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Museum... but I drew a complete blank: a full-length statue of Zachariah Pearson had clearly never been erected, and was not listed anywhere. So why the maquette? And, more to the point, why had we kids all been spun this fib since the cradle?

My enquiries uncovered some interesting things. After an inauspicious start in life, being orphaned aged four, Zachariah had run away to sea, eventually becoming a captain, a shipowner and a successful businessman. With his business partner, he ran a mail service between Australia and New Zealand, and England and America, and carried out trade in the Baltic. One of my living aunts, in fact, remembers her grandmother, Emma Jane, Zachariah's daughter, recounting how she was presented at the Tsar's court in St. Petersburg. After becoming a Town Councillor and Alderman, ZCP was elected Mayor in 1859; his portrait hangs to this day in a committee room in the Guildhall.

It was during his second period as Mayor that at the American Civil War started to bite on the economy in Hull. The southern Confederate ports were being blockaded

by the Yankees, preventing cotton from reaching England, and Sculcoates Cotton Mill was closed, destituting the mainly female workforce. Anxious to acquire cotton bales to reopen the mill (and also, no doubt, with an eye to profiteering!) Zachariah's business acumen deserted him. He acquired several steamers on credit, loaded them with guns and ammunition and other equipment to support the Confederates, and attempted to run them through the Yankee blockade into ports in North Carolina. Only one made it - the rest were either sunk or captured by the Unionist Yankees!

Practically overnight, then, in the summer of 1862, his fortune changed. He resigned as Mayor, and, in 1864, he was bankrupted for £646,000 (a pretty sizable sum even today, but massive in those days). He sold all his other assets and worked hard to ensure that he discharged his debts eventually. From then on he lived a quiet life (at what is now no. 63 Pearson Park), working with his oldest son, Charles, as a shipping agent.

So how do these revelations help solve the mystery? In Victorian times, bankruptcy on such a scale, and of someone in a respected position in his local community, was a heavy disgrace indeed. As his personal letters reveal, he now found out

who his *true* friends were. Apart from the social inadvisability of now planting his own statue in Pearson Park, Zachariah would certainly not have been able to afford it. After all, Alderman Moss eventually paid for Queen Victoria's statue which Zachariah had commissioned and paid a deposit for. We don't know whether his statue was actually started, but it certainly does not appear to have been finished. The maquette handed down the family was probably the sculptor's early model - the only record of his hoped-for statue of glory in the park. It is likely that Emma Jane, his daughter had it when she came to live, in her old age, with her son's family in Broadstairs. The south of England being so far away from Hull, I assume no-one in the family had verified the story of the statue in the Park. They spun the tale from generation to generation - and we just soaked it up!

Dr Marian Shaw

(Further news of Dr Shaw's researches in the next issue. *Ed*)

Christopher Ketchell's column will return in the next issue. Meanwhile, you can email him at: historyunit@netscape.net

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AvenuesOnline
Art in the Avenues

www.avenuesonline.org.uk
www.hullangel.org



appranews

The newsletter of the Avenues and Pearson Park Residents Association

APPRO exists to help retain the unique character of the Avenues and Pearson Park Conservation area and to support the strong community spirit which exists in the neighbourhood

From Stephanie Wilson

APPRO Chair

For the first time ever, the Royal Mail has requested planning permission to erect a 'pouch box'—those ugly grey containers standing on one leg, 'like a lollipop' as a friend described them—on the footpath; this one is to be—or not to be—in Pearson Park. This has given us the chance, at last, to point out how hideous they are and what a sad decline in taste and design they represent. Our pillar boxes are one of the glories of our streets; these dreary 'pouch boxes' are not fit to keep them company, especially in a Conservation Area. I don't suppose our opposition will have any effect, but we're pleased to have registered our antipathy, officially.

We arrived at a new guideline recently, in

discussing an application to fell garden trees. Since the trees were said to be undermining a brick wall, we came out on the side of the wall. So many have been lost over the years—we've just been given a picture of the original small walls at the front of the castellated houses in Park Avenue: they were built in different coloured brick, with narrow gaps in the shape of minilancet windows. We are so much more prosperous than the society that created the Avenues—yet we can no longer afford to preserve the charming details which constitute much of their appeal. The replacement of the Hollies' boundary wall by a wooden fence still rankles; whereas the creation of new walls—by, for instance, the Rainbow Nursery, is appreciated.

One final, unseasonal whinge: why weren't those elegant street lights in Newland Avenue chosen

for us too, instead of the gawky nonentities installed in the Avenues without consultation?

Happy Christmas!

stop press 

Christmas cards featuring Avenues scenes: available from Clements News, Princes Avenue

Design Guide for Avenues: if anyone has old photos (houses, streetscape) for illustration purposes, please contact Sally Walker on 447558

HfOE garden waste collection service takes a break during December and January as amounts of waste collected in these 2 months are low. Their kerbside collection service resumes on **Monday, 7 February 2005**. Tel 07817-824418

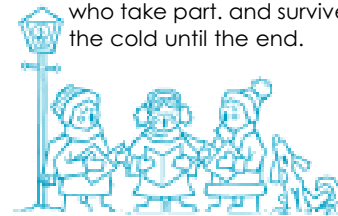
Avenues carolling raises money for NSPCC

Our annual carol singing around the Avenues takes place on **Monday, 20 December**, meeting at 5.45 pm at the Park Avenue fountain. Carol sheets will be provided but please bring your own Christmas lantern or torch.

People preferring to stay at home and listen are asked to give generously to the caller at the front door. The charity benefiting from

this year's collection will be the **NSPCC**. Last year the carol singing raised £315.47 for charity.

A warm Christmas drink and mince pie will be waiting for all who take part, and survive the cold until the end.



Correct advice on planning regulations

Due to pressure of space in this seasonal issue, we are postponing a list of corrections to the article in our previous issue (September 2004) entitled "Planning or building regulations?"

We apologise to Hull Planning for the mistakes, and advise you meanwhile to ring Ian Brown (Acting Head of Hull Planning) for correct advice.

Avenues Advent Calendar 2004

Many thanks to Lesley Longworth for her work in organising the Calendar in time for publication in this issue

ADVENT WINDOWS 1—24 DECEMBER 2004

1 61 S	2 176 M	3 113 W	4 96 P	5 92 V	6 94 M	7 10 P	8 72 W
9 30 S	10 178 M	11 171 P	12 119 W	13 116 M	14 37 M	15 11 M	16 55 W
17 41 S	18 193 M	19 214 P	20 66 W	21 73 M	22 224 V	23 207 V	24 34 W

Key to location

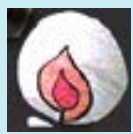
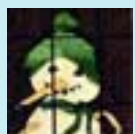
- M Marlborough
- P Park
- R Richmond
- S Salisbury
- V Victoria
- W Westbourne



windows on the web

www.hullangel.org

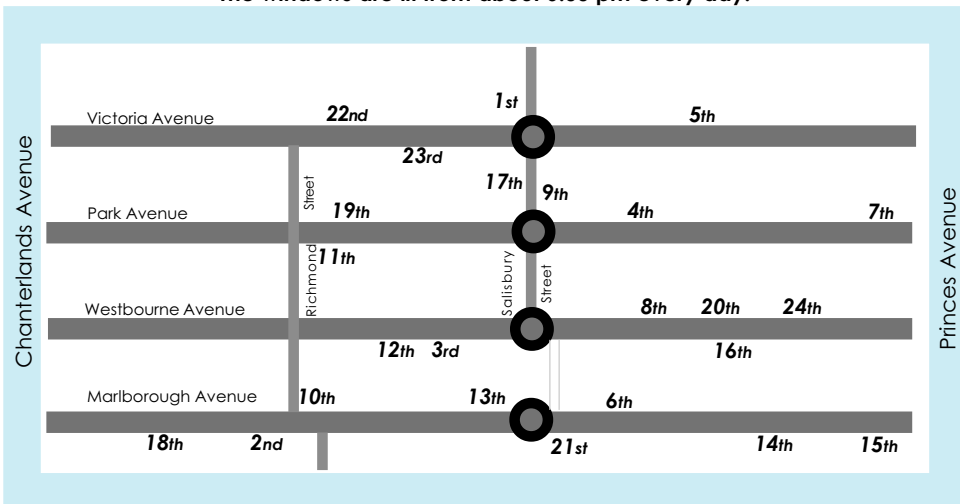
www.avenuesonline.org.uk



Some windows from previous Advent Calendars, on www.hullangel.org

Walk the Calendar: December 2004

These dates (1—24 December) show you where the windows are. The windows are lit from about 6.00 pm every day.



BBC Telling Lives: Fountain Rescue team tell their story

A researcher from the BBC read the story of the Park Avenue fountain on the **hullangel** website. She was fascinated, because she had lived in the Avenues for a short time, but knew nothing about the fountain's history.

She contacted webmaster Chrys to suggest that the story would be ideal for the BBC's Telling Lives project. This is a series of 2-minute digital films made by local people with good stories to tell. The films can be seen on the BBC's website, and may appear on Hull's "big screen".

The BBC provides the facilities and full technical help. The Fountain Rescue team (Harry Atkinson, Martyn Chalk, Alan Worsley and Chrys Bavey) agreed that it would be interesting to do, and would help publicise the Avenues. The BBC insists that the stories must be told from a personal point of view - so the team agreed that Harry should compose and narrate the story; Chrys would help organise the images. The five days of workshops end on 20 November, so the story should appear on the BBC website soon after that.

www.hullangel.org

www.bbc.co.uk/tellinglives

Verge preservation

APPRA, supported by Cllr Robinson, is negotiating with the Council to formulate a plan to protect our verges. Major concerns from residents are:

- edgings rutted by cars because of low kerbs;
- ruts across verges caused by skip delivery and utilities;

- loss of grass from weed spraying.

We need to prevent damage ourselves. Please remember that:

- (a) it is illegal to park (including 2 wheels) on the verges, and it causes ruts
- (b) It's better (and legal) to put skips on the road.



Victorian Christmas in the Park

Carols, Victorian costumes, the crib, and Father Christmas! Our nostalgic image of a true Victorian Christmas will be brought to life by an event organised by The Friends of Pearson Park, in the Pavilion in the Park, on

Sunday, 19 December, starting at 1.15 pm.

The Park Avenue Singers will be there! Light refreshments will be on sale; browse the display of arts and crafts. Stuck for a stocking-filler? Victorian-style sweets will prove popular with young and old alike!

Missing statue mystery

Zachariah Charles Pearson was my great, great grandfather, and I became aware of him in the late 1940s. For in my grandfather's Kentish house, standing on the sideboard between the crystal glass decanters with silver chains, was a small white statue, which I have since learnt to call a "sculptor's maquette". As a small child, I was fascinated with the object: If this was a man, and a ship's captain at that, why was he wearing an ankle length dress and a necklace? The purpose of the ship's wheel, on which he was leaning, was obvious: the house was stuffed with maritime artefacts, as my grandfather (Zachariah's grandson) had also been a sea captain. But the dress?

Zachariah, I was told, as well as owning a lot of ships, had been Lord Mayor of Hull - a town somewhere in "The North", and so the mayoral robes and chain were explained to me. In family folklore, this man had presented Pearson Park to the people of the town, which was where the full-sized statue could be found. Imagine my disappointment when, much later, an uncle visiting Pearson Park discovered a plaque on a stone pillar - but no statue. Where had it gone?

With more time in retirement now, I decided to find out what had happened to this statue, famous by reputation in the family but never actually seen. Everyone in Hull was terribly helpful: the Local Studies Library, the Archivist, the Guildhall, the Maritime

continued...