



TRUST TOPICS

Doncaster Civic Trust Newsletter ©

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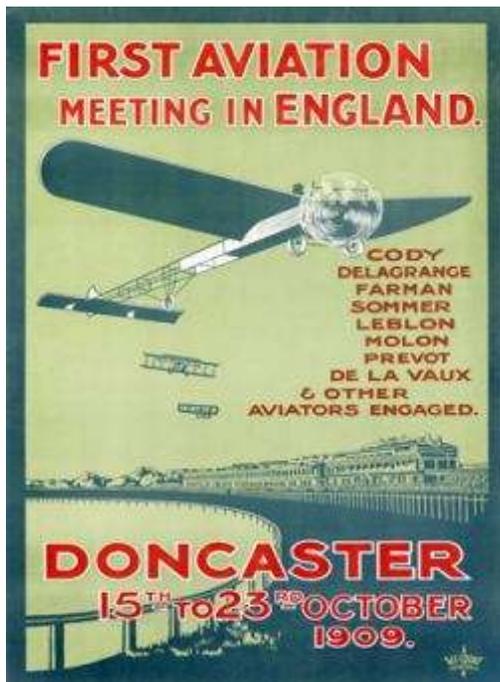
Doncaster's Rounded Street Corners

Doncaster Civic Trust : Registered Charity No. 508674 : Founded in 1946
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Commercial Spin-offs from Doncaster's 1909 Air Display

Much has been written in 2009 (and earlier) about the aviation aspects of Doncaster's Air Display of October 1909, Britain's first, and its arguably more significant sequel of 1910, both at the Racecourse. Here I would like to recall some of the commercial attempts to cash in on the 1909 event.

First, Doncaster's electric tramways, then just seven years old: the Racecourse route was the only one with double track throughout rather than a single track with passing loops. It was expecting good pickings from the Meeting and indeed over the Display period netted £500 extra in takings, good for 1909. The Great Northern Railway and other railway companies ran excursions to Doncaster.



Several Doncaster (and other) commercial organisations used the Meeting in advertisements and packaging. Ernest Waters, milliner of 43-45 St Sepulchre Gate advertised a “Great Show of Aviation Millinery, The Latest Productions in Aviation Shades and Styles” - the mind boggles! Later in October he advertised his premises as a “Millinerydrome”.

A chemist of 47 Market Place, realising that many of the aviators were French, advertised in the Chronicle: “Messieurs les Aviateurs et les Visiteurs Francais, M. Parkin, Pharmacien de la 1ere Classe”.

The sweetmakers Nuttalls brought out a special box of their butterscotch depicting two Blériot XI aeroplanes.

Further afield, a Cadbury's advertisement of 25 October also depicted an aircraft.

Bell Brothers, still with us in St Sepulchre Gate, issued “Exact Models in Gold of the Different Types of Aeroplanes”. Bells are unable to supply me with further details, but I suspect the models would be of the less outlandish types: Blériot XI, easily the commonest make flown at the Meeting, Farmans, maybe the Wright Biplane, but possibly not Samuel Cody's “Cathedral”, a huge biplane for its day. Blériot were advertised in the Meeting's Official programme.

Smith & Sons, car dealers and excursion operators of West Laith Gate, proudly announced that they were “Sole Purveyors of all kinds of Motor Spirits and Lubricants required by all the Aeroplanes taking part in the.... Meeting”. A clearance sale of bicycles by another dealer of cars etc, W E Clark, was headed “These are Flyers”.

The 1910 Doncaster Air Meeting attracted few or no commercial promotions. The municipal trams on the Racecourse route grossed only £200 extra over the September week, as against £500 the year before. But runners-up rarely if ever attract much interest.

Philip L Scowcroft



The Special Summer Outing 2010

There will be one visit this year, on Wednesday 30th June 2010, to Highgrove, the private garden of HRH The Prince of Wales and The Duchess of Cornwall.

The coach will leave Waterdale at 08.30 to arrive at Highgrove for 13.05. We suggest taking a picnic as there will not be time for a lunch stop.

There are some important security arrangements:

All guests must bring a form of photographic identification with them, ideally a passport or driving licence (with photo).

Mobile phones are not permitted anywhere on the Estate. They must be switched off and left on the coach.

Cameras, binoculars or any form of recording equipment are not allowed on the Estate

The group must stay together during the tour.

The garden tour lasts 2 hours and covers 2 miles of garden. Some paths are unmade, and some are cobblestones, so we suggest comfortable shoes and suitable clothing, as tours continue during wet weather.

There is a tea room and shop – make your own arrangements at the time.

The coach will leave 15.30-16.00. Cost per person £45.00.

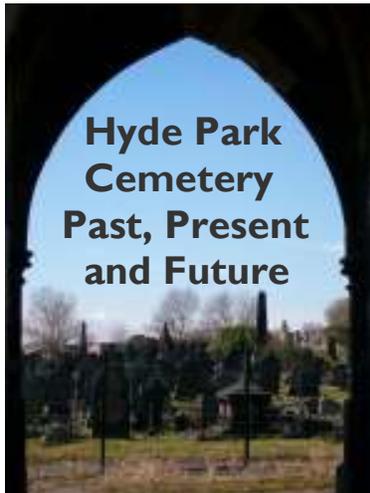
Please see the loose coloured sheet for more information and booking form.

Members' News

① Change of Date

The Social Forum with refreshments will now be on
Wednesday 14 April at 7.30 pm at St Peter's RC Church Hall
– A day earlier than previously advertised– Sorry

This will be an informal opportunity for all members to look at and discuss some of the things we do, have done, don't do and maybe ought to do, as well as another chance to get to know each other.



**Richard Bell – Chair,
Friends of Hyde Park Cemetery**



Thursday 14 January 2010

Up to the 17th century most burials were performed in churchyards. The expansion of towns and cities in the mid 19th century meant that these became grossly inadequate for such a purpose.

It was not until the 1850s that public health reports stated that provision for interment had become insufficient and cemeteries were now “expedient and necessary for health”. In the churchyard at St George’s, Doncaster, the graves were very shallow and in some places only ten inches apart.

The Doncaster Cemetery Act of 1854 arranged for a cemetery to be provided, using land belonging to the Corporation. The Corporation needed to obtain permission from HM Treasury to appropriate some of its estates for use as a cemetery on the south side of the town. The land was part of Balby Carr which itself was a part of Potteric Carr.

Plans were submitted by various architects, including Sir George Gilbert Scott, but were rejected. Finally, those drawn by a young Newcastle architect, Robert James Johnson, were accepted.

The building consisted of two chapels in a T plan, linked by a central arch above which was a square tower with a spire 80 feet tall. The limestone came from local quarries at Levitt Hagg for the walls and Brodsworth for the finer carved pieces. Roofs were in blue slate.

There was space for a 14ft 6in horse-drawn hearse – Victorian funerals were large and elaborate – and the two chapels served both Anglican and non-conformist branches of the Christian faith.



Built at a cost of £1,594, the chapels were opened on New Year’s Day 1856. The first burial took place the following day, on 2 January 1856, when Mary Ellis and her four month old grand-daughter were interred. The baby’s name does not appear on the grave. The incumbent of Christ Church officiated.

The Cemetery was not actually consecrated until the September of that year. In 1882 further land was purchased and the cemetery was doubled in size.

After the opening of Rose Hill Cemetery in 1933 there was a decline in the number of burials, and conditions in the Cemetery began to deteriorate.

Once the caretaker moved out of the Lodge in the 1980s the situation worsened; vandalism increased, buildings collapsed and fell into decay, and fires damaged the Lodge.

The Friends of Hyde Park Cemetery were inaugurated in 2002 and since then have worked tirelessly to raise awareness and funds to restore this piece of Doncaster's heritage.

Larger plans have had to be shelved owing to a shortage of finance but, with £250,000 from Doncaster MBC, the chapel's spire top has been re-built, the roofs have been repaired and re-covered in a temporary but visually acceptable material, and the entrance arch shored up.

Security fencing has been erected to protect the buildings from intruders. In the burial grounds shrub and wild flower areas are being developed and good signage is being installed. It is hoped to reinstate paths and gravel areas and promote the area for recreation and health.

Richard Bell wanted to tell us about some of the cemetery's notable occupants, and gave us some clues to their identities. Mostly no problem for Trust members!

They were:

Thomas Anelay IV Builder of Doncaster's Market Hall 1847, Hyde Park Cemetery 1855 and Wood Street Infirmary 1865, and Doncaster's Borough Surveyor

William Nuttall Bought a derelict business on Chappell Street in 1903 and turned it into a thriving sweet factory, making the famous Mintoes, in only a few years. In 1934 his cortege passed by the Cottage Homes 1912, which he had built and endowed, on its way to the Cemetery.

George Tuby Funfair owner, alderman, mayor and very generous benefactor to the town and its population

Patrick Stirling Chief Engineer of the Great Northern Railway, much admired and respected by his workforce. 3000 people lined the streets as his cortege passed by.

William H Pickering Chief Inspector of Mines, killed at Cadeby Pit 1912 during a rescue on the day he was due to meet King George V and Queen Mary.

Carmino Massarella Italian-born ice-cream maker who built up a large local business

As you will gather from this account it was a very interesting and informative talk. One cannot but admire the dedication and hard work of the Cemetery Friends. Interested individuals can contact Richard Bell on 07777 688 438 or richardbell.fohpc@btinternet.com The evening finished with sherry and shortbread to die for, and once again a big "Thank you" to the Committee for their organisation, dedication and lovely catering.



Elizabeth Marsden

An Embroidered Family History in Wall Panels



Sue Clifton Thursday 18 February 2010



This was a family history talk with a difference. From 1998 to 2007 Sue had been busy embroidering two panels representing the male and female branches of her family tree.

Each was in the form of a grandfather clock and embroidered using chintz, calico and bump (to give weight). The clock cases were divided up into small squares, each depicting one member of the family.

Every small square had been individually photographed and were shown to us on the screen, being enlarged from their actual size of about six inches square to an image four feet square on screen. Each of the images was a fascinating combination of family history research, design, art and craftsmanship.

On the female side of the family we heard that an uncle went to Australia on a £10 assisted package, and another family member was killed when a bull slipped and squashed him against a wall.

A spinster aunt who was a dressmaker lived to the age of 84 despite thinking she was dying all her life!

Some of the interesting characters from the male side of the family included Marmaduke Weaver who was baptised at St Pancras' Foundling Hospital in London. Its founders included the philanthropist Thomas Coram, the artist William Hogarth and the composer George Frederic Handel. Marmaduke eventually succeeded and became a grocer in York.

Then there was a Charles Adam, a sea captain from Hull who sailed between Hull and St Petersburg, who was also an importer of wines and spirits.



Another story involved Aunt Bell, of Bell Watson fame (estate agents and surveyors), who had an unfortunate accident by getting her bosom caught in a mangle.

Sue Clifton's father was an early air pioneer, being one of the first hundred people to fly across the English Channel.

These were only a few of the many ancestors that Sue told us about during a most enjoyable evening.

Liz Brown

Planning Matters

The Planning and Conservation sub-committee meets each month to consider planning and conservation issues within the Borough. Planning applications are studied and we decide whether it would be appropriate to object or comment.

Since the last Trust Topics we have looked at proposals for new houses, alterations to listed buildings, extensions to properties likely to impact on the quality of conservation areas, changes to a hotel and many others. In some cases we welcomed the proposals.

For example it was good to see a recent application highlighting the fact that the former Doncaster College on Church View has been acquired by the Doncaster Central Development Trust and would soon have new occupiers. It was proposed to replace all the existing windows with double glazed units: timber casements in the older 1913 block and metal casements in the later 1930 block, as originally built. This unlisted building is an important part of the St. George's Conservation Area.



Scaffolding in place for the renovation works March 2010

Although we mainly look at proposals for conservation areas and listed buildings, we do study other major proposals too, such as a recent proposal for a new rail maintenance facility for Agility Trains at Ten Pound Walk, on Doncaster Carr, the site of the old engine sheds. In order to accommodate trains 260 metres long, the four track maintenance shed needed to be 300m long and 55m wide. Despite its size, it should have minimal impact because of its low-lying site.

Although we have made very few objections recently we will mention one that seemed to be a minor application yet with the potential to damage the character of a conservation area.

This was a proposal to change the car park attendant's booth to a sandwich shop at Cavendish Court, also known as The Lodge, on South Parade. In this case we felt that the proposed use was inappropriate and that, as the shop would only be for employees on site, it should be located within one of the buildings or in the courtyard.



Cavendish Court with the car park kiosk on the right of the drive

We suggested this would eliminate the risk of the shop attracting customers from elsewhere. Having fully considered our representations, the Council approved the application with conditions: the shop was for staff from the site only and not the general public; there must be no external signage on the building; and its use may not be changed from sandwich shop to any other without permission.

Planning and Conservation Sub Committee

20th Century Dutch



or alternatively:
The Dutch Revolution
or
Tricks with Bricks

Professor Clyde Binfield
Thursday 18 March 2010



Professor Binfield had given us the title of his talk as “20th Century Dutch”, and I had added the word “Design” to the wording on our posters. This was to ensure that no one came expecting to hear about pottery or fashion. But the Professor himself had two more titles at the top of his sheet of notes. *Tricks with Bricks* would have been very suitable for the talk, but then would people have expected to see a magician?

The magician would have to have been Hendrik Petrus Berlage (1856-1934), the man who put the Netherlands on the modern architecture map, we were told. The introduction was by way of an unconventional take on Jesus and his Disciples, to murals with symbolic depictions of past, present (above right) and future by Jan Toorop in the Amsterdam Beurs or Stock Exchange and to Berlage, its architect.

Although London had no buildings by Mies van der Rohe, Le Corbusier or Frank Lloyd Wright, generally acknowledged as the three masters of modern architecture, it did have one by Berlage.



Clock Tower and Covered Walk at The Pleasaunce, Overstrand, Norfolk

We were then posed a question, the first tangent. On the screen came a very distinctive building. It might have been Mackintosh or Voysey, but was it even British? It was an original building that was hard to categorise. We learned that it was the stable block at Overstrand, Norfolk, by Sir Edwin Lutyens.



Images English Heritage

I remembered that the Professor had used a Lutyens building as part of the introduction to his Art Deco talk to us last winter. I should have known.

On a second tangent were some examples of flats for workers in Amsterdam in an expressionist style. These fairy-tale buildings were built between 1913-1923 by architects Michel de Klerk and Piet Kramer. The city fathers were horrified by the extravagance of the clever ornamental use of brickwork for workers’ housing. Again, this was hard to categorise: too late for Arts and Crafts; too early for Art Deco; too decorated for Modernism, so it had to be Amsterdam School.

Holland remained neutral in the First World War, so its architectural development was able to prosper while much of the rest of Europe were fighting one another.

Berlage was influenced by the criss-crossing of styles. The border-crossing continentals put the insular British to shame. We were shown buildings in Zurich from the late 19th and early 20th centuries in a mix of styles, from Elizabethan house to English cottage and Tuscan villa.

Gottfried Semper (1803-1879) was a German architect who was exiled first to Zurich and later to London where in 1851 he wrote “The Four Elements of Architecture”, and later “Style in the Technical and Tectonic Arts, or Practical Aesthetics”. He had lived in Germany, France, Italy, Greece, Switzerland and England, before becoming professor of architecture in Zurich in 1855. He was clearly a “border-crosser” whose writings influenced Berlage, who became one of his students in the 1870s.

Another influence was Viollet –le-Duc, a robust exponent of the Gothic style, whose restoration work at Notre Dame Cathedral was “almost in Disneyland style” in its flamboyance. We saw how the Gothic structure was expressed as key forms – sculptural, yet structural.



The Amsterdam Beurs, or Stock Exchange (1879-1903)



The Main Hall, once the trading floor

So to Berlage, who saw style in the art of building and furnishing. He considered the fundamental description of architecture to be the art of enclosing space. It was the complex of spaces that was important, not the facades. The wall was the essential element, as it enclosed the space.



Steel roof structure above decorative brick and stone
Images beurs-van-berlage.nl



Carvings depicting Paradise, Future and Culture in Decay

The quality of his work was similar to Mackintosh, Frank Lloyd Wright and the Arts and Crafts movement.

Berlage's best known work was the Amsterdam Beurs or Stock Exchange (1897-1903), the commission for which was won in competition and brought the architect widespread recognition beyond his own country.



Front door, Banney Royd, 1902

The building was red brick, with limited stone dressings, and showed the honesty and simplicity which marked the trend towards true Modern Architecture. Internally, the glass and metal roof was clearly expressed, with the exposed brick and stone of the upper galleries providing functional decoration.

We were shown comparative works in Spain, Belgium, France, Russia, Italy, Austria and Czechoslovakia. Then after this European tour, we were in Manchester and at Banney Royd Hall, Huddersfield to see two works by English architect Edgar Wood.

The second building by Berlage that we saw was St Hubertus Lodge, a hunting resort built for the Kroller-Muller family. Muller had done well from a business in iron ore. By 1881 they were in Rotterdam with a shipping and ship-broking company, and dealing in grain. The Kroller brothers bought shares in Muller, and Anton Kroller married the boss's daughter, Helene Muller.

The couple were fabulously wealthy and bought an estate of 55 sq km in 1909. He was interested in the countryside, while she had taken an interest in art and architecture. Designs for a museum-house on another site were prepared first by Peter Behrens, and later his assistant Mies van der Rohe, but the project was abandoned. Finally, Hendrik Berlage was chosen as the architect for a grand hunting lodge to be built in the park, and would work exclusively for the Kroller-Mullers for many years.



St Hubertus Lodge (1914-1920) Image flickr

It was during the First World War, in 1916, that Kroller's company built Holland House, in St Mary Axe in the City of London, opposite where Lord Foster's "Gherkin" now stands. It is the only Berlage building in the UK, an early steel-framed office block clad in ceramic tiles.

St Hubertus Lodge was built between 1914-1920, a two storey brick building of complex plan and sweeping roofs, with hips, gables, chimneys and a tower approximately eight storeys high. Berlage designed everything in the building, in the manner of Charles Rennie Mackintosh, Antoni Gaudi and Frank Lloyd Wright. The interiors were highly decorative, with coloured glazed tiles on walls and ceilings. There was central heating, and central vacuuming, and a lift in the tower to let guests enjoy the views over the grounds and lake.

St Hubertus was the Dutch version of the English Arts and Crafts, probably influenced by Hermann Muthesias' book "The English House" (1904). He was a cultural attaché based at the German Embassy in London and had been charged with producing a study on the English ways of life, including housing. He developed a great interest in the English Arts and Crafts and Mackintosh's work in Glasgow.

Just as English architect Voysey used the heart shape as a motif in his designs, Berlage used the crystal as his motif of choice.

He was considered the "Father of Modern architecture" in the Netherlands, and the intermediary between the Traditionalists and the Modernists. Berlage's theories inspired most Dutch Modernist groups including De Stijl and the Amsterdam School. He was awarded the Gold Medal by the Royal Institute of British Architects in 1932.

We were shown the Schroder House in Utrecht (1924), by Gerrit Rietveld (1888-1965) probably the best known building of the De Stijl movement. The Professor thought that the attached terrace of houses was "light years away". We also saw two unorthodox chairs Rietveld designed for his buildings: the Zig-zag and the Red and Blue Chair.



Zig-zag Chair 1934
Images bonluxat.com



Red and Blue Chair 1917

Schroder House, Utrecht, Holland
Gerrit Rietveld 1924
Image rietveld-schroderhuis.nl



The very fine and important Hilversum Town Hall, by Willem Dudok (1884-1974) was explored externally and internally. Built in yellow brick between 1928 and 1931, it marked the point where Arts and Crafts turned truly Modern. The Mayor's Parlour, Council Chamber and Marriage Room were quite beautiful, and clearly of the 20th century. I compared it to the many English towns in the 1930s which resorted to the heavy neo-classical for their new civic buildings, almost by default.

CIAM was the Congres International d'Architecture Moderne, a series of international conferences of modern architects which was started in 1928 by Le Corbusier, with Berlage and Rietveld as founder members. It ran until 1959 when other styles, like Brutalism, were replacing International Modernism.



Hilversum Town Hall Image Masterpieces

We returned to St Hubertus Lodge. In the 1930s the worsening economic situation brought a halt to the development of an art gallery to house the Kroller-Mullers' important international art collection. They were unable to keep the park. In 1935 the art collection was gifted to the Netherlands State, which continued to build the Kroller-Muller Museum. The park was handed over to a charitable foundation, which received state aid.



The Museum, by Henry van der Velde, was opened in 1938 and housed the second largest collection of Van Goch paintings in the world, as well as works by Picasso, Gaugin, Seurat, Klee, Mondrian and others. The sculpture park contained a pavilion by Gerrit Rietveld built in 1965, and another by Aldo van Eyck added in 2006.

Professor Binfield regarded the whole site as a tribute to The International Style and the private patronage of the Kroller-Mullers.

Archie Sinclair

Doncaster's Rounded Street Corners

Rounded street corners are not an uncommon feature of the urban scene but few towns can have a greater proportion of their street corners rounded than Doncaster has.



Scot Lane from Market Place : Doncaster MBC Archives Department

Of course, it is much easier to make the corner of a building square, or even splayed, than it is to make it rounded. The construction of a wall or roof on the curve is a skilful and expensive operation and is not the normal method of building.

Therefore, the question arises, how is it that Doncaster has so many of its street corners rounded? The answer is that it results from a policy first adopted by the Corporation two centuries ago.

At the beginning of the 18th century, Doncaster, like many other market towns, would have been a jumble of houses, interspersed with gardens, set in imperfectly drained streets. Civic consciousness became alive to Renaissance thought and ideas. Men looked on their surroundings with a new outlook, they saw the visual disorder they had inherited and began to try and bring shape and seamliness into the works which they themselves undertook.

Doncaster grew in importance during the 18th century due to its position on the Great North Road and the town's population doubled to nearly 6,000 by 1801. The Corporation were the lords of the manor and owned extensive estates from which they enjoyed a considerable income, a great deal of which they spent on civic improvements. The more obvious of these were the building of the Mansion House in 1745, a theatre in 1774, and the Grand Stand in 1777; but apart from these, the Corporation carried out many improvements to give greater order to the street scene.

In 1731 the streets were now paved and the channels were removed from the centre of the streets. In 1764 the town was lighted with oil lamps at the expense of the Corporation (but the lamps were not lit when the almanack showed that the full moon would shine). In the 18th century the idea of the "Street" grew in importance – it was seen as expressing civic order and pride of citizenship. Ancient buildings that protruded into the highway would detract from the overall effect. In 1777 the Corporation resolved to join with the freeholders "in purchasing and taking down such projecting buildings and nuisances in the town as shall be thought necessary for widening the streets". At the same time the Corporation decided to approach Thomas Atkinson to secure the purchase of the house at the corner of Baxter Gate and French Gate for the purpose of taking down the house and widening the street to make the same more commodious to the public. In 1780 the Corporation paid £180 for the leasehold of a house at the corner of High Street and Scot Lane so that the house could be taken down for improving the street.

Having purchased a property with a view to demolition the Corporation had several options open to them: they could demolish the building and re-develop the site themselves, they could demolish the building and lease what was left of the site to someone else to re-develop, or they could lease the building to someone to demolish it, and have the re-use of the building materials in re-building on the site. If the Corporation disposed of the site they would approve what was rebuilt and would lay down the building line and sometimes the form of the new building.

The Town Council minutes do not always specify which course of action was followed as discretion in these matters was often left to the Building or the Flagging Committee. In 1788 the Corporation purchased Miss Frances Wade's house at the corner of Scot Lane and the Magdalens for £250. On this occasion the minutes set out clearly what was intended for the site.

The Corporation resolved that William Lindley was to draw a plan for building a house on the site, in a neat manner, and the committee was given power to build it. William Lindley, a pupil of John Carr of York, had already acted as architect for the building of the theatre in the Magdalens, the new Gaol in St Sepulchre Gate, and the re-edification of the Town Hall in the Magdalens. The building that was erected appears on the right of the photograph at the beginning of this article. William Lindley's brief had been to prepare a neat design and this is what he produced – not a grandiose or ostentatious design, nor one devoid of interest and mean, but one that was simple and well proportioned with a generously rounded corner. Whether William Lindley was involved in the design of other rounded corners is not certain but the Corporation accounts show various payments to him for unspecified plans.

The Corporation did not always have to resort to purchasing properties that they wished to improve; sometimes they were able to persuade the owners to re-build in the required manner with some financial inducement. In 1811 £317 was paid by the Corporation to Mr F Turner for improving his property at the corner of St Sepulchre gate and French Gate; in 1812 £700 was paid to Alderman Morris for the great improvement that would be made by him taking down his house and shop in the Far Market Place (at the corner of Sunny Bar) and widening the street there and rounding the corner under the direction of the Building committee; and in 1814 £200 was paid to Thomas Elston for an improvement at his property at the corner of Baxter Gate and the Market Place.

The old-fashioned White Hart Inn stood at the junction of High Street and St Sepulchre gate and projected into the highway. In 1818 the Corporation bought it and decided to auction it to be re-built according to plans provided by William Hurst, the successor to William Lindley's practice. In 1820 the Subscription News Room and Library was built on the site with a corner of greater breadth of curve than any that had preceded it.



Photo by Matthew H Stiles, Doncaster MBC Museum and Art Gallery

The effect of all these street corner improvements was to give the town a sense of urbanity that was unusual in a market town but was entirely appropriate for a town widely celebrated for its races and noted for the magnificence of its Mansion House.

In 1836 the Corporation agreed to expend £200 on the rounding of the corner of the house at the junction of Baxter Gate and French Gate, left, under the inspection of William Hurst.

Three years later an incident occurred which showed that the Corporation were very conscious of the improvements that had been made to street corners and were probably proud of the results.

Some Rounded Corners Today



Former Ye Olde Crowne Inn 1900 Athron & Beck



Former Prudential Building 1913 Paul Waterhouse



Free Press Offices, Sunny Bar, 1902 Henry Beck

A Mr Tyas commenced building a house on a site where the Gaumont Cinema later stood at the south-east end of Hall Gate. It appears that Mr Tyas's house was encroaching on the public highway and a delegation from the Watch Committee was sent to inspect the site.

Mr Tyas wished to proceed but the Watch Committee, having taken into consideration the great expense the Council had been at in widening and rounding of the corners of the public streets whenever they had the opportunity, could not recommend the Council to accede to Mr Tyas's request. Mr Tyas sent a letter to the Council complaining that the Watch Committee was made up entirely of Liberals and claiming that when he bought the land and stables they were a public nuisance. He disliked the Corporation's interference and wrote "such proceedings ought not to be tolerated and all I can say to those individuals who do so is Oh fie!" Nevertheless, despite his protest, Mr Tyas was forced to set back the offending building by five feet.

The process of rounding corners continued whenever the opportunity arose. The building of Station Road, in 1882, produced three new buildings which exploited the architectural potentialities of rounded corners to create a rich townscape. Oriental Chambers, with its Turkish dome, its expansive curve, and broad, sunny footpath was a particularly felicitous addition to the urban scene. All, of course, disappeared under the Arndale development.

The rounding of corners was not only pursued in the town centre; it was also sought in the most ordinary of streets. The meeting of the Sanitary Committee, May 1876, resolved that the plans submitted by Mr John Waller for a house in Burden Street be approved conditionally on the corner being rounded.

It is difficult to see from where the Corporation acquired authority to impose such conditions, save from the force of a long tradition.

The high peak of architectural proficiency in the treatment of rounded corners came in the late Victorian and Edwardian era when architects had the skill to design, and clients had the money to pay for architectural fancies incorporating domes, turrets, cupolas and other embellishments to capture the eye and decorate the skyline.

More Rounded Corners Today

The Corporation continued spending considerable sums of money, right up to the outbreak of the Second World War, in compensation for buildings being set back and corners being rounded. The design of some of these later rounded corners is rather pedestrian. But the same cannot be said of the design for the new building for the Doncaster Co-operative Society, in St Sepulchre Gate, designed by Johnson and Crabtree, in 1938. This must be the ultimate in rounded corner buildings.



Former Co-op store 1938 Crabtree & Johnson

After the Second World War, the pendulum of fashion swung the other way, curves were thought to be anathema, and cubism, functionalism and economy held sway.

Now old ways of building are beginning to be held in greater regard, and old skills are being re-learned. We may yet see the hard corner giving way to the softer form of the curve. Rounded corners may return to restore urbanity to our streets and to “make them more commodious to the public”.

Eric Braim

This article was originally published in March 1984.

Acknowledgements were due to Mr J E Day for information supplied and to the Doncaster MBC for permission to reproduce the 2 old photographs.



Waterdale/Wood Street corner



Danum Hotel 1909



Former Savings Bank 1843 William Hurst

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The Back Page – Wildlife Special

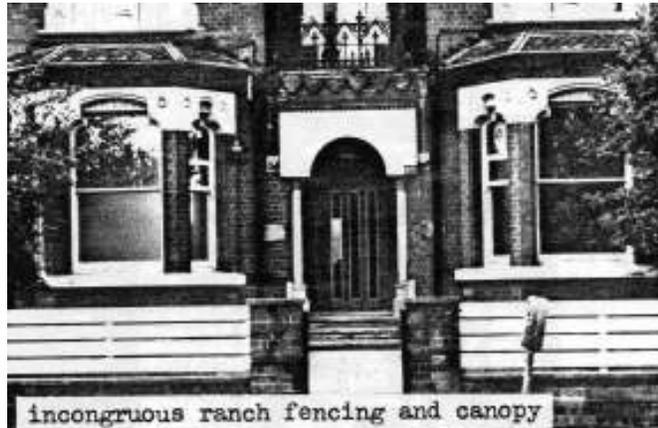


Wildlife in the Christ Church Conservation Area 7 Thorne Road, Doncaster

In July 1986, Eric Braim wrote about inappropriate features which devalued the Christ Church Conservation Area.

His image (right) showed a timber canopy which masked the decorative brick and stone arched entrance of a fine building at 7 Thorne Road.

The close-boarded white-painted fencing was visually intrusive, to the further detriment of the building's appearance.



1986 Before

The building has now been cleaned and the incongruous elements removed (right). A credit to the area and all concerned, it has now been let to local company Barnsdales.

Having been tipped off about this good work, I went to inspect the building and take photographs. The journey turned out to be even more rewarding when I noticed the stone carving high on the first floor window surrounds (below). Such wildlife might be expected on London's Natural History Museum, but why here?



2009 After



The decorative first floor window surrounds



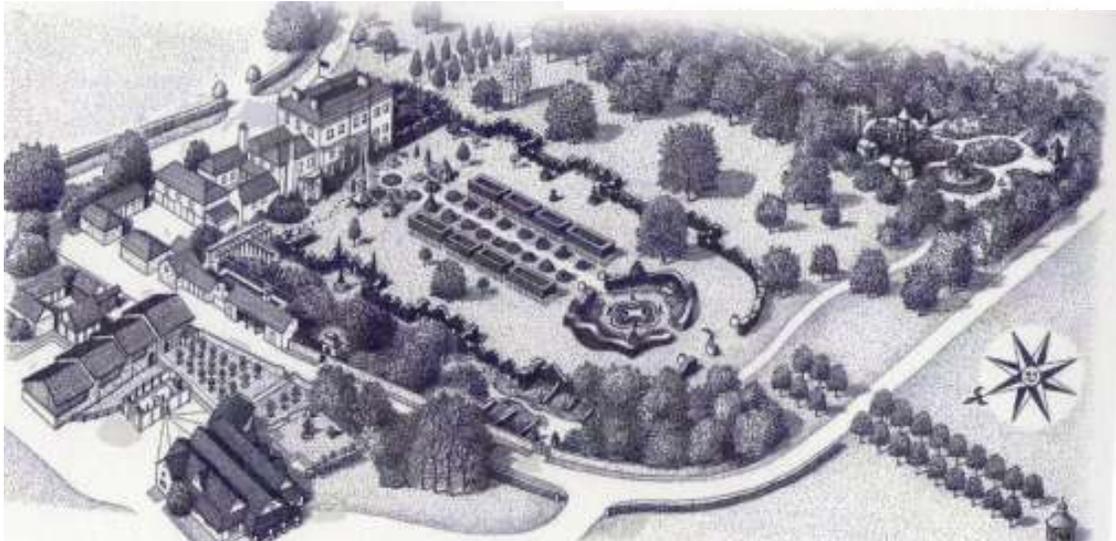
The renovated building in its context opposite Christ Church



**Doncaster
Civic
Trust**



HIGHGROVE



The garden at Highgrove embodies The Prince's environmental philosophy: that it is better to work with Nature than against it. When he bought the Highgrove estate in 1980, The Prince was adamant that it should be an entirely organic garden and farm.

However, at that time there was no sign of a garden at all. Thirteen years later in the book 'Highgrove: Portrait of an Estate' The Prince wrote: "It was difficult to know where to begin and I knew nothing about the practical aspects of gardening.."

His Royal Highness desperately wanted to protect our native flora and fauna which was in decline due to modern farming methods. Every year The Prince takes on a new project to take his garden in new directions, such as his walled kitchen garden or the arboretum.

Highgrove Garden 2010 : Booking Form

Please enclose remittance and make cheques payable to **"Doncaster Civic Trust"**.

Also, please add your telephone number in case we have to contact you.



Highgrove: **Wednesday 30th June 2010**

Return to John Holmes, 53 Thorne Road, Doncaster DNI 2EX by **Wednesday 2nd June 2010**

I enclose £..... for.....places at £45.00 each

Name.....

Address.....

Telephone no.....