

1. The good, the bad and the ugly p4

The reasons why Swindon Heritage Magazine is coming to an end.

2. Amazing space: The Town Gardens p6

a) The Town Gardens, with origins in Roman times, are situated on the top of the hill in Old Town and are considered Swindon's crowning glory. Opened in 1894, its history records its development and pays tribute to Frederick Arthur Haynes the Head Gardener.

When old Town rocked p10

b) Originally the Town Gardens were quarries whose stone was mainly Purbeck limestone and Portland stone. Rich in fossils, quarrying continued into well into the 20th century.

- c) How the Gardens grew and matured p13

- d) When the Gardens were Jurassic Park p15

Gideon Mantell inspired the study of dinosaurs in the early 19th century by what he found in Swindon's quarries.

- e) A Bandstand for all Seasons p 16

The Gardens have two Bandstands, a kiosk and an indestructible statue of Peter Pan seen with Swindon's dancers with the Royal Ballet Company.

- 3 A King is born p 22

Newly discovered photographs, the earliest of the Swindon-built iconic George V, have come to light.

- 4 The epic story of Stephania p 27

When Hitler invaded Poland from the west in 1939 and the Soviet Union invaded eastern Poland 14 year old Stephania was forcibly herded with her family to be used as slave labour in the Russian Arctic. On being released under an Amnesty she served in the Polish Army under British command driving 3-ton trucks in Israel. Eventually in 1986 she came to England, to Swindon her adopted home.

5. Reading between the lines

Alfred Williams compassionate poem "Lines on a Suicide" recalls the man he knew from their childhood. P31

5 Samaritans. 50 years of listening p35

The Swindon branch of the Charity providing support for people in emotional distress covers a wide area to Cricklade, Malmesbury, Chippenham, Devizes, Marlborough and Faringdon. Still operating from a strict policy of confidentiality the volunteers are non-judgemental. Contacts can be made by phone or e-mail and a face to face meeting is possible. The Charity receives no financial support from the government or the local authorities. It operates a charity shop on its premises to help raise funds.

6. How Heritage helps heroes p38

Dr Susan Carr uses "portrait therapy" to get patients with severe illness and trauma rediscover their former identities. Staff Sergeant William Higgs, a veteran Glider Pilot, is an example. He benefited enormously by recounting previously unspoken memories of his active service at Arnhem and the battle for Pegasus Bridge in World War II. Local Studies books from the Central Library also help patients in the battle with dementia.

8. How hope grew from inhumanity p42

In 1888 the heartbreaking and scandalous operation of "baby farms" in Swindon became a landmark case in the history of childcare and their protection in Britain. From the following year the Children's Charter, the widening of Police powers for child protection together with a series of other measures became law. The NSPCC became a national Charity.

9 When railways cost a fortune p46

William Brown, born in 1846, was a wealthy man from Chiseldon Manor who lost his fortune because of his passion for railways. He was a major shareholder in the Swindon, Marlborough and Andover Railway which later merged with the Swindon and Cheltenham Extension Railway. It became known as "Swindon's Other Railway" but was doomed to failure.

10. Flying Circus p50

Fairford has always provided material for Press photographers as Richard Wintle remembers the long range bombers, the stealth bomber, Concorde's testing and many of the aircraft at the Royal International Tattoos.

11. The 609 p54

Katherine Cole from the Local Studies department of the Swindon Central Library identifies the 609 men and women from Swindon, or with any local connection, and who died in World War 11.

12. Not just any old ironmongery p58

The origin of a thriving metalwork industry in Old Town can be traced back to the 17th century. Known as the Castle Iron Works in Wood Street it changed its name to Edward Bays whose descendants now operate from Highworth.

13. Treasure in our Front Garden p60

Jethro Tull, patented his horse-drawn seed drill in 1701. His family had been living in West Leaze Farm just before his birth. West Leaze was part of Westlecot from Saxon times and was classified by English Heritage as a shrunken mediaeval village in 1988.

14. Backswording is back p63

The historic and violent sport of backswording was demonstrated at the summer's Old Town Festival. It had its origins in the Civil War.

15. Life in a Railway Factory p66

"Life in a Railway Factory" by Alfred Williams, 1915, provides a vivid insight into working conditions in British Industry. Graham Carter defines the legacy of Swindon's monumental railway heritage as being that it is people who define a place, not art collections or buildings. It is what our forebears have passed on to us today.

16. A madness before Health and Safety p68

The introduction of Health and Safety regulations has substantially reduced the number of horrific injuries and deaths as the records of the Swindon Railway Works show. In addition many minor injuries have been eliminated.

17. Railway Craftsmen's pioneering vocation p70

As well as producing everything necessary to run a railway this included artificial limbs for railwaymen seriously injured in the course of their work.

18. Horror of horrors

p71

One of the most notorious Victorian murders was known as the "Watchfield Horror". John Carter was tried, found guilty of murdering his third wife and executed in 1893. Before his execution he admitted to killing his second wife. His first wife died in tragic circumstances when she fell down the stairs in the last stage of pregnancy.

19. Clock wind-up

p77

The opening of the new Town Hall in Swindon 1891 with the clock donated by the jeweller Hubert Deacon.

20. Making history: a Honda made in Swindon

p80

The record breaking low fuel consumption Honda Civic Tourer, built in Swindon and already in the Guinness Book of Records, is now in the British Motor Museum.