



Merry Christmas and Happy New Year



News • News • News • News

The November edition of *Foll-e* highlighted the plight of the new sham castle at Packington Hayes, and reported that, as it had been built in the Green Belt without planning permission, Lichfield District Council had served an Enforcement Notice requiring it to be demolished. With only two weeks to go until the start of the scheduled Public Inquiry, the council has withdrawn its Notice together with the threat of demolition.

It is not known whether this is the end of the matter or if the council will issue a fresh Notice to take account of the bat roost. If it does, a fresh appeal will be made. It is nonetheless hoped that the council will instead approve the retrospective planning application that was made in November 2008 offering the removal of the paved footpath but retention of the folly.

Part of the Appellant's evidence was a 94-page report by Andrew Plumridge on what a folly is, listing some of the new ones that have been built (with planning permission) during this century. A small number of those follies were in the Green Belt confirming that some councils regard it as part of a folly's natural and acceptable habitat.

When the final solution is known, a further report will be given in the Bulletin. In any event, it is hoped to visit the folly during 2009.

Józef Boruwlaski and the Count's House at Durham

Despite being only 39 inches (1 metre) tall, Józef Boruwlaski was a giant in European Court circles. He was born near Halicz in Poland in November 1739 and was one of six children, half of whom were afflicted by dwarfism.

In mid-eighteenth century Europe, dwarfs were often engaged by the Royal Courts to amuse guests and dignitaries, so it was no surprise for Józef to have been introduced to the Starostin de Caorlix, especially since he was the son of an impoverished member of the Polish gentry. By all accounts the Starostin took a shine to the boy and instructed him to move to her Court. It was there, when aged 15, that he was presented to Empress Maria Theresa in Vienna, and so impressed her by his charm and courteousness that she gave him a diamond ring as a token of her appreciation.

It seems that Józef spent most of his early life being exhibited around the courts of Europe, including Paris in 1760 and The Hague on his way back to Warsaw. Four years later, when Stanislaw II acceded to the Polish throne, he took Józef

under his protection and even gave him an allowance to marry Isalina Barbutan, one of the Countess's companions.

In November 1780, armed with letters of introduction from the King, Józef and his wife took a tour of European Royal Courts, and by 1781 had reached Vienna. There they were introduced to the British Ambassador R M Keith, and accepted his invitation to visit England during the following year. In London Józef obtained the kind patronage of the Duke of Devonshire and later of the Royal Family itself, by which time he had appointed himself the title of Count Boruwlaski. By then he was famous enough to hold his own court. People paid to have breakfast with him and be entertained by music and exaggerated tales of his adventures. Soon after that, having completed a tour of Scotland and Ireland in 1786, the King of Poland withdrew his allowance and forced Józef to make his own way in life.

Although he returned to Poland in 1791, Józef was soon touring again. Back in London he was sketched by the artist Sir Edwin Landseer (right), and in 1820 moved to Durham to accept the gift of Banks Cottage from the Prebendary of Durham. It was there that he bought an annuity for his retirement and was looked after by the Ebdon sisters until his death on 5 September 1837, aged 98. He was buried in Durham Cathedral, where a short poem attributed to him reads:

*Poland was my cradle, England is my nest,
Durham is my quiet place
Where my weary bones shall rest.*



Banks Cottage was demolished some time ago, but a small Doric tetrastyle temple in its grounds still bears the title of The Count's House. It stands on the banks of the Wear below South Bailey, and contains a single room behind a line of Doric columns.

Cover Story: The Saxon Tower at Broadway, Worcestershire

One of the best known and most loved of Britain's follies is Broadway Tower standing high above the village from which it takes its name, and set between Moreton-in-Marsh and Evesham. At 312 metres (1,024 feet) above sea level, Beacon Hill may not be the highest point in the Cotswolds – that distinction is awarded to Cleeve Hill at 330 metres (1,083 feet) – but at least it is more appropriately marked with a grand folly rather than a simple concrete trig-point.

The "Saxon" tower, as it should properly be called, was designed by James Wyatt in 1794, and was intended as a mock castle to be seen from the Sixth Earl of Coventry's house at Croome Court, some 22 miles away. Mock castles were extremely popular at the time because they suggested a long family connection with a site and formed part of the '*pleasurable enjoyment of the grisly*' that was actively promoted by Gothic poets and writers like Goethe and Horace Walpole.



One story tells that the tower was intended to commemorate Admiral Duncan's victory over the Dutch in 1797. Whether or not it is true, it has been overshadowed by the tale that the Countess of Coventry wanted to use it in a grand show of one-upmanship and delayed building work until she was convinced that it could be seen from the

homes of her friends in the vicinity. Only when she was convinced that they could did she allow work to commence in 1799. Unfortunately, in her rush to impress she forgot to check the view from her own house from where the tower is completely hidden. By the time the tower was completed in 1800 and the error was discovered, it was too late and the joke was on Her Ladyship.

The tower adds a further 55 feet (17 metres) to the summit of the hill, leading to claims that on a clear day landmarks can be seen in Gloucestershire, Herefordshire, Worcestershire, Staffordshire, Shropshire, Warwickshire, Leicestershire, Oxfordshire, Northamptonshire, Wiltshire, Radnorshire, Brecknockshire and Monmouthshire, or at least you could before the Boundary Commission interfered!

The lighting of beacons on the hill has been a long tradition over the centuries. It is said that the Romans used the hill to assist them in the planning of their roads in the area, with surveyors lighting beacons on other hills to help them maintain a straight line between set points. In later years, a beacon was lit to commemorate the end of World War II and to celebrate The Queen's Silver Jubilee.

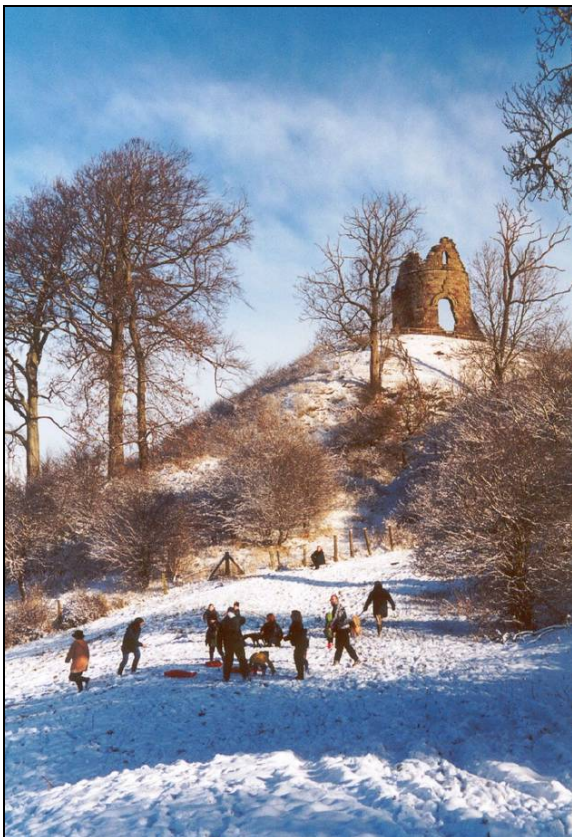
Over the years, the tower has been home to people like Sir Thomas Phillipps who set up his printing press in the building, and to William Morris who used it as a country retreat. Today it is the centre of a Country Park and used to house a collection of information boards. The roof terrace still provides a fantastic view, although the number of counties that can be seen is fewer than it was a century ago when the 1905 postcard (below) was published.



Folly of the Month: Tutbury Castle, Burton-upon-Trent, Staffordshire

The castle at Tutbury has been a Hill Fort for almost 2,500 years, and been topped by a genuine stone castle since Norman times. It might be wondered, therefore, how it might ever be described as a folly?

The castle was a Royalist stronghold during the English Civil War and withstood a Cromwellian siege in 1643. It was finally surrendered during a second siege in 1646, after which Cromwell paid fifteen men £2.10s.4d to destroy it so it could never again be used against him. It took them nearly two years to fulfil their task, and even then their efforts were half-hearted and left much of the castle intact. In 1681 some of the rooms were repaired and leased to the Vernons of nearby Sudbury Hall, who stayed there until 1864.



In 1775 the fourth Lord Vernon decided to embellish his genuine castle by erecting a mock ruined castle on top of the mound. He chose to build it using the local sandstone and is said to have commissioned the folly to improve the profile of the castle and make it more impressive to visitors staying at his home in Sudbury. Like so many folly builders, the desire for visual effect



was more important than good construction, something that was noted by the engineers who undertook the restoration in 1988, and is probably why it has a large crack running down one side.

The Stringer Lawrence Monument

Major-General Stringer Lawrence was our first Commander-in-Chief in India, and an old friend of Sir Robert Palk, the owner of the Haldon Estate in northern Devon. He was a bit of a military hero, having joined the army in 1727 and distinguishing himself at the Battle of Culloden in 1746.

The two men met in India, where Palk had risen from chaplain to Governor of Madras. At that time this was a major trading region with The East India Company, so when the supply of spices and other goods was threatened by French and Dutch competitors, firm action was needed. In those days trade was controlled by the company with the most effective militia, so it was Lawrence's job to 'settle things down' and allow Sir Robert to complete his contract negotiations.



When he retired to Devon, Sir Robert had accumulated sufficient wealth to buy 11,000 acres of Haldon Hill and much of Torquay. It was there in 1755 that he erected his well-known belvedere in

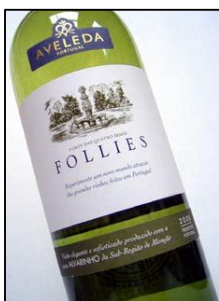
honour of his old friend, and three years later put inside it a Coade stone statue of Lawrence looking down the valley to Dunchideock Church where he is buried. Like the one of Lawrence in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in London, it depicts him dressed as a Roman General complete with a helmet and sword. A third memorial to his memory was erected in Westminster Abbey by the grateful East India Company.



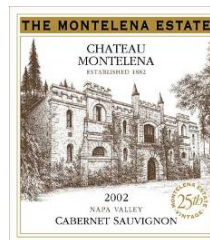
By kind permission of Kevin Rains of www.faithkartoons.com

Make mine a large one!

Some years ago Gwyn Headley proposed that we adopt the sumptuous Cos d'Estournel as The Folly Fellowship's official wine. It was selected because the label shows the Chinese folly where the chateau produces its great claret. Since then, we have often discussed the need for an article on folly wines and their labels.



Winemakers worldwide seem happy to use follies to promote their products, including Chateau Montelena from California's Napa Valley. Some breweries also use them: the Isle of Mull Brewing Company makes the McCaig's Folly Dark Ale, and Buffy's Brewery in Norfolk brews a beer called Polly's Folly. There is even a cider called Newton's Folly, named in honour of the time when an apple fell on old boy's head and condemned schoolboys everywhere to the misery of studying physics!



There is the making of a fascinating article here, and if nothing else at least the research will be merry! So, if you would like to write it, or if you know of any beers and wines etc. that have follies in their name or use them on the label, please write to me at andrew@follies.fsnet.co.uk so I can start to prepare a list.



The Arcade at High Ercall Hall

Yoland Brown recently sent to me a century-old picture of the arcade in the grounds of High Ercall Hall, Shropshire, and posed the interesting question of whether it can properly be included in the classification of folly?



Ercall Hall was built in 1608 for Sir Frances Newport, later the Earl of Bradford, and was used by the Royalists in the Civil War during a lengthy siege in 1646. The arcade, which is not the most attractive of features, was probably part of a loggia to the original manor house built for D E Arkles, after whom the village takes its name. It consists of five circular piers with four simple arches, and is built in ashlar stone. Today, it forms an eyecatcher framing views to the south.

If you have an opinion on whether or not it is a folly, or if you have any additional information about the arcade itself, please let me know or write to Yoland at brownhills@eleventowns.co.uk.

Is it Christmas without Lego?

We all have our own view of what it takes to make Christmas special. When I was a child it was a tube of Rowntrees Fruit Pastilles and a box of Lego to play with; at least it was unless Father Christmas remembered that my brother and I had a Hornby Double-O train set and provided a GWR engine and rolling stock!

Lego is an international phenomenon. It was invented by Ole Kirk Christiansen in his carpentry workshop at Billund in Denmark, where he first made wooden toys in 1932. He began producing his *Automatic Binding Bricks* in 1949 using cellulose acetate to create his famous hollow blocks that could easily be clipped together and unclipped again. In 1934 he held a contest among his staff to see who could devise the best name for his company, putting up a bottle of home-made wine as the prize – the winner was “Lego”, which is based on the Danish phrase *leg godt*, meaning ‘play well’.

By 1954, Christiansen's son, Godtfred, had become the junior managing director of the Lego Group, and it was he who saw the potential for a worldwide toy. Even then, the bricks were simple rectangular affairs that provided few opportunities for the imaginative child. Despite this it still helped to create generations of structural engineers and architects, and kept many a little darling quiet when needed.

In the late 1990s the company began to produce licensed characters to supplement its standard components, including a version of Posh and Becks (above), Winnie the Pooh and even Madonna dressed in her underwear and carrying a microphone but (with brilliant foresight) minus Guy Ritchie! In doing so, the company has encouraged children to build scenes from Star Wars, Batman and Harry Potter, but its core success remains its ability to recreate a vast range of famous buildings. All this has contributed to the success of the Lego-land theme parks at Billund (Denmark), Günzburg in Germany, Carlsbad in California, and Windsor to the west of London.



Now, in a stroke of genius, Lego has begun to manufacture components that can be used to build a range of miniature follies, including a lovely sham castle. However, my own particular favourite is the Taj Mahal which I can now buy for as little as £250 (€300 or \$375), and spend the rest of the year putting together the 5,900 pieces.



The thought of millions of children building follies at the age of 6 and above is too fabulous to contemplate, and can only be good news for the long term survival of these unique structures. With any luck it might also stimulate a general revival of interest in architecture as a whole, including the Classical temples of ancient Rome.



Forgive me if my brain is running away here, but I sense the start of a building competition, or at least the opening of a Classical folly park at Lego-land? Of course, if some of you have been building Lego follies for years, please send me pictures.



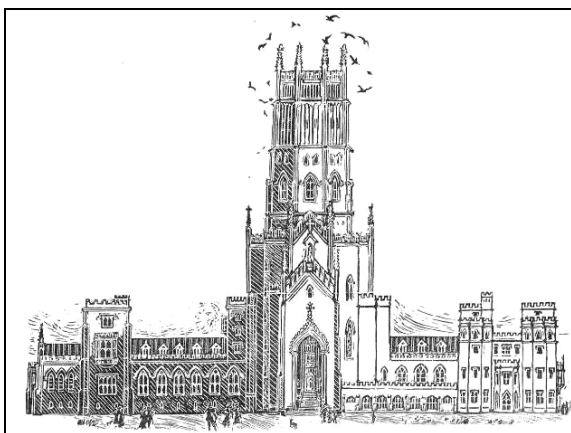
Gobbets

- **Shine, the television production** company, is looking for exceptional quiz contestants to take part in the next series of the successful BBC programme *Battle of the Brains*. They are looking for a team of seven players to represent the Folly Fellowship, and whose combined general knowledge and specialist expertise could make them the ultimate quiz champions.

If you like further information or take part, or if you could put together a team on our behalf, please e-mail Tony at anthony.hooper@virgin.net.

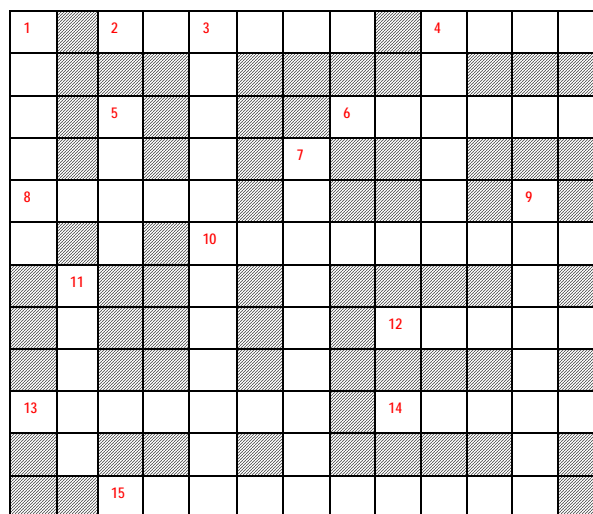
- **2009 is our twenty-first anniversary** year as a registered charity. During that time we have witnessed a sea change in the way that follies are understood and enjoyed, and the frequency of their destruction has reduced dramatically. It is, therefore, a time for us to pat ourselves on the back and celebrate a momentous achievement. We plan to mark the year with a number of special events and visits, including a one-day conference, so keep an eye open for more details in these pages and in the magazine.

- **During the recent visit to Fonthill** there were many requests to buy copies of Ann Hole's divine wood engraving of the Abbey. Since then, Ann has been busy in her studio creating a limited number of 80 x 100mm prints, which are now available at £45.00 each (un-framed) with £5.00 for each one sold being gifted back to Folly Fellowship funds. If you would like one of these rare artworks, please send your order to mohole@tiscali.co.uk or by post through the Folly Fellowship office.



Monthly Competition

This month's competition is a crossword of general architectural terms. First prize of a castellated milk jug (right) will be awarded to the first person to e-mail a list of all of the correct answers to andrew@folliesfsnet.co.uk.



Across:

- A gallery open on one or more sides, sometimes pillared, or a separate garden structure. (6)
- Framing or edging of openings and other features on the façade of a building or interior. (4)
- The long face of a brick. (6)
- A vertical recess in a wall, usually with a curved back and often used for statues. (5)
- A vertical support, usually made of rolled steel. (9)
- The protective entrance to a house. (5)
- An ornamental covered walkway, usually used to support climbing plants. (7)
- The underside of a sloping roof overhanging a wall. (5)
- An American term for rubble. (10)

Down:

- The dressed stones at the corners of walls. (6)
- A lightweight dome formed by interlocking polygons and first designed by Richard Buckminster Fuller. (8,4)
- A roof covering of straw, reeds or grass. (6)
- An *anse de panier* that can be pointed, depressed, ogee or horseshoe. (4)
- An American and Canadian term for a weatherboard. (9)
- A basic building material known in France as *béton* and first used on a grand scale by the Romans. (8)
- The vestibule or entrance hall of a public building. (5)

Picture credits: Cover – Rob McColl; Józef Boruwlaski – National Portrait Gallery; The Count's House – Jean Rogers; Broadway Tower: Neil (Flickr); Tutbury Castle – John Neave, www.carolyn.topmum.net; Haldon Belvedere – Andy Gregory; Cartoon – Faith KARToons; High Ercall Arcade – Shropshire Star; Lego – www.devicedaily.com and Casper van Nimwegan; Cartoon – www.muller.co.uk; Fonthill Abbey – Ann Hole.

Give Gift Membership This Christmas

Special Christmas Offer

If you are looking for a special gift to give a friend or loved one this Christmas, why not send them gift membership of The Folly Fellowship? Buying online means you can avoid the High Street crush and provide a unique gift that will last until May 2010. We will even take care of the gift tag and include any personal message and card that you may wish to enclose.

Under this special Christmas offer, your gift will include the following:

- Full membership for one year, with invitations to all events, excursions and the garden party;
- Three copies of the *Follies* magazine;
- One copy of the *Follies Journal*;

- One copy of our e-Bulletin each month (subject to an e-mail address being provided); and
- An additional six months membership (to May 2010) completely free, with all of the usual benefits, invitations and publications.

With 2009 being our 21st anniversary year, there are many special celebrations arranged for the coming year, including an annual symposium and (subject to final arrangements) a trip overseas. So, if you really want to spoil someone and let them know how special they are, give them gift membership now and let them enjoy it with you for the next 18 months. Life membership can also be given to that really special someone – just contact Norma on membership@follies.org.uk for details.

Recipient's name:

Address:

Postcode: Telephone:

e-mail address:

Your Christmas greeting:

Your name:

Address:

Postcode: Telephone:

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I enclose a cheque (payable to The Folly Fellowship) for:

☐ Individual gift membership at ~~£37.50~~ **£25.00**

☐ Joint gift membership at ~~£45.00~~ **£37.50**

Please also send me:

☐ Follies magazine binders at £10.00

☐ 5 magazine back issues at ~~£12.00~~ **£8.00 ***

☐ Journal back issues at ~~£12.00~~ **£8.00 ****

☐ Index back issues at ~~£10.00~~ **£1.00 ***

☐ Sweatshirt (XL size) at ~~£15.00~~ **£8.00**

☐ Gentleman's silk tie at ~~£12.00~~ **£8.00**

☐ Ladies silk headscarf at ~~£15.00~~ **£12.00**

And I enclose a donation to F/F funds

Total £.....

Please return this form and your remittance to:
The Membership Secretary, 36 Longfield Drive, Rodley, Leeds
West Yorkshire LS13 1JX

My requested back issues are:

* = Subject to availability. Please note that Magazines 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 9, 15, 16, 18, 19, 21, 22, 23, 34, 35, 38 and Indexes for volumes 1-6 are no longer available.

** = The offer extends to Journals 1-7 only.