Scarborough business in the Civic spotlight

The Lightbox on St Nicholas St, which is run by Jack Inston, is one of the first Scarborough businesses to provide support for the fund to restore Scarborough’s statue of Queen Victoria. Jack Inston is pictured here handing over his cheque to the Civic Society.

The Lightbox is just the kind of shop that Scarborough needs if we wish to develop an attractive town centre and it wonderful that they have supported our project.

We still need generous donations to achieve our aims. Donations to the appeal can be made online via the Civic Society homepage on our website www.scarboroughcivicsociety.org.uk or by sending a cheque made payable to ‘Scarborough & District Civic Society’ to PO Box 151, Scarborough, YO12 4YJ.

The Grade II listed structure is one of only seven original bronze statues of Queen Victoria by English sculptor, Charles Bell Birch. All seven were based on an original Carrara marble statue of Queen Victoria, which Birch was commissioned to make for the Maharana of Oodeypore (Udaipur) in India in 1887 to commemorate the monarch’s Golden Jubilee.

As well as Scarborough, bronze versions are located at Blackfriars Bridge in London, Derby Royal Infirmary, Newcastle Under Lyme, Aberdeen, Guernsey and Adelaide in Australia.

This is a worthwhile project making improvements to such an important and historic work of art, which Scarborough is so lucky to have.

At the site of the statue we will install some kind of permanent thank you to major benefactors who make donations of one thousand pounds or more. This could be a special way to commemorate a friend or loved one through this long-standing tribute, a reminder they are not forgotten.

We hope to add the restoration of Queen Victoria’s statue to a long list of successful projects which improve the overall “street scene” around our beautiful town but we will only succeed if everyone gets behind the fund raising campaign.
Chairman’s Report

by Adrian Perry

Again the front page of this issue is devoted to the ambitious plan to restore the statue outside the town hall. We are raising money by activities such as the Afternoon Tea and the Christmas Coffee morning but we also need major sponsors if we are to reach the target of £15,000. I would urge you to consider the offer to have someone named on the plaque as a lasting memorial.

Members who attended the Society’s November meeting received an invitation to a Civic Society Lunch arranged by Bonnie Purchon at the Blacksmith’s Arms on 5th January 2016. Unfortunately the Blacksmith’s Arms cancelled our booking after discovering they had a funeral arranged for the same day. Bonnie was delighted when the Park Manor Hotel agreed to help the Society by providing a replacement venue. The date, menu and cost will be the same, only the location has changed. I must say that I think this is exceptionally good of the Park Manor Hotel and I think that they deserve a big thank you for being so helpful and flexible. I am certain that it will be another wonderful event and to the people who already booked the only change that they need to remember is to go to the Park Manor which will be a shorter journey.

In October we received a cheque for £645.06 which is our gift aid claim so congratulations to our Treasurer on this achievement and it highlights how valuable it is for you to complete a gift aid form if you are a tax payer.

I have attended three Coastal Community Team meetings. This is a central government funded initiative where a wide range of activities and interventions to address some of the issues concerning the town centre and surrounding areas are discussed. The current funding is to get the programme started. So far it has a similar feel to the Scarborough Renaissance project which was so successful in achieving changes in the town so let’s hope that we can push this forward and get a similar result.

The Society has been asked to assist with the updating of Scarborough’s Conservation Area Appraisal. We will be looking for volunteers to work on this interesting project and Peter Cooper will write an article for the next Newsletter providing details.

You will see in the enclosures with this Newsletter that January 1st is the time for membership renewal. As a registered charity, we depend on the subscriptions paid by our members to meet our expenses. All our Committee members are volunteers and give their time freely. What really helps us is to know that we have both your moral and financial support. We also welcome corporate members and sponsors. Civic Society projects cannot be conceived or implemented without our membership so thank you all for your continued support.

Planning Report

by Richard Ward

I am pleased to report some success with our previous concerns.

Permission for new signs at the Post Office in Filey Road and the dental practice in North Marine Road was limited to reduce the impact in their respective locations. The Council agreed with us that painting the ground floor of the listed Pickwick Inn on the corner of Huntriss Row in green was inappropriate and the walls will remain white/cream. A decision is still awaited as to the new signage which we considered too brash for a listed building. The car park on the former St Mary’s Hospital site has been granted permission for a limited term – so that it remains available for development if required.

Unfortunately, we lost the long-running battle over the multiplex cinema site. The Council is determined to press ahead with the Sands development at all costs and, having eliminated the principal competition by resolving not to allow North Street car park to be altered, has granted planning permission to Benchmark. Benchmark has also not given up on its desire to add a further storey to Kepwick House and has appealed the Council’s previous refusal of planning permission.

We have made a submission to the Inspector and his decision is awaited. In the meantime the Water Park continues to grow and becomes more of an eyesore to the nearby residents day by day. At 23 Deepdale Avenue the Council has granted planning permission (15/02110/HS) for an extension and new garage, despite our pointing out that the development did not accord with the provisions of the Conservation Area in which it is situate. I am pleased to say the planners did, however, consider in some depth the points we made and we were successful in getting the extension roof altered to be more in keeping with the house itself.

Bramcote Pavilion in a Conservation Area at the junction of Belvedere Road and Holbeck Hill (13/02594/FL) is to be demolished and replaced by two dwellings. The Society was successful in securing the recording of the history before the building is demolished.

We have raised a number of objections to the proposal for a block of 28 apartments to be built on the former bowling green adjacent to Seraphis Court on Holbeck Hill (15/01517/RG4). And finally, the apparently unstoppable march of uPVC continues. As the appearance becomes more acceptable and the economic benefits unarguable, more and more planning applicants are seeking to utilise this material. The battle over windows seems to be lost (and some may say this is a good thing) but we continue to oppose uPVC cladding which is a different kettle of fish altogether.
This familiar question arose again at the November meeting of Scarborough Borough Council Planning Committee. It was considering an application to replace all of the wooden-framed single-glazed windows on one façade of a listed building in a Conservation area with double-glazed uPVC units. This is usually a "no-no", but there were exceptional circumstances in that case, and planning permission was granted (see Application 15/01745/LB for the details). Is this the "thin end of the wedge" and is the retention of wooden frames something about which we should be concerned? Have a look at this extract from an article by David Lewis of Selby Civic Society which was published in the Newsletter of the Yorkshire and Humber Association of Civic Societies (YHACS) and see what you think.

In the early years of their development, uPVC windows were indeed clumsy and awkwardly proportioned. However, in recent years manufacturers have upped their game and I would challenge the glib claim in an earlier article in a YHACS newsletter that "uPVC windows change completely the character of a building", and ask readers to tell which of the two frontages - from houses in a conservation area - is wood and which uPVC.

But there is a deeper point than subjective visuals. Those who were erecting buildings that are now prized for 'conservation values' had no choice but to use wood. However, if the Victorian or Edwardian joiner had to choose between a material that was prone to wet and dry rot, warped when damp and had to have three separate coats of paint applied before being ready for use, which painting process had to be repeated on a regular basis to maintain peak performance, and one that had none of these drawbacks, the choice would be clear (no pun intended!). I believe that Conservation Areas should celebrate quality craftsmanship of the appropriate era. If we see the Ribblehead Viaduct as a masterpiece of engineering - although some at the time may have seen it as a monstrous intrusion into a wilderness landscape - and red 'phone boxes as quintessential English street furniture, despite that at the time of installation eyebrows would no doubt have been raised at these new-fangled garish scarlet intruders, then we should equally welcome uPVC as an appropriate modern material, amenable to a good standard of craftsmanship. Of course, such new windows must be in proportion, and in some 'high end' properties the heritage value of timber is sacrosanct.

When we checked with David about using this article he added the following comment: The polemic is not advocating "uPVC in York Minster" - but rather a sensible approach to appropriate use of appropriate materials in humble buildings. Of course, as a polemic, there are claims that may ruffle feathers: but if in so doing a healthy debate ensues, then all to the good.

Support for listed building at the railway station.

The Civic Society was delighted to support the work done by Scarborough Studios which has resulted in another listed building in Scarborough being saved from dereliction. Restoration and re-use of old buildings can make an important contribution to the regeneration of Scarborough. Pictured: Adrian Perry handing over a cheque from our Society for the repair of the station parcel office doors to three of the Directors of Scarborough Studios Ltd, Colin Challen, Chris Hall and Peter Cooper.
Among his domestic work are some impressive heraldic windows at Harlaxton Manor near Grantham in Lincolnshire, celebrating the lineage of the owner, the repetitively-named Gregory Gregory. Heraldic windows are still being made – often for institutions rather than for domestic settings. At Bishopthorpe Palace successive Archbishops of York have had their coat of arms added to the windows of the Great Hall; among the latest is that of Dr David Hope, which combines the arms of the See of York with his personal shield, showing the spire of a church – perhaps a reference to his father’s trade as a builder.

But domestic stained glass is not all heraldic. It can be amusing, too. In the windows of Shibden Hall in Halifax there are small, diamond-shaped pieces of glass painted, probably in the 17th-century, with playful birds; one with a spade, another with a wheelbarrow, a third with a fish. These small panels are called ‘quarries’ – from the French carré, a square (the same derivation as for the quarry tiles on kitchen floors). William Morris liked them, for both his church glass and his domestic glass. At his own home, Red House at Bexleyheath in Kent, he painted them with his motto, ‘Si Je Puis’ – ‘If I can’.

Before the 19th-century revival of true stained glass techniques, large houses sometimes had copies of paintings rendered on glass panels; there are good examples in the library at Stourhead in Wiltshire, based on ‘The School of Athens’ by Raphael at the Vatican, and at nearby Bowood, over the door to the Orangery, based on another Raphael, “The Miraculous Draft of Fishes’.

Through the 19th century, stained glass was seen in all types of buildings. Town halls displayed civic pride in this way – there is a stained glass ceiling in Halifax Town Hall, for example, that has the town’s coat of arms as well as Yorkshire white roses and national symbols.
The Town Hall in Lerwick in the Shetland Islands has glass showing figures from its history, including Norwegian kings and James Douglas, 14th Earl of Morton, Grand Master Mason of Scotland in 1739.

Later in the 19th century, Maryhill Burgh Halls in Glasgow were given an array of 20 stained glass panels depicting Scottish labourers, including chemical workers, calico printers, bricklayers and, appropriately, glassmakers. The same idea was used at the Shepherd Neame brewery at Faversham in Kent, which shows the brewing process and its buildings.

In Scarborough many of our churches have very fine stained glass. St Martin’s Church is best known for its Pre-Raphaelite work and has 26 windows by the firm of William Morris. (pictured) St Mary’s Church has fine glass most of which dates from the Restoration of the church in 1848-50. St James Church has some very fine memorial windows and St Andrew’s Church has good stained glass by Walles of Newcastle installed when the church was built in the 1860s.

Brookholme one of the finest houses on the south cliff built in 1894 by Frank Tugwell has all the finest features of a Tugwell house including leaded lights and decorative glass pictured left.

Red Court on the Esplanade has a very fine glass screen which shelters its gardens from the breezes from the sea. These loggias make an interesting and attractive addition to what are outstanding buildings.

The centre-piece of the new Scarborough Maritime Heritage Centre is a beautiful 120 year old stained glass window. The stained glass window contains the town seal of Scarborough and has the Latin wording “The common seal of the people of Scarborough” This would have been hand painted and fired.

SMHC chairman, Mark Vesey, was surprised and delighted to receive an email from a person in the Midlands who was offering the glass for sale. He arranged to collect the window at a half-way meeting point and then spent 6 weeks cleaning a century of tobacco resin off the lead and glass. A foundation stone for the ‘Scarborough Constitutional Club’ was laid in January 1888. The law of the day prevented the naming of any premises a 'Conservative Club'. The town seal dates from the 13th century and depicts the castle and a ship. In 1154 King Henry II declared Scarborough a 'Royal Borough'. In 1253, King Henry III granted a charter to the town to hold an international fair, known as 'Scarborough Fair'. It was a 45-day long fair held in August when the herring shoals swam past this coast and fishing was at its best.

In York’s Guildhall a window (below) showing the history of the city was put in place in 1960 after war damage. By Harry Harvey, it includes images of railway engines and ships, as well as the mayor and corporation. And yet more up to date, even power stations can have stained glass; at a geothermal power station just outside Reykjavik in Iceland is a window depicting the heat being tapped from the depths of the earth.

So your sunburst windows – and even the flowers on your double-glazing – are part of a long and proud tradition of domestic glass. Look after them carefully!
At the launch of the Civic Voice manifesto last year, Civic Voice president Griff Rhys Jones claimed that there is a ‘crisis in civic engagement’. He thought this was a symptom of the frustration people feel as power is taken away from communities and they are subject to tokenistic consultation. ‘We need to give all citizens opportunities to actively shape the future of their place and to give communities the powers they need to enable their town and city centres to prosper’.

In the news we hear of participation levels in sport declining, despite the Olympic legacy. A local example is a bowling club, founded 100 years ago, that had 200 members in the sixties and is now down to 23 and faced closure this autumn but has struggled on to survive.

Are we immune to all this, or do we have trouble recruiting committee members? Are community organisations struggling and, if so, why? Can we find out and, more importantly, can we do anything about it? One theory that has been put forward is a change to ‘polycentric living’. In the past, people could carry out their activities in one locality; now we may live in one place, work in another, shop and pursue leisure activities somewhere else. We have the resources to move around and the chance to do new things and our loyalty to our home town is no longer as strong. Another argument is that to have a sense of civic pride you need to feel your town or city is unique, that it has something special to offer. We have cloned high streets where ‘you could be anywhere’, giving a lack of a feel of a distinctive place.

In Yorkshire we are luckier than some in that our region has a strong traditional identity and a coherent area. Civic pride built our town halls and provided many of the fine public buildings that still dominate our towns and cities. Perhaps these buildings and their maintenance are one of the keys. The Association of Building Preservation Trusts says, ‘The heritage of an area is very important to local communities. Historic buildings, whether alone or as part of a group, establish the particular character of the town or urban area in which they stand.

They are attractive in scale, materials and design. High quality historic buildings can be a powerful stimulus for generating confidence in a local area and promoting civic pride’.

I believe this to be true with some passion (if you are involved in restoring an historic building you definitely need passion to survive) and I am happy to be involved in two groups helping to restore two historic buildings in Scarborough. From whence cometh our help? From the centre we are offered George Osborne’s Northern Powerhouse and the National Infrastructure Commission headed by former Labour transport secretary, Lord Adonis. Or is the answer...nearer to home? I was talking to associates at a regional event recently and they all said how much they had enjoyed recent visits to Scarborough. They pointed out all the good things they had seen; as a Scarborian I didn’t recognise the place!

Scarborough’s Urban Renaissance, involving collaborative planning for all with participation via charrettes, was a success and helped the town avoid the worst of the effects of the recession that has blighted so many seaside areas. In the end most of the good work was done by Scarborough pulling itself up by its own bootstraps. They are attractive in scale, materials and design. High quality historic buildings can be a powerful stimulus for generating confidence in a local area and promoting civic pride’.

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Perhaps here is the answer to a crisis in civic engagement; it starts with us.

Peter Cooper
‘Reminiscences’ a talk by John Fawcett

In September John entertained us with stories of his 25 years running the Mayor’s office with treasured memories of his contacts with famous entertainers like Bob Monkhouse and some chaotic Mayors like Councillor Jaconelli. John had also had a strong connection with the Conservative party but that interest had been strained “I resigned from the Conservative party in 2009 as I was disgusted by the MPs’ expenses scandal. I was so appalled and sickened by those revelations that I decided I wanted nothing further to do with political matters and I did not even vote in the 2010 general election”

‘Life in the Life Guards’

In October Keith Goodchild from Malton gave a fascinating talk about his 21 years in the Household Cavalry. His memories of Royal Weddings captured everyone’s interest and looking after the uniforms for the musicians and horses of the Household Cavalry Mounted Division seemed a huge responsibility. A more serious side of his career was when he served in Bosnia and Northern Ireland, being a “real” soldier. He also had some interesting items to show us, each with its own special story.

Lunch at the Downe Arms, Wykeham

Bonnie Purchon organised an excellent event at the Downe Arms in September. There were forty people at the lunch and the Downe Arms did a great job with the catering. In the future we hope to move around the local eating places so as to sample what’s on offer in and around our town. See the information about the next Lunch on our What’s On page 8

Afternoon Tea in the Sitwell Library

On Tuesday 20 October 28 members and friends enjoyed meeting in the Sitwell Library at Woodend for Afternoon Tea. The catering was by Evelyn Laidler of Homebake and once again Evelyn produced a tasty selection of sandwiches, cheese scones and delicious cakes. There was a picture quiz to keep everyone busy and a raffle. The proceeds from the raffle and the event have been donated to the fund for the restoration of the Queen Victoria statue. by Christine Hepworth

Feedback on the Newsletter, and letters and other contributions, including photographs, are always welcome, and should please be sent to the Editor adrianperry@talktalk.net
Society Events 2016
Civic Society Meetings are in the small meeting room at the Library on Vernon Road at 2.30 p.m.
(unless otherwise indicated)
There is a charge of £2 per head at Society Meetings

Tuesday 5 January 12noon for 12.30
Bonnie’s Festive Lunch at Park Manor Hotel Northstead Manor Drive. Please contact Bonnie Purchon for tickets at £15.50 on 369409

Tuesday 12 January
Brian Mulvana will give an illustrated talk about ‘Scarborough Trams’
Hear about when a tramcar skidded on greasy rails and experienced brake failure while climbing Vernon Road.

Tuesday 9 February
Steve Johnson will give a talk entitled ‘The things you did not know about North Bay Railway.’
Winner of the 2009 Young Preservationist of the Year
Stephen Johnson. Stephen demonstrated his skills as project manager of the restoration of locomotive Neptune which is the oldest diesel-hydraulic in the world.

Tuesday 8 March
AGM at 2.30pm – followed by ‘Accent on the Positive’ a presentation by Christine Hepworth

Tuesday 12 April
Venue Stephen Joseph Theatre, Boden Room
a talk by Kevin Trickett
‘The Style, History and Influence of Art Deco’
From architecture to art, furniture to fashion, and much more besides, Art Deco has been one of the most enduring styles of the modern age; The SJT epitomizes this style and is the perfect setting for this fascinating subject, providing a reminder of the glamorous world associated with the heyday of Art Deco

Tuesday 10 May
Sheila McGeowan will talk about her book
‘The History of Seamer’
Did you know that Seamer can claim to be the longest inhabited site in Britain?

Tuesday 14 June
Maggie Flowitt will give a talk on
‘The Art of Chinese Brush Painting.’
Maggie went out to Hong Kong at an early age and lived in the New Territories district. Her early years education was at a Chinese school where she learnt to speak the Cantonese dialect and to write Chinese characters which she later developed into painting. She has now been teaching Chinese art for many years and regularly returns to China to update her knowledge.

Tuesday 12 July
Christine Hepworth will conduct a
‘A Walk on North Cliff’
At 10.15am starting from Anne Bronte’s grave at St Mary’s Church

Executive Committee
If you think you might be interested in joining the Committee do come along and see how we work. All members are welcome to attend the meetings, but please contact the Secretary first, to help us know how many may be there. We meet at the Red Lea Hotel, on the afternoon of the second Wednesday in each month.

Blue Plaque
Nipper, the famous HMV dog, has been immortalised with his own blue plaque in London. The terrier cross was painted in 1899 sitting with his ear to a wind-up gramophone and featured on millions of records produced by the HMV label over more than a century. You can find the plaque at the Cavalry and Guards Club, 126 Piccadilly, Central London, where artist Francis Barraud, the dog’s final owner, painted Nipper from memory.

Contribution from June Beadnell
December 2015

Dear Member,

Best wishes for 2016

Please find overleaf, the menu for the January Lunch which will be held at the Park Manor Hotel, Northstead Manor Road, Scarborough, on Tuesday the 5th of January, 12.00 for 12.30. The hotel have their own car park and there is free blue disc street car parking. The numbers for the lunch will be limited and therefore I recommend an early reservation. We must have final numbers for this event by the end of December. Please complete and return the menu overleaf along with your cheque. I look forward to seeing members and their guests. Everyone is welcome. Also included with this letter you will find enclosed a membership leaflet for renewal of your membership which is due 1 January 2016. If you have an e-mail address please make sure to enter this on the form so that we can update our records. This document includes the opportunity to pay by Banker’s Standing Order and it also includes a Gift Aid Declaration. If you have any questions about this matter please contact our Treasurer who will ensure that this matter is dealt with correctly by your bank. Gift Aid Declaration, I am sure you will realise just how big an advantage there will be to the Civic Society if most of our members complete and sign this form. It does not involve you in any extra expense, but it means the Society will receive a tax refund. Please complete the form and return it to me at the above address when renewing your membership subscription. For 2016 we have a very interesting programme of events which are detailed in the latest issue of the Newsletter. If you need further copies of the membership leaflet please let me know and I will arrange to send them to you.

Yours sincerely,
Chairman
Scarborough & District Civic Society

PARK MANOR HOTEL

Bonnie has arranged a festive lunch for the 5th of January at the Park Manor Hotel, Northstead Manor Drive, Scarborough. The details are below and anyone interested in booking should let Bonnie Purdon know before the 1st of January.

Tuesday 5th January 2016, Lunch 12 for 12.30

Any two courses for £15.50

Starter
Home made soup of the day
Classic prawn cocktail
Grilled goats cheese tartlet, red wine chutney, mixed leaves
Stilton stuffed field mushrooms

Main
Lemon and thyme roast turkey, bacon wrapped Cumberland sausage, sage and onion stuffing and cranberry sauce
Poached fillet of salmon with a cranberry and orange glaze
Mushroom stroganoff with basmati rice

Dessert
Choice of desserts and homemade sweets
Christmas pudding with rich brandy sauce

Tea or coffee

Please advise at time of booking any dietary concerns.

Please state your CHOICE in the boxes below and RETURN this TEAR OFF SLIP to: Bonnie Purdon, Civic Society, Bonniedene, 20 Briardene Avenue, Scarborough, YO12 7QZ telephone: 369409

PAYMENT IN FULL WITH YOUR REPLY WILL BE APPRECIATED

(£15.50 per person)

(All cheques payable to "Scarborough & District Civic Society")

NAME________________________________________________________________________

ADDRESS____________________________________________________________________

POST CODE___________________________________________________________________

FIRST CHOICE

SECOND CHOICE

TOTAL NUMBER OF PEOPLE