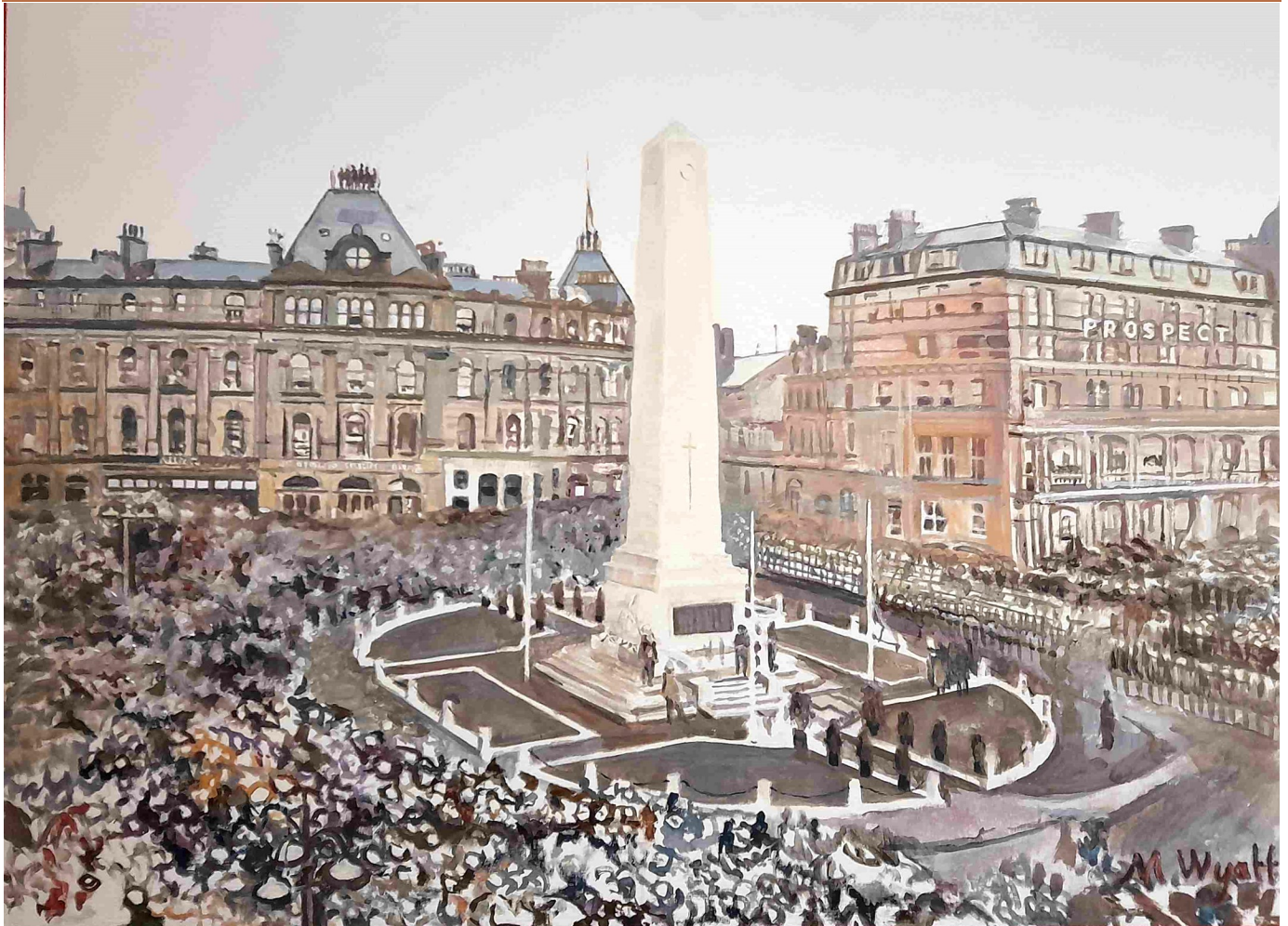




Celebrate our past - **Enhance** our present - **Shape** our future

November 2023



'1 September 1923' by Matthew Wyatt, artist in residence to the War Memorial Centenary exhibition which ended on Armistice Day, 11 November 2023.

Past

Present

Future

Among the articles in this newsletter we include items on 'celebrating the past', notably the War Memorial Centenary (**pages 2 - 3**), our work to 'enhance the present' through our continual monitoring of planning applications (**page 7**) and our involvement in 'shaping the future' of the town through an initiative to establish a Neighbourhood Plan for Harrogate (**page 4**).

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Come to our
Christmas Social
on Saturday 9
December

at St Wilfrid's
Church Hall
Page 3



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

The War Memorial Centenary Project – A Valediction

This is an edited version of the closing address by Nigel McClea, Chair of the War Memorial Centenary Project Group, given at the closing ceremony on 12 November.

Remembrance Sunday is always a very special day. But this year not only did we join the nation in paying due honour but many of those involved in the war memorial centenary project assembled - one last time - at the United Reformed Church for our closing ceremony. Alison Micklem, the URC minister, paid a moving tribute to the fallen before Elizabeth Smith from the Commonwealth War Graves Commission explained the continuing and essential work they do. Then it was my privilege to bring the whole project to a close.

It was on 1 September, exactly 100 years since the town's war memorial was unveiled, that Sheila Pantin (now 100 herself) opened our exhibition (very much the genius of one man, Civic Society member Terry-Mike Williams). In the last 10 weeks, well over 1000 people have visited and many, many more have attended the supporting talks, films, concerts and theatre held in the URC and elsewhere. I believe it has been the largest and most ambitious community project this town has ever undertaken involving a huge cast; a mind-blowing assembly of talent, expertise, energy and experience.



Nigel McClea (left) and Terry-Mike Williams who is holding his personal achievement award

The project would simply not have been possible without the backing of the church, our sponsors, our speakers, those involved in the ancillary events, the

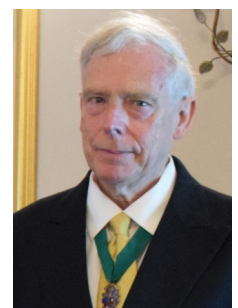
project team, our army of stewards and all the societies and organisations that have given us such encouragement – the Photographic Society, the Film Society, the Dramatic Society, the Council, Harrogate Library, Harrogate BID, Destination Harrogate, Eden Camp, the York Army Museum, the military cadets and charities, the national and local media. The list goes on.

But I must give especial thanks to you, the Civic Society - to Stuart Holland for first suggesting the URC as a possible venue, to your Committee (and, in particular, Chris Dicken) for nurturing our funds and (although he will not like seeing his name in print) to your Editor, David Siddans. But, particularly, my thanks go to you for all your support and for being part of an audience that has given so generously.

Although the raising of money was never a principal aim (except to cover our costs), the generosity of everyone involved has been truly humbling. Early in the exhibition I set a private, ambitious and entirely arbitrary target of raising £5000 for the work of the church and the military charities. At the time of writing we have yet to complete our calculations but I am very hopeful we shall reach that target. At the expense of pushing my luck, if you would care to respond to this article with a further contribution to help secure the legacy of this project for future generations, please email me on mccleas@yahoo.com and I shall be delighted to give you details of the appropriate Civic Society account.

But it is important I do not finish without paying tribute to one man. The genesis of this project was a conversation at the start of last year. It was a conversation with Malcolm Neesam. Malcolm knew he was dying but still he was thinking of the future, determined we should not forget this centenary; determined it should be given a fitting tribute.

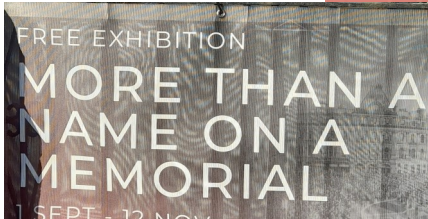
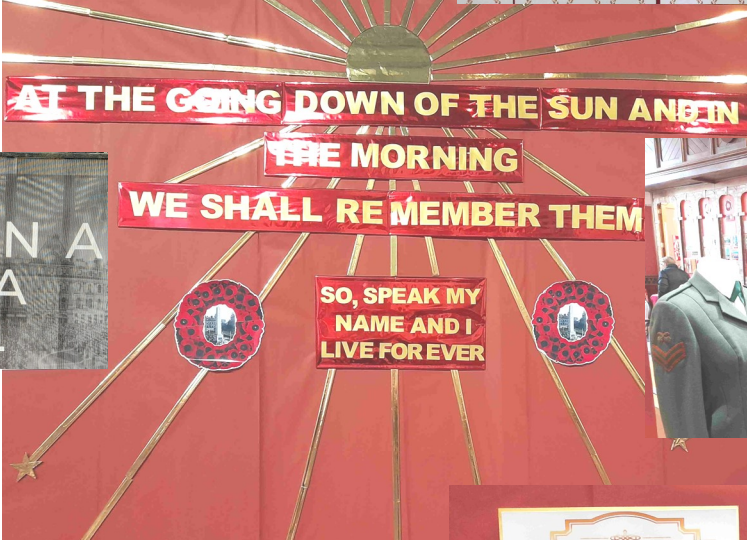
Malcolm, I hope we have done you justice and we dedicate everything we have done to your memory.



Malcolm Neesam (1946 - 2022)



Pictures from the exhibition



Our Christmas Social .. Saturday 9 December

All members and their guests are warmly welcome to our December seasonal social gathering which will take place, as in previous years, at **St Wilfrid's Church Hall, Duchy Road from 2.30 to 4.30 pm**. Expect wine, soft drinks, tea, coffee and, of course, mince pies and Christmas cake. There will also be our usual bookstall and this year we will be welcoming guests from Harrogate Amateur Dramatic Society who will be providing themed entertainment around 3.30 pm.

Do let us know if you plan to attend so that we can make sure we have plenty of food and drink for all.



December 2022

Shape our future ... A Neighbourhood Plan for Harrogate

A report by Paul Hatherley on discussions held on 7 November to explore the development of a Neighbourhood Plan for Harrogate following the demise of Harrogate Borough Council.

An informal discussion between Harrogate Civic Society and Zero Carbon Harrogate identified the need for a mechanism to steer the town towards a 'vision'. There have been differing views between the two organisations on specific projects within the town but we agreed on one thing: the town needs a strong and deliverable vision. We also recognised that other individuals, organisations and business groups are developing and promoting their own visions. How do all these potentially different visions get realised? How do you get the wider community support?



'A citadel famous for its springs'

The Royal Pump Room Museum

Our strapline is 'Celebrate our past - Enhance our present - Shape our future' The past, present and future of Harrogate is very much a product of the town and country planning system. This is because the planning system dictates what type of development is allowed in the town. The Society has a successful record of commenting on planning applications which may change the town's heritage and its buildings, but this is very much an 'end-of-pipe solution'. **There are greater benefits if we can influence the planning policy on which those planning application decisions are made.** This is called 'forward planning' and planning policy is contained in the Local Plan.

The challenge is to get an acceptable vision for the town, promoted through the local planning framework. The current reality is Harrogate Borough Council has

been abolished and replaced by a new, countywide local authority - North Yorkshire Council. The new authority has already started the process of replacing our adopted Harrogate Borough Council Local Plan with a new, countywide local plan. **But will this new plan include a vision supported by the Harrogate town community and will its planning policy shape the town the way we want it to be shaped?** We could rely on a town council for Harrogate but this may not be formed for at least two more years.

Organisations represented at the meeting on 7 November

- * Harlow and Pannal Ash Res Assn
- * Independent Harrogate
- * Harrogate Civic Society
- * Knox Community Association
- * Duchy Residents Association
- * Local Councillor
- * Stray Defence Association
- * Local Planning Consultancy
- * Business Representative
- * Zero Carbon Harrogate

So, how do we get local planning policy in place which is truly relevant to our future town development? This can be achieved by creating something called a Neighbourhood Plan. But how do we do this?

Harrogate Civic Society and Zero Carbon Harrogate co-hosted a meeting at St Paul's Church Hall on 7 November to answer that question and explore the possibility of starting a process to create a Neighbourhood Plan for the town of Harrogate. We invited a small group of individuals and organisations (see box above) to this meeting with the intention of gauging their opinion on the topic. They listened to a presentation on the neighbourhood plan process and there followed a lively discussion on what to do next.

I am pleased to report everyone at the meeting supported exploring the issue further and inviting a wider group of individuals and organisations – particularly businesses - to a follow up meeting.

A copy of the presentation given at the meeting is available [here](#) on the Harrogate Civic Society website.

We will keep you informed of progress and how you can provide support.

*This was the subject of a talk to the Civic Society given on 19 September by **Paul Cook**, Curator of RHS Harlow Carr.*

*Report by **Angela Fahy***

Members heard about the many improvements taking place at the Harlow Carr Gardens, and future plans. This 58 acres of garden and woodland (the Northern Horticultural Society grounds until they merged with the RHS in 2001) attract around 460,000 visitors from all over the country and 30,000 children on school visits every year.

The gardens and surrounding area have seen a great deal of change in recent years. Many members will remember that, not long ago, the gardens were surrounded by fields, not houses. Now increased water runoff from new roads and parking areas of course heads down the slope to the gardens. While the developers take some steps to mitigate this, the gardens have themselves been adapted to manage. One of the most dramatic recent changes has been the creation of more streams and pools leading down to the main streamside gardens.

The philosophy of working with nature and the surroundings is also seen in the management of

invasive species (introduced before their dangers were appreciated) like skunk cabbage (which has spread as far as the Nidd Valley) and Gunnera- both exotic giants that grow by the stream. Until they can be eradicated they remain there as a warning NOT to plant them in our gardens.

The reunification of the Harrogate Arms with the gardens, especially the Bath House area, has been long planned and now almost complete, restoring the views to how they would have looked to visitors at the height of the Spa years. Bettys tea house will be moved to a location elsewhere in the garden.

There are ambitious plans to plant hundreds more trees in the woodland area, adding more flowering trees, and filling in where ash dieback has created gaps. The productive garden area will be expanded and, if you ever wondered what happens to all those vegetables and fruits, the produce will be used in the new café in the Harrogate Arms – see image below.

Given the fact that most of those attending the talk transpired to already be RHS members there was complete agreement that membership (special offer of £49.70 for single membership at the moment) was money very well spent.



An artist's impression of the modifications to the former Harrogate Arms and surroundings.

The works involve alterations and extensions to form a café and activities centre together with extensive landscaping.

Illustration courtesy of RHS Harlow Carr

Harrogate Library - The Local Studies Collection

This visit to the Harrogate Library took place on Tuesday 24 October.

*A report by **Angela Fahy***

A keen audience of members and guests met at Harrogate Library to hear three speakers. Firstly, **Alison Wheat** (Outreach Librarian) who outlined the many resources available in the library's Local Studies collection, and others such as *Ancestry*, *Find my Past* and digitised archival Newspapers accessible online in the library (but only available from home if a subscription is paid).

Paul Jennings spoke about use of the Census (also available online in the Library) and the challenges of interpreting entries. The early censuses had the individual house entries transposed by officials onto the records we now see with consequent variations in family and place names creeping in.

Kevin Hales spoke about the use of street directories, newspapers and Google in his research into previous occupiers of his house



Reverend Edward Davidson

Above:

Edward Davidson (1860 - 1933) the first occupant of the house researched by Kevin Hales

Right: The entrance to the Local studies room in the library.

HOUSE	NAME and Surname of each Person	RELATION to Head of Family	CON-DITION as to Marriage	AGE last Birthday of legal Years	Rank, Profession, or OCCUPATION
1	Thomas Walter	Head	m	45	Agri-cult. Labourer
	Mary	Wife	m	54	
	Mary Ann	Daugh	unm	16	Domestic Servt.
1	Joseph Goding	Head	m	46	Shoemaker
	Galaxy	Wife	m	40	Shoemaker
	Mark A	Daugh	1	16	Scholar
	Elizabeth A	Daugh	1	13	
1	John Towner	Head	m	35	Amusement
	John	Daugh	1	13	Shoemaker
	Ann	Daugh	1	11	Scholar
	Thos	Daugh	1	8	
1	Edward Farmer	Head	m	46	Supplier
	Elizabeth	Wife	unm	21	Housekeeper
	Edward	Daugh	1	13	Supplier
1	Joseph Johnson	Head	m	44	Supplier
	Elizabet	Wife	m	58	
	Elizabet	Daugh	unm	25	School-mistress

An extract from an 1881 Census

which included a Methodist minister about whom it was claimed: 'in the course of his ministry he had never spent fourteen consecutive days at home, and during the last ten years he had slept in 530 different beds'.

We then moved to the Local Studies room where library staff had set out original newspapers from 1912, street directories and maps so that we could have a hands-on experience of these resources.

A number of members remarked that they were unaware that the library provides such a wealth of resources for research. On the strength of this we plan another visit in the Spring for coffee and a closer look at some of this material, guided by those of our members who know their way around the Local Studies room (see page 8).



Local Planning Review

Here Henry Pankhurst reviews four of the many planning applications that the Civic Society has responded to recently.

The owner of a dwelling on **Stray Road** contacted us regarding extensions. An application lodged last summer, which we felt was not right for the property or the Conservation Area, was withdrawn. The applicant kindly contacted us to discuss a new application which we didn't think quite hit the mark, but after discussion, was further refined with amendments to design, materials and fenestration that respected the house and the Conservation Area. It was then approved.

Extensions were proposed for a **Kent Road** house with the front door on the side. The characterful main entrance porch with pitched roof and windows each side matched the front of the property and made a positive contribution to the design and therefore the Conservation Area.

Unfortunately the proposed side extension would see this lost in favour of a very plain glazed front door that did not provide the house with a strongly designed main entrance. A proposed pergola extended forwards from the side extension beyond the front bay windows which was not an attractive feature. It was pleasing to see amendments made before determination. The front entrance was redrawn to match the existing design of the dwelling and the pergola reduced in size.



A fine Art Deco dwelling exists just outside the Conservation Area **off Otley Road**. It looks entirely original from the outside, even down to the delightful

entrance gates. An application was made for very significant extensions in two totally different styles. The front elevation would have been extended in Art Deco style except for the front door and entrance. Even the roof was to be continued seamlessly. The other extension element was at the rear (part single storey and part two storey) but highly visible from neighbouring properties and to an extent from the street. The single storey occupied the area of the demolished garage. The main two storey element was very dramatic – a good contemporary design in itself. Unfortunately the large flat roof was higher than the eaves of the Art Deco building and appeared to crash into its pitched roof. The edge of the flat roof would appear very high from the ground.

We responded that this junction between the roofs was unacceptable. The loss of the front entrance with its beautiful Art Deco door was unsatisfactory. Also lost would be the perfect Art Deco access gates, replaced by electric gates (design not shown). The application was withdrawn – we await the next move!



On **Oatlands Drive** at the corner of St. Hilda's Road stands a row of three 19th century terraced cottages, built before almost all other properties on the road. The one on the right of the row has been unoccupied for many years. I believe that no surviving relatives of the last occupant could be found and the Council took over responsibility for the cottage. We saw a good application to refurbish it including a replacement rear extension and new well placed side extension. White paint would be stripped from the exterior – matching the other two unpainted cottages, so we welcome this application.

Forthcoming Events

Unless otherwise stated, please book by email to events@harrogatecivicsociety.org

Saturday 9 December 2.30pm	Civic Society Christmas Social At St Wilfrid's Church Hall - see page 3 for details.
Wednesday 17 January 10am to 12 noon	Informal coffee morning To be held, as previously, in the Cosy Club, Cambridge Street All welcome and no need to book
Tuesday 23 January 7.30 pm	Park Life Sue Wood, North Yorkshire Council Horticultural Development Officer and RHS Britain in Bloom judge, will talk about the gardens in her care - Valley Gardens, Conyngham Hall, Knaresborough House and Castle, and Ripon Spa Gardens. Venue: St Paul's Church Hall, Belford Road - tea and coffee available
Tuesday 20 February 7.30 pm	The Census - a Guide for Users This illustrated talk by Dr Paul Jennings will take us through how the census was taken between 1801 and 1921 and what that means for users. We will then look at how to research a variety of topics, including family history, with examples drawn from Paul's own research. Venue: St Paul's Church Hall, Belford Road - tea and coffee available
March Date to be advised	We will follow the talk in February by a day time coffee meeting at the Library in March where members can bring along the results of their own census explorations, or just hear what other members have discovered.
Tuesday 19 March 10.00 am	A tour of Allerton Waste Recovery Park See what happens to 320,000 tonnes of North Yorkshire waste that does not involve landfill. Waste is anaerobically digested or burnt (providing enough electricity for 40,000 homes). This will be a 2 hour visit. Suitable clothing essential: thick soled shoes with no open toes and legs covered preferably by trousers, leggings or similar. Car-pooling will be arranged nearer the time.

Paying for events - (Where applicable) By bank transfer: Name: Harrogate Civic Society. Sort Code: 05-04-54. Account: 167 465 95
Reference: please use your name, followed by the date DDMM (day/month) of the event.
By cheque: post to Mr C R Dicken, HCS Treasurer, 74 Otley Road, Harrogate, HG2 0DP (include event)

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

Occasionally, talks will be advertised to our link groups and the general public. **Events are free for members** unless otherwise stated. Early booking is recommended.

Contact us: Chairman: Stuart Holland .. stuart@harrogatecivicsociety.org Tel: 01423 500089
General matters info@harrogatecivicsociety.org
Membership queries.. .. membership@harrogatecivicsociety.org
Event bookings events@harrogatecivicsociety.org

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