

# THE ST. ANDREWS PRESERVATION TRUST LIMITED

## NEWSLETTER NO. 9 - SEPTEMBER 1997

As this is the final Newsletter of the year for 1997 we pause to reflect on our achievements for the year. We have tried to promote the Trust and its work. Our Public Lecture in February, given by Mrs. Elizabeth Garland. Association for the Protection of Rural Scotland, resulted in our decision to launch a Green Belt campaign. The coffee morning in May and Members' Garden Party in July each gave the opportunity to inform members about the progress of the campaign. Elizabeth Williams, Long Term Planning Committee convener, updates members in her article for this Newsletter.

The battle to retain the character of our town seems eternal. Sadly the current trend to 'modernise' is endemic in St Andrews with what appears to be a determination to get rid of the old and bring in the new. The Links Trust wish to demolish Pilmour Cottage to make way for new offices. One of the lovely old houses in Abbey Street will be demolished to make way for the larger Byre Theatre and developers have applied for permission to demolish the old dormitory block at St. Leonard's Fields. The University is merrily beavering away at maintaining its reputation for constructing some of the ugliest buildings in town. In addition to the Buchanan Building in Union Street and the University Library, we will soon have a very mediocre extension at the North Haugh and the new Sea Mammal Research Unit dominating the skyline at the East Bents.

When one walks along Loudens Close or College Street and looks at the little houses there we do not see the inspired creation of some famous architect whose work is well documented, rather we see simple buildings, built for the ordinary townsfolk in a style that is pleasing and ageless. Looking at many of the modern buildings today it is puzzling trying to imagine what the architect wanted to achieve. Fortunately in St. Andrews we do have some local developers who build specifically for the town. We have excellent examples of this in the new flats at City Road and also at the top of Bridge Street. The proposed retirement flats at St. Leonard's Fields are a prime example of what we do not want. This area boasts several fine buildings and the Preservation Trust is totally

opposed to the planned development. **The Scottish Secretary has ordered a Public Inquiry** into this proposal, beginning on 28<sup>th</sup> October 1997 and lasting up to three days. The Inquiry will be held in the Burgh Chambers. Queen's Gardens, St. Andrews and commence at 10.00 a.m. It is hoped that as many members as possible will attend at some point during the three days. Mrs. Ruth Day, Chartered Town Planner, has been engaged by the Preservation Trust to represent us and put forward our case in objecting.

A huge task in the coming year will be to increase our funds. If we are to fight against what we see as being inappropriate development we must raise the capital to do so. Chairman, Bob Murray, has made some suggestions. Members may think about a Deed of Covenant or making a small bequest. Life members of long standing might consider making a donation. The Museum in North Street is tremendously popular with visitors but is a drain on our finances. The Museum Committee will be considering ways of diverting its costs. Other fund raising ideas will be considered in the coming months.

**The St. Andrews Preservation Trust works hard for the town and needs your support.**

### GREEN BELT PROGRESS

We have recently been writing to local organisations telling them about our Green Belt campaign and inviting them to join us in a Green Belt Forum. The aim of this Forum is to spread awareness of the very pressing need to protect the immediate environment of St. Andrews, and to co-ordinate the publicity campaign.

If you are in a local organisation which has received our letter, please make sure, as a Member of the Preservation Trust, that a Green Belt for St. Andrews is discussed at your meetings, and get as many people as possible interested in the issue. The more every body knows about it, the better!

We need to be sure that people see Green Belt in a positive light. For instance, some people might see it as a threat to the town's economic prosperity. In

fact, a Green Belt round St. Andrews would protect the town's main asset, which is its unique character, and would keep the heart of the town alive.

We now expect that public consultation for the St. Andrews Strategic Study will take place towards the end of this year. Fife Council will hold an exhibition and a public meeting, and will invite responses from the public This will be the time to voice your support for Green Belt So far we have no firm dates for this, but we will keep you informed.

Meanwhile, please spread the word, and encourage your organisation to send a representative to our Green Belt Forum

### **DATES FOR YOUR DIARY**

#### **Saturday, 18<sup>th</sup> October. Coach Trip to Dunfermline**

Leaving from Argyle Street Car Park at 1245 p.m. to visit Dunfermline Abbey and grounds (a Heritage Guide will meet us outside at 2 p.m.). At about 3.15 p.m. we shall walk across the garden to Abbot House for tea and scones and then an unguided tour of the house, leaving by 5 p.m. Maximum numbers 35. **Cost: £10 per head inclusive. Please book and pre-pay at the Trust Office by Wednesday, 15<sup>th</sup> October.**

#### **Saturday, 1<sup>st</sup> November. Christmas Card Sale (Charity).**

Town Hall. Queen's Gardens.  
The new Christmas card for 1997 will be available in the office to Trust members at £3.00 for 10. This is a saving of 50p.

#### **Sunday, 30<sup>th</sup> November. St. Andrew's Day.**

Our Museum at 12 North Street will be open from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.

#### **Sunday, 28<sup>th</sup> June 1998. Scotland's Garden Scheme.**

Within the historic city of St. Andrews there are many interesting buildings and gardens hidden from the public gaze behind the high walls or down little lanes or closes. To the majority of people the three main streets. North Street. Market Street and South Street are simply what can be seen from the roadside, but there are numerous houses tucked away behind shop fronts or at the foot of gardens. The Trust believes that these

areas are well worth exploring and next summer we will, for the first time, be participating in Scotland's Garden Scheme. This is seen as being advantageous in two ways. Whilst making visitors more aware of the hidden town and its gardens we also hope to make those living within the Conservation Area more aware of the Preservation Trust and the work it carries out in the town.

During the coming months Trustees will be knocking on doors in the old town, speaking to residents and hoping that some will permit their garden to be open.

We are sure that this day will be a great success, showing off our beautiful town, raising the perception of the Trust and helping with our funds.

### **HELP!**

Dr Gilbert Bell, one of our members living in the West of Scotland, is interested in the history of the Melville Memorial Fountain in Market Street and the Martyrs Monument on the Scores. He has a brief knowledge of the designers and sculptors but not the date of the laying of the foundation stones or dedication of same. If any of our members can provide further information or where it could be found Dr. Bell would be most grateful. Any information can be passed to the editor or our office in Queen's Gardens. Should we have a satisfactory outcome to this Dr. Bell has promised an article for a future Newsletter.

If you would like to write an article for the Newsletter the editor would be happy to publish anything suitable.

A Minute Secretary is urgently needed at the monthly Trustees' meetings. If any member feels able to take Minutes or knows of anyone suitable please contact the office at 4 Queen's Gardens. Trustees meet on the last Thursday of each month at 7.30 p.m.

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