

TOWN MAYOR'S REPORT – 1 Aug 23

Saturday 1 Jul 23

On Friday 30 June, for the second time in as many weeks, the Mayor and Mayoress travelled to Gosport to attend, on Saturday 1 July, HMS Collingwood's annual Open Day. They met there the Stafford Borough Mayor and the Mayor of Fareham and enjoyed the usual excellent hospitality of the Royal Navy and the excitement of the Field Gun Competition along with numerous other attractions.

Saturday 8 Jul 23

The Puppet Festival started with a parade down the High Street, led by the Scout and Guide Band, with Professor James with Mr Punch and the Mayor with a Beadle puppet. On arrival at the *Sanctuary* Mr Punch tried to hijack the opening but was successfully thwarted by the Beadle assisted by the Crocodile (under the control of the Mayoress). The fun then continued inside the *Sanctuary* while the rain beat down outside. The excitement of the children (and many adults, too!) at the antics of Punch and Judy was wonderful to behold. The event was honoured by the presence of the original Muffin the Mule.

After the rain had stopped the Mayor and Mayoress moved on to Christchurch Academy for their *Stone Rocks* festival and enjoyed the huge variety and talent of the school's musicians under the inspiring direction of Mr Kieron Harrison. The Mayor and Mayoress were hosted attentively by three of the senior pupils and were able to thank the school's Chief Executive, Mr Chris Wright, and congratulate him and the school on an outstanding event.

Sunday 9 Jul 23

Sunshine returned to Stone for the significant event of Civic Sunday. The Stone Scout and Guide Band led the parade to St Michael's and St Wulfad's church for a well-supported Civic Service which incorporated the ceremonial of the Mayor Making. The public aspects were concluded outside the church, after which the Mayor and Mayoress hosted a reception in the Frank Jordan Centre where an excellent buffet was provided by the Secret Kitchen. The event was supported by Brigadier Barry Smith (Deputy Lieutenant), the Borough Mayor and Mayoress, the High Sheriff, and many other local civic heads, representatives of local organisations, and personal friends.

Wednesday 12 Jul 23

Following on from *Stone Rocks*, the Mayor and Mayoress were delighted to support Christchurch Academy's Celebration Evening at Christ Church to mark the end of the academic year. The Mayor was pleased to present some of the well-earned prizes.

Friday 14 Jul 23

After 170 years presence in the Town it was sad to see the departure of the Sisters of the Dominican Congregation. The occasion was marked by a Mass of Thanksgiving at St Dominic's Church celebrated by the Most Reverend Bernard Longley, Catholic Archbishop of Birmingham. A very well-attended service was followed by a reception held in the cloisters.

Sunday 16 Jul 23

The Mayor and Mayoress travelled to the far North of the county to attend the Biddulph Civic Sunday service. They received a warm welcome from the Mayor and Mayoress of Biddulph and from the other local civic heads. The service was followed by tea and cakes in the church.

Wednesday 19 July 23

It is always a pleasure to visit the allotments in Newcastle Road and Mount Road and to support Martin Robinson in his annual judging visit. It was good to learn that there is now a waiting list and to see many very well-tended plots.

DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR'S REPORT – 1 Aug 2023

Sunday 9 July 2023

The Deputy Mayoress and I were delighted to be invited by the Mayor and Mayoress of Stone to join the Civic Sunday event on 9 July 2023. The event was well attended and the weather was kind. It was wonderful to be part of a parade that represented so many authorities and organisations from across Stone and Staffordshire. The marching band performed excellently and kept us all in step. The church service was also well attended, and we were honoured to be presented with the Deputy Mayoral badges officially marking the start of our duties supporting the Mayor and people of Stone.

Thank you to everyone involved and especially to those who organised the event.