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# The Leamington Society Newsletter

November 2009

## CHAIRMAN'S NOTES

Important change to programme:

**The date of our Christmas meeting has been brought forward by two weeks. Restoration of the Assembly will now be held, at the Assembly, Spencer Street, on Monday, November 23rd, starting at 7.30, and not as advertised on the programme.**

Chandos Street No application by Wilson Bowden has yet been submitted. Given the downturn in the retail scene; the large number of empty shops in all towns and cities; the depressed housing market; high unemployment, it may be some time before an application for development is made. We can only hope that something less massive and more appropriate for a conservation area with narrow streets will be chosen.

Loft theatre Planning permission has been granted for the demolition of the Loft Theatre building. The site will be redeveloped into a mix of restaurants, offices and perhaps flats. The theatre will move to the United Reform Church in Spencer Street after conversion to make it into a theatre. The project, part of the Cultural Quarter redevelopment, is being made possible by major funding from Advantage West Midlands.

Pump Room Gardens We are delighted that the Warwickshire Gardens Trust have joined the group consisting of the Leamington Society, CLARA and the Royal Leamington Buildings Conservation Trust to further our project to restore the listed Royal Pump Room Gardens. The expertise of the WGT will be of great assistance in this venture.

Work on the riverbanks should start this winter. First there will be remedial work to clear overhanging trees on the south side of the Leam as well as clearance to give better glimpses of the river between the pedestrian bridge and the Adelaide Road Bridge. This will be followed by clearance of the scrub along both sides of the river, low-fencing to prevent young children falling into the river, and Canada geese climbing out and eroding the river banks. The last stage will be reed planting, probably in May.

### *Dates for your Diary*

#### **Restoration of the Assembly**

Alan Mayes

The Assembly, Spencer Street  
Leamington (CV31 3NF),  
Monday, November 23rd, 7.30

#### **Leamington Town Hall, its past and future**

Robert Nash

Pump Room Annexe  
Thursday, January 14th, 7.30

#### *Joint meeting with Literary Society*

#### **Presenting the Pre-Raphaelites**

Dr Chloe Johnson

Leamington Art Gallery

Pump Room Annexe

Tuesday, February 9th, 7.30

More information is provided on  
the back page











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**Newsletter Distribution**

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*The Leamington Society is a registered charity. It is affiliated to the Civic Trust and to the West Midlands Amenity Societies Association. It exists to preserve the heritage and improve the character of Royal Leamington Spa and to encourage high standards of planning and architecture*

*Charity No. 516078*

*Unless otherwise indicated, views expressed in these newsletters are the contributors' own and not necessarily the corporate view of the Society.*

**EVENTS to February 2010**

**The date of our Christmas meeting has been brought forward by two weeks. Restoration of the Assembly will now be held, at the Assembly, Spencer Street, on Monday, November 23rd, starting at 7.30, and not as advertised on the programme.**

Our Christmas event this year is being held on Monday, November 23rd at the Assembly, Spencer Street, 7.30

**Restoration of the Assembly, with**

**Alan Mayes, Monday, November 23rd, starting at 7.30.**

Alan will start the evening with a short description of the problems that had to be overcome when the building, previously a bingo hall with adjacent tyre, battery and car exhaust refitting workshop could have its splendid Art Deco interior restored under the careful guidance of the master of interior design, Laurence Llewelyn-Bowen.

Drinks may be purchased from the bar. *As this is our Christmas meeting you are encouraged to bring friends and neighbours.*

**Leamington Town Hall, its past and future**

**Robert Nash, Pump Room Annexe, Thursday, January 14th, 2010, 7.30**

The fate of Leamington Town Hall is in the balance – again. It is an expensive building to maintain, is underemployed and has very little income. Members of the Society may experience a sense of “d  j   vu” as we have defended its existence before under the leadership of David Hayes and Toby Cave. Robert Nash, the capable clerk to the council, is coming to tell us about the current position. Come and learn.

*Joint meeting with Literary Society*

**Presenting the Pre-Raphaelites**

**Dr Chloe Johnson, Leamington Art Gallery, Pump Room Annexe, Tuesday, February 9th, 7.30**

Over the past century the Pre-Raphaelites have received a significant amount of media coverage. Chloe Johnson will discuss, how as we move into the digital age, it is important to consider the impact the media has had on perceptions of Pre-Raphaelitism and investigate the part it has played in creating and informing opinions on the artists involved with the group