

CUPOLA

TYNE & WEAR Building Preservation Trust NEWSLETTER SPRING 2022

Spring finds us settling in at our new home at the fabulous John Marley Centre in Scotswood, tackling a new project in Hexham, developing our Dunston projects, and expanding our portfolio in Sunderland on High Street West.

If you have any queries about projects or membership, please contact our Office Manager
Corrina at: corrina@twbpt.org.uk
Yours, Martin Hulse, Trust Manager.

THE JOHN MARLEY CENTRE



Built in 1936, this purpose-built school (a Secondary Modern built on Grammar School principles) was initially designed for pupils aged up to fourteen. In 1965, a Senior School opened that fed into John Marley Upper Schools, including Pendower and Westerhope sixth forms. It became a co-educational Comprehensive School from 1973. The school closed in the late 1980s, becoming an Adult Education College as part of City Challenge, when the Marley Gym followed by Scotswood Community Garden also took up residence at the site. Newcastle College then converted it to a Centre for Popular Music, where at the official opening in October 1994, Dire Straits frontman Mark Knopfler was guest of honour.

It was renamed the John Marley Centre after Sir John Marley, who defended the King's interest in the town of Newcastle during the Civil War and later became Mayor. During the 1644 Siege of Newcastle, the Scots threatened to destroy the tower of

Welcome to our not so new base, The John Marley Centre, where we have been for almost a year now. Our office, John Marley Lodge at the northern entrance to the site, is the former swimming pool care-takers home when it was Wickham View School.

St. Nicholas Church (now a Cathedral) with cannon-fire to quell resistance. Sir John Marley placed Scottish prisoners within the structure to save its very existence. And save it he did!

Recently, Ballet Llorent, Breeze Creatives and many other smaller businesses have also moved into the centre, adding to the vibrant mix of organisations based here.



When we opened the doors back in September for Heritage Open Days, England's largest festival of history and culture, it was a chance for everyone to see hidden places and try out new experiences for free! Over 150 people visited, many ex-students from every decade between the 1940s to the 1980s, with the majority attending the school in the 1970s.

Two granddaughters of the architect, Fred Harvey, brought along the original Order of Service for the school opening planned for 1939, but delayed by the Second World War until 1941.

The site was originally split into two schools, one for girls and one for boys, preventing interaction.

"Such a treat. Something I thought I would never do. Just a magical day."

The start, finish and break times were staggered, and it was a punishable offence for a boy to talk to a girl or vice versa, with harsher punishment for the boys being the cane or the belt.

"I didn't realise I came to such a beautiful looking school until right now, it's an amazing building."

Use of the swimming pool (also used by other schools, as the only school in the area with pool at that time) and the geography rooms on the first floor was shared, with the observation tower containing a relief map of Newcastle to help identify the

"When I walked into the hall, the smell took me back to the 70's instantly and suddenly I was eleven years old again, it felt just like yesterday."

local area. The tower closed in the early 1970s, but some visitors remembered waiting in the queue up the stairs to see the 'nit nurse' also known as 'Nitty Nora ... the Dicky Explorer' or to have their BCG, a vaccine given to secondary school children at the time to protect against tuberculosis (TB).



Visitors recalled that the entrance lobby, now with external doors on both sides, was once open air with a road running straight through. Below the main floor were heating pipes and one of the visitors showed us the manhole they climbed down to have a cigarette. They also smoked under the stage, until the day smoke was seen coming through the stage floor during an assembly! Many people spoke of air raid shelters under the corridors, as yet undiscovered, although they are marked on the plans.

Some visitors, who knew each other from Facebook, met here in their groups and others bumped into each other and were surprised to have a catch up for the first time in 40

years. One group travelled from Cheshire having seen an advert on social media. Everyone had interesting stories to share. Some had enjoyed being at the school, whilst others had found it a tough place to be. An emotional experience for many; some wanted to stand back on the spot where they first stood in the assembly hall, others wanted their photographs taken outside the headmasters and headmistresses' office doors, where they remembered being told to stand aged eleven. One group of ladies, who attended in the 80's, sat on the stage to have their photo taken and said they had fond memories of being at the school. The men particularly had valued the practical education they had received, saying it helped them get into the type of work they did for the rest of their life.

We can say one thing for certain, there is so much love for this building locally and from afar, we are looking forward to being here for the foreseeable future.

High Street West Sunderland

The wonderful news is that both Pop Recs CIC and Sunshine Co-operative are now both operating out of their ground floor units at 170 -175 High St West (HSW), Sunderland. TWBPT has been working for over five years on the massive restoration scheme for these three buildings. So, to be able to sit in the cafe and enjoy a cup of coffee is a tremendous achievement.

There is still a great deal of work to undertake and we are currently focusing on the upper floors of 170, High Street West using a loan from the National Heritage Lottery Fund. This is the building far left on the photo (painted white) that retains the original door and stair to the upper floors from when it was in residential use. As we go to print a new tenant, Global Teacher, is fitting out a floor for their new office and workshop.

Funding has now been secured from the Architectural Heritage Fund (AHF) to examine the potential purchase of 176 HSW, which is the one in the picture with the pretty columns. Whilst the restoration of 177 HSW 'The Tyre Shop' has taken a huge step forward after it secured further funding through the Levelling Up Fund.

Throughout the project funding from Sunderland City Council, AHF and Historic England has been crucial to the success of our work that has proven to be a catalyst for further regeneration.



Dunston: Staiths and Parish School



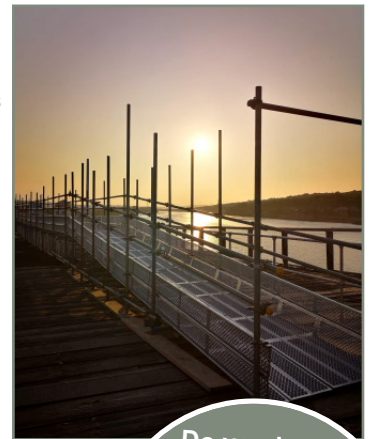
Our partnership with National Trust, Gateshead Council & Historic England has achieved £550,000 Community Renewal Funding

to move forward work on the Gateshead Riverside project, which includes looking at a strategy for the Staiths. Plans for a Staiths car park can be developed further, with the objective of transforming the operation of Dunston Staiths and creating much needed revenue for the overall restoration project. Following transfer of ownership from the Council to the Trust, the car park will continue to be for public use, with a small container hub and electric vehicle charging points are also being explored.

An exhibition of the artwork 'GAP' (Wolfgang Weileder's interpretation of the gap in the structure burnt out in 2003) is now on show at Gibside, as part of the exhibition 'Exploring Heritage at Risk through Art'. See the new What's On section for details at www.dunstonstaiths.org.uk

Staiths Friends continue to work hard behind the scenes on security enhancements and raised over £5000 at the 5-10K run back in August. While a scaffold bridge over the fire damaged top deck funded by Historic England, enabled Staiths to re-open for Heritage Open Days in September.

Part of the derelict Dunston Parish school collapsed in the Autumn, luckily it was the annexe earmarked for demolition as part of the proposed restoration scheme. The original school room is still standing. Appropriate funds need to be sourced along with a suitable future tenant to enable delivery of the next phase of work.



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

NEWS ON OTHER PROJECTS.... NEWS ON OTHER PROJECTS.... NEWS ON OTHER PROJECTS....

We recently purchased No.1, Cattle Market in Hexham which brings the potential for a residential element to enhance our portfolio, more about this in our next newsletter, and we're keeping an eye on the old Ropeworks there too.Perhaps you know of a potential project near you....?