

## THE GREAT PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORD OF CAMPDEN'S BUILT HERITAGE (2002-2005)

### The Reason Why

1 During 2002, after its combination with The Campden Trust and the adoption of a new Constitution, The Campden Society (The Society) established a fresh "Strategy". In that context, the trustees recognised the need for a comprehensive photographic record of the standing state of the precious built heritage of Campden (mainly contained in the Conservation Areas of the town and of Broad Campden) at the beginning of 21st Century. This would be the best way of recording what had been preserved as a result of quite extraordinary safeguarding work throughout the 20th Century. It should also serve not only as a time capsule for posterity but also as a great aid to the continuing protective work of The Society.

2 From the start, The Society recognised that some of the resulting photography would enhance the Community Archive being developed and managed by The Campden and District Historical and Archaeological Society (CADHAS).

### The Ground Level Photographic Record

3 A first statement of the requirement was set out late in 2002 – see attachment A and map. The idea was to capture a record of the whole character of the Conservation Areas of Campden and every "Listed" building in its setting (some 270 in all). The plan was to:

Start with the town's renowned extended High Street, containing 170 of the town's "Listed" buildings – Stage 1

Deal next with the spurs and loops off the High Street, including the whole of Westington, to complete coverage of the town's Conservation Area – Stage 2

4 All this would be followed by coverage of out-lying listed buildings, by agreement with their owners as appropriate, and the Conservation Area of Broad Campden.

5 After exploring other options, The Society

approached Jim Smith, a photographic expert, resident in Campden, who specialises in digital imagery in colour. Most importantly, as a supporter of The Society, he was enthusiastic about the project. By 9th June 2003, when terms were agreed, he had already taken some excellent shots of buildings on the High Street (corrected for elevation distortion) and had a good feel for what was required. The quality of this work, including the absence of vehicles in most images, testified to the time-consuming nature of the task he was taking on. We were glad, therefore, to engage his services, on rates discounted for the benefit of The Society, for Stage 1 of the ground photography requirement – see **Attachment B**.

6 Stage 1 was to produce a comprehensive set of 240 to 250 full colour individual shots of every building in the extended High Street from Leysbourne to "The Volunteer", to form a continuous series on each side. Some street scenes were also needed as well as a selection of A4 prints of some images for display purposes. A fee of £2,000 was agreed for all this with copyright to the Society. David Atkinson undertook to oversee the project, specifying the requirement stage by stage.

7. The project was explained in a statement by the Chairman on the 2nd August 2003 – see **Attachment C**. This was an important document not least in specifying how the images were to be produced for the uses foreseen. Essentially, three products were required:  
High Definition Images on disc – to carry the full size, high quality images, duly indexed for the main record. Copyright to remain with The Society  
Hard Copy, generally A4 size prints – as ordered, each in a protective sleeve, for display purposes. Copyright to remain with The Society  
Buildings Files on separate disc for the Community Archive – to carry images for viewing on the Community Archive system – each entry showing a part-screen size image and name, alongside a note on the character of the building (The Campden Society to compile) and some historical notes (CADHAS to compile). Copyright on these files to be shared with CADHAS to allow operation as part of its Community Archive.

8 Agreement as regards the Buildings files had already been agreed and welcomed by CADHAS – see correspondence and format for the Buildings

File at **Attachment D**.

9 The work continued as funds became available – starting with an initial grant of £1,000 from our Campden Conservation Trust Fund (CCTF). The Society appealed for contributions from members - see attachment E: This raised about £3,500 including the benefit of Gift Aid. A CDC Ward Project grant of £200 and another £200 was granted by the Town Council.

10 Jim Smith continued to build the portfolio to meet the tasked requirements - see tasking letter dated 24/09/03 attachment F. By November, extra work on Stage 1 had been agreed at an extra cost of c £1,600. and work on Stage 2 was being lined up.

11 By the end of 2003, the extended Stage 1 had been completed - see updating brief 23/01/04 - attachment G. 350 fine images (plus a few others not chosen to meet specification) had been produced on disc, as well as 150 high-quality, mainly A4 prints. Members and invited guests were briefed on progress so far during January 2004. All the further ground photography work had been approved by then and Jim had started Stage 2. Plans for complementary aerial photography were also being advanced – see below.

12 By the end of 2004 all the ground photography and some aerial photography had been completed – realising a total of 442 ground level images – as well as 42 very low level aerial images – see below. The results were presented in January 2005, first to members and then to an invited audience - see **Attachment H**.

13 Avril Newton (the Secretary of the Society) took charge of the imagery for The Society and worked to get the reference order right, especially for High Street properties. Much work was also in hand at CADHAS on the database for the Buildings Files.

14 Meantime, The Society offered prints of the images for sale - see conditions at **Attachment J** – the proceeds to go, initially anyway, towards completion of the project.

## The Aerial Photographic Record

15 The Society had to feel its way more carefully as regards aerial photography mainly because of cost. During 2002, however, The Society had taken advantage of a special offer from Commission Air and already had eight aerial views of the town - with copyright.

16 As the project developed, it became clear that, ideally, we should obtain some very low level oblique shots, particularly over the Conservation Area of the town, to reveal remaining evidence of the burgages originally laid out by the Normans in the 12th Century, and to identify not only the extent of infilling in the Conservation Area but also how much open space was left. This was achieved more easily than expected, when a friend of Jim Smith's, called Bill Tollett, agreed to take Jim up in his light aircraft for some very low level passes over Campden during which he could take shots with hand-held cameras. Thanks to the personal generosity of Bill Tollett, there was no cost to The Society for these splendid, enabling flights. The result was the addition of 42 impressive images and eight prints.

17 The Society had also identified the need for low level oblique shots to capture the approaches to Campden and its lovely country setting. A further grant of £1,000 from the CCTF made this achievable and, after much analysis, the Society engaged Commission Air to provide the coverage required – see copy of the tasking at **Attachment K**. These were produced in March 2005, adding a further 12 full colour images - with full copyright to the Society.

17 Jim Smith was able then to complete the whole project by consolidating all the aerial photographs (2001 to 2005) on disc – 62 in all - see summary list at **Attachment L**. The full extent of all this remarkable coverage was first presented to members on 25 June 2005 on a day of walks and talks about the towns splendid Conservation Area – see **Attachment M**.

## Conclusion

18 This comprehensive photographic record, conceived in 2002 and achieved by 2005, came at a cost of about £7,000 mainly covered by fund raising, grants (including a total of £2,000 from CCTF) and the sale of prints. A huge amount of voluntary as well as expert professional effort was involved - all encouraged by local community enthusiasm and support.

19 Inevitably, the project grew in the making; indeed it more or less doubled in scope and cost by the end. I believe, however, that The Society's far-sighted purpose, to create a really definitive and comprehensive record for posterity and for the on-going benefit of the community, was handsomely realised.

David J Atkinson  
30th January 2017