



WHITBY
CIVIC
SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER



JANUARY 2019

We've had good news and bad in the last few months. First, we think some decent decisions have been made about some inappropriate developments in the Conservation Area. Just to take one example, CeX, the electronics retailer, accepted that their plans did not sit well with the rest of Baxtergate. The resulting compromise helps to protect the look of this old Norse street.

It's a small victory but a significant one for all who care about Whitby's historic core. The Society took criticism for its stance from those who feared that CeX might refuse to come here; we were proved right, and I'm glad to see how busy their new shop is.

Sadly, we've also seen some less welcome developments. These include the replacement of stone blocks by concrete on the West Pier; the rather plain concrete design for the East Side flood defences; and concern about the removal of stone flags from the footpath between Prospect Hill and Ruswarp and from part of Endeavour Wharf.

In law, a Conservation Area is defined as being one 'the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance'. The Borough Council's Local Plan states that 'proposals affecting a Conservation Area should preserve or enhance its character or appearance especially those elements identified in any Conservation Area Appraisal'. We do not believe that some of these new developments match the standards that the law and the Council's own policies lead us to expect.

JOHN FIELD
Chairman WCS

Can we combine conservation with economic renewal?

This is a live question for Whitby, a town that benefits enormously from our beautiful natural heritage and some fine built environment, yet suffers from a low-wage economy which offers few incentives to our youth.

This question was also the focus for this year's conference of Civic Voice, the national assembly of local civic societies. I was fortunate enough to join the 160 delegates at this year's event, hosted with friendly efficiency by the lovely people of Birmingham Civic Society. We heard some great keynotes from a range of speakers, including Deborah Lamb (Chief Executive of Historic England), who outlined the serious challenges currently facing conservation areas, and Sarah McLeod (chair of the Heritage Trust Network), who told the wonderful story of how Wentworth Woodhouse was rescued.



For me, the most informative sessions were the workshops, where local civic society members exchanged experience and ideas. I learned that compared with many other local societies, we might be small but we are in rather good shape. In relation to population, our membership level is higher than anyone else's that I talked to, whether large cities like Birmingham or small towns like Lichfield and Ludlow. Our Borough Council talks to us and unlike a growing number of planning authorities at least they have a conservation officer. We have members with direct professional experience of planning and conservation, and others who know our town's history. We can work well with other local groups with related interests, like the Whitby Naturalists.

As a civic society, we should be more bullish and confident about the positive impact of heritage and conservation. The conference heard of research showing that being located in a conservation area was good for business and for property prices; we also heard evidence that these positive effects decline if the conservation area is allowed to deteriorate. Conservation and heritage also have measurable benefits for health and well-being, presumably because it does you good to feel proud of your community.

In short, our message should be: conservation can and should be part of sustainable local development. This isn't an excuse for complacency. We already try to use our influence to support diversification of the local economy, particularly in encouraging developments that bring skilled and well-paid work. We argue for housing developments to include affordable homes for local people, and we contribute constructively to planning discussions on local infrastructure investments in health and education. But we should never apologise for taking conservation and heritage seriously: let's keep Whitby special.

JOHN FIELD

CHRISTMAS - 2018

24 members enjoyed another Christmas meal at the White Horse and Griffin again this year. We were full to capacity so it was a cosy atmosphere for a very enjoyable evening.



WINTERFEST - 2018



On the 1st and 2nd December, Whitby Civic Society was present at this year's WINTERFEST, which was held at the Spa Pavilion.

As in past years, our stall created much interest and we sold a record amount of our publications, gained valuable funds from our now famous bottle raffle and recruited new members.

Thanks to our committee members and a special thanks this year goes to our non-committee members who kindly gave up their time to come along and help man the stall on Saturday and Sunday

Lucky winners are presented with a bottle of Prosecco

WHITBY & DISTRICT COTTAGE WAR MEMORIAL HOSPITAL

Whitby Civic Society wants to ensure that the original reason for building a hospital on the present site is not forgotten. We want to recognise the effort and the achievement of the people of Whitby & District following the First World War in building the hospital. To this end, we are hoping to compile a history of the hospital, progress a new War Memorial book containing histories and photographs of those lost through war. We wish to commission a new sculpture for the refurbished hospital, and are looking for partners to help in these endeavours.

Following the First World War in 1919 a committee, chaired by Canon George Austen, Rector of Whitby, decided on what form a war memorial should take and it was decided to build a hospital. A huge effort followed with the people of Whitby & District raising £18,450.00 – this is equivalent to £905,339.00 nowadays, to purchase the land, build and furnish the hospital. This was a massive amount of money to raise in those days with people contributing pennies and it shows the residents commitment and dedication to remembering and honouring those who gave their lives. Land at Springhill was purchased from George Marwood of Meadowfields, followed by the appointments of the architect AE Young and contractor R A.Wilson. On 18th November 1925 the Whitby & District War Memorial Cottage Hospital at Whitby was officially opened by HRH Princess Mary, Viscountess Lascelles & Lord Lascelles.

The whole of the operating theatre block and all the equipment was the gift of Sir John Harrowing JP CC, in memory of his son Captain John Stanley Harrowing who was killed in action. The new hospital was wired out with radio fittings and earphones for most beds – very advanced for 1925! The x-ray room was lined with lead before plastering.



This hospital served the people of Whitby and District well until 1977 when a new hospital was built on the same site by D. Crouch & Co at a cost of £2.5 million, to incorporate the services provided by Helredale Hospital (Maternity), St Hilda's Hospital (elderly care), the War Memorial Hospital, Community Health Office and Clinic and a GP Surgery Health Centre. The naming of the hospital led to much controversy with the authorities finally agreeing on "Whitby Hospital." The War Memorial hospital was demolished to make way for the maternity block, which opened on 3rd February 1979. The Hospital was renamed and officially opened on 22nd March 1979 by HRH Princess Margaret, Countess Snowden.

The GP Surgery Health Centre moved out of the hospital into their own purpose-built premises in 1990, with further cuts in services leaving the hospital being greatly underused, resulting in the latest proposal to redevelop only a third of the site into a refurbished hospital allowing the sale of the remaining site hopefully for extra care housing.

A strategic project document known as the 'Full Business Case' was due to be reviewed by the HR&W CCG's Governing Body at a meeting scheduled for 22 November to approve the monies for the refurbishment

The statement issued on 6th November then read “The quotes from potential contractors who will be moving forward with the remodelling of the hospital are taking longer to come through and the costs are also higher than anticipated. The CCG and partners are therefore working together to look at opportunities to bring costs in line with what was originally agreed. This, therefore, means that the Full Business Case will be reviewed at a Governing Body meeting, which will be held in the Whitby area next year. Formal notification of the meeting will follow separately.”

However, at the same time, the following announcement was made "In September this year, all three CCG Governing Bodies agreed to introduce a shared senior leadership team across NHS

We want to hear from you if you are interested in helping with our project or have any relevant information on the hospital's history or the people lost through

the war in the relevant villages

that helped to build this hospital including:

Aislaby, Newholm, Dunsley, Commondale,

Danby, Egton, Ellerby, Fylingdales, Glaisdale, Goathland, Grosmont, Hawsker, Hinderwell, Lealholm, Lythe, Port Mulgrave, Roxby, Runswick, Ruswarp, Sleights, Sneaton, Staithes, & Whitby Parish.

Please contact Whitby Civic Society, either by:

- Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/whitbycivic/>

- Email: whitby_civic_society@yahoo.co.uk

- Twitter: <https://twitter.com/whitbycivic>

Hambleton, Richmondshire and Whitby CCG, NHS Harrogate and Rural District CCG and NHS Scarborough and Ryedale CCG. A single accountable officer Amanda Bloor (Harrogate CCG) has been appointed to oversee a shared leadership team across three North Yorkshire NHS Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs). Once Amanda is officially in post after 1 December 2018, a single senior management team will be established that fits the needs of the three CCGs and their local populations. A group representing all three CCG Governing Bodies will also be set up.

We now wait with bated breath to see if the hospital refurbishment does go ahead.



Illustration of planned refurbished hospital

JOYCE STANGOE

War Memorial Project Coordinator
Whitby Civic Society

WHITBY WAR MEMORIALS SURVEY

On 16th June we showcased the many months of research which had been carried out by our group, led by Joyce Stangoe and assisted by Dennis & Julia Buck, Tim Deane, Heather Rowland & Chris Whitlam. An exhibition was held at the Brunswick Centre on Civic Day 16th June this year which was officially opened by Whitby's MP Robert Goodwill.

On show were 43 A1size storyboards created by team members and other willing volunteers and printed by Karen Purvis at Caedmon College. The boards tell the story behind the different local memorials researched by our group.

A lot of interest was generated for our visitors to the exhibition and on some occasions, people saw a reference to their past families that they had not seen before.

Also, several representatives from other groups requested to host our boards in exhibitions of their own. One such showing was recently displayed at St. Mary's Church in their Poppy & War Memorial exhibition commemorating the end of WW1. The exhibition then moved on to Pannett Park Art Gallery in the Whitby Museum where some panels were displayed alongside the slideshow from Whitby Town Council's 'Out of the Darkness' project. It may still be possible to catch this exhibition.



If you missed either of these events keep an eye out for information from WCS about future events. We have also produced a self-guided walking trail leaflet 'Whitby War Memorial Trail' including a map kindly provided by Whitby based cartographer Paul Taylor and the design/layout created by Pam Whitlam. The leaflets are available for sale at all our meetings and events.

Now that stage one of our research is completed, we will be starting a new survey of war memorials in the villages around Whitby, further information being available in the new year.

WHITBY ABBEY COLLECTIONS

Our October Lecture attracted another large audience to a very interesting talk given by Susan Harrison, curator of exhibits, Whitby Abbey Collections.

Susan's talk began with a description of the history of the headland, where the abbey is now situated, starting with the evidence of habitation in prehistoric times.

The first monastery to be built on the site was founded about 657. This became one of the most important religious centres in the Anglo Saxon world and in 664 was the setting for the Synod of Whitby, a church of England landmark. Now the ruins of the 13th century Benedictine abbey dominate the headland.

The audience were shown images of some of the 4,500 items excavated from the Abbey grounds and Susan described what period they represented and what their use was. The abbey collection holds 240 coins dating back from 3rd to 4th C and 7th to 9th C. It is known that many more items are buried, yet to be excavated around the site.

We were treated to a very well delivered and interesting talk which everyone thoroughly enjoyed.

CHRIS WHITLAM

A Tour of the Museum of Whitby Jet

The Museum of Whitby Jet in Church Street opened in August and members of the Civic Society were invited to have a guided tour, hosted by Rebecca Tucker, the Museum's Curator and a jewellery designer for W Hamond. The demand was tremendous, with forty-five members wishing to visit, so three separate groups visited in September and October. What a treat was in store for us!

The museum is situated in Church Street in what was formerly the Wesley Hall Chapel, opened in 1901. The building was latterly occupied by a yarn shop, but three years ago, Chris Sellors, the owner of W Hamond the Whitby Jet Shop at the far end of Church Street spotted the potential of the building. He decided to carry out a full refurbishment to restore original features and what a splendid building has resulted from nearly three years' work. Rebecca showed us pictures of the building before, during and after restoration. Much of the building was in a poor state and local and national companies were engaged to carry out the necessary work. Substantial masonry repairs were needed and replacement masonry exactly copying the original was made and installed by Mark Eaton of Birchover. The stained glass windows were replaced as necessary by Alan Davies of East Barnby, the York Stone flags were restored and levelled by Steve Ingram and a specialist manufacturer of cast iron fittings, Longbottoms of Holmfirth, provided replacement guttering using traditional methods of manufacture dating back a hundred years.

On entering the main building there is a magnificent spiral staircase made by James Godbold (who also made the entrance gates) and then the main hall with stunning surroundings, now being used as the location for the restaurant, 'Albert's Eatery'. Behind the serving area, the original organ pipes have been restored and form a marvellous background to the room. There is a row of central seats either side of a long display cabinet, as well as another smaller one by the window. The cabinets contain the world's largest piece of jet, 20 feet long cut into four sections. The tables, chairs and cabinets were sourced from Taylors Classics of Stafford, who reclaim, restore or remake classic styles of furniture. (I can recommend having a look at their website). All the furniture has been restored and looks brand new. There is lovely Art Nouveau tiling, made by Birmantofts of Leeds and a superb granite facade below the counter with a most unusual pattern and colouration.



Hall before restoration



Hall after restoration



Section of World's largest piece of jet

The flooring is the original parquet, which was restored by Neil Robinson by sanding and oiling the wood to reveal the natural colours. Above the ground floor via the spiral staircase is a room yet to be fully restored, which will eventually become a gemstone library and archive.

The display of raw jet and manufactured jet jewellery is in a room off the restaurant area and consists of a large number of items never seen before in public. Originally, jet was collected by beachcombing, but as demand increased it was extracted by lowering men down the cliff side to hack out the jet. Dynamite was also used, but it was risky, as well as damaging to the jet, so mining became the main method of extraction. A warren of tunnels was excavated, some being hundreds of yards in length. The well-lit display cabinets show examples of unworked jet, including hard and soft jet, as well as some samples with ammonite impressions.

Moving on to the jewellery, the intricacy of some of the designs is remarkable. Jet is fairly easy to work but it is also easily broken, so the carving and polishing needs to be undertaken with great care. There are so many examples that it is difficult to comment on all of them, but notable examples include a lovely replica of the Poltalloch necklace, a piece made 4000 years ago and discovered in Scotland in the early part of the 20th century. There are examples of long rows of beads or guards, the longest being 58 inches which were wrapped around the neck several times. Although looking ‘heavy’ by modern standards, they are beautifully crafted. Popular at one time were sets of miniature tables, chairs and food. Bracelets were also popular and in Victorian times, two or more were worn on each wrist. Jet isn’t hallmarked, so dating the jewellery is based upon the design: early 19th century pieces were quite large and often carved from a single piece of jet. The designs were usually patterns or shapes as floral designs followed later. Many examples are on display. Finally, just outside the display is a shop selling modern examples of the jewellery.



Corridor before restoration



Corridor after restoration



A replica of the Poltalloch necklace



Miniature furniture

Entrance to the museum is free and a visit is highly recommended.

JET MISCELLANEA

Jet was created over millions of years by extreme pressure on decayed monkey puzzle tree wood (more correctly Arucaria arucara).

It is a precursor to coal and is a gemstone. Jet is found elsewhere in Europe, but Whitby jet is of the highest quality.

The compiler of the Guardian cryptic crossword, the late Rev'd John Graham, used Arucaria as his pen name!

The W Hamond Original Whitby Jet shop at 112 Church Street was established in 1840 as 'Storrs', then 'Whamond'. The current owner, Chris Sellors, didn't like the name so he re-titled it 'W Hamond'

Jet jewellery has been fashioned since before the Bronze age and for hundreds of years it was treated with the same regard as pearls and diamonds by the wealthy.

Its popularity increased following Prince Albert's death in 1861, after which although the jet engravers were highly skilled, they were usually illiterate, so there are a couple of examples of misspelling, 'Whitby Abby' and a miss-spelt Mavis as 'Navis'

Jet was believed to have magical properties. Fumes of burning jet were said to drive away serpents, taken with wine it was said to cure toothache and to test for a woman's virginity, taking jet in water would have an immediate diuretic effect in non-virgins. I suspect all those taking the test would have succeeded in proving their innocence!



Lecture Programme 2019

The lectures are on the third Monday of the month at the Coliseum.
The lectures begin at 2pm from October to March
and from April to September
at 7.15 pm

January 21 st	A joint Council Meeting with a panel from NYCC, SBC,WTC and NYMNP
February 18 th	AGM followed by a talk on the history of the White Horse and Griffin by Ed Henebery
March 18 th	The History of St. Mary's Roman Catholic Church by Mark Edwards
April 15 th	The History of Bothams by Jo Botham
May 20 th	The Sirius Mine Project by Matt Parsons
June 17 th	A talk by Neil Williamson
July 15 th	The History of Whitby Jet by Rebecca Tucker
August 19 th	Daytime events will be arranged
September 16 th	A talk by Clare Jones, Education Officer for the Captain Cook Museum
October 21 st	30 Years in the Police Force by Adele Davies
November 18 th	Forensic Archaeology 'Death and Discovery' by David Dance
December 6 th	Christmas Meal



A FRIENDLY REMINDER

2019 subscriptions are now due.

Members who have not already paid their subs. and new members, please complete the form below and post it to Chris or return it to him at the next meeting, which is the January 21st or at the AGM on February 18th.



Membership Application

Should you wish to join Whitby Civic Society please complete this Application Form and send it with a cheque made payable to Whitby Civic Society to:

Mr. Chris Whitlam, 16 Carr Hall Gardens, The Carrs, Ruswarp, YO21 1RW.

e-mail..... cjwatchg@tiscali.co.uk

Alternatively, bring this completed form along to one of the Society's monthly meetings.

If you are a taxpayer the Society will be able to claim back the tax that you have paid on your subscription at no cost to yourself. To allow us to do this, please sign the declaration below. Thank you. Membership cost is **£10** per calendar year.

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I would like to join **Whitby Civic Society**, Registered Charity No.1055396

Full name

Address

..... Post Code

Telephone E-mail

I enclose £10 being this year's subscription.

I enclose £ an optional donation towards the work of the Society. Total

Signature Date

I am a UK tax payer Please tick box if appropriate

I would like Whitby Civic Society to claim back tax on my subscription and donation from the Inland Revenue from the date on this form until further notice.

I understand that I must pay an amount of Income Tax or Capital Gains Tax at least equal to the tax the charity reclaims on my donations in the tax year.

WHITBY CIVIC SOCIETY

2018 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

PRESIDENT	Barry Atkinson Atkinson326@btinternet.com	01947 811707
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TREASURER	Libby Thompson libbywhitby@yahoo.co.uk	07815445557
MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY	Chris Whitlam cjwatchg@tiscali.co.uk	01947 811808

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Susan Harty **Joyce Stangoe** **Peter Craggs**
Mike Dawson **Neil Swannick**

NEWSLETTER

Pam & Chris Whitlam **01947 811808** **preven16@msn.com**

FUTURE NEWSLETTERS

We would welcome any member's contributions to be considered
for inclusion in our future newsletters.

Memories of life in Whitby, reports of events - recent or past
or any other articles of local interest.

Please email any contributions to Pam Whitlam ...preven16@msn.com

AGM
FEBRUARY 18th – 2pm
ALL WELCOME – FREE ENTRY