



When I spotted the small headline in the current Whitby Gazette, “Visit Masonic Hall on Heritage Days”, my response was firstly one of interest. I have never been inside the Masonic Hall in John Street, but it looks an interesting building from the outside. I may try to find the time, I thought; unfortunately that was not to be. It was only open for three hours on Saturday September 9 and I missed it, busy doing other things. But the same Gazette article also offers visits to St Mary’s church in Goathland the weekend after, September 16 and 17, and Heritage Open Days on the North Yorkshire Moors Railway over the week between September 8 and 17.

These are all excellent initiatives and should be supported, but my second response was one of sadness that Whitby Civic Society has not been able to organise a programme of throwing open the doors of some of our many wonderful Whitby buildings and heritage sites as we did before Covid. For many years until 2019, Whitby Civic Society registered with the National Trust who promote and support Heritage Open Days in September each year across the UK; and each year a small committee took on the responsibility of doing the publicity and making all the arrangements for a programme of free events across one weekend. In 2019 our volunteers opened up 15 sites across Whitby and welcomed in hundreds of residents and visitors to look inside the buildings they had probably passed by many times.

Sadly our Society is struggling to find people with organising skills to run many of the regular activities that Whitby Civic Society used to organise and take part in. The Society has a strong membership of 150 paid-up members and a healthy bank balance, but we need to appoint a Chair after Dr John Field’s departure from Whitby, and we desperately need new members on our Executive Committee.

Our lectures are well attended and well-received each month usually in the Coliseum, our Planning Group continues to scrutinise all the new Whitby planning applications (and there are a lot!), but there are so many projects, like Heritage Open Days, we could be doing if we had people prepared to give their time to help organise.

If you feel you might be able to help re-energise the Society, please get in touch with our hard-working Secretary, Janet Kuk, to arrange a chat over a cup of coffee. Email: whitby_civic_society@yahoo.co.uk

*Neil Swannick
Vice-Chair.*

Memories of holidays spent in Whitby in the 1950's



As secretary it was a pleasure to receive a letter and photographs from a Roger Graham of Long Eaton, Nottingham with reminiscences of childhood holidays taken in Whitby where the family stayed at Streonshalh, Khyber Pass around 1951-1954.

Pictures taken by his parents in the early 1950's show the herring fleet in the harbour.

'The sight and sound of the clogs worn by the Dutch fishing boat men around the harbour were a first for me as a 10-year-old from Long Eaton, 85 miles from the nearest coastline.'



'Many very happy memories playing cricket on the beach with my young brother and parents'



Photographs of a wreck close to Whitby, and of the Lifeboat out on a mock rescue and outside the Lifeboat station.



Moving further back in time Roger Graham recounts how his grandparents, on his father's side, met each other by prior arrangement (an advert in the Yorkshire Post!!) for the first time in Whitby in 1898.

Public Houses in Whitby - 'Board Inns'

It was often said that Whitby once had more public houses per head of population than any other place in Britain!! There were many different types of licences; Full Licences were issued to public houses, whilst other premises were only allowed to sell beer – Beerhouses. Another category was those only allowed to sell Wines, Spirits and Sweets. Board Inns usually fell into the last two categories.

1840 - 49 fully licensed public houses in Whitby town.

1855 - 46, including 2 separate BOARD INNS and 3 separate SHIPS.

1880 - 135 licensed public houses, 16 beer houses and 17 licensed to sell wines, spirits and sweets.

1880 - 132 convicted cases of drunkenness plus 6 cases which were dismissed.

1890 - 54 public houses.

1891 - 127 fully licensed houses, 13 beer houses, 13 licensed to sell wines and sweets.

1894 - 50 plus public houses.

1904 - 50 public houses

Many public houses in the town have closed and been demolished over the years and these will feature in a future article, but the ones I am going to mention here are the Board Inns. It was a general term for a number of pubs in Whitby, many existing at the same time. Board Inns originally only sold beer and are the Beer Houses often found mentioned in newspaper reports. They were not allowed to sell wine and spirits. At one point there were at least 5 Board Inns on Church St, and one still remains. It would seem that most, if not all, also had a shop, in the same premises.

Many locals can still remember the Board Inn on Cliff Street (38/39), where you had to go through the shop and then turn right through another door to reach the licensed premises. It was situated at the top end of the street, just before the railings leading to Pier Lane; it is now a private dwelling. The premises consisted of a double shop front, with the pub room taking up the complete right hand side. On the left was the shop through who's entrance the bar was reached



by a second door on the right, opposite the shop counter. The interior of the bar consisted of the once common brown leather bench type pub seats around the edge of the room.

'In 1891 William Jewson aged 22, a shipwright from Hartlepool, was charged with stealing from the pub – a silver cream jug and a pair of silver sugar tongs worth £5. He stole them on Regatta Day. Jewson was no doubt under the influence of drink and had been in the pub when Wilson, the Landlord, was serving refreshments in the dining room. Wilson had noticed the items had gone missing from the chiffonier where they were kept after Jewson had left. He immediately informed the police. Police Sargeant Lee apprehended Jewson but he had already disposed of the goods. Whilst in custody he admitted theft and directed the police to a hedge bottom near Ruswarp where the missing items had been hidden. At the trial he was found guilty and fined £2, which if unpaid would result in one month's imprisonment.' Whitby Gazette

1884 Landlord Isaac 'Waxy' Wilson

1890 - 1905 William Wilson (maybe son of 'Waxy')

1913 - 1925 Thomas Bulmer (followed later by Mrs Bulmer)

1935 - 1937 Mrs Edith Pinkney

During the War Ms Dobson was the Landlady

In the 1950's and 1960's it was run by Hilda and Jonty Paylor

In the 1960's it was also run by Shirley Noble.

The final Landlords were Doug and Val Heselton, closing on Saturday December 7th 1968.

It was listed at all times as 'Shop and Beer Retailer'.

It was privately owned until the owner died in 1990; 38 and 39 were then knocked through into one house.

Photos: The inside of the Board Inn in 1967, Dickie Chambers and his father Dick. The outside of 'The Board Inn' now.

Sources: A History of Whitby's Pubs, Inns and Taverns and

Comments from Whitby Memories Facebook group

Photo from inside the Board Inn courtesy of Kay Newby-Driscoll

Val Appleton



The Town Deal Fund Project to Construct a Maritime Training Hub on Endeavour Wharf

Any proposed development on the reclaimed land in the Upper Harbour has, historically, occasioned much debate among local residents, not to mention concerted opposition. It is therefore surprising that few people in Whitby seem to be aware of the plans for a major development on Endeavour Wharf. The Planning Application is scheduled for Autumn 2023, with construction due to start in December 2023. The lack of public awareness may be due to the project idea being developed during the pandemic. It has been allocated up to £10M of funding under the Whitby Town Deal, as part of the Government's Levelling-Up agenda.

The drawing to the right shows the outline scale and proposed site for the development, as submitted to the Government. The design and build contractors, Wilmott Dixon, have been undertaking ground investigations before developing the detailed final design and submitting the planning application.

The outline proposal is very similar to that submitted by Dalby Offshore in 2016. Their proposal (right) illustrated the potential effect of such a development in the centre of the harbour and the Whitby Conservation Area.

Many members will have opinions about the final design, but I submit that there are more fundamental questions that should be considered first.

Extreme events such as periods of drought over the moors, followed by sudden downpours, often lead to flooding in Whitby. The former Bell Shoals in the upper harbour, now reclaimed land, were formed when the silt-laden freshwater flows down the River Esk were stemmed by the incoming tides. Over many centuries, the resultant deposition of tens of feet of silt necessitated pile-driving to a depth of 60 feet to create Endeavour Wharf. Questions still remain about the feasibility of constructing any large permanent building on the reclaimed land, as illustrated by the short life of the Cargo Transit shed.

The whole of Endeavour Wharf has long been designated as a Zone 3 floodplain. Slowing the speed and scale of climate change over the coming decades will depend on co-ordinated global action. However, all forecasts agree that sea-levels will rise and that extreme weather events will increase in frequency. Given the latest predictions of sea-level rise, consideration is now being given to raising the height of the Maritime Hub structure, in order to reduce the displacement of flood waters to adjacent areas. (As with the Whitehall Landing complex, the vacant space below could then be used to offer ground floor car parking.)

Over recent years, tidal surges have brought extensive flooding in the town, leading to the raising of flood defences along Church Street. Studies conducted by Royal Haskoning in 2009 highlighted the urgent need to maintain and improve the piers and pier extensions, by 2032 at the latest, to provide protection to the harbour and town for the next 50 years.

Remedial work to the main piers was carried out during 2017-18, which required the use of Endeavour Wharf as a site compound for some 14 months. The work required to the pier extensions was costed at

Stage 2 Business Case – Whitby Maritime Training Hub
February 2022



over twice that of the work needed to the main piers, so was deferred. But, if Endeavour Wharf is built on, where could the site compound be located for the repair and strengthening work needed on the extensions? That work is becoming ever more critical to the safe operation of the harbour and to protect the town from flooding.

Before any debate about the design and its visual effect on the townscape and Conservation Area, this proposed development needs far wider consultation about its effect on the future operational needs of the harbour. Such consideration needs to include a thorough examination of the potential impact of climate change on all harbour structures, harbour users, and residents, over the coming decades.

Sue Boyce

George Hudson and His Vision for Whitby

Many of you will know Hudson Street on the West Cliff and will have walked down it many times. But do you all know that it is named after George Hudson, 'the Railway King'.

George was left 'motherless' at the age of 6 and only a couple of years later his father died, leaving him to be cared for by his elder brothers John and William who had then to run the farm at Howsham. Presumably his elder sisters tried to mother their young siblings. By George's teenage years he was pretty much left to his own devices as was evident when at 15 years of age – a girl was 'In Trouble'. George was sent away to York to make his own way in the world and he eventually became Lord Mayor. Matthew Bottrill, George's Great Uncle, lived in York; he was a man of property and lived in a fine Georgian house in Monkgate and was described as 'a gentleman and wealthy'. He looked after George, and maybe found him the employment at Bell and Nicholson's draper's shop.

George spent many years behind the shop counter and it was probably the best training ground for his future.

He worked with the owner's widow Rachel Bell, her brother Richard and sister Elizabeth Nicholson. Shortly after his 21st birthday he and Elizabeth were married.

When Rachel retired she gave the business to her brother and to George as partners and the name of the business became Nicholson and Hudson. When Matthew Bottrill died he left his house in Monkgate to George. After receiving a substantial legacy from the estate of Matthew Bottrill George gave up the draper's shop and moved to Monkgate. He became a Councillor, then an Alderman in the ancient city of York. He was elected Lord Mayor twice, in 1838 and 1839 and then for a third time in 1846 when he was deeply involved in the railway.

Information about Hudson's Whitby activities is non-existent before he joined the Whitby Building Company in the 1830's. It has been said that he had been left Whitby property by his Great Uncle but there is no definite evidence to support this.

There are speculations that he spent holidays in Whitby, but again there is no definite proof.

At the start of the railway mania, George Hudson could do no wrong. As the financial truth began to dawn over the ensuing years he became the target of the Investors and he became hated whereas before he was adulated. Hudson did not defraud anyone or invent fraudulent companies; it was simply that the returns from the railway investments did not come up to the expected profits. At one point he was so bewildered by the small returns that he paid the shareholders a dividend by using money from the capital account rather than let them down.

As early as 1827 there were suggestions being made about the development needed in Whitby for it to become a tourist resort. Meetings were held and Committees were formed. A Joint Stock company was formed but there was little progress until 1843 when George Hudson, although in the middle of railway speculation and Alderman duties, set up the Whitby Building Company. By 1845 Hudson owned the railway route from York to Whitby as he saw the potential to develop Whitby into a resort. In 1848 the WBC bought the entire West Cliff Estate and its development was nearer to a reality. Hudson took out huge loans and he hoped that eventually the erection of houses and hotels would justify the outgoing.

His first vision was to build a large hotel to accommodate holiday visitors, so the Royal Hotel was built alongside an imposing terrace and East Crescent.

His brother Charles Hudson was the first to live in 6 East Terrace and he was to manage the hotel. Then the boarding houses were built on John Street, Normanby Terrace, Abbey Terrace and Hudson Street, named in honour of George Hudson.

In 1865 George Hudson stood as Conservative candidate for Whitby. Crowds gathered to welcome him outside the Angel Hotel where his pre-voting 'address' took place in the newly opened St Hilda's Hall behind the Angel Hotel. A trumped up creditor was discovered (perhaps by his rival) to whom Hudson owed money and Hudson was arrested two days before polling took place and taken to York where he was imprisoned in York Castle for three months. A good friend George Elliot paid the debt. Elliot was later Knighted and afterwards became the ultimate purchaser of the Whitby Estate. Hudson was arrested again in 1868 and put in the London debtors prison but was released under an ancient ruling. He had two peaceful years settling with his wife in her London home and finally had no debt. He died on 14th December 1871.

His ultimate vision had been to build a magnificent 'Crescent', which would equal, if not outshine Bath. But halfway through, the scheme went wrong as he owed vast amounts of money to lenders. So sadly we only have half a Royal Crescent, but perhaps it is better than none.

I think we have a lot to thank him for.

Val Appleton

Parry and Jean Thornton

The following article was written by the late Dr John Shorter and appeared in our August 2011 Newsletter. John had served our Society as Chairman and when the article appeared he was serving as our Vice President.

‘Parry and Jean Thornton came to live in Whitby in October 1993, from Leeds, where he had worked for many years in the City Architect's Department. It was natural that he should view his new surroundings with a professional eye, and at an early stage he began to research the history of Whitby, and its buildings and streets. At that time steps were being taken to revive Whitby Civic Society, which had been moribund for some years. This was accomplished about 1995-6 with a new Constitution, officers and Committee. Parry became associated with the reformed Whitby Civic Society.

I am sure that Parry became interested in the Victoria Spa Well House from his earliest days in Whitby, but at that time the Civic Society had no particular responsibility for the building, which is owned by Scarborough Borough Council. Anyone who wanted to visit the building could obtain the key from the Planning Department at the office in Back St. Hilda's Terrace.

Anne Dennier was WCS Secretary in the late 1990s; she took the necessary steps to obtain 'Listed' status for the building. In the early years of our participation in Heritage Open Days we began to include the Well House, but around 2004 we assumed a greater responsibility for it and took over the key. By this time Parry was at work on a Short History of the Victoria Spa, Bagdale, Whitby, so he became the key holder under WCS auspices. The Short History was first printed in 2005. Parry began a programme of improvements at the Well House. At an early stage he and Jean carried out a thorough cleaning of the interior of the building and Parry prepared display material, including under-the-floor photographs of the actual well. He introduced a programme of opening the building to the public on several occasions in the spring-summer season (in addition to HODS), mainly at Bank Holiday weekends.

Initially he and Jean did all the supervision of open days, but in recent years other members of WCS have assisted in supervision, while Parry has remained in overall charge. He has done all the 'admin' meticulously, submitting annual reports to the Chairman and Executive Committee. The well openings have contributed significant funding to WCS. Parry's contribution to the running of the Well House as an important activity of WCS is going to be much missed.

On this occasion it would be appropriate to mention also another major contribution Parry has made to the activities of WCS: his pioneering of the Guided Walks. The first of these was the Cemetery Walk, a tour of the town cemetery in Larpool Lane. This was trialled 'privately' for WCS on two occasions, before appearing in HODS. There were, however, various other pioneering occasions in which Parry took the lead in enabling us to respond positively to other Civic Societies, who solicited our hospitality for an hour or two, so that a party of their members could be conducted around some part of Whitby. Occasionally this has involved no-Civic Society bodies, e.g. the Scottish Vernacular Buildings Annual Conference decided one year to come to North Yorkshire, and Parry organised several WCS members into providing a staggered system of tours in groups.

A short history of the Victoria Spa Well House, Bagdale, Whitby



*Researched & edited by
Parry Thornton
for the
Whitby Civic Society
2005*

One non-Civic Society event which has had a lasting effect was the visit of the East Yorkshire Georgian Society in April 2006. A walk through Georgian Whitby was clearly the necessary response. Parry did not need to produce a new tour from scratch, the material already existed, scattered in several walks which he had designed! Parts of the Georgian Walk have been repeated on many occasions, guided by various WCS members. Several years ago Parry also made very important input to the new edition of the Whitby Town Trail booklets, East Side and West Side. This was a co-production of Scarborough Borough Council and Whitby Civic Society, which continues to sell well in the Tourist Office and other outlets. Then there was Parry's booklet 'Whitby Wyndings' about the Whitby Yards. One could go on and on... We hope that his written contributions to the Whitby scene may continue.'

John Shorter

Footnote. Parry & Jean still continue to support our Society to this day and it is always a pleasure to see them occasionally attend our lectures.

Chris Whitlam

WHITBY - A hotbed for Table Tennis in the 1920s and 1930s

Pre World War 2 Whitby was a hotbed for Table Tennis with a number of nationally successful players and reports of tournaments.

Greta Vasey of Whitby was the winner of the English Open women's singles title in 1925-26.

Bernard (BL) Hookins, a Yorkshire Penny Bank manager in a number of Yorkshire towns prior to settling in Whitby, was one of the founders of the Yorkshire Table Tennis Association, represented England in World Championships, chair of the Whitby TT Association and a significant national administrator within the sport. He died in Whitby in 1946, his wife Lucy also died in Whitby in 1959, their daughter Betsy married John Butterfield.



B. L. HOOKINS, Hon. Secretary and Treasurer.

If any member has any information or photographs about Table Tennis in Whitby, or Greta Vasey and Bernard Hookins, or any leads, please contact me on 07870197754 or richardofyork187@outlook.com. I will be pleased to hear from you.

Yorkshire Table Tennis Association celebrates its centenary in April 2024. We hope you may be able to help us with this part of our sport's history.

Thank you for your interest.

Richard Scruton

Honorary President, Yorkshire Table Tennis Association
Honorary Life Member, English Table Tennis Association



Fire in Scate Lane

All was quiet in Whitby on the evening of 24th July 1823, exactly 200 years ago.

Then, in the early hours of 25th July the sound of the Town Bell could be heard. This was a warning to the people as a fire alarm and soon the sound of scattered, scurrying feet could be heard on the flag stones of the harbour streets. By 3am it was well alight and people watched in dismay as bit by bit fire took hold and gradually destroyed every inch of the building.

"Fire in Scate Lane." Fire in Scate Lane." "Not the theatre. Please, not the theatre!"

It had only five years ago been newly painted and tastefully decorated for the town. By that time theatres were losing their popularity, possibly due to the cost of wars being fought at the time, and some people considered them to be rowdy places. Most Georgian theatre performers played in circuits with actors often travelling from one venue to another behind a cart that carried their scenery props and belongings. The journey from the theatres in the circuit such as Beverley, Ripon and Harrogate would take several days to complete, and the stay was quite a long season so they all lived and worked side by side underneath the stage area built of wood where it was warm, beside the fire, and they could get their washing done.



The actor-manager of the Butler Company had decided that after the 1818 winter visit, it would be the end of their long association with Whitby and the well-loved Georgian theatre was then dependent on strolling players. The life of a strolling player was hard and tenuous and in the eighteenth century was illegal and the work un-licensed. Jugglers, rope dancers, conjurers, fire eaters and animal trainers did not need a licence. The feeding of the animals took place in the evening and people could go and watch for a small fee while getting to know what the animals looked like close at hand. A licence did not allow smoking and the drinking of alcohol in theatres. Plays and the spoken word were not allowed to be performed without a licence in force.

So, the great Georgian Theatre in Scate Lane, now Newton Street, was on fire. It was in the height of summer so there would have been enough light in the sky to see what was going on. Performing earlier in the day were a group of sword swallows and fire eaters. They had booked the venue whilst on a tour of the area. Open fires, curtains and candlelight plus the use of gaslight to bring light to the stage were always a hazard and this was the day when it all came to a head. This was not the first theatre in Whitby to end this way nor was it the last, as the next one, the Freemason's Tavern, which survived in Baxtergate for the next thirty years finally ended in the same way in 1853.

Elizabeth Cheyne

Christmas 2022

On 13th December 2022, 28 members attended a Christmas meal at the splendid Albert's Eatery in Church Street, Whitby.

A good time was had by everyone



Dog Walking in Whitby

If you walk your dog on Whitby beach in the summer you will be aware that the "dog friendly" area is restricted.

The order that relates to this is under consultation by North Yorkshire Council. Members of the public can put forward their views by completing a short questionnaire.

This can be found at:

www.northyorks.gov.uk/psposcar

Please take the time to submit one and safeguard our dog walking area on the beach in the summer.

Spread the word!!!



Thank you
Jane Hale

Remaining Lecture Programme for 2023

10th October 2023 – Clair Stones (Chair of the Management Committee, the Captain Cook Memorial Museum) 2-4pm

A Sailors Life

An overview of the life of Captain James Cook FRS RN – explorer, cartographer and Whitby's most famous denizen – together with a description of the life of a sailor in the Royal Navy at the time of his world voyages, and how the Royal Navy has changed.

14th November 2023 – John Freeman (Whitby artist well known for his watercolour paintings of the North Yorkshire landscape)

An A to Z of creating a watercolour painting

A step-by-step illustrated description of how renowned Whitby artist John Freeman created one of his most famous pictures - The 'Visiter' lifeboat rescue at Robin Hood's Bay.

12th December 2023 – Joe Cornish (British photographer noted for his large format landscapes)

Fountains Abbey – “Still time to wonder...”

Joe Cornish was commissioned during lockdown to capture the beauty of Fountains Abbey, a World Heritage site. Without air or road traffic sounds, or the busy movement of visitors, he was able to record over 12 months a special kind of quiet that we probably will never experience again.

WHITBY CIVIC SOCIETY – 2023 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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COMMITTEE MEMBERS	Sir Martin Carey	***** . *****	*****
NEWSLETTER	Pam and Chris Whitlam	01947 811808	cjwatchg16@gmail.com

**WE HAVE SEVERAL VACANCIES ON OUR
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**
**Would you like to join us and have a positive
influence on local issues?**

**GET INVOLVED TODAY & HELP KEEP WHITBY
SPECIAL**

The Civic Society has a good presence on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.
Our Instagram account has been noticed by Civic Voice.
If you don't have Instagram all you need is an internet connection and about two minutes.

