

Things you may not know about Bridlington

The following extracts are from "A Bridlington Fireside Tale", a paper presented to the Augustinian Society by Bro Robin Sharpe. He covered the period around the first World War and between the wars.

"Quay Road and St John's Street were improved by widening, which involved demolishing about 60 houses between 1903 and 1912. The first Council houses were built in Watson's Balk (Avenue) to re-house families from property demolished in St. John's Street and near the Priory.

Bridlington's first dedicated picture palace or cinema was the Picturedrome (later the Roxy) on Quay Road.

Until 1910 a market was held in the Market Place and in the wide section of High Street. Centre House was at the bottom of Market Place before it was demolished in 1913.

More than 300 boats were fishing off Bridlington in 1902, but only 84 boats belonged to the port. By 1912 there were still 80 Bridlington-owned boats, and 172 men were employed by them. Motors began to be fitted in sailing boats about 1914 and soon purpose-built motor boats were in use as well, gradually replacing the sails. At the end of 1914 6 herring boats fitted with motors were line-fishing, and a year later 25 motor boats were lining.

Crane Wharf was used as a fish market until 1915, and when it became too small, larger ships began to use the South Pier where there was no cover for buyers. In March 1915 the Bridlington Sanitary Office complained of the abominable smell of fish from the harbour, and that year the Harbour Commissioners refused to allow the extended use of Crane Wharf as a fish market.

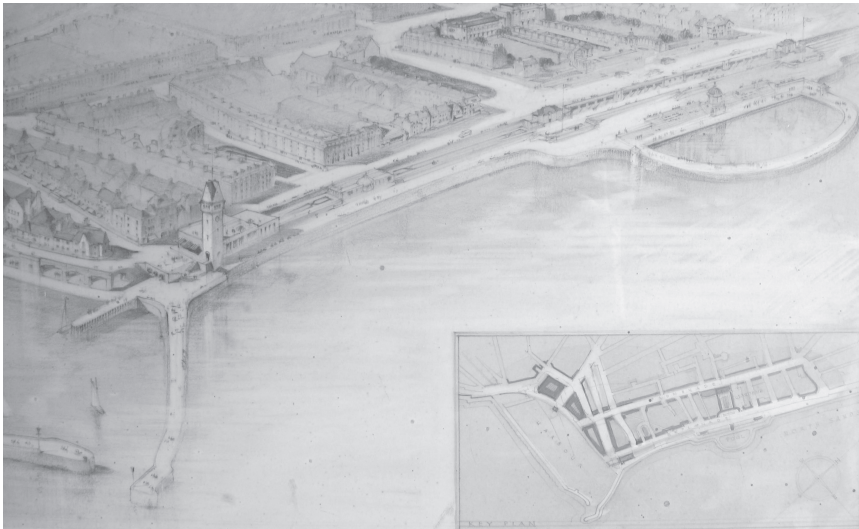
"The Bridlington Sorting Carriage" was a travelling post office which ran from 1913 (other authorities say 1901 - Ed.) until 1916, and was re-instated as a summer service between Bridlington and Hull from 1919 until 1926, when it was scrapped.



Fish sales on Crane Wharf

During a North Sea patrol for the Royal Naval Air Service in July 1913, a Shorts S41 bi-plane was beached after developing engine trouble over Bridlington Bay. On 17th August, 1913, Mr. Robert Blackburn and his manager's daughter, nine-years-old Miss Isla Tudor, the world's youngest aviatrix, ascended 6000 feet at Bridlington. Local ministers of religion requested that flights should not be undertaken on a Sunday.

On the 28th August 1913 the local press announced a scheme put forward by Alderman Southcott for the improvement of Bridlington. The present pier was to be raised to form an upper deck, which when completed would provide for the public and vehicular access. A carriageway would come down the side of the pier and along the sea front. Bungalows were to be built, as well as swimming pools. A number of streets were to be widened to cope with the increased traffic. Further business to be considered was taking over the functions of the Harbour Commissioners, a bridge from Princess Street to the sea front and lengthening the sewerage outfall. This scheme was not approved.



This is part of an architectural drawing of development plans for Bridlington found by members Bro Peter and Mrs Pamela Quigley. Could this be Alderman Southgate's proposal? It shows two roadway

The Baker family were ice cream makers in the town from the beginning of the 1900s. In the years before the First World War dozens of little stalls were on the sands. They were run by the brothers Herbert, George, Steve and Sidney Baker. Thousands of excursionists were in Bridlington on August Bank Holiday Monday in 1914 and it was reported that 'all the places of amusement were packed' but the next day the town's prosperity ended as Britain was at war.

The British cruiser 'Pathfinder' was sunk by the Germans in the North Sea on 3rd September, 1914, and amongst its crew was Jack Charlton, a pupil-teacher at Hilderthorpe School in West Street, whose death brought to the town the real horror of war. His was the first naval funeral held in Bridlington. The death of Private G. Pinkney (Green Howards) at Christmas 1914 led to even more recruits and festivities were low key.

The town's first Penny Bazaar opened in Prince Street in 1913.

In 1913 Mr. Tom Garbutt opened his men's hairdresser and umbrella repairer business at 5 Cliff Street.



The Domestic Bazaar Company shop in Prince Street

Winifred Holtby, famous as the author of "South Riding", was at school in Scarborough in December 1914, when the town was bombed by the Germans for nearly twenty minutes. The Bridlington Quay Chronicle published the first known work of Winifred Holtby which recorded this event.

During the First World War, Flamborough Head provided a beacon for shipping but was also a landmark for "Zepps". The Royal Navy Air Service, later known as the RAF, had a base on Hornsea Mere from 1917 until early 1919, from where military flying boats used to fly around the coast including Bridlington Bay hunting enemy submarines. A letter commends Bridlington men for rescuing a stricken flying boat and pilot, which they towed into the harbour.

In January 1929 a lecture on the marvels of television was given by Mr. A. Dinsdale to Bridlington Literary and Debating Society. He asked what they thought television was. One said it was some form of mental telepathy, and another thought it was a kidney disease.

If walls had ears, what tales could some familiar local buildings tell? Nat West Bank in King Street was first used as a bank by the National Provincial and Union Bank of England. Before this, at the turn of the century, the building was Arthur Sigsworth's house and church decorating business. Next door to it was William Cussons' grocer and baker, also a toy shop, and around the corner was a confectionary. Martin's Bank opened in King Street in 1929. HSBC Bank on the corner of Manor Street and Chapel Street began life as the London City and Midland Bank. In November 1926 Yorkshire Penny Bank Ltd. opened their new premises in Queen Street.

From 1924 until 1978 Johnston and Son ran a hardware shop in Manor Street. Mr. Peter Johnston ran the business from 9 Manor Street until his death in 1952 when the business was taken over by his son Kenneth and his wife. In 1956 the Johnstons took over the old Bridlington Chronicle Office at 10 Manor Street.

The shop on the corner of Beck Hill, and the two adjoining on Prospect Street (including the Free Press office), were built in 1922 on land that had been the garden of Cottesmore House, a double-fronted, two storey building.

The Baptists and Independents shared the Union Chapel on Manor Street, which was built in 1818. This later became the site of the Manor House which was demolished in 1928 to make way for the Lloyd's Bank Chambers where C.P. Bennet Ltd had offices for many years.

Griffin's on Prospect Street (formerly Frank Webb's Manshop) was occupied by a hatter in the late nineteenth century.

In 1911 Carlton's [now rebuilt and occupied by Boyes] was opened in King Street, known as Au Bon Marche. The owners celebrated with the biggest drapery sale ever held here. The Co-op had a branch in Chapel Street from 1913 until 1967 and a drapery branch at 37 King Street. Marks and Spencer were at 34 King Street by 1921 and at 8 Prince



King Street on market day. The shop "Au Bon March" is on the far left.

Street in 1932.

Mr. James Burrell ran his charabanc business on Promenade. Mr Herbert Ripley opened a business on Promenade repairing cars and charabancs in 1921. When he left in 1934 the East Yorkshire Bus Company took over the site. The United Bus Company had a smaller bus station at the corner of Marlborough Terrace and Promenade. Mr. Edwin Wardill lived at Cheapside, 107 Promenade, and ran the family's carriage building business.

On Promenade Wm. Cussons is now Boots, W. Foster Brigham's photography shop is now Higginson's and F.E. Gray & Co. is now a bookmakers and Poppins Coffee Lounge. The Promenade Methodist Church was demolished in 1960, its place being taken by two shops and a Wimpey Bar. Cinemas that were on Promenade were the Lounge, the Regal, the Winter Gardens and Coliseum. In early 1973 the Victoria Hotel on Promenade was demolished and replaced by an extension to the neighbouring Greyhound Hotel.

The White Bus Company had its office and waiting room on Queen Street. Public conveniences were built on Queen Street in 1932.



Horse drawn buses wait for business in Queen Street. The first underground toilets have yet to be built.

In 1926 Ernest Hodgson opened John Bull's rock shop at 19-20 Prince Street. In 1928 Woolworth's opened at 10-11 Prince Street. Macdonalds, 28 Prince Street, was built for Montagu Burton in 1932-3 on a site of a petrol station and car show room opened in 1919, and Notarianni's ice cream parlour opened at 15 Prince Street in 1935.

Neat's Furnishers were in business at 7-9 Quay Road from 1916 until 1989. Chambers Estate Agents was formerly Cumming and Spark. The General Post Office moved from Queen Street (now Nixie Plonks) to Quay Road in 1929, being built on the site of the former Greenling's Commercial Hotel. This building was destroyed by a bomb on 20 August 1940 and replaced by the present Post Office.

White Lodge an early Victorian mansion which was formerly known as Rose Villa, was refurbished for council use in 1925. Only three years later it was found that accommodation was hopelessly inadequate for

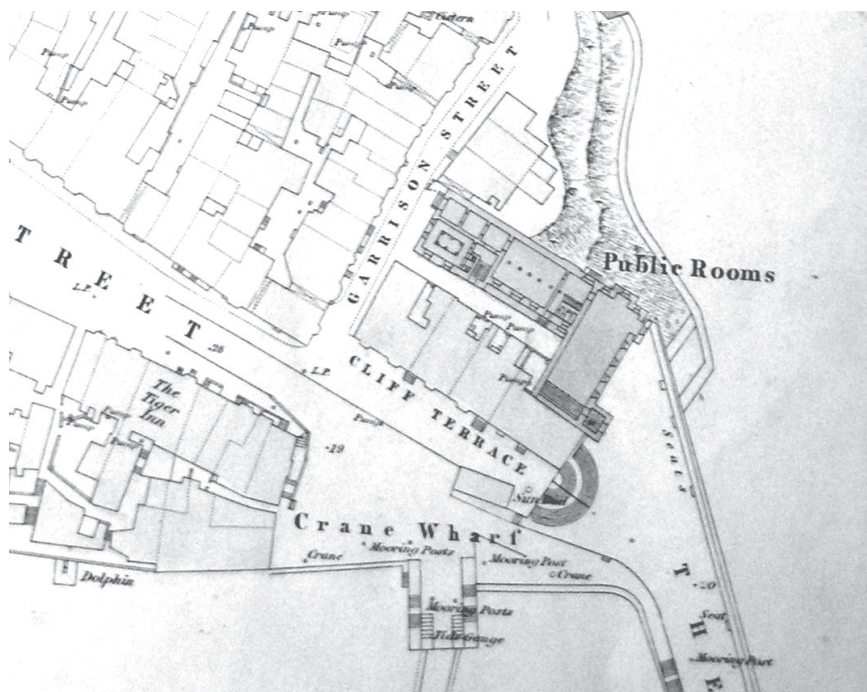


White Lodge and Quay Road. For a short while White Lodge acted as the expanding borough. So in 1929 the council agreed to build a new Town Hall. It was built on the same site and opened on 11th May 1932.

The Victoria Rooms, on Garrison Street, housed the Refreshment Rooms where tea was politely sipped and cakes daintily consumed.



The Victoria Rooms is the castellated building.



This exquisitely detailed O.S. map of 1850 shows internal details of the Victoria Rooms. Princes Parade has yet to be built and the cliff erosion seems to be endangering the structure.

This map is reproduced here with kind permission of Ordnance Survey.

These public rooms were erected near the North Pier in 1846 and included a room for balls, concerts and promenading, a newsroom, a reading room and a billiard room. The last council meeting to be held here before the opening of the Town Hall was on 27th April, 1932. The Victoria Rooms was devastated by fire on 22nd September, 1933. The Blue Bird Cafe was destroyed at the same time.

R. and J. Turner also opened on 11th May 1932 as florists and nurserymen in a doubled-fronted house known as the Poplars opposite the Town Hall. Other businesses included Anfield's Bus Company (where Higgs & Barker's is now), George Hardwick's grocers (now Tophams), Austin and Doran cycle shop, Les Fletcher's butcher's shop and J. Wright decorators (next to the Cricketer's Arms).

The Spa Royal Hall was opened on 15th July, 1926, by Alderman W. Storr who owned Storr & Sons, furniture / cabinet making and undertaking business, but was sadly destroyed by fire six years later in the early hours of 29th January, 1932. The new Spa Royal Hall was opened on 30th July, 1932 after a speedy rebuild. Among those affected by the 1932 Spa Royal Hall fire was the Ceres Harper Orchestra who had been playing the night before, the last waltz being "Charmaine". They lost all their instruments.

Herman Darewski was musical director at the Spa for ten seasons in the 1920's and 30's. Lionel Johns and his broadcasting orchestra began performing at the Floral Pavilion in 1933 and returned each year until the war. Leeds-born band leader Ivy Benson began her professional career in Bridlington in the mid-1930s in an all-girl band called 'The Rhythm Girls'.

The English comedienne and actress, Beryl Reid, made her first stage appearance in a concert party at the Floral Pavilion in 1936."



Herman Darewski and his band playing at the Spa