

## **TOWN MAYOR'S REPORT – 6 Feb 24**

### **Friday 1 Dec 23**

A popular annual Christmas event in the Town is the daily opening during the season of Advent of decorated shop windows in the manner of an Advent calendar. The windows were each designed and created by many different organisations such as schools and charities under the coordination of Christ Church. The Mayor was delighted to support not only the opening of the first window at Vantage Point Creative but also many of the subsequent openings.

### **Sunday 10 Dec 23**

A large congregation gathered in St Michael's and St Wulfad's Church for the annual Civic Carol service with contributions from many organisations within the town.

### **Monday 11 Dec 23**

The Mayor and Mayoress were delighted to host the Christmas Meeting of the Royal Air Forces Association, Stone & District Branch, in the Council Chamber. Representatives from the operational RAF of today along with local members of the University of Birmingham Air Squadron were very interested to learn some of the history of the Town.

### **Thursday 14 Dec 23**

The Mayor and Mayoress had greatly enjoyed attending the Stone Alzheimers Drop-in's 17th anniversary meeting in October and now were delighted to join in their Christmas Party.

In the evening, the Mayor managed to combine both his civic role and his role as a choir member at the Stone Choral Society Christmas Concert.

### **Saturday 16 Dec 23**

One of the enjoyable features of Christmas in Stone is the Church-led carol singing in the Market Square at which the Mayor lent his support both in his presence and with his voice.

### **Sunday 17 Dec 23**

The Mayor travelled to St Mary's Church in Stafford to support the large-scale Stafford Borough Civic Carol Service.

### **Monday 18 Dec 23**

It is always interesting to attend civic events in other authorities' areas and the Mayor thoroughly enjoyed attending Cannock Chase Council's Civic Carol Service at Hednesford and the subsequent refreshments.

### **Friday 21 Dec 23**

Stone has had a formal friendship twinning with Bagnacavallo in Italy for some 20 years and it has been unfortunate the events over recent years, not least the Covid pandemic, have caused the relationship to become inactive. Therefore, the Mayor and Mayoress were

pleased to accept an invitation from Bagnacavallo to participate in an on-line Christmas exchange of greetings between all the towns that are twinned with Bagnacavallo. Those towns were Neresheim in Germany, Aix-en-Othe in France and Strzyzow in Poland. The Mayor and Mayoress had had the pleasure of visiting all those towns in the past and it was encouraging to see that all were keen to keep these friendships alive.

### **Monday 25 Dec 23**

For the Mayor and Mayoress the highlight of Christmas Day was joining the residents and staff of St Mary's Nursing Home for a pre-lunch drink and a chance to wish everyone a very merry Christmas. It was a particular pleasure to spend some time with the Sisters who had remained in the Town after the Priory had closed earlier in the year.

### **Friday 29 Dec 23**

In honour of Stone's sister city, Carthage, Texas, and of the anniversary of Texas joining the Union in 1845, the Mayor and Mayoress were present for the raising of the Lone Star State flag in the High Street. It was also the eightieth anniversary of the origination of the event when the American flyer, John Howland, and his crew, who were at the US Army Air Corps depot at Yarnfield awaiting their operational assignment, come down to the Town and had received a very warm welcome and hospitality during those dark days of World War 2.

### **Monday 1 Jan 24**

New Year's Day saw the Stafford and Stone Canoe Club's traditional canoe race from Darlaston to the Canoe Club down the River Trent. The Mayor was delighted to act as the starter and the event was an opportunity to restate the links between the Council and the Club.

### **Saturday 20 Jan 24**

The first of the Mayor and Mayoress's charity events of the new year was the 'Pig Race' held at Stone Golf Club. The event was very well supported, particularly by local civic dignitaries, and a great time was had by all. The winners were particularly pleased by their prizes which included individual ceramic piggy banks produced by the Mayoress.

### **Sunday 21 Jan 24**

Over the centuries the churches in the Town have played a major role in the community, extending to the parishes around the Town. It was, therefore, very appropriate for the Mayor and Mayoress to accept the invitation to the induction of Rev Paul Kingman, Vicar of Christ Church, as the Rural Dean of Stone. The Bishop of Stafford made a particular point of welcoming the support of the Town Council.

### **DEPUTY TOWN MAYOR'S REPORT – 6 Feb 24**

No report on this occasion.