



On 26 April, Malcolm Neesam gave a talk at the Cedar Court Hotel on his latest book 'Wells and Swells'. Pictured above are (l-r) Fiona Movley, chair of Harrogate International Festivals, Malcolm Neesam, Trevor and Janet Chapman, Mayor and Mayoress of the Borough of Harrogate and Stuart Holland, chair of the Harrogate Civic Society.

## Lots Happening!

Whilst we frequently report in this newsletter on past events, including further on in this newsletter, the Civic Society is busier that ever with current and future projects.

On the next page, Stuart Holland, chair of the Society describes some of the activities we are involved with.

We value the support of our members and would warmly welcome any member who wishes to participate in any way with the work we are doing.

There are many opportunities to get involved. Do please get in touch directly if you are interested. [info@harrogatecivicsociety.org](mailto:info@harrogatecivicsociety.org)

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*Please note that whilst every effort is made to ensure accuracy, no responsibility can be accepted should any losses be incurred. Opinions expressed are those of the contributors and not necessarily of the Harrogate Civic Society.*  
David Siddans, Editor

# Civic Society Current Projects - a review by Stuart Holland, chair of HCS

## North Yorkshire Council

We have established links with local councillors, our Chief Executive and with the Leader of North Yorkshire County Council in order to maintain a dialogue about a future Town Council. Our meeting on 31 May will be a good opportunity to gain a clearer understanding of the process, after which we will endeavour to ensure that our Heritage Assets are protected.

## Plaques

Plenty of ideas for new plaques are being considered with substantial research into each proposal.

## Royal (or Jubilee) Walk

Working with Harrogate Dramatic Society, we are devising a walk around the town's royal connections. Funding has been secured to produce a trail leaflet.



*York timeline*

## Timeline

The Conservation Officer at HBC has suggested that a timeline in Harrogate, carved into stone paving, would be a fitting end to the life of the Borough Council and has asked for our comments. We support her idea and can see a number of suitable locations including the entrance to Valley Gardens, Station Square or even a trail through the town.

## Harrogate on film

Together with Harrogate Film Society, we are preparing a unique film presentation from the Yorkshire Film Archives to be shown at The Odeon Cinema on 19 September 2022.

## Heritage Open Days

A new team from the Civic Society are developing this year's programme, likely to be our busiest ever (HODS week: 9 – 18 September).

## Information boards

We have secured funding towards one or two information boards to be erected in the town and now need to research, design and manufacture them.

## Smart rubbish bins

Having raised concerns with Harrogate Borough Council about the unsatisfactory position of large new bins at the entrance to Valley Gardens, we are now considering three alternative positions in discussion with the Waste Services Manager and others.



## Harrogate Railway Station 160th Anniversary

We are cooperating with staging an exhibition to be held at the station for three days in late July, culminating on the anniversary date of 1 August.

More on page 4

## Station Gateway scheme



Our Planning and Development group are now having regular meetings with the project leader of this town centre scheme to offer comment and ideas as the design evolves, with a particular emphasis on the landscaping elements.

## Social media

Social media is a great way of getting our message out. Our Facebook page is receiving an increasing number of readers as we expand the content.

**These are some of the exciting opportunities for the Civic Society and result from hard work by your committee and sub-groups, particularly in establishing links with other organisations.**



## Recent Events

### Annual General Meeting (29 March)

Sixty members took part in the Annual General Meeting for the period ended 28 February 2022. The meeting followed a very interesting talk on the history of brass bands by Gavin Holman.

The highlights of the year were described under headings of Events, Plaques, HODS, History, Newsletters and Planning. The full report is available on our website:

[https://www.harrogatecivicsociety.org/\\_files/ugd/ad2cce\\_0f66252ff1b44fb3b8c40f7e8a13d605.pdf](https://www.harrogatecivicsociety.org/_files/ugd/ad2cce_0f66252ff1b44fb3b8c40f7e8a13d605.pdf)

The existing committee was re-elected with the addition of Andrew Brown. The committee, at their first meeting after the AGM, appointed Stuart Holland as chair and Susan Amaku as vice-chair. The committee is grateful to Susan for her work as co-chair with Stuart during the two covid years. Susan is concentrating on her work and remains a valuable member of the committee, particularly with her architectural knowledge.

An important part of the meeting was listening to the views of members on topics such as programme, newsletters and membership subscriptions.

### A history of Harrogate brass bands



Harrogate Borough Band 1905

*Gavin Holman, an expert on British and American brass bands, gave an illustrated talk at the AGM, and we thank him for this contribution.*

There were seventeen various amateur brass and military bands that entertained Harrogate's townsfolk and visitors over the last 180 years. These ranged from the Harrogate Brass Band (1842-1861) through to the current Harrogate Band (1970-). These bands, consisting of local musicians, co-existed with the professional musicians engaged by the town corporation and businesses. Some bands received sponsorship from the townsfolk, others depended wholly on their engagement fees. They performed across the district in many concerts, supporting civic events and parades, and providing music for the visiting tourists and spa clients.

### Book Talk: *Wells and Swells* (26 April)

Over 150 guests filled the ballroom at the Cedar Court Hotel last month to witness the launch of this great achievement by Malcolm Neesam.

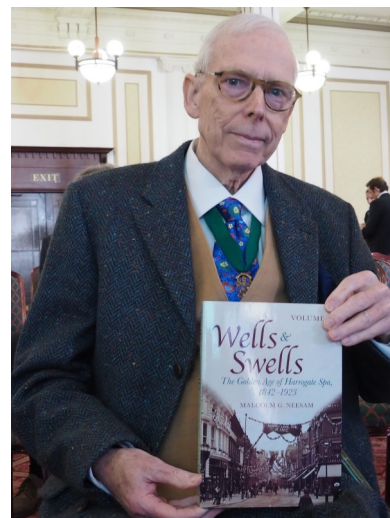
The event has been extensively reported on in the media but in case you missed the reports, you can catch up by:

- Following the Stray Ferret report: <https://thestrayerret.co.uk/major-book-charting-history-of-harrogates-glory-days-launched/>
- Watching a video of the event, prepared by the Harrogate Informer: [https://youtu.be/t0Q\\_RoOa3xo](https://youtu.be/t0Q_RoOa3xo)

- Reading the Harrogate Informer report: <https://www.harrogate-news.co.uk/2022/04/26/video-malcolm-neesam-releases-the-2nd-part-of-wells-and-swells-the-golden-age-of-harrogate-spa-1842-1923/?mo=11&yr=1941>

You can purchase a copy of the book, in two volumes, from Carnegie Publishing.

*Malcolm gave a fascinating talk on his new book covering the 'golden age' of Harrogate 1842 - 1923.*



## Celebrating our Past

*Nigel McClea reports:*

You will find on the History section of the Website a steadily increasing number of well researched articles arranged under three headings - *Aspects of Harrogate's Past*, *Down your Street* and *Harrogate People* (a new series just launched).

### Harrogate People

In the History section of the website we are featuring the first of a new series of articles called 'Harrogate People', focussing on less well-known people. We begin with the Barkers, father and daughter, who lived for many years on Duchy Road. They were both artists and she also wrote and illustrated children's books.

### Aspects of Harrogate Past

The latest article in this section is on Grove House and its years belonging to the Royal Antediluvian Order of Buffaloes.

### Down your Street

Current articles describe Skipton Road, York Road, Commercial Street, Valley Drive, Valley Road and Omega Street. We will be adding to this list at regular intervals.

Go to <https://www.harrogatecivicsociety.org/history-articles> to read the full articles.



## Calling all local historians

We warmly welcome any suggestions and contributions to expand these series over the coming months and years. So, if you feel you can help in any way, however large or small, please don't hesitate. Get in contact with us on [info@harrogatecivicsociety.org](mailto:info@harrogatecivicsociety.org)

## Harrogate Railway Station - 160 years of history

*Terry Williams, organiser of the exhibition, writes:*

On 1 August it will be the 160th anniversary of the present Harrogate railway station. To celebrate this anniversary of both the station and its workers, there will be an exhibition in the station concourse illustrating both the story of the station and also Harrogate's surrounding railway network. The dates are 30 and 31 July and 1 August.

With the town developing as a spa resort, there was a rush to provide Harrogate with links to the outside world by rail, in order to transport both visitors and everyday necessities to the area. Originally they arrived in Starbeck and then at the Brunswick Station which opened in 1848, close to what is now the Prince of Wales Mansions. Only 14 years later, the line that we know today, running across the Stray, opened with a station in central Harrogate in 1862, joining the existing villages of High and Low Harrogate.

*An 1870 painting of Harrogate Station*





## Plaques - Latest

A plaque at 9A Royal Parade is to be unveiled on 8 June at 6pm by the new Borough Mayor.

This will be followed by a reception and chance to look around the building, once the home of Pickersgill Palliser, who was the town's first postmaster and who founded the Harrogate Advertiser.

There are six places available for members to attend this event, on a first come, first served basis. Please email to [events@harrogatecivicsociety.org](mailto:events@harrogatecivicsociety.org)

Royal Parade



## Harrogate Club plaque



On a snow-covered day in March, the 89th plaque to be installed in the town was unveiled outside the Harrogate Club on Victoria Avenue by its longstanding member, Malcolm Neesam.

The Mayor and Mayoress of Harrogate, Trevor and Janet Chapman, also unveiled a panel over the Club's dining room which was named in Malcolm's honour.

The Club President, Kevin Parry (second from right) paid tribute to Malcolm's enormous contribution to the club and the whole town over many years.

## Our Summer Tour: Allerton Castle, Thursday 15 September

*From Angela Fahy, events organiser*

At 2.00 pm we will meet at Allerton Castle for a private tour. Just off the A1 beyond Knaresborough, it is a Grade 1 listed Victorian Gothic house. It is owned by the non-profit Rolph Foundation, and was substantially renovated to the highest standard after a devastating fire in 2005.

Our visit will include a tour of the main rooms, and then the opportunity to look at the gardens, and, of course, tea and cake. Cost is £15 per person.

Please book **by 27 August**, numbers are limited to 45.

**Pay online** (Account Name: Harrogate Civic Society    Account Number: 16746595    Sort Code: 05-04-54  
**or by cheque** (payable to Harrogate Civic Society) and send to HCS, 74 Otley Road, Harrogate, HG2 0DP.  
Please use **reference 1509**.

If you are happy to car share please indicate and we will try to match drivers with non-drivers.



# Planning Report: St Mary's Church, Harlow Terrace

*A report by Henry Pankhust*

St Mary's Church was built in 1916 in a 14<sup>th</sup> century Gothic style. The choice of stone was poor and it began degrading very early in its life. Nevertheless it was granted Grade II\* listed status, due to its design by the architect, Sir Walter Tapper, who also designed Richard Lofthouse's grand tomb. Lofthouse was the founder of the church. St Mary's was put on the 'at risk' register by English Heritage, now Historic England.

The church became too expensive to maintain and by 2001 the congregation had to move out. Several ownerships followed but with little attention to the continuing dilapidation and damage due to water ingress. A scheme to convert the church into a health spa came forward in 2009 and was given planning consent. This application was renewed in 2013 but never implemented. The bells, organ and clock mechanism have been removed for safe keeping.

*Currently there is an application for conversion to seven apartments. We have objected due to unacceptable treatment of this listed building ...*

In 2015, proposals for conversion to offices along with an element of community use were welcomed by the Civic Society. We regarded it as the best possible solution for reuse along with sensitive treatment of the building. The only real disappointment we had was the proposed removal of the founder's tomb from the south chapel to the chancel.

This conversion was never implemented, except for the self-contained vestry building at the east end which is now an architect's office.

Currently there is an application for conversion to seven apartments. We have objected due to unacceptable treatment of this listed building, both internally and



externally. Historic England cannot support the proposal because of the scale of changes, including the many subdivisions and excessive external works with new doors and hard landscaping etc. The Church's positive contribution to the conservation area would be compromised.

In our representation we noted that no reference is made on the plans to the important Lofthouse Memorial, but simply notates the location as a kitchen! The only internal open area shown is a full height 'atrium' under the tower, all other spaces being intensively developed. A full first floor would be inserted plus a second floor over the nave and the chancel. An overall understanding of the design and architecture internally would therefore be seriously compromised.

On the exterior we saw that three new doorways, one new window and six windows elongated downwards are proposed. Parking for 13 cars, paving and private gardens to all seven apartments would be introduced. This would entail breaking through boundary walls and railings and planting hedges to divide the plots. The only intact area, which would preserve part of the grounds and setting of the church, is at the east end which is in the same ownership as the vestry building.



## Early Days at the Society - a personal reflection by Anne Smith

*Anne Smith joined the Harrogate Society soon after its inception in 1971, and was chairman from 1982 to 1985. She carried on chairing the Friends of the Valley Gardens for 20 years. The Harrogate Society changed its name to the Harrogate Civic Society in 1991. We thank her for contributing this article.*



*Anne at the time she was Chairman of the Harrogate Society*

How did I become involved in those far off days? I was already a member of the Harrogate Naturalists Society (wildlife) when the chairman was the very able Margaret Sanderson. She had asked me to talk about trees at their meeting in 1971. I had arranged the very first Tree Preservation Order (TPO) in Harrogate- TPO No 1 Pannal 1969 - on a number of trees in Pannal where I live. I also campaigned for Tree Preservation Orders on a number of trees in Harrogate.

After the talk held in the hall of the Royal Baths Mrs Enid Davey who was secretary of the newly formed The Harrogate Society approached me and asked me to come to a meeting at the home of Mr Michael Laycock which I did and so met the committee and joined them. We were all of a similar mind to save Harrogate from excessive building and road schemes and also the preservation of The Stray. Those days were fun. Apart from Mrs Enid Davey and her husband Walter Davey, the well-known society photographer who had a studio in James Street, we, the newly formed committee, were all relatively young.

*The Society was a force to be reckoned with and carried on under various chairmen until the day in 1982 when I was asked to be chairman.*

Very often at the end of the committee meetings the young ones would repair to the nearest pub. On one memorable occasion, at the end of our Annual Meeting at the Royal Baths Meeting Room, Miss Shaddick stood up and wanted the audience to march on the home of the Town Clerk (notice Town Clerk and not Chief Executive) whose views on modern architecture were anathema to the Society. She had a quite considerable following from the audience who were keen to march

behind her. She was stopped by the chairman Mr Walter Hartley.

The Society was a force to be reckoned with and carried on under various chairmen until the day in 1982 when I was asked to be chairman. I had been minutes secretary for a number of years but now the great honour was bestowed upon me.

Then in 1983 I found out (this is another story of how I found out) that Harrogate Borough Council were planning to demolish the Sun Pavilion and Colonnade and horror of horrors replace them with a car park. I called a meeting in the Crown Hotel where we now had our Annual Meetings and nearly 400 people turned up. I was asked by the audience to form a group to stop this happening. From the platform I formed The Friends of the Valley Gardens and took the role of chairman. Geoffrey Smith who was in the audience, James Herriot and David Bellamy who was also in the audience, became president and patrons. Stephen Barnes became our invaluable treasurer.

A committee was formed there and then. It was so exciting but a great deal and years of hard work lay ahead. I could not do two jobs as I have four children and the youngest was only three.

Reluctantly I left The Harrogate Society in capable hands\* and the Friends of the Valley Gardens went on to save the Sun Pavilion and Colonnades from their dreadful fate and we were all present when Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth 11 opened the newly furnished Sun Pavilion in 1998.

*\* John Nellist became chairman in 1985*

# Forthcoming Events in 2022

Unless otherwise stated, events will be held at ST. PAUL'S URC HALL, Belford Road, just off Victoria Avenue, starting at 7:30pm.

Tuesday 31 May	<b>The New Unitary Authority</b> - Graham Swift and Wallace Sampson, Deputy Leader and Chief Executive respectively of Harrogate Borough Council, will be giving us an overview of the impending changes in local government in North Yorkshire.  <b>FULLY BOOKED.</b> Please email if you wish to be placed on the reserve list.
Sunday 10 July	<b>Behind the Scenes at the Great Yorkshire Show</b> - a guided tour of the Great Yorkshire Show during its setup period.  <b>FULLY BOOKED.</b> Please email if you wish to be placed on the reserve list.
Sat - Mon 30 July - 1 Aug	<b>Harrogate Railway Station - 160 Years of History</b> - a free exhibition in the station concourse.
9 – 18 Sept	<b>Heritage Open Days</b>
Thursday 15 September	<b>Visit to Allerton Castle</b> - see page 5 for details
Monday 19 September 2pm and 7pm	<b>Harrogate on Film</b> - to be screened at the Odeon cinema Further details including how to book for either performance will be issued in July.
Tuesday 25 October	<b>Schooldays in Edwardian Harrogate</b> - a talk by Dr Paul Jennings
Tuesday 29 November	<b>The Harrogate Convention Centre: its purpose and future</b> - a talk by the Centre Director, Paula Lorimer (to be held at the Centre)
Sunday 11 December	<b>Christmas Social for 2022</b> (details to follow)

All details are on our website and continuously updated. Full information and reminders will be issued via the newsletter, by email and via facebook.

Talks will be advertised to our link groups and the general public. They will be free for members unless otherwise stated. There will be a £5.00 head charge for non-members. Early booking is recommended.

Where possible, please book by email to [events@harrogatecivicsociety.org](mailto:events@harrogatecivicsociety.org)

<b>Contact us:</b>	General matters	..	..	<a href="mailto:info@harrogatecivicsociety.org">info@harrogatecivicsociety.org</a>
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