



# APPRA NEWS

APPRA exists to help retain the unique character of the Avenues and Pearson Park conservation area and to support the neighbourhood's strong community spirit

## APPRA AGM

Wednesday 16 May

7-9 pm

St Cuthbert's Hall  
Marlborough Avenue

## Spring

### Report from the Chair

I have been asked by a number of parents of young children about the current absence of railings around the Pearson Park playground and have reassured them that we have seen a planning application to enclose the play space. We rejected the type of railing envisaged, since the arrowhead design is (1) dangerous (athletic teenagers are always going to scale the fence when the gates are locked) and (2) 'not in keeping with the Conservation Area' ie they looked as if they came cheaply from B & Q. This impelled me to look at the variety of railings in use around the Park, in order to request something similar: the best quality and most ornate are along Princes Avenue, starting at what was Pier Luigi's: we preferred those, of course, but would settle for the looped sort around the lodge and the grounded cupola. We pointed out that the plain type already surrounding the play area is itself safer and more acceptable than that proposed. Since then—we've heard nothing.

But the older equipment showing evidence of wear and tear has been brightly painted, which is cheering to see; maybe railings will follow.

On to the plantings at the Princes Avenue end of each Avenue: the Wyke Area Team have been under pressure from local groups, including us, to prune the shrubs which were deemed dangerous by some residents and motorists, in much the same way that the shrubs round the fountains were criticised. And in much the same way that they were dealt with, the Princes Avenue plantings were 'managed' by being removed, which we on APPRA were surprised to see. Without wanting to be unduly critical (and once more meriting the accusation that 'there's no pleasing you in the Avenues'), we once more put in a plea for consultation. We had no idea that the plantings were going to be replaced; we were not asked about the alternative plants and we find them far more ordinary than before—the phrase which surfaced in our committee meeting was 'civic flower bed'. And what a brutal sight it was, witnessing the grubbing-up of glorious mahonias in flower; why couldn't they have been pruned in due season, which was all we asked?

Planning permission was granted for two new houses in the land behind Regina Crescent, adjacent to St. Ninian's Walk. I was surprised—not, I think, that we had been complacent in opposing the application, we brought the same energy as we always attempt to our arguments; but previous applications for this 'backland' have been refused, and the same reasons for those refusals are still germane. Our fallback line of argument is that the proposals do not conform with Building Regulations. There is no current application for Building Regs., so we wonder if the intention is to sell the land on with the extant

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## Hull's precious heritage: George Gilbert Scott Jnr's Queen Anne houses



PHOTOS © JOHN GEEKIE

The lovely rear view, which will be lost if development is approved

**George Gilbert Scott junior** (1839-1897), born in London, came from a dynasty of architects whose three most distinguished members were: Sir George Gilbert Scott, the architect of St Pancras Station and the



A mock-up of the proposed building showing the old houses obscured

Albert Memorial in London; his son, George junior; and to complete the trinity, Sir Giles Gilbert Scott, son of George junior and architect of the Anglican Cathedral in Liverpool and the iconic red telephone kiosk.

George junior has his own claims to national achievement in the

history of architecture in the 19th century. The architectural critic Jonathan Glancey writes:

"Scott helped give rise to the Queen Anne style, a new form of English domestic architecture. He was the creative missing link between the Victorian Gothic Revival and the Arts and Crafts Movement of Pugin and William Morris." Pugin was the designer of the interiors of The Palace of Westminster, and The Clock Tower more familiarly known as Big Ben. Morris is England's most famous designer of the 19th century. The Queen Anne style of domestic architecture (1860-1900) has no real connection with the architecture during her reign (1702-1714). The style is defined as a mixture of a few genuine Queen Anne period details and many other English, Dutch, Flemish and French influences, as can be noted in the houses Scott designed for Salisbury Street, Hull.

The architectural historian Gavin Stamp writes that Scott was also "an accomplished and refined designer of churches ... collegiate buildings, of furniture and metalwork, decoration and wallpaper -- whose masterpiece, the church of St Agnes by Kennington Park in South London,

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# Planning regulations are conservation's BF\*

LIVING IN A CONSERVATION AREA MEANS YOU SHOULD MAKE SURE THAT ANY CHANGES MADE TO YOUR PROPERTY THROUGH REPAIRS, MAINTENANCE OR ALTERATION ARE IN KEEPING WITH THE CHARACTER OF THE BUILDING AND THE AREA.

In a Conservation Area, there is planning control of certain architectural features which are in need of protection. This is called an Article 4 Direction. In the Avenues Conservation Area the features listed below are protected by Article 4 Directions. This means that specific planning permission from Hull City Council is required for alterations to them or for their removal; and, in the case of porches and driveways, for the construction of something which was not there before.

NB The Article 4 Directions apply only to the elevation of the house which faces a public highway—ie mainly the fronts of houses (but in a few cases the sides also), apart from roofs and chimneys which include the fronts and backs of the property.

- ◆ Window or bay;
- ◆ Construction of a vehicular driveway across a pavement or verge;
- ◆ Chimneys;
- ◆ Roofs (both for roofing materials and for the installation of solar panels);

- ◆ Eaves gutters, gutter blocks/brackets, fascia boards, barge boards;
- ◆ Construction of a porch or alterations to an existing porch;
- ◆ Front doors.

The Article 4 Directions for the first two items on the list above have been in place since 2003. The others came into force on 1 December 2011.

When thinking about replacing doors, windows, roofs on the front elevation, do not assume that other houses nearby represent something that can be copied. They may have been altered (eg re-roofed) before the Article 4 Directions came into force; and thus their style or materials may no longer be permissible. It's always wise and to your benefit to contact the Planning Department for guidance before engaging with a builder.

The emphasis from the Planning Department in a conservation area is on 'like for like'. For instance, the council's heritage guidance on traditional windows says "...new windows should match the originals in terms of proportion, design and position within the reveal".

\*BEST FRIEND

3/5 Salisbury Street continued from page 1

had, quite simply, changed the course of English architecture." In 1883, three years after he had converted to Roman Catholicism, Scott designed an Anglican church in Hull, St Augustine's, at the junction of Queen's Road and Princes Avenue. It was demolished in 1976 because of severe subsidence. Scott was also an antiquary and scholar, the author of a highly regarded book on medieval church architecture.

In 1881 Scott began to suffer from mental illness and alcoholism, which led to periods in mental asylums and separation from his wife and four children (two other children had died in infancy). It is interesting that Stamp notes:

"...some of the first sketches for the Hull church were made while he was confined in the Bethlehem Hospital and – from the point of view of design – they show no sign of mental breakdown."

He died in May 1897 in the Midland Grand Hotel at St Pancras Station; a touching aspect was that this was a building designed by his father. Scott was staying there because he had no home of his own. His affairs were being looked after by officials, as he had been declared of unsound mind, under the Lunacy Acts. Gavin Stamp provides a fitting acknowledgment of his importance:

"Indeed, the architecture of the Late Victorian decades cannot be fully understood without reference to Scott and his achievement."

**This is an extract from the thoroughly researched letter Cecile Oxaal wrote in opposition to the planning application for 3/5 Salisbury Street. George Gilbert-Scott Junior has always been overshadowed by his father and his son, which makes her account all the more interesting and valuable to us, who live with and take pride in his Avenues houses.**

**This pride is demonstrated by the 400 signatures on the petition opposing the plan and the 70 letters of objection in the file. English Heritage, Hull Civic Society and the Victorian society have also objected—English Heritage describes the proposed building as a 'quasi-garage block.' There is no date set for the application to be considered by the Planning Committee.**

Chair's Spring Report ... continued from page 1

permission. This land could be used in so many more productive ways for the neighbourhood (a community orchard was one idea) if it were not regarded a source of profit, to be developed at all costs. It is our view that the short term profit is outweighed by the loss of amenity forever to residents in Regina Crescent and Victoria Avenue; the two new houses would turn St Ninian's Walk, finally, into a street, not an urban walk and would have little space or views themselves, while simultaneously depriving all the surrounding houses of both.

**W**e have repeated our request to be part of the discussions about Houses in Multiple Occupation

(HMOs), but have had no response; other cities, we know, have put Article 4 Directions quickly in place in case they are needed in areas where the number of HMOs may begin to destabilise local communities. (There is a perception that this is happening here and, interestingly, the student body has proved sensitive to the issue. We have a student representative attending our meetings now; we value her presence, her interest in local issues and the different views she contributes.)

**T**here is a current application for a house which would be extra-multiply-occupied if permission were given: there would be sixteen (now reduced

to thirteen) bedsits in 99-101 Park Avenue, which could entail, if rooms were shared, more than sixteen tenants (plus, inevitably, their cars). The plans show a warren of rooms with the proximity of bedrooms to other people's bathrooms and lavatories, which is always the hallmark of this sort of over-development: maximum usage is squeezed uncomfortably and unæsthetically into the space available, regardless of original boundaries and dimensions. Some very awkward internal arrangements are manifest here; as one neighbour commented—'The tenants will be sparkingly clean, but starving'—each bedsit has en suite facilities, but the

kitchens are less obvious. This is not a welcome adaptation of what was once a notable local house; it deserves better.

**W**e had the same sort of thoughts about 54 Pearson Park, which has one of the most decorative façades in the Park. Last summer's plans proposed a raised roof which would have ruined its proportions. New plans have just arrived, leaving the roof as it is, but still, arguably, aiming to pack in too many flats.

**L**ooking forward to seeing you at the AGM (16 May, 7-9). I hope St Cuthbert's Hall will be as full as last year!

Stephanie Wilson MBE, Chair

## PAST, PRESENT AND POSTERITY

### Conservation roofing in 2012

Perhaps almost all the main styles of suburban housing between 1875 and 1920 are represented within the Avenues and Pearson Park Conservation Area. Whether your home is of the Queen Anne style, Arts and Craft, Mock Tudor, or part of a Victorian or Edwardian terrace you will be aware that one of the main elements that gives your house so much character is its roof. Within this great variety of house styles the roof has a huge bearing on the building's over-all look and provides a unity throughout the area with the prominence of steeply pitched roofs and traditional coverings.

Yet it seems that some of the roofs in our neighbourhood have eluded the care and conservation they deserve. The typical roof material of the Victorian and Edwardian periods would either have been Welsh blue slate or small red clay tiles which are commonly known as Rosemaries. Sadly, with their popularity in decline since the 1950s, concrete tiles have often taken their place. Despite concrete tiles being made to emulate their predecessors, inauthentic profiles are often used: the tiles are thicker, heavier and larger than traditional roofing materials and subsequently lack the elegance of the red clay tiles or natural slate.

In recent decades the traditional coverings have enjoyed a revival with many planning departments insisting on their use within conservation areas. Roofing with clay or slate is labour-intensive, and the tradesman must employ a little patience and finesse to get the best results. But the virtues of a good tradesman will be well-reflected by the virtues of the materials themselves. Clay and slate roof coverings hold more aesthetic value than any other: they weather well with

age and will last way beyond the tenure of long washed-out concrete alternatives. They tend to be smaller and lightweight and therefore are more attuned to the finely balanced structures of the Victorian and Edwardian periods.

However, there are modern roof coverings that are likely to be deemed acceptable by the planning authorities. Small concrete red plain tiles may be allowed instead of the red clay. These have the same dimensions and weight as their counterparts and require the same labour to install, but the material itself will cost marginally less; the downside being that they begin to look washed-out within a decade. With regard to slate roofs, there are a couple of alternatives on the market but it is only reconstituted slate tiles that provide a viable alternative to the real thing. Once fitted they can look similar in proportions to natural slate and will weather relatively well. They cost similar money to slate for each square metre of the roof covered but as they are an interlocking tile they will reduce labour costs. However, period properties are characterful in appearance, so careful consideration should be given before using such material. The roof is part of the fabric of the building and is expensive to change.

Of course, retaining the existing fabric of a roof and carrying out sympathetic repairs can be the most economic and environmentally sustainable way to keep a roof watertight and conserve a house's character. Moderate and consistent investment in a property will preserve its authenticity and help avoid a large restoration for which a great deal of intervention is required.

Christopher Nicholson

## We can help you move your satellite dish

There are funds available from the Avenue Ward Community and a proportion from APPRA resources to meet half the cost of moving dishes. Sat-City are a Sky sub-contractor so **Sky dishes are included** and they will move any dish that qualifies and **charge residents £60**. This all-in price comes with their warranty, and includes any fixing brackets or cables that might be required. We will soon be circulating a leaflet with full details.

APPRA Visual Amenity Group

## James Neal, Artist, 1918-2011

**JAMES NEAL WAS AN AVENUES RESIDENT FOR OVER FIFTY YEARS.**

He moved to Hull from north London in 1958 to take up a post at the Regional College of Art as Lecturer in Painting and Drawing. 'You'll enjoy Hull – the docks and the shipping', one of his former teachers at the Royal College of Art, the Yorkshireman R.V. Pitchforth told him. These subjects certainly did give my father much artistic enjoyment; he painted many such scenes.

The move to Hull saw a noticeable change in his style. The modernist works of the late 1940s and 1950s by and large give way to realism. Those who knew him around this time remark that he cut quite a dash. He immediately became a founder member of the Avenues Group of artists, The Guardian commenting in 1959 that he was 'undoubtedly the strongest member of the moment, having a touch of the real fire and driving personality which leads up the ladder'.

He painted – and advised others to paint – subjects that were around him, quite literally close to home. He became renowned for painting the ordinary, unremarkable aspects of Hull, such as the ten-foot between Park Avenue and Victoria Avenue, or the drain that used to run in Queen's Road. One of his Avenues paintings, 'View from the House', is in the Ferens and may be viewed online at the BBC's Your Paintings website.

In his lengthy career, he exhibited over 40 works in the Royal Academy, a large number of which were Avenues views, including 'Two Doors, Victoria Avenue: Ancient and Modern' (1965) and 'Walk down the Avenue' (1986), which shows the view from his front window. He told the press at the time: 'There's a dog doing its business against a tree and a man out for a walk – one of my neighbours – and a group of people gossiping. It's a typical scene in Victoria Avenue. Your own sitting room is an easy place to paint from because you are not seen by your subjects, or other people, so they are not distracted and you get a perfectly natural scene which is constantly in front of you.'

One of his most celebrated Avenues views—it even sold out as a greetings card—was 'Snow in the Avenue'. Again, he painted this from his own front bedroom looking right towards the houses opposite. The winter sunshine gives the snow a lovely blue hue that contrasts beautifully with the red brick of the houses.

Of this picture, as I think of so many of his works, the words of former director of the Ferens Art Gallery and Avenues resident the late Dr John Bradshaw are true: '... Enjoy the view and appreciate the skill behind the understatement'. He had a remarkable ability to convey the atmosphere of a place and, having grown up in the Avenues myself, I feel his paintings of the Avenues do this exceptionally well.

Sebastian Neal

<http://www.bbc.co.uk/arts/yourpaintings/paintings/view-from-the-house-79043>

## OUR THANKS AND CONGRATULATIONS TO:

**Lesley Longworth** for organising the Avenues Advent Calendar for the eleventh time - in 2011.

**The Advent Calendar participants**, who created such colourful and imaginative work for all passers-by to enjoy.

**The carol singers and fund-raisers**—who braved the elements to sing and collect money for charity, raising £385 for the Teenage Cancer Trust; and thank you **Ian and Christine Colquhoun** for your generous hospitality afterwards, as always!

# Was she Westbourne's Lady Haw Haw?

The two World Wars which the Avenues witnessed threw up all kinds of spy and fifth column scares. During WWI to my father's fevered young imagination a local nurse was sending Morse messages to 'some one' by flashing her room light. However, in WWII **Lord Haw Haw (aka William Joyce)** was no product of a fevered imagination when he tried to demoralise the British and Allies with his 'Jairmany calling, Jairmany calling' radio broadcasts from Germany. 'Jairmany' is how Joyce pronounced Germany. But curiously there was an Avenues family whose own granddaughter was singled out as the female equivalent of William Joyce. So here's the very odd tale of Westbourne Avenue's own Lady Haw Haw.

**Richard Gillett** was born in Sheffield in 1839 but moved to Hull when five and eventually became a top-or-high-hat maker at 14 Market Place, 75 Porter Street and 36 Hessle Road. He became an Alderman of Hull and had his caricature in the Hull Daily Mail in 1901 as well as his obituary in 1935. A pillar of Hull's business society he lived in the Avenues with his wife Anne, first at 44 Westbourne from 1878-1896 and then 16 Park Avenue where he died in 1935. Richard and Anne had 5 children: Thomas (Amy's Uncle Tom); Clara; William Henry; Kate and Fred (Amy's Uncle Fred).

Richard Gillett's son, William Henry, married his cousin, Florence Gillett, in 1888 and in 1889 their daughter **Amy Joyce** was born, possibly in Chestnut Avenue off Queen's Road. However, by 1891 William, a Hatter and Outfitter, was living at 24 Whitham. Business must have been good as at the age of 36 he, his wife and daughter Amy, and three other children were living 'on own means' in Bridlington! From here the family's movements cast the die which eventually caused an uproar in Hull.

In 1908 Amy and the family moved to Australia to live in Queensland where William Henry became a JP and where he died in 1945. In Australia Amy met a teacher called John Glyn, and married him, at Sandgate, Queensland in 1918. John was Latvian and had been previously called Kuschinsky but certainly Amy knew that.

As John found it difficult to find work in Australia the couple went to live in Latvia in 1923. There John became the Head of a local school and he and Amy had a daughter, Janis. Although relatively prosperous, Amy's life initially was not easy as she was unable to

speaking the language and also had to endure temperatures down to minus 40°C. However, she settled down and enjoyed life when she learned some Latvian.

When WWII broke out and first Russia and then Germany invaded Latvia Amy appealed to her Uncle Tom, now at 16 Park Avenue, for help to escape to England but Annie, the wife of her Grandfather Richard Gillett, objected. When the Russians occupied Latvia the Latvians had hard lives and it seems several attempts were made by Amy's Uncle Fred Gillett in Hull to extradite the family but permission to leave was never granted.

On Friday 12 September 1941 the Hull Daily Mail screamed "**Lady Haw-Haw, Heads Goebbels' Female cast**". It continued: "Member of noted Third Port Family—Hull-Born 'Lady Haw-Haw' says she is ashamed to confess that she is an English woman". The paper accused Amy Joyce née Gillett of broadcasting for the Germans! Rather a coincidence, the paper boomed, that her middle name was Joyce.

The broadcast was supposedly from Berlin apparently on Bolshevism and apparently unpaid. She allegedly also announced she was the Granddaughter of the late Richard Gillett, Alderman of Hull. A Bremen announcer apparently promised that 'the English lady will broadcast again next Wednesday'. A final swipe that the Hull Daily Mail made was to pass on the message to Amy that her 'German friends' had recently bombed and destroyed the business tended with such care by her grandfather and father—14 Market Place.

So what is the real truth behind the Hull Daily Mail's accusation? It's not easy now to tell. Certainly her daughter didn't think her mother had broadcast for the

Germans though it's suggested they had taken an essay she had written about her life and someone else had spoken it pretending to be Amy. Amy's daughter, Janis, is certain that her mother never visited Germany. I don't know whether this formed the basis of some subterfuge by the Germans to disquiet the British, perhaps it did. Amy died of Diabetes Mellitus in 1953 in Latvia and with her a more certain explanation for the Hull Daily Mail's 1941 article.

Chris Coulson

I acknowledge the help of Richard Gillett's Great Grand-daughter, Sheila Weston from Hampshire, in the preparation of this article.

## SAVE OUR VERGES



If you would like some APPRA "PLEASE DO NOT PARK ON THE VERGES, EVEN TWO WHEELS UP" leaflets, contact Sally Walker by

email; she will send you a copy which you can print.

## HERITAGE REPAIRS ADVICE

If you wish for advice on repair and renovation using traditional materials and styling, email **Ed Ulliyart** and he will help, or find a "man who can".  
ed@allstar.karoo.co.uk

## CRAFTS LIST ONLINE

AvenuesOnline has APPRA's updated list of recommended local firms with the skills and willingness to carry out conservation-minded repairs and renovation.

## OPEN GARDENS AND OPEN DOORS

This year, for the first time, St Ninian's and St Andrew's United Reformed Church (URC), the Church by the bridge on Chanterlands Avenue, is taking part in Open Gardens.

Brownies, Beavers, Cubs and Scouts are working hard on our trees, shrubs, flowerbeds and lawns preparing to welcome visitors in July. Members, friends and groups who meet at St Ninian's have been invited to contribute to a Flower and Plant Display on Sunday 8 July—so on that day the doors as well as the gardens will be open. If you are on your way to or from visiting other Avenues gardens, don't pass by, please call in and see us. We have plenty of room for children to run about on our safe, enclosed lawn.

Further information about St Ninian's and St Andrew's and our uniformed organisations at [www.stniniansandstandrews.urch.org.uk](http://www.stniniansandstandrews.urch.org.uk) or contact Jim Foster on 470277.

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