

# NEWSLETTER

## HARROGATE CIVIC SOCIETY

December 2020



*Civic Society committee and subgroup members before taking part in a tour of the Crescent Gardens building arranged by Impala Estates Ltd. Friday 9 October. Numbers were restricted to comply with Covid-19 regulations.*

*Back: Angela Fahy, James Hartley (Impala Estates), Stuart Holland*

*Front: Henry Pankhurst, Barry Adams, Peter Hirschmann*

### Crescent Gardens Update

In our last newsletter, we reported on the proposals for the conversion of the former Council Offices at Crescent Gardens to provide office accommodation, public access and a restaurant.

The new owners, Impala Estates, kindly gave our Civic Society group a tour of the building on 9 October, during which we saw an example of the replacement windows, an important part of the scheme to bring the building up to the latest standards of insulation.

We saw that work of stripping out asbestos, obsolete cables and floor covering had been carried out. The submission of a full planning application is expected early in the new year.

We will continue to have contact with the developers as the scheme progresses.

*We wish everybody well this Christmas season which will be unlike any Christmas we have ever experienced.*

*In normal times we would be inviting our members to pre-Christmas drinks, mince pies and cakes at The Club - an event enjoyed by all in previous years and which will certainly return again.*

*We are given hopeful and encouraging news that vaccines will enable us to return to normality next year. Meanwhile do take care, stay safe and keep well.*

**Celebrate** our past - **Enhance** our present - **Shape** our future



This online talk was hosted by Harrogate Library as part of Black History Month. The speakers were Joe Williams of Black History Walk in Leeds and Audrey Dewjee who carries out most of the archival research.

Attended by 112 people, this wide ranging talk illustrated the rich history of black people in Yorkshire. In the 1700s and 1800s many black people worked as servants but the picture was not exclusively of servitude. Some black residents achieved prosperity, such as John Moore of York who made enough money to pay to become a freeman there in 1687. By the

1800s black people who were well known in Yorkshire, and beyond, included prominent actor Ira Aldridge, born in the US, who came to work as an actor in the UK. He married a Northallerton girl and went on to become a noted Shakespearian actor.



*Pablo Fanque*

Pablo Fanque, born as William Darby in 1810 in a Norwich workhouse, became the first circus owner in the UK and often performed in Harrogate (famously exercising his circus horses on the Stray).

Harrogate Society members will of course know about Thomas Rutling, of the Fiske Jubilee Singers, who made his home on Valley Drive where there is a Heritage Plaque in his honour. The singers performed in Harrogate in the 1870s.

### **Our First Video Talk: The European Presence in Edwardian Harrogate**

The Society's first online Zoom talk took place on 4 November. Thirty members, and guests signed up in advance to hear Dr Jennings, a social historian who spoke about his research into the many European workers who came to Harrogate in the Edwardian period.

Migrants from Germany and Austria were prominent in the hospitality business, with 40-60 recorded working in hotels in the 1901 census. In the 1911 census at least one third of the Crown Hotel staff were from the continent. European staff were reputed to be well presented and professional, and spoke several languages.

A boarding house for Jewish migrants was set up on Cold Bath Road in the building now occupied by the William & Victoria restaurant.

Italian workers had also come to Harrogate. Some worked as lowly street performers (such as organ grinders and pierrots).



*A street organ grinder, possibly Italian Harrogate, early 1900's Courtesy: the Walker-Neesam Archive*

The 1911 census shows several living in Knaresborough, where rents were cheaper. Some Italian families became established in commerce in Harrogate such as Fattorini The Jeweller, and the Krollers (ice cream makers).

Further talks are being planned for early next year, while Covid restrictions still apply.

## Forecourt Structures

Henry Pankhurst  
writes:

The most usual form of what I am thinking of would be called a canopy but sometimes we see forecourt structures of a different nature.



*Station Parade*

The grandest canopy in Harrogate is the historic one at Prince Albert Row on Station Parade, constructed in 1870 by the Victoria Park Company. It is a listed structure which gives owners and tenants a heavy responsibility.

A newer example is at Jespers of Harrogate on Oxford Street, constructed about 20 years ago by Charles Kendrew Metalworkers Ltd which is a great enhancement to our conservation area. It is always gratifying when property owners are keen to see the expense of such a construction as worthwhile.

There is a recently constructed one on Commercial Street at Tarbett's Fishmongers, which we are very pleased to see.

Some protection from the weather has become important to hospitality businesses just now because



*Commercial Street*

of Covid 19. A bar on Cold Bath Road applied for what they describe as a semi- permanent structure on their modest forecourt. It was proposed that this construction, which is principally glazed walling, would be dismantled or partly dismantled in the summer. It was not clear how the structure would be roofed. Neither the Civic Society nor the Council Conservation Officer are content with the proposal. The application was approved, but with very clear conditions. The permission is temporary for 5 years and in addition may only remain in place from October to May (two thirds of the year). It seems that the Conservation Officer was uneasy about policing of the conditions. Perhaps a more fitting structure may be put in place at some stage.



*King's Road*

One forecourt structure that very surprisingly gained planning consent some years ago is at the Stuzzi Restaurant on King's Road. The materials are black canvas and plastic windows on a frame that is bolted to the stonework. It is said to be demountable but stands there as a permanent all year round feature. When the planning application was considered, the planning officer concluded that the economic benefit outweighed harm to the conservation area. Whilst we recognise its 'practical' benefit, its poor visual appearance in such a prominent location in the conservation area is most unfortunate.

I began with our grandest canopy but have ended with arguably the worst – unless you know otherwise!

## Mike Hine - A legacy

Members will remember Mike Hine who died in December last year. He was a long-standing and very active member and, amongst the many bequests, he donated £1000 to the Society with the request that we erect or plant something in his memory in Harrogate which will enhance the town.

We are pleased to say that the money has now been received and we will be discussing ideas for a suitable memorial in recognition of his great contribution to the Society and the town.



## Our Golden Jubilee - The History Group needs your help

# 50 Years

We are making good progress in pulling together the records of the Society in advance of our Golden Jubilee next year, but we do have some major gaps.

- ◆ We have a virtually complete record of **AGM and committee meetings** since June 1987 but very few dating from earlier than that.
- ◆ We have all **newsletters** from 1998 onwards but are otherwise a little patchy.
- ◆ We are very short of **photographs** of Society events or leading personalities.
- ◆ We have some examples of **other memorabilia** (such as talks or events programmes) but could do with more.

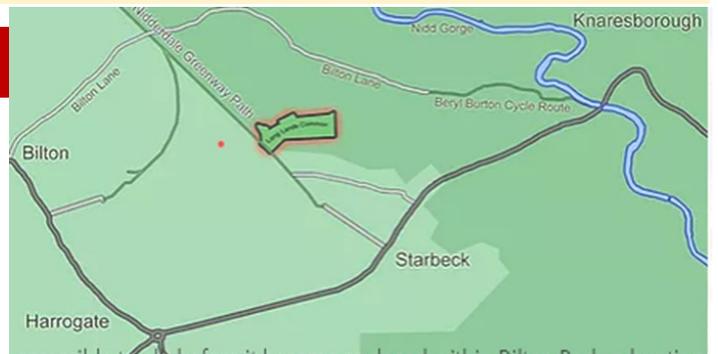
Anything you can unearth from your files or attics will be hugely appreciated. Please contact us through [info@harrogatecivicsociety.org](mailto:info@harrogatecivicsociety.org)

## Long Lands Common

A request was received from a member asking the committee to consider making a donation to the Long Lands Common project between Harrogate and Knaresborough. This is a Community Woodland project set up to purchase 30 acres of farmland (to be planted with woodland, grassland, wild flower meadows and used for public access and education), adjoining the Nidderdale Greenway Path beyond Starbeck.

The committee considered this to be a very worthwhile project but unfortunately our constitution would not allow us to donate by buying shares. At that stage the organisers had raised over £250,000 of their £300,000 target. Instead we wrote to all members inviting them to consider personal donations.

It has recently been announced that the target has been met, but it is still possible to buy shares for members interested in contributing. See [www.longlandscommon.org](http://www.longlandscommon.org) for details.



Above: Location map Below: The Vision  
Both images taken from [www.longlandscommon.org](http://www.longlandscommon.org)



## Links with the Mercer Gallery

Representatives from the Society recently met, via Zoom, with May Catt, the Cultural Services Manager for Harrogate Borough Council. Our joint agenda was to look at ways of working together, particularly with regard to our proposed Cultural Quarter centred on Crescent Gardens. This will take in the Mercer Gallery and The Royal Pump Room Museum for which May Catt has day to day responsibility.

We also discussed Heritage Open Days for September 2021. As we reported earlier,

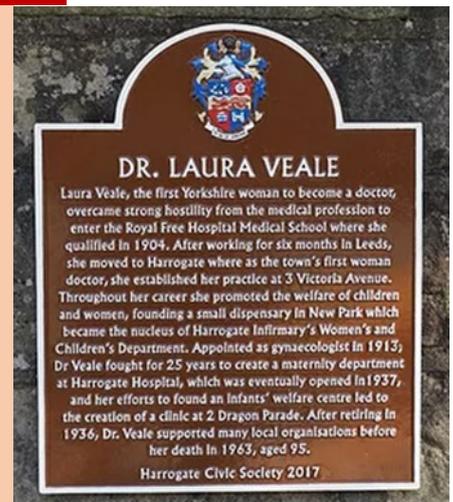


the Heritage Open Days programme, which has been running every September for several years, was disappointingly cancelled this year as a result of the Covid-19 restrictions.

## Dr Laura Veale

The Records Office at North Yorkshire County Council is engaged in a project: *Great North Yorkshire Sons and Daughters*. In the process of their research, they have been looking at the story of Dr Laura Veale of Harrogate who was the first Yorkshire woman to become a doctor.

They quickly discovered our Plaques website which of course contains details of the brown plaque placed by the Civic Society on Victoria Avenue to commemorate her work. As a result we have been very pleased to help them with additional research, in particular through Paul Jennings of our History Group.



## Station Gateway Consultation

The Civic Society was invited to send a representative to a Zoom workshop on plans for the landscaping and street architecture of the new Station Gateway scheme.

More details to follow in the next newsletter.

### Station Square

Station Square (sometimes referred to as Victoria Gardens) is the gateway to the town centre for visitors arriving by train. It is a large open space that currently suffers from a disjointed appearance that makes it difficult for visitors to orientate themselves on arrival. The square also suffers from the environmental impacts of the A61 at Station Parade. However, it has considerable potential to provide a key gateway to Harrogate and provide the town centre with a large, multifunctional events space immediately adjacent to the retail core.

*Extract from Harrogate Town Centre Strategy and Masterplan, Harrogate Borough Council, May 2016*

## Harrogate Spring Water

Harrogate Spring Water's 2019 application to further extend their bottling facilities, and Reserved Matters application for the 2017 extension permission, rumble on. As part of the 2017 planning permission HSW are required to carry out planting off site to mitigate for the loss of trees from the Rotary Wood site.

They have proposed planting on a nearby piece of land but for several reasons various local bodies, including Pinewood Conservation Group, Duchy Residents' Association and Harrogate Civic Society, are unhappy with



Entrance to Harrogate Spring Water from Harlow Moor Road

the proposal. Discussions are ongoing. At the moment the application is scheduled to be heard at a Planning Committee meeting on 26th January, and further details of the replacement land should appear on the planning file before that date.

## The Old Post Office

The Society were consulted by The Stray Ferret on proposals to re-develop the former Post Office building in the Town Centre to provide 25 flats, a ground floor commercial unit and a fourth floor office.

Our Planning and Development Group looked at the proposals and concluded that, whilst welcome in principle, the proposal would lead to overdevelopment of the site.



## Our new treasurer .....

We are delighted that Chris Dicken, well known to us all for his work on the plaques website, has agreed to take on the role of treasurer. Thank you Chris.



## ..... and web designer

Chris is also busy working on a new website for the Society and this will incorporate a new logo. As soon as the logo design has been drawn up, ready for printing, we will publish details – hopefully in the next newsletter.

### Contact us:

General matters .. .. [info@harrogatecivicsociety.org](mailto:info@harrogatecivicsociety.org)

Membership queries.. .. [membership@harrogatecivicsociety.org](mailto:membership@harrogatecivicsociety.org)

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