

APOLOGY

Last month I managed to cut off the last line of a letter about Anson Trust. It was sent in by The Ex-Servicemen's Club. Apologies for any confusion.

Editor

Dear Editor

I am writing in response to the letter you published regarding the Anson Trust's plans in the September issue of MADNews.

I'm sure the Anson Trust will independently correct the views of the Ex-Servicemen's Club, and so it claims, those of much of the village, but how many times must the Anson Trust state their argument so that it gets through to people? If the Trust merely sold the Institute to the highest bidder, whoever that might be and assuming that the price was agreed by the Charities Commission, then although there would be enough money to construct a new pavilion etc. etc. there would not be enough income to maintain it. In effect this would merely stave off another financial crisis for a few years! A fact the Anson Trust has highlighted in numerous exhibitions, meetings and in their literature! Why do some people refuse to accept this?

I would also like to take issue with the statement that "from the poll conducted by N.A.F it is obvious that there is little support for the Trusts [sic] grandiose scheme". As a geographer and former marketeer I have serious concerns in the subjective way the data was collected, the subjective content of the questions and the statistical validity of the sample size. It also surprised me that when I stood down from the parish council, nobody from N.A.F or any other interested parties felt the need to stand for election on what they claim is such an important and divisive issue? However, the issue of the Anson Trust goes to the very heart of the future of Marcham and so we should not get caught up in technicalities and personal opinions.

Marcham is dying.

In recent years, the village used to have two pubs and two shops. We now have one of each, both of which are struggling in the face of 'external' competition, and in the case of the Post Office, external political factors. How many people are employed within the village by businesses that contribute directly to village life? How many more commute to Abingdon, Oxford and London contributing instead to those local economies? As more housing goes up, without any form of gain for the village in terms of facilities or inward investment Marcham will become more and more of

a dormitory village. Those with disposable income will simply jump in their cars and spend it elsewhere and Marcham will have no services for those not able to travel. There will be no community and Marcham as we know it will cease to be! If the Anson Trust folds and the Charities Commission sells off the Field, do you think the housing developer who buys it will care about anything like that? The 'grandiose' scheme of the Anson Trust offers a true lifeline. A few houses, managed on behalf of the community in return for state of the art facilities, that will attract external investment and spending, revitalising the village. To quote, "surely this is what the Anson sisters visualised when they formed the Trust".

In my opinion, that is what Marcham needs. I don't have any surveys to back me up, but I'm willing to bet that there is a sizeable (silent) proportion of village residents that think similarly? I urge these people to speak out. To not do so condemns Marcham to a bleak future at the hands of those with narrow minds, self-interest and a lack of vision.

PETER ROWE

Dear Editor

I am intrigued by the recent report by The Anson Trust. Two things in particular caught my eye in their report in last month's MADNews. Firstly, I would have considered it sensible to discuss any proposals with the Village before spending time, effort and money on grandiose schemes which it would appear the majority of the residents do not want. Secondly, and much more important was the contents of the fourth paragraph where mention was made of "the provision of ADDITIONAL housing" We all remember their initial circular which proposed "about 30 homes", then there was the indication that 45 homes would be built on the football field, now a mention of even more housing. Where will it stop? I have always maintained they cannot possibly provide all their proposed new facilities and retain a substantial endowment by building only 30 - 40 small properties. It is about time that The Trustees stopped being so secretive, removed their blinkers, and consulted with the people of our Village. After all they have not been elected, the Trust is supposedly there for the benefit of all parishioners.

Also in last month's edition was a report by Les Mitchell, indicating that Mr. Duffield was still interested in purchasing and restoring The Institute for the use of the village. This surely would be the answer to

all the problems, and no doubt The Anson Trustees are following up on this very generous offer.

COLIN TRINDER, Tower Close

Dear Editor

I was interested to read Les Mitchell's letter in last month's MADNews along with other correspondence with regard to the Anson Trust, their inability to resolve the Village Hall Fiasco and other matters.

If we – that is to say the village – have a benefactor who will restore and make fit for purpose our elegant Victorian/Edwardian 'Institute', then I would be happy to sponsor a replacement for the now lost stained glass windows that at one time adorned the frontage.

Personally I have no interest in 'shed-architecture' that would ultimately be the noble hall's replacement, if the current so-called 'Trust' had their way. How very sad it is that Marcham has been plagued with so much inaction for so many months – perhaps years, with regard to this heart of our delightful village.

JEREMY P COLLINS

Dear Editor

My great grand father Charles Weingartner married Sarah Ellen Conway/Townsen (DOB: 08/12/1843). Sarah Ellen Conway/Townsen was born in Marcham, back when it was part of Berkshire.

Have you seen any reference to the Townsen/Conway family around the village? If so I will make a visit to the area one weekend?

Very kind regards,

EDWARD GARDNER

Dear Editor

In your September edition, you included a letter from Valerie Davidge asking for information about Oakley House. I have some information about the previous occupiers of the house going back to around 1840 and a copy of what appears to be a wedding reception photograph taken in the garden around 1900 before the house was extended. It may have been the marriage of Mary Campbell to John Duffield, if in fact that marriage did occur. I would be interested to know if any other readers respond on this subject.

Regards

LEN HUDSON

If you are looking for someone or information on any of the villages covered by MADNews, write to the editor to have your letter published!

Write to MADNews and let others know what you think about current events