earlier in the year Flugel Player with Foden's but moved to Wales and the Cory Band with her husband Glynn Williams where they both helped Cory to first place in the National Finals held on the 10 October 2015. Helen's return to Sandbach was welcomed by the band and her opportunity to be an adjudicator was "easy compared with allocating rooms", and she wished she had done this years before, making this a very enjoyable experience.

Local players included Catherine Flanders (2nd in the Under 16 Tuned Percussion Section) and the Lions Youth Band Quartet

Dave McGlynn of Foden's Band said that this year's event was "The best solo contest that I've been to since being with the band" (2012 to date) a view that was duplicated by contestants, adjudicators and band members.

The prizes were presented to the winners by the adjudicators with a special guest appearance by international trumpet virtuoso Professor John Wallace CBE.

Next year's event will be on the 30 October at Sandbach School.

Lions Quartet with Nigel Birch.

RESULTS

Class 1 – 11 and Under Slow Melody (Helen Stewart Memorial Quaich)

1st Hannah Taylor

2nd Simon Binon

3rd Joe Heartfield

Class 2 – 12 and 13 Slow Melody (Diamond Jubilee Trophy).

1st Jamie Reid

2nd Martijn Binon

3rd Lewis Frost

Class 3 – 14 to 16 Slow Melody (B and G J Birch Memorial Cup).

1st Lina Van Lint

2nd Margot Binon

3rd Robbie Richardson

Class 4 – 17 to 19 Slow Melody (Bryan Tait Trophy).

1st Benjamin Bourgeois

2nd Siobhan Bates

3rd Nick Elsen

Class 5 – Vintage Slow Melody (Lyndon Baglin Trophy).

1st Jackie Greensted

2nd Patricia Woodings

3rd Ilse Degeest

Class 6 – Open Slow Melody (Mark Wilkinson Trophy).

1st Adam Bokaris

2nd Siobhan Bates

3rd Gaelle Lefevre

Class 7 – Under 16 Air Varie (Granville Jennings Trophy).

1st Jamie Reid

2nd Simon Binon

3rd Joe Heartfield

Class 8 – 16 to 21 Air Varie (Louise Charles Memorial Trophy).

1st Siobhan Bates

2nd Daniel Thomas

3rd Jack Lythaby

Class 9 – Open Air Varie (Peter Fletcher President's Trophy).

1st Gaelle Lefevre

2nd Paul Bennett

3rd Stephen Lomas

Class 10 – 11 and Under Duet.

1st Ruby and Kitty Hawker

2nd Hannah Taylor and Bethany Harby

Class 11 – 12 to 16 Duet.

1st Simon and Martijn Binon

2nd Oliver and Toby Marshall

3rd Rosie Darracott-Gray and Suzanna Hudson

Class 12 – Open Duet.

1st Duo Gaileam (Gaelle Lefevre and William Thebaudeau-Muller)

2nd Margot Binon and Ilse Degeest

3rd James Atkins and Jess Wilson

Class 13 – **Not Run.**

Class 14 – **Not Run.**

Class 15 – Open Quartet.

1st Euph4niums (Birmingham Conservatoire)

2nd The Mighty Imps (Yorkshire Imperial)

3rd Haz Brass

Class 16 – Under 16 Tuned Percussion.

1st Lewis Barton

2nd Catherine Flanders

3rd Alex Walton

Class 17 – **Not Run.**

Class 18 – Under 16 Un-Tuned Percussion.

1st Dom Ritchie

2nd Alex Walton

3rd Lewis Barton

SPECIAL TROPHIES

Best Local Player (Sponsored by Sandbach Town Council) – Hannah Taylor

Besson International Award – Gaelle Lefevre

Outstanding Performance of the Day (Sponsored by Flowcrete) – Adam Bokaris

Most Promising Local Player 11 and Under (Sponsored by Lions Youth Band and includes a lesson with a Foden's Principal Player) – Lewis Barton

Most Promising Player 12-15 Audi Bursary – Adam Warburton

Most Promising Player 16-21 Besson Bursary – Jack Lythaby

Most Outstanding Euphonium Player (Sponsored by Glyn Williams) – Adam Bokaris

Youngest Player in the Competition – Kitty Hawker (Aged 8)

Best name in the Open Quartet Section – The Mighty Imps

31 October 2015

HALLOWEEN EVENT IN SANDBACH

For many years now the Sandbach Partnership have staged a Halloween Event on the Market Square and this year seems to have been the biggest event since it started with hundreds of people turning out for the event on Saturday the 31 October. The annual Fancy Dress Competition was divided into two sections with the under 8 category and the over 8's.

Under 8 costumes included Wicked Witches, Demon's, Pumpkins and even Scooby Doo made an appearance. The Over 8's also had a mixture of costumes with Sandbach Mayor Gill Merry judging the costumes to find overall winners, a very hard decision to make with such a good turn-out of children. Winners of the Over 8's were Molly Clark (Wicked Witch) and Aaron Goode (Skeleton) with each child being given sweets for taking part in the competition so they all ended up winners.

The event also included Face Painting, Apple Bobbing, Henna Tattoos, Clay Modelling and Craftwork along with spooky music provided on the square.

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8 and 11 November 2015

REMEMBRANCE DAY IN SANDBACH

Remembrance Day as always was organised by the Royal British Legion and even the dull weather didn't put a dampener on the ceremony in Sandbach.

Assembling at Westfields the groups and dignitaries marched into the town for the parade and service of remembrance on Sunday the 8 November. The procession was led by the Roberts Bakery Band with the Lions Youth Band supplying the music for the event at the War Memorial.

Due to the absence this year of Glynn Robinson after a stroke about two weeks ago, the parade was led by Simon Robinson (His son) who stood in at short notice.

Reg Dunning of the Sandbach British Legion gave the usual readings as part of the outdoor service along with the Rev. Thomas Shepherd, before a member of the Roberts Bakery Band played the last post just before the two minutes silence, which this year was a little earlier than expected at 10.55am.

The laying of wreaths by local groups including for the first time the Aquarius (Disabled Swimming) group and various regulars including the Guides, Brownies, Scouts, Fire Cadets, Air Training Corps, Sandbach High School, Sandbach School with their Army and Navy CCF, Sandbach U3A, Rotary Club and Inner Wheel with representatives from the Police and Fire Brigades, Sandbach Town Council, Cheshire East, The Cheshire Regiment and the Royal British Legion. Marjory Newton thanked Peever's in Hightown for storing, distributing and selling the wreaths on behalf of the Legion.

Hundreds turned out to see the event in the town and paid their respects to the fallen in conflicts all round the world from WW1 to the latest missions.

It is 93 years since the War Memorial was unveiled on the 16 April 1922 at 3pm by Lieut Colonel John Kennedy, C.M.G., D.S.O., of the Black Watch and the son of Colonel and Mrs Kennedy of Brookside, Arclid. The cost at the time was £900 and it stands on the site of the second Sandbach Town Hall in the Market Square. It is to date still a fitting memory to those who gave their lives for the town of Sandbach with names from both World Wars carved into the stone.

Lions Youth Band at Remembrance Day 2015

REMEMBRANCE DAY AT SANDBACH

EXTRA INFORMATION It was suggested that Simon Robinson was inappropriately dressed for the occasion in uniform and with medals he was not entitled to. Walter Andrews (RBL) pointed out that it was an offence to wear a uniform if not a serving member of the armed forces while others suggested the badges and medals were not for the same squadron. Glyn Robinson replied to the Sandbach Chronicle about his son. - "Simon did in fact serve in the British Army for almost 5 years. He originally joined the Adjutant General's Corps, Military Police, but decided, during training, that he felt more aligned with the Army Air Corps and was allowed to transfer. Simon joined 3 Regiment AAC, served in Canada and saw active service in both Bosnia and Kosovo. This active service resulted in his being awarded the UN/NATO peacekeeping medal for Bosnia together with the Queen's Golden Jubilee medal. As a result of his experiences in these countries, he continues to suffer from Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder and has done so since leaving the army." Glyn then went on to say;- "There was certainly no intention to cause any offence to anybody in the parade and in this respect, Simon would like to sincerely and profoundly apologise for any offence he may have caused. At no point was there any intention to cause any offence or insult anyone involved in the parade, including any existing or ex-servicemen or to disrespect our fallen heroes, in any way whatsoever. On reflection, Simon realises, and accepts, he should not have worn the uniform together with some of the badges/medals, which may have unintentionally been misleading. His AAC jacket, beret and medals would have been perfectly adequate."

The general public thought he did a good job leading the procession on the day and while he was in the wrong maybe we shouldn't forget the debt we owe to all Forces personnel especially those suffering from injury and post-traumatic stress.

11 November 2015

REMEMBRANCE DAY EVENT

On Wednesday the 11 November larger than usual crowds turned out for the Remembrance Day Service on the Square. This midweek event was attended by classes from the Local Primary School(s) and about 100 people from the area including members of the Cheshire Regiment Association, Council officers and ex Councillors who along with local people are getting to know that the Sunday event is not the only day to commemorate the fallen from conflicts in wars since 1914 in Sandbach.

Ken Brown Played the cornet for the last post a job he tells me he has done for about 15 years on the 11 November in Sandbach. With readings by ex-Soldiers from the British Legion and a chaplain conducting the service the 2 minutes silence was observed. After the dismissal of the parade the participants retired to Williams Delicatessen for warm drinks while others talked of old campaigns and how nice the event was that year. Local PCSO's were in attendance to stop the traffic including Spike who had himself served in the army. Craig Roughley (Chairman of Sandbach and Middlewich Comrades Branch of the Cheshire Regiment Association) with Walter Andrews of Sandbach Branch Royal British Legion and Vicar.

28 November 2015

RAIN FAILS TO DAMPEN CROWDS AT LIGHT SWITCH ON

It has snowed, been cold, but for a long time it has not rained when the lights were officially switched on in Sandbach. However on the 28 November 2015 rain drenched the Market Square, but failed to dampen the spirits of the hundreds of people who turned out to see the cast of the Crewe Lyceum Pantomime "Cinderella" turn on the lights with the help of Father Christmas (Santa to his friends) and Sandbach Mayor Gill Merry.

Organised by the Lights Committee with the Sandbach Partnership (Dot Flint) and Elsie and Graham Alcock the event was a great success with a funfair and entertainment provided from 2pm until the Switch On at 5pm hosted by Silk Radio. Thanks were also given to all those who helped put together the event as well as the Sandbach Round Table who installed the lights over a weekend.

Alice Baker who stars as Cinderella was joined by Richard Foster King and Darren Southworth as Ugly Sisters on stage to choose the best fancy dress costume as well as entertain the crowds and of course publicise tickets for the pantomime at Crewe between the 12 December and the 3 January 2016 at the Lyceum. The show stars Gareth Gates (Pop Idol) and was supposed to have had Keith Harris (Orville and Cuddles) in the cast but his untimely death in April 2015 has meant the Qudos company have had to arrange new cast members and a script as Keith wrote most of the Pantomimes he was in.

Talking to the cast before the „Light Switch On“ they were all looking forward to the Christmas show with Alice Baker getting her first taste of a venue in the North of the Country as she used her passport to bridge the Watford Gap to come to Sandbach and Crewe in her first professional job since leaving drama school.

Richard Foster King and Darren Southworth are not strangers to the North but this year will also be their first appearance at the Lyceum and working together as Dames. They got into the spirit of the characters by gate-crashing the fairground roundabout to have a go, but did not allow Cinders to enjoy herself too much as she was left in the cold before they were invited on stage for an enjoyable evening.

The lights will be switched on each night between now and the end of the Christmas period.

4 December 2015

CHRISTMAS MARKET in Sandbach.

With 100 Stalls the Annual Street Market in Sandbach on the evening of the 4 December 2015 was a great success despite a strong wind rushing down the High Street. Shoppers turned out to support this event designed to give that unusual extra idea for Christmas.

From Wood Carvings and Glass making to Puppets and Christmas Food the shoppers purchased those gifts you can only find at these events. With Chestnuts Roasting by the War Memorial, Exotic meats by the Town Hall, Cupcakes and home baked goodies available with cheese and chutney on the Car Park, the smell of fresh cooking on the Market Square and to go with them some of "Bongo's Chilli" served up by "Tears for Fears" original drummer Manny Elias and his actress wife Deborah Bouchard (Coronation Street extra 2007, Emmerdale extra, Greggs and Injury Lawyers for You Commercials etc.). Other stalls included Toys, Clothing, Paintings, Artwork, Records and Collectables available in the Common Car Park, inside the Market Hall, upstairs at the Town Hall, down the main street and on the Market Square this event was a huge success.

Entertainment was provided by a brass band, school choirs and local singers which brightened up the evening and managed to kick start Christmas in a way only Sandbach can do.



Manny Elias and Deborah with Bongo's Chili



Christian Aid



Collectables Stall

17 December 2015

WINDOW DISPLAY WINNER

The prize winner of this year's Christmas Window Display Competition run by the Christmas Market and Sandbach Town Council and picked by the Mayor Gill Merry, was "Flowers on the Cobbles" with a wonderful display based on a Christmas theme in their window with various animals depicted among the ice and snow. The shop seems to excel this year with its window displays as their Remembrance Day window was also a joy to see on a cold November weekend.

Flowers on the Cobbles joins a number of "Christmas Best Dressed Shop Window" winners since the competition started in 1972 by the Chamber of Trade and was been taken over for a brief time by the STAR organisation in 2010. Since 2012 when the Town Council has run a Christmas Market (With other organisers) they have taken over the competition with the cup being awarded at their event on the first Friday of December.

PREVIOUS WINNERS

- 2010 Godfrey Williams (Delicatessen) at 9-11 Market Square.
- 2011 The Heart Tree - 43 High Street, Sandbach.
- 2012 Lollipop Stop – Children's Shop - 42 High Street, Sandbach
- 2013 Wall Street Fashion – 23 High Street, Sandbach.
- 2014 The Heart Tree - 43 High Street, Sandbach.
- 2015 Flowers on the Cobbles – Market Square / High Street Corner.



END
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