

TOWN MAYOR'S REPORT – 4 Jul 23

Saturday 3 Jun 23

For the start of this year's Stone Festival it was good to see the children enjoying the Teddy Bears' Picnic and, particularly, the Puppet Show in the Market Square. The Mayor was keen to see if there were any strings he could pull as a curtain raiser for the Puppet Festival in July.

Sunday 4 Jun 23

The work on Westbridge Park had caused the Dog Show to be moved this year to the Stone Hockey and Rugby Club which proved to be a very convenient location for this event which was clearly enjoyed by all the participants – canine and human. The Mayor was pleased to present the prize for Best in Show.

Monday 5 Jun 23

The canine theme continued on Monday evening with the Dog Derby, preceded by the human Steeplechase, both starting and finishing at the Amphitheatre and including Crown Meadow. The Mayor was very impressed that even the youngest competitors completed the steeplechase in fine style. For the Dog Derby it wasn't always clear whether the owners were leading the dogs or vice versa. The Mayor was pleased to present awards to the successful competitors.

The Mayor then proceeded to the end of Station Road to support the opening of the new steak house, "The Butcher's Block". A welcome addition to the attractive range of 'eateries' in the Town.

Tuesday 6 Jun 23

It was mechanical attractions which caught the eye on Tuesday evening when it was estimated that some 500 motorbikes and scooters (plus a few push bikes) were lined up in the High Street and were duly admired by an immense crowd. The Mayor was asked to select his personal favourites for two awards and he unashamedly was guided by his nostalgia for the 1960s.

Saturday 10 Jun 23

The Carnival for 2023 had to be significantly re-imagined because Westbridge Park was not available. The organising committee did an excellent job in devising a hugely successful and enjoyable event despite the limitations imposed this year. The Town Mayor was joined by the Borough Mayor in admiring and judging the 'walking floats' (motorised floats could not be used this year) and sharing the duty of awarding the prizes for an amazingly imaginative and eye-catching set of entrants.

The afternoon saw the Stone's Got Talent contest with a wide range of performers demonstrating that the Town certainly does not lack talent. The Mayor was delighted to present the awards and the canine theme continued with first place going to Teddy the Dog with owner Holly Ashbrook.

Friday 16 Jun 23

The town is rightly proud of its long association with the Royal Navy through its most famous son, John Jervis, Admiral of the Fleet the Earl of St Vincent. The Mayor and Mayoress travelled down to HMS Collingwood, near Fareham, as VIP guests for this year's Ceremonial Divisions. The reviewing officer was the Chief of the French Defence Staff, General Burkhard, and he was accompanied by the Chief of the British Defence Staff, Admiral Sir Tony Radakin. The Mayor and Mayoress were delighted to have a number of opportunities to explain the link between Stone and the Royal Navy and to extol the attraction of the town and its people, not least to General Burkhard who had to suffer the Mayor's efforts at speaking French!

Sunday 18 Jun 23

The Mayor was delighted to travel to Newcastle-under-Lyme for that Ancient and Loyal Borough's Civic Sunday, part of their celebrations of the 850th anniversary of the granting by Henry II of its first charter. The Mayor was particularly welcomed by the Mayor of Newcastle, Councillor Simon White who, like the Town Mayor, was also in his third term as mayor. They had both been mayors together in 2017-18.

Saturday 24 Jun 23

Having completed a reconnaissance of Newcastle-under-Lyme the previous weekend the Mayor was joined by the Mayoress to support Newcastle's Armed Forces Day parade where their personal military experience and connections helped make this an enjoyable event. Moreover, it further strengthened the links between Stone Town and the Ancient and Loyal Borough. It was also valuable to make and renew friendships with the Lord Lieutenant, the Chairman of Staffordshire County Council and the Mayor of East Staffordshire.

Sunday 25 Jun 23

On a warm and humid morning, well over 400 runners assembled on Priory Road for the 2023 St Michael's 10K road race. The efficiency of the registration process and recent technical advances in timekeeping were very impressive. From a number of conversations it was good to learn how far and wide people had travelled and how favourable was their opinion of the Town. The Mayor was delighted to act as race starter.

Sunday 25 Jun 23

Immediately following the start of the road race the Mayor moved to St Michael's and St Wulfad's church for the farewell eucharist for Rev Preb Ian Cardinal and Stef Cardinal, his wife. Ian had been the Rector for some seventeen years and had been Chaplain to several

different Town Mayors. The current Mayor was joined by at least six past Town Mayors in paying a Civic tribute to a well-loved and highly-respected couple who would now be enjoying a very well-earned retirement.

DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR'S REPORT – 4 Jul 2023

Sunday 4 June 2023

The Deputy Mayoress and I attended the Hockey & Rugby Taster Sessions at Stone Hockey & Rugby Club as part of Stone Festival Week. The event was well attended with a good number of young people being introduced to the sports. A club official also updated us on the plans to build a new club house which is imminent. They also have longer term plans to introduce other sports for the residents of Stone. We were made very welcome, the sun was shining and it was great to see so many people enjoying sport and recreation.

Thursday 8 June 2023

I was delighted to attend the Kibblestone Scout Camp Annual AGM. The last time I went to Kibblestone was 50 years ago for the famous Lads and Dads weekend. Reassuringly, Kibblestone is still a magnificent natural environment that provides a unique outdoor experience for 1000's of young people each year. The AGM revealed that Kibblestone is busy again after surviving the catastrophic effects of the pandemic. There is a need to attract new client groups and there are hefty costs maintaining the site, especially the woodlands. I would like to commend the Kibblestone team of employees and volunteers who work hard to keep the camp open and successful. Stone is fortunate to have this remarkable facility on our doorstep.

Saturday 10 June 2023

The Deputy Mayoress and I visited the Crown Wharf Theatre during its Festival Week Open Day. The event was well attended and, as usual, very well hosted by the many volunteers. We were thrilled to see the continuing progress and learn of the plans for completion for the inaugural performance in October. Everyone involved should be congratulated and very proud of what they are achieving. The Crown Wharf Theatre is going to be a remarkable asset for Stone, which the Deputy Mayoress and I will definitely be supporting.