



ROMSEY & DISTRICT SOCIETY Reg. Charity 269308

PRESS RELEASE

Society announces Charter Stone choice

The Romsey & District Society has chosen nationally-renowned artist Gary Breeze to create a stunning commemoration of the 400th anniversary of the Town's Charter.

This follows substantial support for both the project and the design at a display of their ideas by two short-listed artists – in King John's House in August and at Romsey and Mountbatten schools in September. The design brief for the artists had called for a work to celebrate the spirit of Romsey, highlighting the long and close relationship between the Town and the River Test.

“We were delighted to get 302 completed questionnaires” says TVBC Councillor Clive Collier, who is leading the Society's working group on the project, “with only a few expressing any dissatisfaction.”

By nearly a 2 to 1 majority respondents preferred ‘artist A’ – Gary Breeze's vision of a Romanesque column engraved with the names of Romsey's many streams and mills, both old and new. People spoke of its simplicity and elegance, calling it ‘striking’ and saying that it relates well to the Abbey.

“Gary's Charter Stone will be an imaginative and lasting addition to Romsey,” added Clive, “telling our story in a continuing spiral signifying water, mills, people and history.”

The Society has committed at least £3,500 to the project and the next step is to investigate additional sources of funding. It is hoped to unveil the Stone in the spring of 2007, in line with other Charter commemorations and celebrations.

Works by Gary Breeze can be found at Hilliers Arboretum in Jermyns Lane and at the Roche Court Sculpture Park, East Winterslow, as well as in the new Scottish Parliament in Edinburgh. He has just been commissioned to create the British memorial to those who died in the Bali bombings, a large granite and Portland globe to be placed in St James's Park near the Foreign Office, inscribed with 202 names.

25 October 2005

For more information contact Clive Collier (500001) or Geoff Morris (501822)