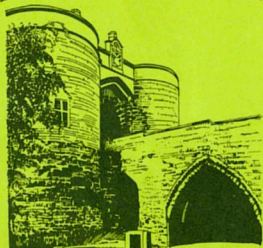


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Nottingham Civic Society

79

April 1989

NEWSLETTER



COURT BETWEEN THE ALBERT HALL AND PLAYHOUSE.

Alterations to the Albert Hall, Nottingham
William Saunders and Partners Architects

50p

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Looking back over the last seven years, this being my 21st. Newsletter, much has improved but at least three areas still need a great deal of attention and action. Lack of maintenance, litter and graffiti still detract from a general level of improvement. It is not sufficient to renovate or restore and walk away thinking "That's completed!"

Unless something has been done recently the Camellia House at Wollaton Hall is a case in point. Amid a general air of neglect the interior paintwork is appreciably veined by rust.

Having rightly condemned graffiti I find I am grudgingly sympathetic to a loud cry from the heart. Elm Avenue was created by the Enclosure Commissioners as an essential part of a green walkway, a promenade, that skirted the inner town from Caming Circus to St. Ann's. Until recently it still had some dignity but a variety of social reasons brought a partial decline. No. 10 in the middle of a terrace at the Mansfield Road end has been allowed to decay. An anonymous hand has boldly painted on its facade "MEND ME I ROT MY NEIGHBOURS. MEND ME NOW, CRIMINAL WASTE" One might shout "Why has this been allowed to happen and to continue?" Is another loophole involved just waiting to be closed by some public spirited person with enough enterprise to do something about it? Do we rely all too often on the Council, "them", to take action? How do "they" find out?

Grffiti and the accumulation of litter often results from a building and/or its surrounding area being left unoccupied or unattended for more than a few days. Sometimes the first signs of the ubiquitous illiterate felt tip are not removed and inevitably more of the repulsive scribes move in. For a long time the walls in Clinton Street East provided this kind of treat.

Legislation for £10 instant fines for litter offences, as exists in Central London, appears an attractive proposition but who enforces the legislation?

To close on a more cheerful note, could I ask more pubs and eating and drinking establishments in the centre of Nottingham to put tables and chairs outside for the benefit of their patrons when the weather is favourable? *Ken Brand*

THE SECRETARY'S ANNUAL REPORT 1988

We are happy to report another very successful year in many respects. We are very much more than a 'pressure group', though we continue to exercise that function effectively and to give our considered views on planning and conservation issues. Apart from this we provide a wide range of other activities in which our members can participate.

Membership continues to show a small overall growth. At October 31 we had **421 individual members, 245 family members and 9 corporate members**. If we count a family membership as 2, this gives a total of 920. (Last year 889).

Donations have included **£250** (restoration of the Smythson Memorial in St Leonard's Church, Wollaton), **£600** (cataloguing of the mediaeval pottery collection in the Castle Museum), and **£725** (one of two British White Cattle - heifer with calf - for Wollaton Park).

We were represented at the Midlands Amenity Societies Association Conference in Leicester in April and at the Heritage Co-ordination Group Conference in London in May.

The Third Keith Train Memorial Lecture was held in October, jointly sponsored by the Civic Society and the Thoroton Society and hosted by the Thoroton Society. The speaker was our President, Professor Barley. In 1989 it is our turn to host the Lecture. The speaker on this occasion will be the well-known architect Rod Hackney, present President of the R.I.B.A.

Our Special Projects work has suffered a serious set-back since the introduction of the Government's new plans for Employment Training, replacing the MSC provisions under which we had worked so successfully in association with the Family First Projects Agency. The emphasis now is on more formal training in set skills and much of our work does not fit into this concept. The project for the improvement work on the Broadmarsh Caves has been abandoned, though it is possible that this may be taken over by the proprietors of the Broadmarsh Centre, who would sponsor the work and combine it with an interpretation centre. Likewise, the cleaning of graves in the Rock Cemetery has been halted. Virtually the only positive work in which we have been involved during the year has been the comparatively minor reconstruction of cattle drinks at Wollaton Park.

Our interest in the Nursery Garden at Wollaton Park has continued, particularly the reconstruction of the 'flued walls'. In association with the Nottingham City Council Recreation Department and Family First, we visited Chilton Foliat and Grotth Country Park (Liverpool), where the television series 'A Victorian Kitchen Garden' was filmed. These were very enjoyable visits, as well as being very valuable and informative. Particularly memorable was our meeting with Harry Dodson at Chilton Foliat, who figured so prominently in the series. Unfortunately - and frustratingly - there is little to show for our efforts because of lack of funding by the City Council.

Wollaton Park and the Hall have figured prominently in our discussions during the year. The Executive Committee held a special meeting in March to formulate our continuing policy views, up-dating our 1986 Report 'Fraying at the Edges'. This discussion was based on a Report prepared by Hilary Silvester and Ian Wells. Later in the year, we accepted proposals by Professor Barley for an Architectural Interpretation Study of the Hall. Surprisingly, no such study has ever been carried out. It was agreed to sponsor the Study by donating up to £2,500.

We made a detailed submission to the consultants carrying out the feasibility study on Nottingham Castle commissioned by the City Council. This was prepared by Andrew Hamilton.

We made a general appeal to our members for help in various aspects of our work, following a special meeting of the Executive Committee in July which looked at fundamental matters affecting the work of the Society. Response in the various categories was mixed. There was scarcely any support for 'practical', 'muddy Wellingtons' work on conservation projects. The appeal for shop helpers was also, on the whole, disappointing. On the positive side, however, we have been able to put together two very significant and useful groups. One of them has ably taken over the organisation of our attendance and participation in 'special events' - shows, etc. under the guidance of Ann Mitchell. The other, led by Michelle Greenwald and assisted by our Chairman, John Severn, has undertaken the recording and photographing of threatened buildings in particular, together with the provision of photographs to assist in the consideration of planning applications. Its first - though long-term - task is the recording of Victorian Churches in Nottingham. We have been fortunate in attracting, in both groups, a number of enthusiastic and professional members.

The Shire Hall Tours, Heritage Walks and the Sunday Castle Tours have been outstandingly successful, thanks to the devoted work of Cliff Deane and Margaret Harrison and others, bringing in an income of **£1,821**.

We are immensely indebted to Thoresby Bradley and Margaret Harrison and all the shop helpers who have devoted their time and effort regularly to keeping the Castle Gatehouse Shop running so successfully. They can congratulate themselves and earn the sincere thanks of the Society on achieving a record year, with a gross profit of **£11,599**, despite increased competition from the Castle Museum Shop. What is more, the profitability, which was the subject of previous adverse comment by the VAF Inspectorate, has improved.

Ken Brand has worthily kept the 'Mark of the Month' Awards scheme going, with regular awards throughout the year. We are very grateful to him for his devotion. A lot of hard work is involved. Unfortunately we get very little publicity for the awards, but they are highly prized by the recipients and the eye-catching red certificate is proudly displayed on many a board-room wall.

The Society has a member on the judging panel for the Lord Mayor's Award which fulfills somewhat similar objectives. 1988 was its first year.

At the end of April, the Civic Trust Environment Week was marked by an exhibition in the Old Market Square, again using our kiosk. In addition there were two bus tours ('Sneinton Railway Lands', John Severn, and 'Buildings of the 30s', Ian Wells), and a walking tour of the city centre by Ken Brand, taking in the various renovations that had taken place. Attendances were disappointing for the tours and inadequate publicity was blamed. The Committee will be rethinking proposals for 1989.

We put in an appearance at the Local History Fair in Brehouse Yard in May.

A notable publication during the year was a completely new edition of the T.C. Hine book, which has been very favourably received. The author is Ken Brand.

In collaboration with the Sneinton Environmental Society, we have continued our interest in the Sneinton Railway Lands. The feasibility study is proceeding, but it is still uncertain if we shall achieve our objective of an Industrial Heritage Centre.

The future of Lamberts Factory continued to be a matter for concern, particularly after the fire which occurred early in the year. We were awarded an Urban Initiative Grant to carry out a feasibility study on the building. The work was carried out by John Severn, who concentrated on proposals to embody it in a new Exhibition Centre. This received wide publicity, but other ideas have carried the day. There are now definite proposals by the new owners, Pickering Developments, for an ambitious redevelopment scheme for offices. We have given these proposals a general, if still slightly cautious, welcome.

We commented in detail on the provisions of the draft Local Plan and on the plans for a major scheme of improvements to the Forest Recreation Ground. The Environment Committee is studying the planning situation in the Park Estate with a view to formulating policies for the future of this estate in a time of great change.

We are still anxious about the future of the Shire Hall, though we are prepared to suspend judgement on George Akins' proposals and we have offered to assist and advise him in his plans.

Our meetings and visits and tours for members were generally well attended. Landmarks in a memorable year were probably our visits to Gloucester, Norwich and Derby during the summer.

The 1988 Christmas Party was held in the Lace Hall, a very enjoyable event in very pleasant surroundings. The catering was organised by Ann Booth and Peggie Charlesworth with the assistance of a band of willing helpers, who put on a splendid buffet for us. Thank you!

We have made detailed representations on a large number of planning matters. We have been actively involved with the Mapperley Park Residents' Association and the Action Group in objection to proposals for residential development of the Police Training Ground off Mansfield Road. Other matters of concern have included shopping policies, Pearson's store, hot food take-aways in the city centre, redevelopment of the Hyson Green flats site, street trading proposals in Clinton Street E and W and Lincoln Street, flagpoles in the Old Market Square, development of the Babbington Colliery site, proposals to build on green-belt land at Bramcote and many others.

We supported, with success, the listing of the Watson Fothergill Almshouses (Norris Homes) on Berridge Road East and have shown continued concern at delays in putting them to new residential use. We proposed the listing of Basford Hall, without success and we also failed to secure the listing of the cottages 21-35 Talbot Street, which we fear will now be demolished as part of the site for new Co-operative Society offices.

A special word of thanks to Ken Brand, who has edited our Newsletter since September 1982. He researches and writes much of the material himself and has brought to the Newsletter a particular excellence of which we are very proud. It is the flagship of our Society, long may it sail under his captainship!

There is much more that could have been said about our activities. So many things have had to be dismissed in a few short words, but this is a Report and not a detailed history so perforce it must end here. May I finally personally thank the chairman for his continual support and guidance and for all his unstinted and devoted work for the Society, our newly elected treasurer, Simon Hodgkin, for so willingly undertaking the complex task of looking after our many accounts and all the other officers and committee members for their help and support throughout another very busy year.

February 1989

Ray Banks, Secretary

THE VICTORIAN SOCIETY : EAST MIDLAND GROUP.

The Civic Society and the Victorian Society already have a number of members in common, and we feel that many of the Victorian Society's activities may well be of interest to Civic Society members. All the following events are open to both members and non-members:

Saturday 20 May	Visit to Bolsover Castle and Hardwick Hall.
Friday 2 June	Arthur Sullivan: Victorian Musician. Lecture/recital at the W.E.A. Shakespeare Street, Nottingham.
Sunday 4 June	Visit to Calke Abbey and Melbourne.
Saturday 9 September	T.C. Hine Architect. A lecture by Ken Brand at All Saints Church Nottingham.
Saturday 7 October	Visit to Windsor Castle and Royalty and Empire Exhibition.

For further details and booking forms please send s.a.e. to Hilary Silvester, 22 Wheatfields Road, Thorneywood, Nottingham.

NOTTINGHAM'S CITY TRANSPORT: EXTREMELY LIMITED

No-one who goes out of doors during the rush hour can fail to realise that Nottingham grinds almost to a halt twice a day. Whether you curse your way to work in a car, make your leisurely progress in a bus or overtake everyone by going on foot you will realise that the situation is desperate.

A desperate situation calls not for desperate remedies but for sensible ones, and with this in mind the Civic Society asked Bob Cullen and Ian Wells to make a submission to the County Council, in response to its Structure Plan Review, concerning traffic in the city.

Why do so many of us drive to work, and why do so few of us carry passengers? The short answer to both questions is 'convenience'. My own daily journey, from Thorneywood to Clifton, takes under 20 minutes: by bus it involves a seven minute walk and then takes another 40; within the limits of the job I like to arrive and leave at a time to suit me. In fact I only skirt the congestion, but the section between Smeinton Market and Wilford Road is itself jammed in several places.

The Civic Society's solution starts with the motorist. He will sit in a traffic jam because there is no advantage in going by bus, and there will be a parking place at the end of his journey. If there was no parking place, would he drive? A parking policy could determine this by the way it was priced: 50p for two hours, £1 for four hours, £7 in excess of this. That is the sort of draconian measure which may be necessary, leaving space for shoppers and visitors but making commuters think again. Some workplaces have their own parking, and this has been encouraged, if not indeed expected, by the city council; however well meant, its unfortunate effect has been to increase car traffic.

Car sharing is another way of reducing vehicles on the road. A group of people would use less petrol, reduce the wear on each car and do their bit to ease traffic congestion; waiting for all your passengers each morning and evening may be tiresome, but a little organisation and flexibility, not least in working hours where possible, might do the trick.

Congestion would be further reduced if heavy lorries were banned from the city centre during the daytime. They obstruct traffic flow when they are on manoeuvres outside their destination or parked in such a way as to close one lane of the carriageway, and their majestic progress in heavy traffic is such that they slow everyone down. Their deliveries could surely take place at night, and if this was impossible companies could use a fleet of vans which met the lorries at agreed points and transferred their loads in that way. No city centre should have to tolerate 38 ton juggernauts: and they're getting bigger all the time.

Many readers will recall the 'zone and collar' scheme of 1975 by which Nottingham attempted to set a lead and became a laughing-stock. The reason was simple: the bus lanes along

which the Lilac Leopards could prowl were completely ineffectual.

Bus expressways are in fact an excellent idea, given that all the main roads into the city centre are, or could easily be, dual carriageways from the city boundary inwards, allowing for one lane in each direction to be a dedicated expressway at certain times of the day. But traffic engineers would need to be serious about it: the buses would need to be able to glide past other traffic, with control over traffic lights; and stringent penalties should be handed out to motorists who drive or park in bus lanes between the forbidden times.

A nice idea. An impossible one? Certainly despair at Nottingham's traffic movement has prompted serious thoughts about a Light Transit system for the city. One might immediately think of trams or trolleys and it's worth thinking for a moment about Nottingham's experience of this in the past.

When we celebrate 150 years of the Midland Railway later this year we will no doubt see maps showing the local railway system of 25 years ago, and marvel at all the lines - not to mention the stations - that have gone. Apart from the excessive zeal with which Dr Beeching carried out his task, it has to be admitted that few of Nottingham's railways went where commuters wanted to go. Perhaps you know the story of the man who went into Victoria Station and asked for a ticket to Daybrook: the booking clerk advised him to take the tram as it was both quicker and cheaper. Traffic conditions eventually caught up with the tram in 1936 and its trolleybus successor 30 years later, but the wheel appears to have come full circle.

The Nottingham Development Enterprise scheme for an LRT has looked at an initial scheme using the trackbed of the existing Leen Valley goods line from Hucknall through Bulwell and Lenton to the Midland Station; a sensible proposal is then to align this route through Weekday Cross Tunnel into the Victoria Centre. A brave scheme, but is it where one should start? One can see why this line has been chosen, but how much congestion will it really ease? You can say that same about the intention of using that line to restore services to Mansfield and Worksoop, as British Rail hopes to do since the reopening of Kirby Tunnel has become a distinct possibility.

For an LRT really to make an impact, however, it must really attack the problem routes such as Mansfield Road. Reserved track will be necessary, as in continental tramway systems (and some enlightened British ones in days of yore), and a fair degree of civil engineering and landscaping will also be required. The residents of Kent have just added £80 million to the cost of the new Channel Tunnel link, and the residents of Nottingham will not fail to protect environmentally sensitive areas. However desperate the need the railwaymen will not have it all their own way as they did a century and more ago: courageous decisions will be needed to meet all the needs of the world we live in today.

Those who choose to cycle or walk to work sometimes get forgotten amidst all the grand schemes. If anything they

should be thanked for easing congestion, and their numbers encouraged to increase. Cycleways and green corridors have begun to be developed, they must be jealously guarded, and we need many more of them.

Particularly we need areas dedicated to people, where vehicles do not normally go. Existing pedestrianised areas are criss-crossed by traffic, and it may be a counsel of perfection to ban all traffic from the central area between Parliament Street and the Broadmarsh and between Cranbrook Street and Maid Marian Way (buses excluded) to deal with this. At the very least we need pelican crossings, to avoid the free-for-all at zebra crossings.

Surely all this is not a pipedream? It is rather a serious solution to a desperate problem. Nottingham could be blocked solid by the end of the century: and that is only eleven years away.

Ian Wells

MAPPERLEY PARK ROADS

Several of the names of the roads in Mapperley Park are associated with the campaigns of the British Army in the mid to late 19th century. This is no doubt due to the fact that the Wrights were in part a military family.

The British residency in Lucknow was besieged in 1857 during the Indian Mutiny. After the city was temporarily relieved by Havelock and Outram on September 25, final relief came on November 17 through Colin Campbell.

In January 1868 a British expedition to Ethiopia, led by General Sir Robert Napier, included the 45th Regiment. The army's presence in Ethiopia followed the imprisonment of the British Consul by King Theodore the Third. Magdala was the fortress and last stronghold of Theodore. It was stormed and captured on April 13, 1868. Zulla on Annealey Bay, an inlet on the Red Sea Coast, was the embarkation port for the victorious British Army returning to Bombay.

On January 4, 1878, through a secret Anglo-Turkish agreement, Britain promised to defend Turkey against attack, part of a move to check Russian advances in Asia Minor. As part of this strategy Britain would be allowed to occupy Cyprus. Confirmation of this move came when the Treaty of Berlin was signed on July 13, 1878. In fairness, it should be pointed out that the use of 'Cyprus' as a possible name for one of the first roads on the Wright's Mapperley Estate was suggested early in the 1870s. This proposed development, on land purchased by William Windley, was put back for several years.

So far, in spite of extensive enquiries, an explanation for the use of 'Ebers' has not been uncovered.

Ken Brand

ALBERT HALL ORGAN APPEAL

A number of Nottingham landmarks have disappeared over the last two decades, and many more have been under threat. One of these is the Albert Hall, for three quarters of a century Nottingham's Concert Hall and then dropped immediately new (and far more comfortable!) premises appeared. Various schemes appeared, the best known being the disco (Albert's!), but now we have the fine refurbished hall and studios which seem set fair to be an asset to the City.

One major job remains, however, and that is the organ. The gift of Jesse Boot, it was built by James Jepson Binns of Leeds and opened in 1910 by the distinguished recitalist Edwin Lemare, remembered today for a piece now known as Moonlight and Roses. For the next 75 years the Hall was served by four organists: Bernard Johnson, Gordon Thorp and Philip Mason, and during this time the instrument survived with little major attention: some changes to its stops by Brindley & Foster in 1920 and a rebuild by Willis in 1973.

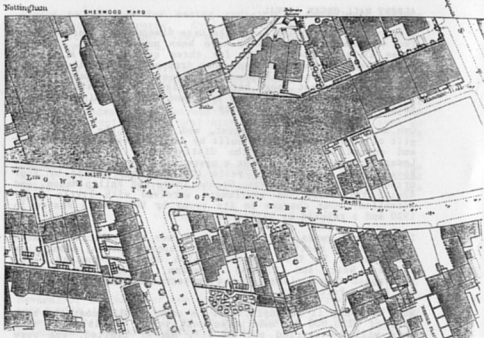
In its last years, particularly, it was the vehicle for some distinguished recitals promoted by Stephen Sherwin, among them performances by Flor Peeters, Ralph Downes, Jennifer Bate, Gillian Weir and Nicolas Kynaston, along with leading Nottingham based players David Butterworth, Stanley Monkhouse and Adrian Partington.

Now, however, it is unplayable. A rebuild will cost the best part of £150,000 if undertaken next year. It is hoped that this will be carried out by N.F. Mander Limited, who were responsible for the rebuilds at St Paul's Cathedral, Birmingham Town Hall and Eton College. They would restore the sound of the organ to what its builder intended and they would also retain and restore the original tubular-pneumatic action. Put simply, this is the system which uses wind not just to supply the pipes but to do all the necessary work once the player presses the keys; this action affects how the instrument is played and how it sounds, so that retaining it would ensure that it continued to speak with its slightly northern accent (inside the case you can see the ramrod-straight Yorkshire pines used for the pedal Violone stop).

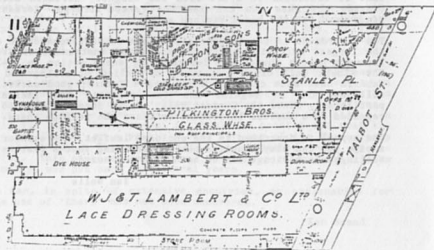
The instrument is the largest pipe organ in Nottinghamshire and the largest surviving by Binns (the grand instrument at Great Yarmouth parish church was destroyed by enemy action in 1942). The Albert Hall organ can truly be called historic, and as Manders have made clear it still has a future; good marketing will see it in regular use for concerts and recitals, particularly since the Concert Hall 'organ' does not seem to be regarded as a musical instrument by those who perform there.

The appeal is described in the enclosed leaflet. By sponsoring a pipe you can play a unique part in ensuring that a feature of Nottingham's heritage can be both seen and heard.

Ian Wells



The O.S. Map of 1881 (above) shows the location of the Marble Skating Rink, the Turkish Baths and the Alexandra Skating Rink. Goade's Insurance Map c.1922 (below) reveals the Marble Skating Rink has become Pilkington Bros. Glass Warehouse. The Turkish Baths and the Alexandra Skating Rink have been taken over by Joseph Burton and Sons Provision Merchants. "The Alexandra" is now "Rock City".



SHORTS WAREHOUSE, ORIGINALLY NOTTINGHAM'S MARBLE SKATING RINK

The historic implications of this building, once one delves into the subject, is more important than one thinks.

Just as today when sporting activities have to be practised in surroundings different from the real thing, so in Victorian times our forefathers had to indulge in similar activities if they were to become proficient in their chosen game.

The best analogy in relation to Shorts Factory is that of skiing and this year, 1989, we have seen much disappointment in Scotland particularly because of the lack of snow. Most of today's skiers in this country practice on training grounds of plastic or fibrous materials built to simulate the ski slopes of the frozen Alps. Or indeed, another training method is the wheeled ski which allows practice on many other surfaces different from the compounded snow so much favoured by our winter sports fanatics.

The art of skating as a sport was no doubt initiated by the founding of the Edinburgh Skating Club in 1642 - in the year Charles I raised his standard outside Nottingham's Royal Castle - and there were two kinds of skating - figure skating and speed skating as there are now. But in earlier times available conditions dictated the type and times of the sport in a way which would not be tolerated today.

Speed skating required large tracts of ice such as are to be found on the lakes of Scandinavia and the Lincolnshire Fens. Figure skating, the more popular in Britain, required frozen ponds and ornamental lakes.

Skating became a well patronised Victorian activity and the London Skating Club, established in 1830, was the organising body for figure skating. Speed skating, where this occurred, was conducted under the rules of the National Skating Association which was founded in Cambridge in 1879 and transferred to London headquarters in 1894.

As now most games played on dry land could then be played on ice, and hockey, dancing, rounders etc were not only played with vigour on the frozen waters whenever possible, but practised on dry land whenever time and facilities permitted.

Both speed and figure skating were then practised on roller skates, which were considered to be a good introduction to ice skating. The roller skates in use at the turn of this last century were invented by J.L. Plimpton of New York in 1869, although wheeled skates were known to have been in use in Holland in 1770.

It must be remembered that it was not possible to construct ice skating rinks in the 1870s, as the production of ice by mechanical means in the form required for skating purposes had not been invented.

However, the 1870s and 80s were obviously a golden age for skating for reference to an early 20th Century Encyclopaedia gives a bibliography thus:-

Figure Skating (1889) by T.M. Witham
Art of Skating (1880) by G. Anderson
Combined Figure Skating (1892) by S.E.M. Williams
Handbook of Fen Skating (1882) by N. and C.A. Goodman
Skating (Badminton Library (1894) by J.M. Heathcote and Tebutt
Figure and Fancy Skating (1895) by G.A. Meagher

It is obvious from the invention of the Roller Skate in America in 1869 and the construction of two skating rinks in 1876 and 1877 in Talbot Street, Nottingham, that this city was in the forefront of modern thinking and no doubt the Leicester and Nottingham Skating Rink Company (Limited) were in on the act straight away with two spanking brand new rinks within shouting distance of one another in the centre of Nottingham.

As the little pieces of history begin to knit together and as yet I have only carried out about four hours research, it is significant that at one end of the scale we have still remaining in almost original and intact one of Nottingham's two skating rinks, and at the other end of the spectrum, Torville and Dean, Nottingham's International heroes still making headlines.

Perhaps one should have a 'World of Skating' as well as a 'World of Soccer', at least with the World of Skating we have the authentic building to put it in, that is if we do not grant permission to demolish it.

It is easy to establish the importance of this building in the city, particularly for those who wish to see the name of Nottingham playing a part in the history of Great Britain. It is not so easy, however, to persuade those who have no detailed knowledge of such facts as I have found out, or indeed have no interest in them. All I would ask at this stage is for time to be allowed to have this building fully researched and investigated before a decision is made, lest we knock down a building of local importance, as well as one of architectural merit.

I append below some notes and dates gleaned from documents.

Nottingham's Skating Rinks on TALBOT STREET

1. November 26, 1876

Alexandra Skating Rink; Talbot Street opened.
From Kelly's Directory of 1876 there is in italics 'Skating Rink' between No.22 and No.56 Lambert & Co, lace dressers.

2. February 12, 1877

Opening of the Marble Skating Rink, Talbot Street.

From Wrights Directory of 1879 we note that the 'MARBLE RINK' under the direction of the General Manager, Mr F.A. Granville, was situated adjacent to Lambert's Factory.

(a) Next door down the road was the TURKISH BATHS (under construction in 1876) and next door to the Baths was the ALEXANDRA RINK, noted as in the ownership of E.B. Cox, Esq.

3. In Morris's Directory of 1877 we note under the heading of Skating Rinks there are two in Nottingham owned by the:

Leicester and Nottingham Skating Rink Company (Limited) proprietors of the Alexandra Hall and Marble Rinks, Lower Talbot Street.
The managing director of that Company was Edward Cox.

4. The OS Map of 1881 clearly shows and names both Rinks and the Turkish Baths are shown in between.

5. The OS Map of 1901 shows the Marble Rink as now being part of a lace dressing works and the Alexandra Rink as the Victoria Hall.

6. The OS Map of 1915 shows the Marble Rink as a glass warehouse and the Victoria Hall (formerly Alexandra Rink) as still in existence.

7. Notice of Intention to erect a skating rink and offices in Talbot Street, Nottingham, on land adjoining Messrs Talbots Factory was given to the borough surveyor by the architects Messrs Evans and Jolley of Eldon Chambers, Nottingham, on June 30, 1876.

The builders were to be Messrs Richard Stevenson of Gamble Street, Nottingham, and the building was to comprise:-

Brick walls with stone dressings, 14" thick on the ground floor and 14" and 9" with piers on the first floor.

The building was founded on sand rock.

The roof to the two storey building on Talbot Street was to have a timber roof, slated and with a zinc flat and the roof to the rink was to have a structure of wrought iron principals, wood purlins with trusses, slate covering and plastered underneath.

The structure was designed with a covered rink enclosed by the building and an open rink at the rear, the covered rink had a gallery all round for spectators.

On the ground floor the entrance was on Talbot Street with a ticket office and private office on the left and a ladies' cloakroom on the right. Beyond the entrance and before the rink proper, the state room was situated on the right and a refreshment room on the left. The gentlemen's lavatory was only accessible from the skating rink proper

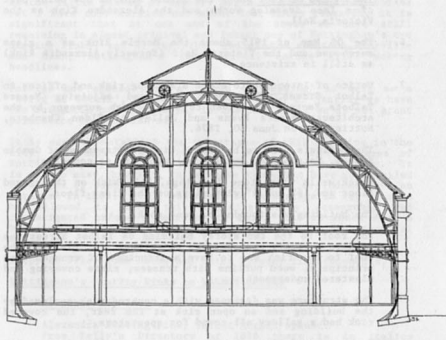
and there was a staircase to the first floor between the ladies' room and the skate room.

On the first floor a smoke room was situated over the ladies' cloakroom, and a long gallery provided a viewing space and, no doubt a functions room along the width of the rink. The attendants' room was on the first floor over the gents' lavatory and a store room, a small public room over entrance foyer and ticket office.

It would appear that from an initial viewing of the present premises it is little different today from when it was built, and no doubt all the original layouts could be traced.

It is probably the only remaining example of Nottingham's Roller Skating Entertainment Emporiums remaining in anything like its original form.

J.A. Severn



A section through the Marble Skating Rink showing the wrought iron principals and the wood purlins with trusses. All are in a very good condition. Are there any other splendid Victorian structures hidden and unrecorded in some of our neglected buildings?



The Marble Skating Rink, alias Pilkington Bros. Glass Warehouse alias Short's Warehouse by the Nottingham architects Evans and Jolley (1876).



The Alexandra Skating Rink was also designed by Evans and Jolley (1876). In addition they were responsible for the Turkish Baths adjoining this rink.

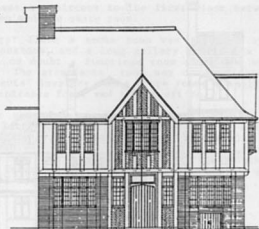
THE EXCHANGE BLOCK SCHEME

Taken from a transcript of a talk given by T.Cecil Howitt early in 1929 before the formal opening of the Council House and Exchange Buildings on 22 May 1929.

"...but this happy blending of a Civic Building with a large commercial building is one of the finest investments the City has ever made. In short instead of the old rental of c.£4 000 the new rental will be over £26 000 with rates of say £15 000-these figures will easily pay the interest and sinking fund charges over a period of 60 years after this the income will be a profit and form a reduction in the rates for the City."

(University of Nottingham Archives Department Nott B7b P29).

THIRTIES TUDOR



Elevation to Castle Gate



Elevation to High Pavement

In the early 1930s Baily and Eberlin rebuilt two of Nottingham's public houses in the stylised Brewer's Tudor popular at the time. The Royal Children, Castle Gate (April 1932) and the County Tavern, High Pavement (January 1933) are the hostelries concerned.

The late Philip Arthur 'Bobs' Weston was a keen supporter of the Civic Society and its ideals. In his will he bequeathed several books on Nottingham to the Society together with a number of maps of Nottingham. The Society gratefully acknowledges this bequest.

ANOTHER USE FOR AN OLD CHURCH

The opening of the Lace Hall in the former Unitarian Chapel on High Pavement, reminds me of Derek Latham (Derek Latham and Associates; architects, town planners, etc. of Derby) who impressed the Society several years ago with his talk on "Our New Architectural Heritage". This is how he solved his business accommodation problem.

In 1980 Derek Latham and Associates, a rapidly expanding architectural practice, was squeezing its eleven members into two rooms of a Regency town house in Friar Gate, Derby. By chance, it was discovered that St Michael's, a disused church of 1858 by H.I. Stevens, was about to be demolished. St Michael's, close to Derby Cathedral, was in a sorry state with dry rot, deteriorating stonework and damaged stained glass windows. It was a paradise for vandals and pigeons.

Derek Latham, who is on the city's conservation advisory committee, offered to buy the church, restore it and convert it sympathetically for the use of his practice. So well researched was the proposal put before the church commissioners that they felt the dignity of the building would be enhanced.

First and second floors have been inserted which are supported from the existing structural members of the church. The two mezzanines at first floor level are shaped so as to leave clear spaces round some columns and arches, and to reveal the massive rafters and purlins.

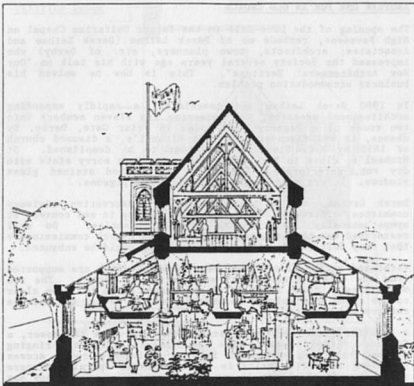
A dramatic glazed screen separates the nave from the tower, a feature created to meet fire requirements. The old ringing chamber has been converted into a conference room, access (doubling as a fire exit) is via a concrete spiral staircase which ascends all three floors. The great west window now has clear glass, but the stained glass has been retained in the east window. Ground floor studio space is available in the nave for young businesses working in mainly craft and design. A 125 year lease from Derby Diocese cost £4,500; conversion cost around £140,000. The cost of a new building would have been close to £200,000.

As the drawing shows, the transformation has given the practice a spacious open plan office with roof lights providing plenty of diffuse natural lighting.

Ken Brand

[Based on information provided by Derek Latham and Associates].

The Society's visit to the Heights of Abraham on Saturday July 8th. will allow members to appreciate and experience one of the practice's more spectacular projects. The Heights of Abraham Cable Car and Visitor Centre were designed by Derek Latham and Associates, the Cable Car Engineers were Pomagalski of Grenoble and the contractors were Shand Building.



Sketch showing the result of converting St. Michael's Church Derby (by H.I. Stevens 1858) into offices for the architectural practice of Derek Latham and Associates. (from Heritage Outlook July/August 1983).

The Society's response to the 'Movement' section of the Structure Plan Review 'Traffic in Nottingham' ended with the following conclusions:

Nottingham Civic Society calls for an integrated transport policy, with serious study followed by action in the areas listed below:-

1. A car parking policy.
2. A ban on heavy lorries at certain times.
3. The use of bus only lanes in conjunction with park-and-ride facilities making public transport fast, convenient and attractive to use.
4. Priority for pedestrians in the central area and proper consideration of the needs for pedestrians and cyclists in the City generally.
5. The relocation of industry, housing and shopping to both reduce the need for travelling and allow peak public transport to work both ways.
6. The investigation and development of a light rapid transport system.



In 1873 T.C. Hine, more as the amateur antiquary than the Duke of Newcastle's agent, prepared this picturesque proposal for Nottingham Castle. At this time the Castle was still a blackened ruin, its walls and towers overgrown with ivy and the interior a mass of rubble. Hine's plan for the £20,000 feasibility study on the future of Nottingham Castle should look again at Hine's distant dream! (Between 1876-8 Hine, acting on behalf of the Town Council, did convert the old ruined Renaissance Palace into the first provincial Museum of Fine Art).

MARK OF THE MONTH

The Society's Mark of the Month for December 1988 was awarded for the Albert Hall Refurbishment.

When the New Concert Hall opened the Albert Hall became redundant, and it was decided rather than let it decay through lack of use, to find a new use for it. There was a need in the city for a hall suitable for venues which were too small to fill the Concert Hall.

As the building adjoined the Playhouse Theatre it was decided to interlink the two buildings so facilities could be shared and managed from one source.

The old layout had a narrow cramped hall which was enlarged. a new floor was fitted at first floor to split the building. The upper floor was for concerts, dances, etc, whilst the lower floor could be used for exhibitions, small theatre groups etc.

The elevation looking towards Parliament Street was previously obscured by the Institute and was dull and utilitarian. This was extensively altered to give a more pleasing appearance and now gives interesting views over the city centre from the Gallery and Meeting Room.

A terrace has been fitted over the Playhouse Bar with access from the Playhouse and Albert Hall which should prove popular when the weather is suitable. Facilities such as a lift and ramps were incorporated to allow disabled persons access to most of the complex.

The enclosed yard between the buildings is being repaved and landscaped to give an additional outside space for the public to use.

The heating system is an interesting early form of warm air heating. Heat is pushed up into the ceiling void via a large paddle fan in the boiler room and drawn back into the boiler room via grilles in the walls to complete the cycle. This is still effective and only the boiler was changed to gas from coal for convenience.

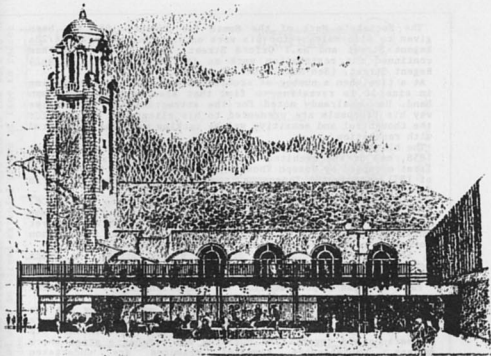
The Faience facade on North Circus Street was cleaned and repointed. It was in remarkably good condition considering its age and exposure. The organ is reputed to be one of the best in the country and it is hoped to have this back in full song in the near future.

When the Institute was demolished the back of the Playhouse Theatre was exposed and the opportunity was taken to provide an additional entrance into the Playhouse Foyer from Park Row.

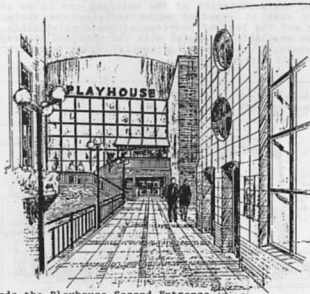
The Institute had become obsolete and was in a poor condition, it was decided, therefore, to demolish this and construct a new office block on the site.

The architects for the refurbishment of the Albert Hall; restoration, adaptation and new work, were William Saunders & Partners. The contractors were Standen Construction Limited.

(Grateful thanks to William Saunders & Partners who supplied information and illustrations).



View from the Playhouse Concourse.
Notice the terrace over the Playhouse Bar.



View towards the Playhouse Second Entrance
(from Derby Road).

The Society's Mark of the Month for January 1989 has been given to Alan Mulcahy for his work on the Hine block No.28/28A Regent Street and No.1 Oxford Street. In many ways Alan has continued the restoration work on the Hine terrace No.14-24 Regent Street. (See Newsletter 67 pp6-8).

At a time when a number of architectural practices are growing in size it is revealing to find that Alan remains a one man band. He is already noted for the attractive and informative way his proposals are presented to his clients as well as for the thoughtful and sensitive way he tackles problems associated with renovation.

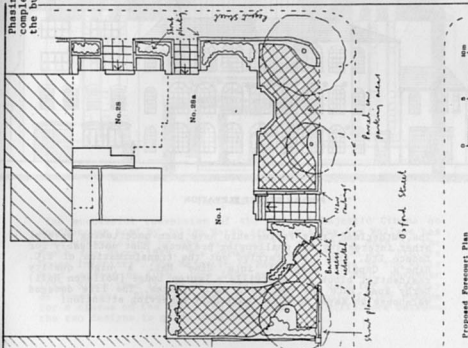
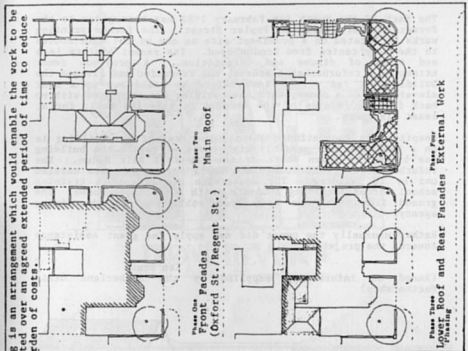
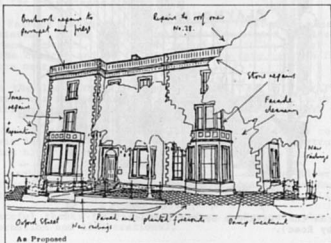
The block faces Hine's own house and is dated over the doorway 1858, one of the architect's later houses in the area. It was first occupied by Joseph Thompson a surgeon. Wright's Directory of 1871 records the Thompsons, now senior and junior, still in residence.

On the 14th. September 1875 the Girls Public Day School Co. Ltd. moved into School House No.1 Oxford Street. A Thompson was listed for No.26 Regent Street, the present No.26 was not yet built hence No.26 for No.28. Rapid expansion of the school soon forced it to find new premises on Arboretum Street.

Like many properties in or near Regent Street the block became used by commercial and professional interests. At present Bramleys Solicitors are at No.1 Oxford Street.

Part of Alan's presentation to his client(s) is reproduced here with his permission. His 'Conclusion' was as follows:

"This large and fine single building is now showing its age and is in need of extensive repair and improvement to ensure long term use, limit future maintenance costs and enhance its appearance and impact. The building has reached a stage where unless comprehensive remedial measures are undertaken increasing problems will be encountered and valuable building features will continue to be lost. The cycle of 'patch the problem when encountered' will no longer suffice if the important characteristics of the building are to be retained. The high cost of remedial works reflects the scale of the building and the lack of previous adequate maintenance. Grants should be available to assist with the work and the report has been structured to present potential grant agencies with a clear overall picture."



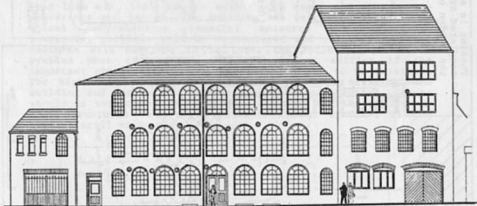
The Mark of the Month for February 1989 has been given to the former Butchers Works on Poplar Street. The former printing works is located on a prominent site on one of the main routes to the city centre from London Road. Its recent history is a sad story of disuse and dereliction. A previous owner attempted a refurbishment scheme, and re-roofed and cleaned the building but ran out of cash before he could put up a rear elevation. As a consequence the building was abandoned with no back for the ravages of the weather to take its toll, for at least six years.

Despite many foundation problems, the rear of the building is on a riverbed, and possible high costs of repair the building was bought by Brian Whitt of the Top Knot Hair Salon. The refurbishment by the Sutherland Craig Partnership was carried out by TK Building. The conversion has created a training school for hairdressing students, with a penthouse above. The ground floor premises have been sublet to an advertising agency.

Rather unusually the owner did not apply for grant assistance towards the project.

Ken Brand

(Based on information supplied by the Sutherland Craig Partnership)

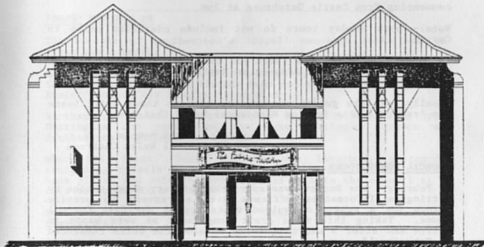


POPLAR STREET ELEVATION

The Sutherland-Craig Partnership have been undertaking several other interesting and challenging projects. Most noticeably for Zodeco Ltd. they have carried out the transformation of T.C. Hine's Coppice Hospital into Hine Hall a high quality residential block and Wyatville's Lenton Lodge (Wollaton Hall) Derby Road into the company's main offices. The fire damaged warehouse on Kayes Walk is currently receiving attention.



FRONT ELEVATION



FRONT ELEVATION.

The successful conversion of the disused Majestic Cinema on Woodborough Road by Julian Marsh Architects for Roy Wallace has been acknowledged by the award of the Society's Mark of the Month for March 1989. The premises are now known as "Picture House Interiors". The Majestic at Mapperley, close by the Wells Road, opened on 10th. June 1929 and closed on 30th. November 1957. Since then it has until recently, been used for a variety of functions. Plans survive of an earlier unfulfilled scheme for a cinema on the site, the Cine drone. The difference between the two designs is quite remarkable.

1989 GUIDED WALKS PROGRAMME

Welcome News! The Shire Hall is available to us for another year, so we hope that this 'Bonus' year is as successful as last year's.

The 1989 programme is as follows:-

On Wednesdays **HERITAGE WALKS** at 7.30pm from Castle Gatehouse Shop

LACE MARKET	May 17, June 7, 28, July 19, August 9
VICTORIAN	May 24, June 14, July 5, 26, August 16
REGENCY PARK	May 31, June 21, July 12, August 2, 23, 30

On Thursdays **SHIRE HALL TOUR** at 7.30pm from Shire Hall steps
May 18 to August 31 inclusive (NOT June 15)

On Sundays **MORTIMER'S HOLE** from 2pm to 4pm from entrance to hole
March 19 to October 8 inclusive

Last Sunday of each month from April to September

A GRAND TOUR OF THE CASTLE GROUNDS

commencing from Castle Gatehouse at 3pm

Note:- both Sunday tours do not include admission price to Castle.

If, after looking at the tours you feel that you would like to become a guide, please ring me on Nottingham 607819. Training is given.

Finally, all the guides and helpers wish to thank Cliff Deane who 'retired' this year as Historical Walks Chairman.

David Newham
Historical Walks Chairman

COUNCIL HOUSE TOURS

In February, the Society was approached at very short notice by Nottingham Information Officers with a request to provide guides for a scheme of guided walks around the City Council House. Taking this as a great compliment we were happy to oblige and after a short training session the walks commenced on February 18.

The initial four tours were an outstanding success and all concerned were extremely pleased with the response. The next tours are on August 1, 2, 3, 8, 9, 10, with tickets available from the Wheeler Gate Information Centre.

David Newham
Historical Walks Chairman

Material used in this Newsletter which is deposited in the County Record Office is used with the permission of the County Archivist.

SHIRE HALL AMENDMENT

There is in the County Record Office a set of ink and water-colour drawings prepared in 1838 by the borough surveyor Henry Moses Wood and showing some intended alterations to the County (Shire) Hall and the Gaol. These drawings have long been accepted as part of the evolution of the site in the nineteenth century. However, a few lines in the report of the Quarter Sessions held on October 25, 1838 alters everything.

"Resolved: That the proposed alterations in the County Gaol be postponed till it shall be seen whether any and what alterations in Prison Discipline are introduced in the course of the next Session of Parliament."

Moses Wood received payment of £62-8-9d for preparing plans for these unexecuted proposals, and valuing property in the Marsh etc. Improvements were eventually carried out after the responses to the new Model Prison at Pentonville had been evaluated. The revised plans, by Messrs. Hawksley and Jalland, were approved in May 1844. The new architects received £95-6-0d for "preparing plans and superintending the building work." This work was carried out, at a cost of almost £2,000.

Ken Brand

'OOPS' MARCHES ON

The success of Southampton's 'Oops!' campaign looks set to sweep the country.

A similar scheme, which encourages people to report dangers facing pedestrians, has already been set up in Nottingham - and Exeter council say they're interested.

Southampton council are to receive £1,800 in royalties from Nottingham who have used the same Footloose cartoon as Southampton's posters and leaflets.

When the first 'Oops!' scheme was launched, postcards containing details of potholes, faulty street lights, broken name plates and other hazards flooded back to the council at a rate of about 200 a week.

But now they've settled to a steady stream of about 45 complaints.

[This note appeared recently in the Southern Evening Echo, Southampton. So far very little visible evidence of Nottingham's version of 'Oops' has been seen. Ken Brand]

An Appeal to Those Who Scribble On Buildings?

"In my small way I am constantly working in the direction of preservation of what is worth preserving. I rarely stir out without having to harangue children, and even grown-ups, in groups or singly, upon the folly, the wrongness of exercising their destructive powers on lovely things not their own. If they cannot contribute to the beauty of the world, they can at least let it alone", from 'Recollections of Old Nottingham' by Mrs A.Gilbert 1904. Quoted by Hilary Silvester.

Tours and Visits

Saturday, June 10 Cotswold Wildlife Park and Arlington Mill: Cotswold Country Museum

Tuesday, June 27 British Geological Survey, Nicker Hill, Keyworth

By popular request. There is a lot to see and this should be very rewarding evening.

Saturday, July 8 The Heights of Abraham and the Crich Tramway Museum

Spectacular ride by cable car to the Heights of Abraham and the attractions of the Centre which was opened in 1987. Restaurant/coffee shop/picnic area. Then on to the Crich Museum in the afternoon.

Tuesday, August 8 The Robin Hood Centre, Maid Marian Way

A specially arranged evening visit. (The Centre will open on May 27). We will have had the opportunity to see it in course of construction on January 10 at 6pm prior to Jim Lees' talk).

Saturday, September 16 Chester

We last visited Chester in 1976. This time we shall be conducted round and entertained by members of the Chester Civic Trust. Chester is the best-preserved walled city in England and one of the richest in architectural and archaeological treasures. It has a distinctive dignity, with its mediaeval galleried streets and Tudor houses, and much else besides.

Friday, October 13

The fourth Keith Train Memorial Lecture.

Dr Rod Hackney, by this date the immediate past president of the R.I.B.A., will talk on aspects of Community Architecture. The media often refer to him as Prince Charles' architectural guru.

Arkwright Lecture Theatre
Trent Polytechnic 7.30pm.