

Welcome to our  
Friday ~ Sunday

Cowbridge  
1254 **750** 2004

Historic Celebrations  
12th ~ 14th March

## 'Everyone is now looking forward to the town's 750th birthday party'

**S**UE COX, chairperson of Cowbridge 750 Group, is hoping that the elements will smile on Cowbridge for its significant occasion, when the town begins its two-day 750th birthday party.

"With almost everything in place and going according to plan, only the weather can seriously blight our celebration," she said, "and then only partially.

"I think that everyone is looking forward to this event, which can set so many things in tow for Cowbridge, in terms of creativeness, for years to come.

"We had a wonderful start in the visit by the Prince of Wales, which hopefully augurs well for our entire programme.

"We've had a very appreciative letter from Clarence House and here at home, people seemed to really enjoy the relaxed atmosphere that surrounded the whole occasion.

"I must express my thanks to everyone who took part, from the

children and the spectators in the street, to the congregation in the church and the musicians who made it so enjoyable. It fulfilled all our expectations and lived up to all we'd planned.

"I really do hope that Charter Weekend will be equally rewarding. Nine months of sheer graft by the people involved has been a strenuous episode in our lives. We must hope that our ideas work as placed and that they provide enjoyment and fun for all concerned.

"I have to pay a special tribute to our patrons and sponsors who have been so generous in response to our appeals for help. Without their support, we could not possibly have advanced so far.

"It's demonstrated that people of Cowbridge and our friends beyond take pride and pleasure in our town, want to see it thrive and prosper, and wish it well.

"For our part, we'll do our very best to ensure that they are not disappointed."

## Prince Charles visits the town to get the celebrations under way



**ABOVE:** Prince Charles waves to the crowds of people who lined the streets of Cowbridge during his historic visit on St David's Day.



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# Scenes from Holy Cross Church during St David's Day visit by Prince Charles



ALL PICTURES ON THIS PAGE by MIKE BAKER

LEFT: The Prince examines one of the many displays that were on show in Holy Cross Church during his visit.



RIGHT: Prince Charles receives a commemorative Cowbridge 750 tankard.

## Cowbridge 750 Charter weekend programme for Saturday, March 13 and Sunday, March 14

**SATURDAY, MARCH 13**  
**9.30am:** Bridge FM begins broadcasting from the podium outside Cowbridge town hall (until 2pm). A medieval encampment in Old Hall Gardens begins preparations for the day.  
 Community parade assembles at Druids Green; military parades assemble at Cowbridge leisure centre. David Parry-Jones begins broadcasting from the town hall for the formal ceremonial; knights in costume and armour, led by the town crier, Simon Fowler, proceed from Old Hall to the town hall.  
**10.05am:** Community parade, including children and parents, community groups and others.  
**10.35am:** The Royal Regiment of Wales, headed by their regimental band, members of the Welsh Guards, the Royal Air Force and representatives of the Royal Navy from HMS Cambria - up to 100 personnel in total - leave the leisure centre for Druids Green, where they about-turn and proceed back through the town; the mayor and the Lord Lieutenant of South Glamorgan, Capt Norman Lloyd Edwards take the salute outside the town hall; the parade disperses at 11.15am at the leisure centre.  
**10.50am:** A single

Hawk fighter from RAF Valley, Anglesey makes a fly-past in honour of Cowbridge 750.  
**10.51am:** S.A.Brain's vintage dray bearing the specially brewed Cowbridge ale, the mascot Cowbridge cows (mother and daughter) and a traditional jazz band move off from Druids Green to parade through Eastgate, High Street and on to Church Street; some other participants head for The Butts.  
**11.30am:** The mayor and his guests retire to the council chamber. Traffic, temporarily halted for the parades, is allowed to flow through the town once more.  
**11.45am:** Town hall assembly room (upstairs) opens for exhibition of charter documents and other artifacts, the sale of tankards, and other associated historical items connected with the festival.  
 In Church Street there will be numerous activities, some of which will be sited on the old grammar school car park; stalls, the Cowbridge mascot cows and numerous other attractions. The Scouts, Guides and other organisations will be active with other challenges and demos.  
 The day-long programme, which spreads into pubs, bars, restaurants and businesses winds down at 4pm.  
**7pm:** Medieval banquet for 300 at the Duke of Wellington. Entertainment in a special programme gets under way at Bar 44 to include tapas, cocktails and music.  
**12 noon:** The lesser hall (ground floor, town hall) opens for refreshments served by members of the Women's Institute.  
**12noon-12.30pm:** Entertainment programme begins throughout

the town; street theatre, re-enactment groups, buskers, jugglers, tightrope walkers will display their artistic and entertainment talents; a music programme comprising jazz and blues begins in the courtyard at the Bear Hotel where buffet-style food will be available.  
**12.30pm:** Entertainment programme begins at the town hall to include drama and dance and a mixed programme of music from classical to jazz.  
**12pm:** onwards: The medieval encampment in Old Hall Gardens will be open for viewing, providing an insight into life in medieval times.  
 Upwards of 30 people will be available to engage in conversation and demonstrate life in the raw; they'll also be seen walking through the town.  
**SUNDAY, MARCH 14**  
 Cowbridge town hall, Old Hall and Church Street pedestrian areas will open at 11.30am and a circus workshop will be open for children, parents and others to learn juggling and other circus skills.  
 Buskers will be providing music around the town. From the town hall council chamber at 10am-11am, Cowbridge Rotary Club will be organising a historic walkabout quiz around the town, split into three age groups, with cash prizes for the winners.  
 Teams comprising two people will be charged £1 to enter.  
 Focus shifts to teenagers from 4.00 pm onwards when rock bands take over at the Duke of Wellington ballroom in a head-to-head contest, due to end at about 9.30pm.  
**MIKE MEREDITH**



LEFT: The Prince is pictured meeting members of the congregation, as local residents look on.

BELOW: The contents of a special display are explained to the Prince following the short church service.





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Welcoming the Prince to begin the celebrations



ABOVE: Prince Charles is introduced to Cowbridge 750 committee men Bruce McGovern and Alan Crossley by Coun Sue Cox.

This will be a wonderful year for Cowbridge!

A MESSAGE from the Lord Lieutenant of South Glamorgan, Captain Norman Lloyd Edwards.

“As the Queen’s representative, I was pleased and privileged to accompany Prince Charles, the Prince of Wales, on his visit to Cowbridge last week and I know that the Prince himself greatly enjoyed his time in the town, where he was given the most warm and appreciative welcome.

“Cowbridge looked wonderful and Holy Cross Church was beautifully decorated for that occasion, which served as an opportunity, fittingly on St David’s Day, for the Prince to meet those people who have

worked so hard and diligently for Charter 750.

“This is an enviable birthday for Cowbridge, reflecting its impressive history as one of the oldest boroughs in Wales. I hope that townspeople, friends and visitors alike will enjoy the programme on offer which illustrates its modern presence as well as its medieval past.

“A huge amount of devoted and careful research by history and record groups has gone into this magnificent effort. The documentation and the literary evidence about the

town’s past is truly impressive.

“Many groups have come together behind this unique occasion, which marks Cowbridge’s very special place in history as first a Roman settlement, and then later a significant marketing and trading town.

“Cowbridge is much-treasured as a jewel of the Vale of Glamorgan and I extend my sincere thanks to all those who have united to make Charter Weekend one to cherish and treasure. This will be a wonderful year.”

THANK YOU TO SPONSORS

- Charter weekend – March 13-14, 2004
- Celtic Wine and Food Festival November 6, 2004
- For all other events – visit www.cowbridge750.co.uk

COWBRIDGE Charter Trust takes this opportunity to give a very special “Thankyou” to our invaluable sponsors:

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- Jane Hutt
- Mr. & Mrs. DG. Smith
- Mr. & Mrs. D. Kennedy
- Mr. & Mrs. T. Williams
- Gwyn & Gwyn

The Prince is pictured meeting local people during his visit



Photographs by Mike Baker.

ABOVE: The Prince entered Holy Cross Church to the sound of a fanfare by the trumpeters of the South Wales Police.



LEFT: Prince Charles chats to local historian Jeff Alden.



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COWBRIDGE GETS IN TUNE TO CELEBRATE 750 YEARS AS A ROYAL CHARTER TOWN



**COWBRIDGE** is destined to commit more than £10,000 to the celebration of its Charter Weekend on Saturday and Sunday in a two-day jamboree, marking the 750th birthday of its first charter granted to the town in 1254.

Visitors are expected in large numbers, possibly thousands, for its unique spectacular which will include an impressive military parade, re-enactment groups in medieval costume, a community parade, bands, buskers, street theatre and a medieval encampment.

Cowbridge 750 Group chairperson Sue Cox, said: "We've no way of knowing how many people are likely to come along, which has complicated our planning programme, especially for parking, so my best advice is to come early because we're kicking off at 9.30am with parades, starting at 10am."

More than 100 service personnel are expected to take part in a military parade through the town's main street, drawn from the Royal Regiment of Wales, RAF St Athan, the Welsh Guards and Royal Navy representatives from HMS Cambria.

The salute, outside the town hall, will be taken by the Mayor of Cowbridge, Hugh Field, who will be accompanied by the Lord Lieutenant of South

Glamorgan, Captain Norman Lloyd Edwards.

A preceding community parade will comprise children and parents from schools in the town and surrounding countryside, together with community groups; following the military parades, there will be a procession of veteran cars, a dray hauling a special Cowbridge 750 ale brewed by SA Brain, and a float containing the new town mascot, a life-size fibre glass effigy of a cow, purchased with the aid of sponsors, from the international CowParade company.

Between, a Hawk jet fighter from RAF Valley, Anglesey, will perform a fly-past over the town.

As medieval encampment will be set up in the town's Old Hall gardens and the town will be thronged with street theatre, to include tightrope walkers, jugglers and professional busking musicians working the streets, bars and ale houses.

Cowbridge, in its ancient past known as Long Villa, won its spurs from the Lord of Glamorgan and Hereford, Richard de Clare, whose image lives on to this day in a stained glass window at Tewkesbury Abbey, Gloucestershire.

Contemporary Cowbridge retains its unique character as one of the few remaining walled towns in Wales, with its ancient South Gate still intact.

Historian Jeff Alden says: "Cowbridge is a very special place whose original name described



ABOVE: The Lord Lieutenant of South Glamorgan, Captain Norman Lloyd Edwards.

• Photographs by Margaret Lamb.

its linear Roman past. Its topographical profile remains much the same to this day, enhanced by its rural setting six miles west of Cardiff, as a cosmopolitan centre with a Welsh heart for people from far and wide."

Saturday's events are rounded off by a near sell-out medieval banquet for 300 people, with more street entertainment to follow on Sunday, together with an historic treasure hunt and a battle of rock bands for the young at heart.

The weekend's celebrations get under way on Thursday evening

with a concert in Holy Cross Church by instrumentalists and singers from the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama under the baton of Christopher Mowat, to include a specially written *Fanfare for Cowbridge 750*, composed by college lecturer Andrew Wilson-Dickson.

On Friday, Cowbridge Chamber of Trade sponsors a disco and fireworks party at the town's rugby club.

This photograph by Mike Baker.



Members of the Cowbridge 750 committee pose for the camera before the church service at Holy Cross Church on St David's Day.

ABOVE: Prince Charles chats to local residents after his arrival in Cowbridge.

RIGHT: One of the many local school children who wore traditional Welsh dress for the occasion.



The crowds eagerly await the Prince's arrival.