

CUPOLA

TYNE & WEAR Building Preservation Trust NEWSLETTER AUTUMN 2020

I write this as I return by train from Great Yarmouth to see a sister Building Preservation Trust set up at a similar time to TWBPT in the late 70s. It was my first meeting outside of the region since March. GYBPT has got very strong connections to the local authority and undertakes many partnership projects. I found some great inspiration from their work, especially from their projects on King Street in the town centre.

The reason for this visit is TWBPT have been included in a pilot project that is examining how to improve the long term viability of similar organisations. You cannot underestimate how important peer to peer support is to these small groups tackling incredible projects.

One of the key targets for TWBPT is to increase the membership levels of the Trust. We can only continue our work if we have the support of the community and deliver projects on their behalf.

If you have any queries about projects or membership, please contact our new Office Manager

Corrina at: corrina@twbpt.org.uk

Yours, Martin Hulse, Trust Manager.



Save Our Staiths

Many thanks to everyone who took part in the 5k and 10k challenge race over the summer. Local artist Laura Crow designed this print which has been sold to support the campaign, and also been printed on t-shirts for runners. Funds raised have allowed us to install CCTV cameras and lighting to deter trespassers, and carry out some urgent repairs. Next on the list is a review of security fencing and investigating a cabin for the site that could be used for a wide range of things such as a visitor kiosk, events storage, work day hub, etc.

As our partnership progresses with the National Trust to explore how the Staiths can generate an income, Staiths keyholders met at Gibside recently to consider ways we can link up the two sites to celebrate their shared coal mining heritage.

It is hoped that we can open the Staiths next spring to test out some of the ideas, and welcome everyone back to the Staiths.

See links from www.dunstonstaiths.org.uk to the fundraising page and www.facebook.com/Staiths/ for updates

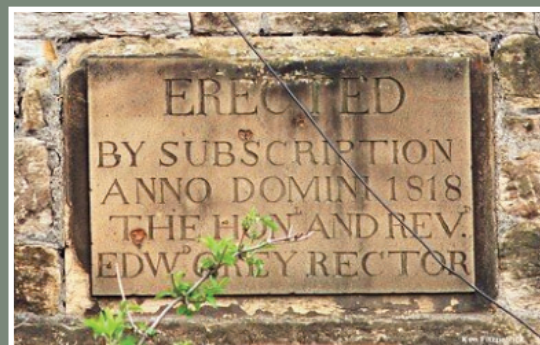
Dunston Parish School

Staying in Dunston, we are exploring a new project to restore Dunston Parish School. Threatened with demolition, Gateshead Council has stepped in and asked us to help to save possibly the oldest building in Dunston.

Opened in 1818 by the Rev Edward Grey, son of the first Earl Grey, the school served the poorest in the community, where pupils learnt using sand desks - literally with sharpened sticks on tables covered in sand to practice handwriting. The school closed in the 1930's, anchored a barrage balloon during World War 2, and was last in use as a workshop.

The site is very overgrown now; some of the trees are quite possibly holding the building upright. There are often hidden issues with derelict buildings; once vegetation and debris is removed we'll have a clearer picture of what we are dealing with.

In the current difficult funding climate, we are proposing a phased approach to restoration, in the hope we can bring this fascinating building back into use



Local schoolchildren, circa 1900.



Original flyer, circa 1870, recently found under the floorboards by workers renovating the site.



High Street West Sunderland

The progress to restore these three buildings is steady and their shells are due to be complete in October.

It certainly has been a challenging project and has required more time than initially forecast. However positive steps are now being seen with the three roofs nearly complete after a full refurbishment whilst one chimney has been repaired and the other rebuilt.

Recently we have held a crowdfunding campaign 'Buy a Brick for Sunderland' that successfully raised £5,000 and was matched by £5,000 from the Architectural Heritage Fund. Over eighty individual contributions have allowed us to raise the funds to rebuild the rear wall of Binns Department store.

The major change to this project is that we are working with Sunderland City Council to extend the project to include two further buildings 177 High St West and 1-2 Villiers Street. These two buildings from the 1800's are not listed but are an important component of the Conservation Area, which is currently classified as 'At Risk'.



Alderman Fenwick's House

Many of you will be aware that the Trust is looking to sell its current office Alderman Fenwick's House on Pilgrim Street, Newcastle.

The building was leased to the Trust in 1982 and then restored over four phases, finally opening in 1997. The building is owned by Newcastle City Council and they will keep control of the building through this freehold ownership.

With all Trust projects there is a need for an exit strategy. TWBPT's role is to restore these buildings drag them back into use and then move on. Sometimes this exit is after completion such as the Dukes Cottages in Backsworth, whilst for other projects it is a longer term campaign.

Do you know you can become a member for only £24 per year? Visit us at www.twbpt.org.uk for more information.

The staff team are conscious that we cannot sit in splendour on Pilgrim Street and that we need to move onto the next challenge such as the Cooperage, Banqueting Hall or Keelman's Hospital. The funds raised will be placed in an investment vehicle that will raise funds to cover core costs and will also provide an option to borrow money for these future projects

