



# TRUST TOPICS

## Doncaster Civic Trust Newsletter ©

Issue No. 41

October 2010



### Contents

**Page 2**

The Summer Outing to Highgrove

**Page 3**

Members' News:  
Winter Programme  
Members' Social Forum

**Pages 4-8**

Doncaster Architects No. 9  
John Rawstorne

**Page 9**

End of an Era for the Trust  
Eric Braim to Stand Down

**Page 10**

Planning Matters

**Pages 11-12**

The Back Pages  
Destination Cambridge  
A Battle of the Styles?



**That Elegant and Convenient House, Situated on South Parade**

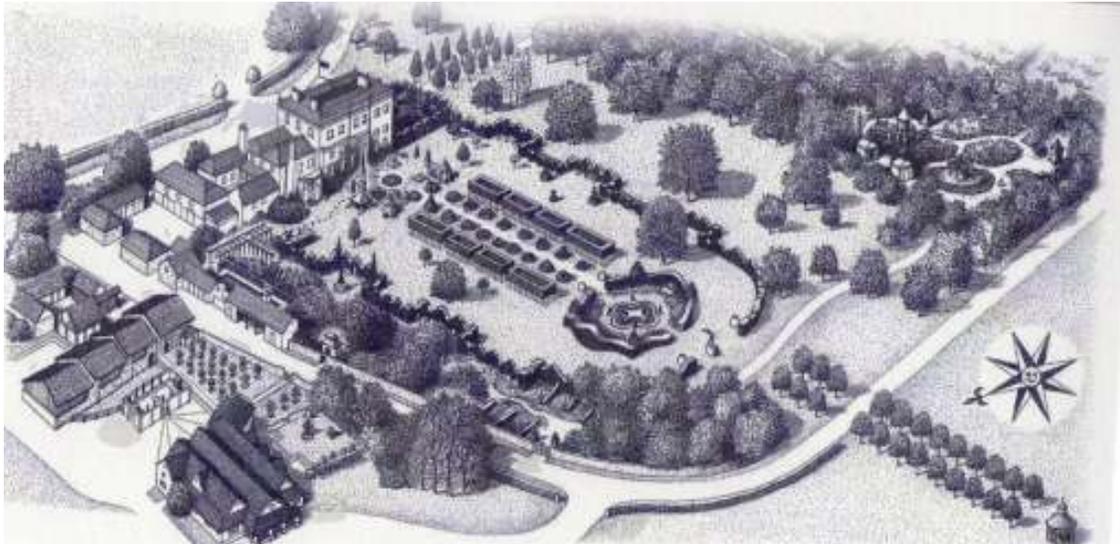
Member of



Doncaster Civic Trust : Founded in 1946  
Registered Charity No. 508674  
Hon. Sec : E L Braim, 2 Lawn Road,  
Doncaster DNI 2JF Tel : 01302 367512



## **The Special Summer Outing 2010**



With the promise of a warm and sunny day, we left Waterdale at 8.30 am on Wednesday 30 June 2010 bound for Highgrove, the country residence of HRH The Prince of Wales, near Tetbury, in the heart of the Cotswolds.

We enjoyed a superb luxury coach from Wilfreda Beehive, unusually set with small tables and groups of four seats, making our picnic lunch so much more sociable.

Arriving at Highgrove, with strict security checks, we enjoyed a one and a half hour tour of the thirteen acre garden with a pleasant and knowledgeable guide. Rather sadly, the security controls included the prohibition of cameras, video camcorders and camera/phones, so the trip had to go unrecorded. Might Prince Charles have allowed us to do a small water colour, perhaps?

There are many fascinating features in the gardens: a thyme walk planted by Prince Charles with friends' help, a walled produce garden and a rose garden. Temples and rooteries abound, illustrating the Prince's great interest in horticulture.

He is very interested in preserving old building skills and, when visiting masonry yards and sculpting classes, is often presented with a carved finial or a test piece. These, into the hundreds, are used to build fountains or a wall of carvings set with ferns.

There was time to visit the rather stately tea room and, of course, the gift shop, together with plant sales.

Leaving at 5.30 pm gave us an easy and pleasant journey home. Thinking of all the traffic problems which could have occurred on such a long journey, we were most fortunate.

**John Holmes**

## **Winter Programme 2010 – 2011**

**All events to take place at St Peter's RC Church Hall, Chequer Road**

### **2010**

**Thursday 14 October 2010 at 7.30 pm**

Sue Kohler on "Sheffield Botanical Gardens"

**Thursday 11 November 2010 at 7.15 pm Annual General Meeting**, followed by

Colin Bycroft on "The Vanishing Streets of Doncaster"

**Thursday 9 December 2010 at 7.30 pm Christmas Buffet Supper**

Andrew Firth on "Christmas in the Dales"

### **2011**

**Thursday 20 January 2011 at 7.30 pm**

John Hoare on "The English Parish Church"

**Thursday 17 February 2011 at 7.30 pm**

Speaker to be confirmed in the next newsletter

**Thursday 17 March 2011**

Mrs Bowser on "Winthrop Park Nature and Sensory Garden"

**Thursday 14 April 2011 Members' Social Forum**

Another chance to review what we do, how we do it and why - and maybe what we ought to do.

## **First Member's Social Forum 14 April 2010**

Our first forum was held at St Peter's Church Hall in April, and turned out to be a very useful and enjoyable get-together. As well as having wide-ranging discussions, we agreed some actions and aims for the Trust.

There was unanimous support to join Civic Voice and pay the full donation request. We did this in May. You may have noticed that we now carry the Civic Voice logo on our front cover.

Over recent years the Trust has enjoyed a healthy income, mostly from interest, yet spent only about 65% of it. We felt we could and should be achieving more, in line with our charitable aims.

There was unanimous support for the sponsorship of a student (or group of students) on a course related to architecture or the historic environment. Ideally this would be a local student working on a local project at a local university.

Development of our website was an absolute priority. Since the meeting this has progressed well. Our website now includes the last 10 newsletters, in colour, and images and information of the 22 Town Trail buildings. We hope it will go live soon.

It was agreed that news items should be posted on the website or turned into press releases to promote wider interest. We needed to use strong initiatives to build on a good foundation.

**Archie Sinclair**

## Doncaster Architects No. 9 : John Rawstorne

John Rawstorne, (or Rawsthorne as it is sometimes spelt), was born in Badsworth, near Pontefract, in 1761. He was closely related to Samuel Walker who lived at Stapleton Park, a mansion that once stood north of Doncaster.

As a young man, John Rawstorne was articled to James Wyatt, one of the most important architects of the eighteenth century. After leaving Wyatt's office he moved to Birmingham where he was responsible for a number of buildings including the Cavalry Barracks. These were built in 1792 to keep control of the local population following the city's riots of the year before. In 1793, whilst still in Birmingham, he designed Sheffield Royal Infirmary, the first of his South Yorkshire buildings.

The Infirmary opened in 1797 but by that time Rawstorne had moved on, settling in Doncaster by 1795. The landlord of the Salutation, William Hurst (father of the architect of the same name), had bought much of Hall Cross Hill in 1793 and by 1795 had begun to build houses there. The first two were almost certainly what are now numbers 9 and 10 South Parade, and Rawstorne moved into one of them, probably what is now number 9.

John Rawstorne probably rented the house with the bow window, now 9 South Parade



At this time Bethune Green, a former owner of the Salutation, was busy selling building plots between the inn and the north end of the road, now known as Waterdale. One plot was sold to John Rawstorne and on the site he built what is now 18 South Parade, arguably Doncaster's finest domestic property of the Georgian period. It is situated almost opposite the Regent Hotel and is now known as Bourne Swann Chambers.



18 South Parade, architect John Rawstorne

In looking at this house we can do no better than refer to an article written about South Parade by Eric Braim in Doncaster Civic Trust Newsletter No 55 in September 1988. He wrote:

“Rawstorne must have hoped that Doncaster would offer an opportunity for his professional advancement; at least he would be certain that his new house would display his abilities to the many travellers on the Great North Road. The house is so impressive that some people have thought it the work of James Paine, even though he had died six years before it was built. As the house incorporated all the latest ideas of its time it will be of interest to quote the sale notice of January 1803:

*To be sold by auction: That elegant and convenient house, situated on South Parade, fronting the Great North Road and commanding an extensive prospect.*

*Consists of a basement, principal, chamber and attic stories with servants' rooms in the roof. A commodious yard and garden walled round and planted with choice fruit trees in full bearing. Also two rooms used as offices, forming a separate building fronting the yard and garden.*

*Basement: Kitchen, pantry, two beer cellars arched, wine cellar and coal vault; a scullery, ash hole, and servants' privy under the yard with an area. The kitchen is arched with Mr Cartwright's patent bricks and is very lofty.*

*Principal Storey: A breakfast parlour, dining room, hall, stone staircase, and servants' stairs and butler's pantry*

*Chamber Storey: drawing room, anti room, bed room, closet and w.c.*

*Attics: three very good bedrooms, dressing room, three closets*

*There are three rooms in the roof for servants, with a lumber room, well lighted and ventilated.*

*All the rooms upon the several stories are very lofty and well proportioned, the dining room and drawing room are finished with handsome marble chimneypieces, and steel grates, with ornamental ceilings and enriched cornices. The front of the house is of stone and finished in a superior style of architecture, the whole forming a complete residence for a genteel family being situated in the best situation in the town, which is esteemed one of the handsomest in England.*

“A w.c. would have been an innovation in Doncaster in 1796. Lack of a town sewerage system weighed against their general introduction. Individual cesspools had to be provided to take the soil water.

The reference to the kitchen being arched with Rev Cartwright's patent bricks sheds new light on the Rev Edmund Cartwright's last year in Doncaster. His pioneering work on the power loom and wool combing machinery ended in financial disaster in 1793. He removed from Doncaster in 1796 but in 1795 he took out a patent for interlocking bricks for use in the construction of arches - the same year that Rawstorne came to Doncaster. It seems that the two men must have known each other and this is probably the first house to incorporate Cartwright's patent bricks”.

An advertisement for the house first appeared in October 1798 when it was available to be let 'for a term of years'. Several years later, in July 1801, Rawstorne advertised that the house was to be auctioned. Also for sale were 'a coach house, three stall stables and tenements belonging the same, situate in Prince's Street and at a convenient distance from the house'. It is not known if Rawstorne designed these buildings, but in January 1803 they appeared again in an advertisement to be auctioned separately from the main house.



Number 18 South Parade may be seen on this print of the south entrance to Doncaster from Edward Miller's History of Doncaster (1804).

It is on the right just beyond the Pillared Houses.

A Mr Hewett of Bilham Hall subsequently purchased the South Parade house. I will return to Mr Hewett later. The house continued in domestic use for many years but, like much of South Parade, it changed into commercial premises in the 20th century. At one period it was The Free Press Chambers and sectional garages were sold from the garden. For many years now it has been an insurance broker's office. Although some of its character has been sacrificed for office use, it still pleases the eye today.



One of the details I particularly like on the house is an oval recess (known as a patera) over the first floor window, containing details of two figures. Other interesting features are the four giant pilasters; two of them situated either side of the central windows.

Cusworth Hall stands proudly on a hill just north of the town. The owner, William Wrightson, built it between 1740 and 1744 in conjunction with mason/architect George Platt. Around 1749 two new wings were added to the house to designs by one of the leading architects of the day, James Paine. One of the wings contained the sumptuous chapel whilst the other, matching wing, housed the library.

In 1766 another William Wrightson, grandson of the builder, succeeded to the estates as a 14-year-old boy. He became a politician but by 1797 he was struggling to be re-elected and seems to have had time to look at modernising Cusworth. Wrightson asked John Rawstorne, a family friend, to make changes to part of the house. Rawstorne completely re-designed the parlour on the south front to create a book room containing several splendid classical bookcases. We can assume the idea was to create a more fashionable, lighter room and it succeeds beautifully. The changes also included a new fireplace and surround but it is the bookcases that are the main features. They are made of painted deal with adjustable shelves but they were not glazed. Instead, the doors were covered with a brass wire mesh, which kept the books safe.



Right: This is one of several book cases designed by Rawstorne for the new Book Room at Cusworth Hall. The room has been restored.



Close by, in Paine's library, Rawstorne proposed major decorative changes but only a small part of the scheme was implemented. He replaced the windows, inserting the more fashionable thinner glazing bars as well as making other changes to the design of the window surrounds. The alterations are quite subtle and sympathetic to Paine's design. However, if Wrightson had proceeded much further with the scheme we would have lost a complete Paine room which, from a 21st century view, would have been most regrettable.

Rawstorne altered the windows to this Paine wing. The top of the Diocletian window (with the arch) may only be seen from outside now. The canted bay window was also altered.

Externally, Rawstorne also proposed that decorative railings be fixed beneath the canted bay window at the end of the library. This part of the scheme was not implemented either but the design of the proposed railings is interesting as they are very similar to those which stand in front of the South Parade house (below).



Detail of railing at 18 South Parade

I had asked myself why Wrightson wanted a book room when he already had a perfectly good library. It is thought that he had a large collection of books and that extra space was needed, particularly as he had eight children to be educated. However, I think there could have been another reason. Rawstorne's drawings for the Paine Room are headed 'Section of the Proposed Alterations to the Dining Room at Cusworth'. It is possible that it was intended to convert the library into a dining room but for some reason the scheme did not go ahead and the room remained in use as a library.

Another project was at Bilham Hall, a small estate lying between Hickleton and Brodsworth owned by William Nathan Wright Hewett. He wanted a summerhouse or Belvedere and chose Rawstorne to design it around 1800. Edward Miller, in his 'History of Doncaster' (1804) speaks of the Belvedere in glowing terms:

*"W N W Hewett Esq., who has lately, at some distance from his mansion, erected an elegant small structure called Bel-vedere or Belle Vue which commands, perhaps, the most extensive, but certainly the richest prospect of any place in the West Riding of Yorkshire. The minsters of York, Lincoln (and sometimes Southwell) are distinctly seen, with nearly seventy parish churches"*.

I am sure that much of this is exaggeration, although comparison with today's view is difficult due to subsequent tree growth. However, Dr. Miller wrote some of his book by being provided with information from the inhabitants of outlying villages, particularly the clergy but also other people too. The description might well have been provided by Hewett himself. Whatever the truth, it is clear that the building was special and that people enjoyed the views.

In the nineteenth century the Brodsworth estate acquired Bilham and the Hall was demolished. Gradually the Belvedere fell into ruin but in the 1990s it was skilfully repaired by a team of specialists adopting a 'conserve as found' policy. Its conservation received praise for the vision of its owners, Mr and Mrs Williams, when it won a special mention in the DMBC Design Award Scheme for 1996/8. Today it stands hidden away in woodland away from the public gaze.



The Bilham Belvedere (a water colour by Terry Chipp)

The same year that he built the Belvedere, John Rawstorne announced in the local paper 'Proposals for publishing, by John Rawstorne, Architect, a Set of Designs in Architecture, in which will be introduced a great variety of plans, elevations and sections of buildings, public and private, which have been created under the immediate inspection of the architect'. This would have given much more information about his work than we know today, but unfortunately it was never published.

During his time in Doncaster John Rawstorne also designed buildings in what is now West Yorkshire, but after 1800 he seems to have had little work. By 1803 he had decided that he should move to York.



It would seem that the competition between himself and a successful local architect called William Lindley had all been too much. Lindley's more economical style of building was enabling him to be successful in selling houses in both town and country. On South Parade, from the Hall to Waterdale, it is thought that all of the houses, except No 18, are by Lindley.

18 South Parade.  
The Pillared Houses to the right were built by William Lindley, and the house to the left has been attributed to him.

In York, John Rawstorne is only known to have had one building constructed to his designs, a now demolished chapel, and later he returned to South Yorkshire moving to Sheffield. Shortly after designing a house there in 1819, his practice collapsed and by 1821 he was begging people for money to enable him to move to another part of Yorkshire. This was a sad end to the career of a talented architect. He died in Liverpool in 1837 aged 71.

John Rawstorne had three sons all of whom became architects. The most notable was Walker Rawstorne who practised in Bradford, mainly designing churches in the early Victorian period.

John Rawstorne may have only designed one building of note in central Doncaster, but that is a building still to be admired today. Next time you are passing please have a good look at it. I also recommend a visit to Cusworth Hall with its excellent museum. You can see the Book Room that is Rawstorne's only known surviving interior open to the public.

### **Notes on Cusworth:**

No plans have survived for the Book Room but it has long been attributed to Rawstorne. We do not know what name was given to the room at the time. It became known as the 'Book Room' at a later date and I have used this for convenience.

**Peter Coote**

The painting of Bilham Belvedere is reproduced by permission of the artist, Terry Chipp.

The front cover shows a measured drawing of 18 South Parade done in April 1942 possibly by a Jack Prentis (the signature is unclear). Measured drawing was part of the syllabus for the examinations for membership of the Royal Institute of British Architects.

---

**Trust Topics is edited by:**

**Archie Sinclair, 43 Ellers Avenue, Bessacarr, Doncaster DN4 7DY**

e-mail: [sinclairs@e-malin.freemove.co.uk](mailto:sinclairs@e-malin.freemove.co.uk)

tel: 01302 538225

---



## **The End of an Era for Doncaster Civic Trust**

### **Eric Braim Announces his Retirement**

After over 40 year's outstanding service as the Trust's Honorary Secretary, Eric Braim has decided not to seek re-election at the Annual General Meeting in November. He has been at the very heart of the Trust for all of this time, and has been the driving force behind most of its achievements.

After producing his first Trust Newsletter in 1970, he continued to produce a further 88 issues over the next 30 years. Many of these contained substantial articles based on his original research into the area's architects, buildings and significant spaces. This body of work has formed a valuable archive resource for those undertaking local history projects, both now and in the future.

Of his many campaigns, the most notable was fought in 1986 when he successfully challenged Doncaster Council in the High Court. The judgement established that a large part of Doncaster Common, mostly within the Racecourse, was Public Open Space and the public had a right to use it for recreation.

A member of the Royal Institute of British Architects, Eric Braim worked for practices in Doncaster before retiring early. He had also studied for membership of the Institute of Landscape Architects, then, in the late 1970s, studied for and received a Diploma in Conservation Studies at the York Institute of Advanced Architectural Studies at The King's Manor. With his immensely broad knowledge, the Trust has been very fortunate to be able to rely on his well-qualified judgement and wise counsel over many years.

The Trust has so much to thank Eric for. An example of his initiative, drive and skill is the set of display boards which he called "In Style". Many members will have seen these, and will remember that they show local houses and their details, like doors and windows, through the years. Each excellent photograph is captioned with the building's architect and date. They are becoming an even more useful record as the buildings become altered, often to the detriment of their character.

Ten years ago it seemed that almost everything in the Trust was done by Eric, ably assisted by his wife Betty. Gradually, aspects of his work were handed over to others. Under Philip Mottram the Newsletter became Trust Topics in 2000, and is now edited by Archie Sinclair. The membership details are now looked after by our Membership Secretary Mairaid Smith.

For over 35 years, Eric would go to the Planning Department and look through the plans that had been submitted, not only those affecting listed buildings and conservation areas, but also anything else of civic importance. A year ago Doncaster Council's planning business became "paper-less", so there were no plans for Eric to inspect. Now, with the new technology, plans which we wish to view are selected on-line and presented to the Trust's Planning Sub-committee, which includes Eric, as images on a laptop. Our representations are now submitted to the Council by e-mail.

Although Eric will no longer be our Secretary, he and Betty will remain on the Executive Committee, and on the Planning Sub-committee, and they plan to continue to host the meetings at their home.

So although the "hand over" of duties should be completed at the AGM in November, we will not be losing regular contact and participation from the Braims. It's "Thanks for everything, Eric", but not "Goodbye".

**Archie Sinclair**

# 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 edition of Trust Topics we have objected to several applications for proposed commercial activity in conservation areas.



Bass Terrace, on Thorne Road

In one case, as an example, we objected to a change of use from a shop to a hot food take-away at Bass Terrace in the Thorne Road conservation area, left. This also included planned changes to the shop front. We felt that this proposal was detrimental not only to the character of the conservation area but would also impact on the amenity of local residents.

In other cases we may have no concerns about a change of use but be concerned about changes to the building. In a recent application for a change of use from nail bar to a taxi office in Sunny Bar, a well established commercial area, right, we made no comment on the new use.



Sunny Bar, new taxi office

However we did express concern about an inappropriate shop front which was also proposed. We thought that the existing shop front could be retained.



The former Gaumont/Odeon site after demolition

The state of the old Gaumont site has caused much comment not just amongst Trust members but also in the town generally, with the press taking an interest. In July there was an application for change of use of this land to a public car park and for fixing cladding to the side of the adjoining building, left.

We stated that this application should only be granted when full details are received. The Trust would particularly object to any advertising panels on this site.

For the second time, we studied an application to make considerable changes to an old nursing home on Avenue Road. Here we felt that the opportunity to restore the brickwork of the original Victorian house should be taken.

Further away from the town centre, we recently commented on an application to erect two semi-detached houses in the conservation village of Warmsworth. We felt that it was important that the character of this village with its limestone buildings is preserved. Whilst we had no objections to some of the demolition required, nor to the new housing in principle, we felt that improvements could be made to the design. Our suggestions included, amongst other things, that one vernacular out-building should be retained, that only one house should be built and that more appropriate materials should be used.

## Planning and Conservation Sub Committee



# Nearly the Back Page - Destination Cambridge

Cambridge is a fascinating place for the architectural tourist. Its architecture dates from Norman times to the present day, is often stunning and is rarely uninteresting. Throughout the 20th century there was a “battle” between contemporary and revival styles. Archie Sinclair spent the day there in May.



In 1934, Sir Herbert Baker designed the Scott Polar Research Institute building, above, in a classical neo-Georgian style while Sir Giles Gilbert Scott adopted a modernist-cum-classical approach in 1934 for the monumental University Library, right.



In 1969, Downing College built its modern Senior Common Room, left, in concrete but with a classical, even Palladian, sense of symmetry and proportion, winning an RIBA Award in 1971 for its architects Howell, Killick, Partridge and Amis.

James Stirling’s 1967 Library for the Faculty of History, below, was uncompromisingly radical and asymmetrical. It is now listed grade 2.



James Stirling's History Library  
Exterior, left  
Interior, right



# The Back Page - Destination Cambridge

In 1994, John Outram designed additions to the former Addenbrooke's Hospital for the Judge Institute of Management Studies in a decorative post-modern style, below.



The Trinity Hall Jerwood Library, right, by Freeland, Rees, Roberts, 1999, was clearly neo-vernacular Tudor.



Although the 20th century was in its final decade, architects Erith and (Quinlan) Terry designed the neo-classical Maitland Robinson Library for Downing College in 1991, in Portland stone, left.



Norman (now Lord) Foster and Partners was responsible for the high-tech Library for the Faculty of Law, in steel and glass, designed in 1995.

Exterior, left

Inside the curved glass wall and roof, right

