

CUPOLA

TYNE & WEAR Building Preservation Trust NEWSLETTER Issue 4 AUTUMN 2018

Through the fireplace...*

Hello and a very warm welcome to members and supporters to this fourth issue of our newsletter, Cupola.

As 2018 flies by, you find us grappling with Victorian railway workings, devising schools programmes, supporting Friend's dog shows and meeting an internationally acclaimed pop star in Sunderland. You really do see it all in the heritage sector. Enjoy reading about it, thank you for your kind support and we look forward to seeing you at a members' event soon.

Yours, **Martin Hulse, Trust Manager.**

Back to the Wall Volunteers' Viewpoint

In this issue we hear from members of the Harton and Westoe Miners' Banner Group, who, as part of our activity plan, have been training to deliver workshops in schools to encourage pupils and their teachers to visit our newly completed St Hilda's Colliery in South Shields.

Jimmy Cummings, a member of the dedicated group of former miners, whose banner motto is "their future is built upon our past" takes up the story.

"It all started when I visited St Hilda's with some former workmates for a photo. Since then I got more and more involved, including visits to Caphouse Colliery and Beamish and work with Woodhorn Mining Museum to learn how best to talk to children in local schools blending coal mining in general with our own personal experiences of working underground.

I am passionate about my mining background. I followed my father into the pits when I was 15 and worked there for the next 25 years. Mining is a very important part of this area's heritage and there isn't



The Westoe Lodge Banner "their future is built on our past"

enough being done to to keep it alive. Being able to pass our knowledge on to the children has been great and they have really responded to it well.

The work builds on experience gained by fellow group member and modern day pitman painter, Jacky Payton, whose passion to keep mining heritage alive in younger

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*Random though it seems, this title is very apt. Our home, Alderman Fenwick's House, is in fact two houses joined together. You pass from one to the other at various levels via short passageways cut through some of the original chimney flues. And so telling colleagues you're popping "through the fireplace," means you are popping next door.

generations, saw him, in 2009, work with pupils at local school, Westoe Crown Primary on an art project which recreated a mining seam the entire length of a 40 foot corridor within the school.



As Jacky explains "Alarmingly little or nothing is known in schools about mining coal. We learned a lot about how to approach the task from the Woodhorn activity plan. I've found talking with children very rewarding. They are quite willing to expand and detract into their own immediate thoughts and question accordingly.

It's often very funny. The children are very eager to learn.

Gerry Huitson, another member and this region's last ever colliery manager has the last word.

"I think it's vitally important that children are aware of their background and sense of place and of exactly how important coal taken from this area by their forbears has been in shaping the modern world. The engagement from the children is a credit to them, their teachers and their schools.

We get asked lots of questions during the sessions. Most popular themes seem to be: mice, gas, explosions and toilets! It's great- long may it continue!

The wider activity plan will see St Hilda's play host to a series of exciting events and well as a mining museum within one of the lift cages!

To find out more or if you have found items you'd like to donate, please contact Fiona Tobin, Project Officer at fiona@twbpt.org.uk



PROJECT UPDATE

St Hilda's Pit Head, South Shields

Our last report welcomed Fiona Tobin to the project and as you can see from the pictures in Back to the Wall, things really have been pressing on apace on all fronts. The build completed on time and on budget over the summer. There are some projects which, when complete, utterly surpass your original vision and this is one of them. What a dramatic space...

St Hilda's held a successful community open day on 23rd August to celebrate the unveiling of a blue plaque for the world famous St Hilda Colliery Band, and has already played host to talks, tours, family fun days, poetry evenings and film screenings.

Fiona has been busy rolling out the activity plan with able and enthusiastic assistance from Harton and Westoe Miners in particular on the schools element and a huge honour came when St Hilda's was chosen by Heritage Lottery Fund to host the launch of this year's Heritage Open Days for the North East region with a special performance by Westoe Brass Band and speeches from John Grundy and the Mayor of South Tyneside.

PROJECT UPDATE

170-175 High St West, Sunderland

The news on this project just gets bigger and bigger. Last time, we reported how it has been accepted into European Horizon 2020, a programme which will see it become subject of a Heritage Lab, alongside similar labs in Rome, Warsaw, Berlin, Lisbon and Budapest.

Then a pop star popped in and thought it was insane.

We should explain. For some time we have been talking to an excellent organisation called Pop Recs. Founded by members of local rock band Frankie and the Heartstrings, Pop Recs operates a highly successful culture hub in Sunderland. They need more space and 170-175 High St West will be perfect for them, once complete. And so Pop Recs has a pop star patron. Multi-award winning singer-songwriter James Bay is a long standing supporter of Pop Recs and while playing a tour date in Sunderland took the opportunity to drop in and pay a visit.

"The potential of this place is insane, said the 27 year old star. They are trying to galvanise and inspire creative minds that want to work in all corners of the music and creative industries. With this blank canvas the possibilities are pretty much endless."

Quite an endorsement. The first phase of the project will see Pop Recs make a temporary base in the first building which will be completed over the summer before moving to the neighbouring building - the former Binn's store - on completion by 2021. And with such high profile support the possibilities really are endless. What will the next issue bring?



**PROJECT
UPDATE**



Dunston Staiths

As foundations are laid to allow phase two works to proceed, the ever industrious Staiths Friends Group is just winding up a busy summer of events which saw floods of visitors come to an eclectic mix of events from food markets to the eagerly awaited dog show.

It's great to hear that visitor numbers have yet again increased on last summer's and the Staiths really is taking its place as an attraction / destination in its own right.

And the group has been busy on the fund raising front too, securing a grant for £2,000 funding the widening of the access onto the Staiths.

With the Staiths now closed until spring, next step is phase two works.

Blackfell Hauler House, Blackfell, Bowes Railway

Built in 1913 Blackfell Hauler House is one of the few surviving elements of the historic Bowes Railway, which once played a prominent role transporting coal from the Durham Coalfields to the Tyne for shipping worldwide.

Following closure of the railway in 1970, the now redundant hauler house became the target of sustained vandalism and the resulting dereliction saw the building fall into a state of virtual collapse by 2013 when the Trust stepped in and restored the building, returning it to use as an artisan workshop.

Last time we reported on a grant we had just received from Historic England for restoration of the hauler workings themselves. Well, we're pleased to report that work has started, and progress is excellent. HE's wider vision is seeing the railway working again. A very exciting prospect indeed which is coming nearer and nearer to reality as our works continue. More next time.



Out on the tiles

Following a viability study funded by Architectural Heritage Fund and Weardale Area Action Partnership, architect Michael Atkinson shares thoughts on his approach to Westgate Chapel and Schoolroom in Weardale.

Having been for some years architect to churches of multiple denominations across the Newcastle and Durham diocese - including the ongoing extensive reordering and repair of Christ Church in Newcastle, I'm used to the interesting challenges churches can throw up when we consider future use.

The grade II listed Chapel and Schoolroom at Westgate sitting on the main road through the village centre are no exception.

The stunning chapel interior, complete with pews, gallery, organ, pulpit and vestries is - while beautiful- designed for a very specific purpose. I had to consider how to retain all these special features, while creating space for fresh activity.

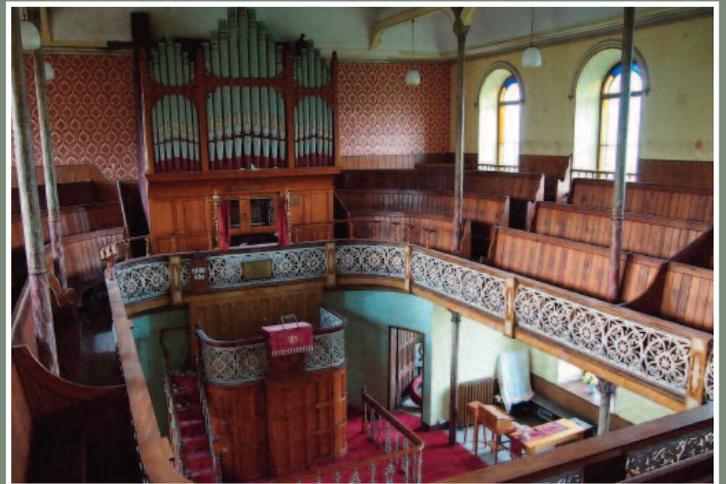
The schoolroom offers more flexibility in terms of future use, having an open plan ground floor with a two bedroomed flat above it accessed via external steps, and a number of useful outhouses.

The key thing on a project like this one is to keep the approach open and collaborative. As a practice we like to work with a range of people to understand what makes places and buildings so important. This process allows us to generate creative solutions within the historic environment and construct places, buildings and objects which are both beautiful and culturally important to people.

At the moment the Churches Conservation Trust is working with Westgate's owners, the Historic Chapels Trust to review their portfolio, and their report is due at time of writing. Once this comes out we should hopefully be able to move the project to the next stage: agreeing a future use or uses, defining a design, detailing costs and achieving planning permission.

All the while the Trust will be kept very busy finding a tenant for the future use. And of course, the funding...

Michael Atkinson is principal architect at MA Architecture & Heritage.



Competition Time

With each newsletter we're giving you the opportunity to win a prize!

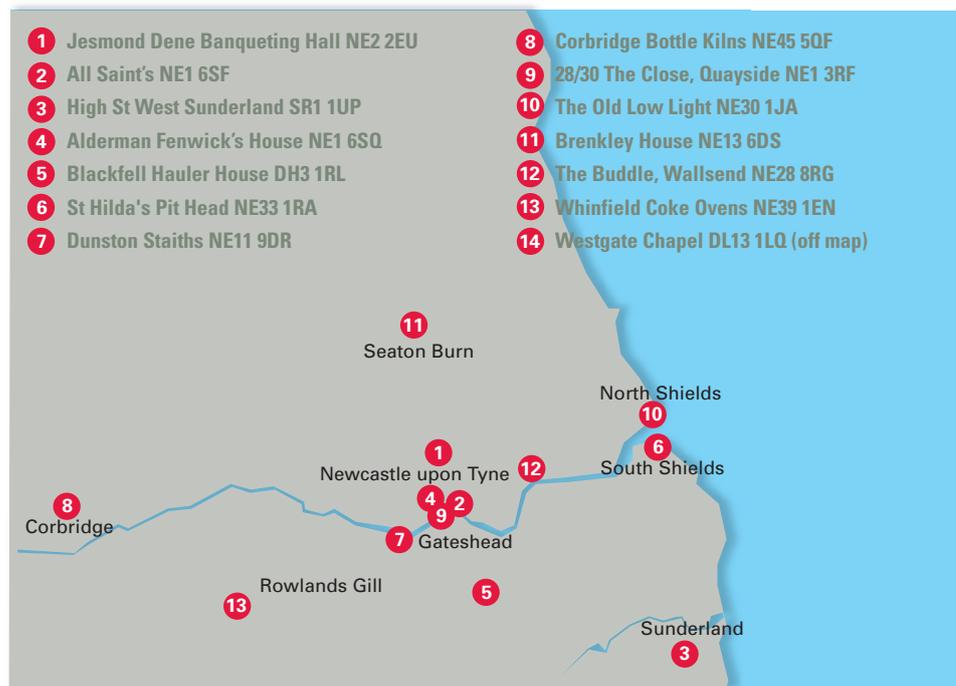
To enter, all you need do is answer this question:

Which pop star thinks High St West is insane?

Please email your answers to kari@twbpt.org.uk . First correct one drawn out of the hat wins.

Remember, the answer is somewhere in the issue.

The Trust has projects in Tyne and Wear, Northumberland and County Durham



Events

Members Coffee Morning

Wednesday 7 Nov 10.30 - 12.00

Alderman Fenwick's House

Staiths Friends AGM

Wednesday 14 Nov 7:30

Dunston Excelsior Club

Spooky St Hilda's Family Event

Wednesday 31 Oct 17:30

St Hilda's Pit Head

Community Christmas Fayre

Thursday 6 Dec 17:00

St Hilda's Pit Head

Meet Santa at St Hilda's

Sat 15 Dec 12:00 St Hilda's Pit Head

Sector News

The Government has launched a new fund to help local communities, charities and councils save their best loved local coastal architecture. **The Coastal Revival Fund** will make grants of up to £50,000 per project and early applicants include the Pavillion Theatre within Blackpool's Winter Gardens and Swanage Pier in Dorset.

Meantime, and with relevance to TWBPT, the **Historic Chapels Trust** and **Churches Conservation Trust (CCT)** have announced they will be working together to allow a strategic review of the former's properties with particular emphasis on finding a sustainable future for them. CCT is expected to report by the end of the year.

Membership Form

You can support us by becoming a member of the Trust. The future of the Trust depends on a strong membership base to ensure our work is integrated within the community where we operate. Membership of the Trust will help to strengthen our charitable credentials and will provide you with the knowledge that you are helping to make a difference to heritage in Tyne & Wear.

Please complete and return to the Trust office with a cheque for your annual subscription of £24.00 payable to 'Tyne & Wear Building Preservation Trust Ltd'. Otherwise a Standing Order or Bank transfer can be arranged to our bank account number 00161309, sort code 309355.

You can also join on-line at www.twbpt.org.uk

Title	Name
Address	
Post Code	
Telephone Number	Email address

Payment form (please circle): Cash / Cheque / Standing Order / Bank Transfer

Gift Aid Declaration (UK Taxpayers Only)

I would like the Tyne & Wear Building Preservation Trust to reclaim the tax on any qualifying donations made by me until further notice. I confirm that I have paid an amount of UK income or capital gains tax equal to any tax reclaimed. I understand that other taxes such as VAT and Council Tax do not qualify.

Signature	Date
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