

# Royal news winter 2010 Hall Harrogate

In the six months since the Trust's last Newsletter, we have continued to make good progress. The two period bars in the North and South ambulatories have been installed and we are now moving on to the second of our major projects – developing the Heritage Lounge as a first class focal centre for the Royal Hall's new role as a Visitor and Heritage Centre. Inside are articles on this and our other future projects along with news of upcoming events in support of our fund-raising efforts.

The Royal Hall continues to be an extremely popular and successful performing venue. Over the past six months we have enjoyed events ranging from *Harrogate College's Higher and Further Education Awards* ceremony,

*Ann Summers Exhibition*, *National Rotary Conference*, *Moscow Ballet's "Nutcracker"*, *National Association of Flower Arrangers* to Harrogate Operatic Players "*Celebration of Song*". Harrogate International Festival held many of their events in the Royal Hall and expressed a very heartfelt sentiment "what on earth would we have done without the restoration of the building?" One particular event I would like to mention is "*Christmas with Thomas*" on Tuesday 21st December. The organiser, Thomas Spencer-Wortley, has pledged to donate some of the proceeds of the evening to the Trust so do please come along – it will be a super evening. Full details are on page 16. The Trust is

now engaged in approaching other grant-making trusts that might help fund the continued restoration. We have received an extremely generous second donation of £10,000 from the Audrey and Stanley Burton Charitable Trust and other donations from the Colin and Sylvia Shepherd; WW Spooner, and Gerald Finzi Charitable Trusts. The other way in which we are looking to raise funds is from the sale of the last 140 Dress Circle seats. If you, or someone you know, has £300, then this is a wonderful opportunity to place permanently on record your support for this and future generations' enjoyment of "Harrogate's jewel in the crown"!

Russell Davidson  
Chairman

# Major Improvements



*North ambulatory bar*

The Royal Hall Restoration Trust has recently commissioned and installed two replacement bars for the North and South ambulatories. Although the cost of these has absorbed a major portion of the Trust's remaining funds, it was felt by the Trustees that the beautifully restored ambulatories were being

spoiled by the makeshift formica counters that the HIC's caterers have been using since the hall re-opened.

The Trust commissioned joinery experts A P Pallister & Sons of Ripon to design and build the two replacement bars, based on an Edwardian prototype

found in the storerooms behind The Royal Hall. The North ambulatory had a big enough space behind the bar for ornate matching shelving to be built. This has a mirrored back and will eventually be lit from above.

The South ambulatory does not have enough space for shelving, but it is intended



*The old counter*



*South ambulatory bar*

in due course to commission a mural to hang behind this bar, in keeping with the appearance of the Royal Hall and the other pictures which have been hung in the public areas.

The bars and shelving are made out of solid mahogany and red walnut, 99% of which has been recycled

out of panelling and other fittings removed from The Royal Baths when the changing rooms at the Royal Baths were stripped out in 1969. Much of this wood had been stored for over 40 years at the Royal Baths and the Conference Centre. The bar tops comprise first quality Italian granite.

The new bars, while traditional in appearance, have been built to accommodate the requirements of the caterers, with refrigeration units for ice cream and drinks nicely hidden behind the bars, rather than being placed on top in full public view, as was the case with the old formica bars.

# Sponsor a Seat



*and help us complete the restoration of Harrogate's magnificent Royal Hall*

The Trust needs to raise a final £40,000 to complete these works – a sum that we plan to raise from the sponsorship of the last 140 seats in the Dress Circle and other fund raising projects. Can you please help us on this final push?

- Remember that special event:
  - a birthday
  - a meeting
  - a memorable performance
  - a special achievement
- Remember that special person who means so much to you
- Sponsorship of each seat is £300
- Choose your own inscription for the back of your seat
- Only 140 seats left in the Dress Circle



Please return to: Royal Hall Restoration Trust, Royal House, 110 Station Parade, Harrogate HG1 1EP or contact by email: [chairman@royalhall.org](mailto:chairman@royalhall.org) or tel: 01423 505805. Charity number 1090032.



## I would like to sponsor a seat in the restored Royal Hall

I would like the inscription on the back of my seat to read as follows below:

.....  
.....  
.....

If you would like to sponsor more than one seat, please include a note of the additional inscription(s) along with the applicable payment.

I enclose my payment of £..... Cheques payable to 'Royal Hall Restoration Trust'

I would like this and any future donation to be treated as Gift Aid.  Please tick box

I have paid tax in the UK equivalent to the amount reclaimed by the charity (25% of the donation)

Name.....

Address.....

Tel No.....

Signed.....

# New Door Handles for North & South Ambulatories



*Mr Robert Norman-Smith*

Thanks to a generous donation from The Audrey Burton Trust, the Royal Hall Restoration Trust has been pleased to commission Mr Robert Norman-Smith of Helmsley, North Yorkshire to cast bronze reproduction door plates and handles for the doors in the North and South Ambulatories.

Many of the Edwardian originals had become worn or gone missing. They bear the arms of the Borough of Harrogate with an art deco scrolled handle.

Mr Norman-Smith is an ex-Royal Marine who spent many years as a grain trader in the City of London, of which he is also a Freeman and member of the Fishmongers Company.

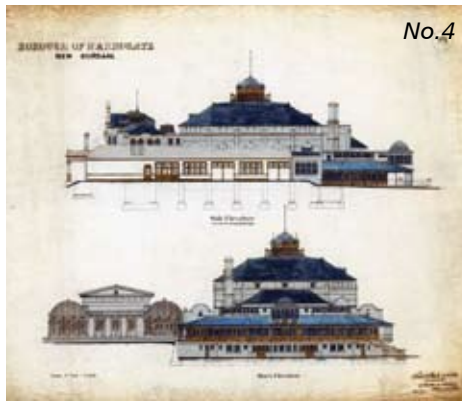
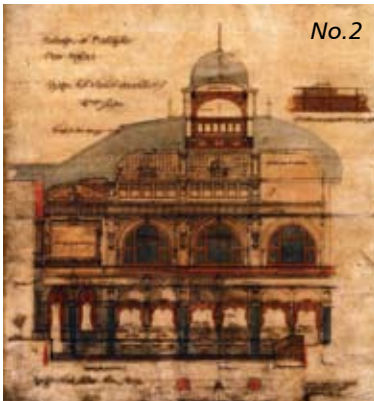
He moved to North Yorkshire some twenty years ago and took up working in metals when his son needed some castings to complete a model of a watermill as a student project.

He found he had a natural talent and has since been commissioned to do work for the restoration of various Pugin Houses, Temple Newsam near Leeds and the choirstalls at Southwell Minster.

Robert works in brass, bronze, aluminium and occasionally silver. He is often asked to cast precise historical reproductions of steam locomotives and boats. Now in his 80s, Robert has no intention of retiring and says he hopes to avoid the foundries of the underworld for many years to come!

£10  
EACH

# Architectural drawing prints for sale



The Trust has reproduced four high quality architectural prints of the original drawings for the Kursaal/Royal Hall.

The two with the orange background are of the interior of the building by the renowned theatre architect Frank Matcham. One shows the proscenium arch of the stage and the other features a line of the boxes in the auditorium.

The two on the white background are of the exterior designs by the architect Robert J. Beale. One shows the Front Elevation together with the North Side Elevation. The other shows the South Side Elevation and the Back Elevation.

The size of the prints are approx: 20" (51cms) x 16" (40.5cms) and cost only £10 each with all the profits going to the restoration project.

Only 200 prints of each drawing have been printed and remaining stocks are limited.

Please make out your cheque for the number of prints that you wish to purchase and kindly add £2.50 to cover postage and the cost of sending them in a cardboard tube. Cheques to be made payable to 'The Royal Hall Restoration Trust' and posted to:

Michael Hine, Royal Hall Restoration Trust,  
55, Fairways Avenue, Harrogate, HG2 7EL.

# Christmas tea dance



*The Sun Pavilion*

We are now coming to the end of 6 years of running a very successful season of Tea Dances.

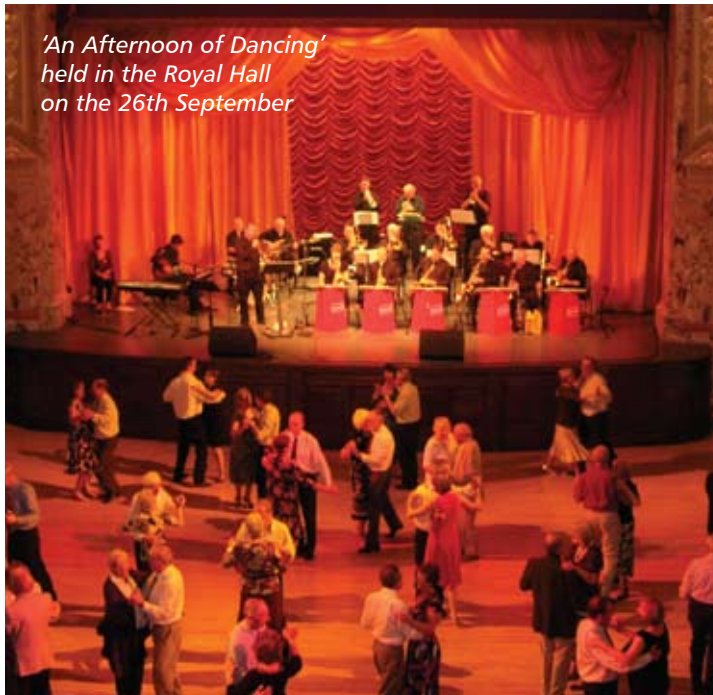
The final one was our annual *Christmas Tea Dance* held in the Sun Pavilion in the Valley Gardens on Tuesday 7th December 2010 from 2pm to 4.30pm.

The host was the ever popular Barbara Simpson and providing the live music was the entertaining Terry Wadkin. Christmas refreshments of mince pies, christmas cake, tea and coffee were served.

Tickets were £6.50 each and they were paid for on the door.

Our recent '*An Afternoon of Dancing*' held in the Royal Hall on the 26th September was a great success and everyone who attended had a wonderful time.

Our thanks go to all our wonderful volunteer helpers and to all those who have so kindly supported us in attending these very happy occasions - many lasting friendships have been made throughout these times.



*'An Afternoon of Dancing'  
held in the Royal Hall  
on the 26th September*



# “Happy Have We Met”

## *Harrogate, The Royal Hall & Yorkshire West Riding Freemasons.*

The Masonic Province of Yorkshire West Riding retains the pre 1974 boundaries of the former County of the West Riding of Yorkshire, encompassing 1.709,307 acres. The area spans roughly from Sheffield in the South, to Ripon in the North and Benthams in the North West, Goole in the East to the Pennines in the West. Within this considerable area 207 Masonic Lodges meet, with a membership of about 7,500.

It is certain that Freemasonry was practiced within Yorkshire from the early 18th Century. Efforts were made to establish a formal structure, in line with other Provincial Lodges, culminating in the formation in 1738, of a Provincial Grand Lodge, covering the whole of Yorkshire and centered on Halifax and the Lodge of Probity (now numbered 61 and still working).

1817 witnessed the division of the County into two autonomous Provinces, viz, Yorkshire West Riding and Yorkshire North and East Riding, each with its own Provincial Grand Master and administration. Between 1822 and 1957 the meetings of Provincial Grand Lodge varied in number and were peripatetic. Prior

to 1886, anything up to 16 meetings were held. Post 1886 the meetings were generally reduced to one annual and one half yearly meeting, again peripatetic. In 1957 a decision was taken to hold a single annual meeting, which would take place in the Royal Hall at Harrogate, to be followed by a banquet at the Majestic Hotel, which continues to this day.

The Province paid its first visit to Harrogate in 1866 following the opening in 1864 of Harrogate's first Masonic Lodge, Harrogate and Claro Lodge Number 1001 which is still working.

It again returned in 1873 and 1876. In October 1903 the Province forgathered of the Ballroom of the newly opened Majestic Hotel on that occasion the Provincial Grand Master Lord Allerton presided, when 290 Freemasons were present.

The Province returned on 5th October 1937 for its first meeting at the Royal Hall. On that occasion 646 witnessed the presentation of a portrait in oils by Sir William Nicholson of the Earl of Harewood *K.G.M.C.* Provincial Grand Master. The Portrait had been commissioned by the

Province, for their highly respected and much loved Provincial Grand Master, which now may be seen in Freemasons' Hall London.

The record attendance within the Royal Hall rests on that on the 14th May 1982, when 1382 were present. This record must stand as following refurbishment the seating capacity has been reduced.

During the period when the Royal Hall was closed, Provincial Grand Lodge happily met at the Harrogate Conference Centre, where they were made most welcome.

In January 1902 the foundation stone of the Royal Hall was laid by Ald. David Simpson *J.P.* thrice Mayor of Harrogate, himself a Freemason, being a member of Doric Lodge No: 2695 meeting at Harrogate. (Still working).

How gratifying it is once more to return home to this beautiful building where countless Freemasons have happily met down the years. Hearty congratulations are preferred, to all who have sought and those who yet seek, to maintain and promote this National Treasure.

Martin Stray

# Lilian's bench



*“Like the pied piper, we followed her magic...”*



While the place for which Lilian Mina is most vividly remembered is undoubtedly the Royal Hall, it was in the Valley Gardens that she would gather her energies for the many challenges involved in the campaign to save Harrogate's famous Kursaal, and it was also in the Valley Gardens that Lilian alighted on many of her most innovative and daring fundraising ideas. The Valley Gardens were a stone's throw from her home, and she loved them deeply, not only for their beauty, but also for the much-needed respite they afforded her during the intensely busy final years of her life.

It was, therefore, both moving and fitting that on the 26th August, the Mayor of the Borough, Councillor Bill Hoult, graciously dedicated a bench to Lilian's memory in the gardens that meant so much to her. Situated by the main gate, at the spot where she would stop to read the papers on sunny Sundays, the bench carries two plaques, one of which records the words with which Dame Fanny Waterman evoked Lilian's magnetic personality: *“Like the pied piper, we followed her magic...”*

Some 50 people attended the ceremony, all close friends of Lilian and her

family, and all were moved by the Mayor's touching and very personal account of Lilian and her contributions to the town and district.

After the dedication, a small casket of Lilian's ashes was placed in the eaves of the Royal Hall, next to the Time Capsule she herself had put there – braving steep scaffolding when she was already ailing – over two years earlier. It had been Lilian's dying wish that her ashes be scattered in the eaves of the building she loved so much. Health and safety regulations meant that scattering was not an option, so the ashes were instead safely contained within a small wooden box.

# Poster Display



Five images of the Kursaal/Royal Hall have been purchased, framed and hung on the back wall of the Dress Circle.

They feature interior and exterior views as portrayed on the 1920's/30's railway posters to promote Harrogate as a visitor destination.

Michael Hine obtained the prints from the National Railway Museum and The Mercer Art Gallery and donated them to the Royal Hall.

They have been paid for from the monies raised from the sale of his CDs. These stunning art deco images really enhance the decor of the Royal Hall.

# Royal Patronage to Continue

The Trustees were recently informed that HRH The Prince of Wales has confirmed that he wishes to remain as the Trust's Patron until the remaining works to complete the restoration of the Royal Hall are all in place and the Trust is in a position to disband "with mission fully accomplished".

This is a huge vote of confidence in what we have set out to achieve and the Trustees are highly indebted to His Royal Highness for his continued support.



ROYAL HALL  
RESTORATION TRUST



# CD Sales Boost Funds

The second CD produced by Michael Hine to raise funds for the Royal Hall is entitled 'Harrogate in Music & Song'.

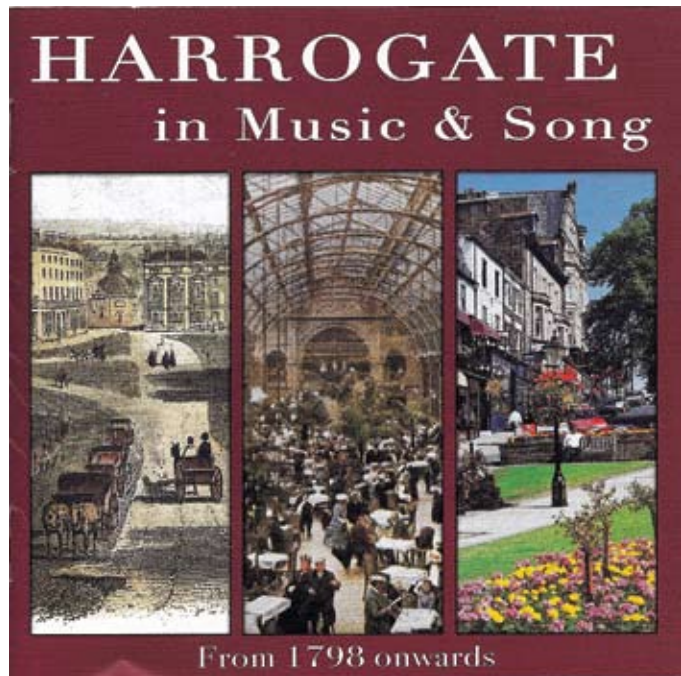
This is a culmination of 20 years research into music and songs that have been written with 'Harrogate' in the title. Many people have stated that they never knew of any Harrogate music.

The 21 tracks feature music from 1798 to 2000 and cover a wide range of music styles from folk dance to classical, dialect to the Charlestone and from barbershop to brass band – a real piece of Harrogate history.

Some of them are original recordings and others have been specially recorded by local talented musicians and singers who have so kindly given of their time to support the restoration project.

A limited edition of 500 has been produced and they are now on sale at only £5 each from the Harrogate

*The full £5 from every sale goes to the continued enhancement of the Royal Hall.*



Tourist Information Centre,  
Royal Baths, Crescent Road,  
Harrogate.

Should you have any difficulty in obtaining the CD then please contact Michael on: 01423 880505.



## Vintage Dance Band CD

Since our last newsletter the sales of the 'Vintage Dance Band' CD have been excellent. At the last stock check there were only 13

copies left at the Harrogate Tourist Information Centre. So buy one before it is too late at only £5 each.

# HEARTS Festival has been an overall success

HEARTS Festival organiser and STUDIO Arts & Culture Magazine Managing Editor Kelly Gavaghan is continuing to support The Royal Hall Restoration Trust into 2011.

Kelly says "The inaugural year of HEARTS Festival has been an overall success with all of our events well attended and with more than 200 performers from the ages of 6 - 66 taking part last summer at all of our events. We are picking up momentum so much so that we are now attracting world famous supporters of Harrogate's only charitable festival including the Moscow Ballet, The Vagina Monologues and the Hungarian Ice Theatre who are performing The Nutcracker on Ice at The Great Yorkshire Showground between 16th - 23rd December. To add to this we have engaged the services

of top UK ice sculptor Jamie Wardley to hold a workshop with students from across Harrogate and District to perform a live carve at the Showground on 15th December."



"We are also working with Connecting Youth Culture's CULTURESHOCK Youth Festival in 2011 where we will be holding open auditions for our planned Royal Hall fundraiser 'Royal Variety Performance'. The event will see talented young people from across

the district participating. As an organisation we are still very much committed to helping to publicise fundraising events free of charge for the Hall through STUDIO Arts & Culture Magazine and providing a platform for young people in the arts, whilst raising money for such an integral building at the heart of Harrogate's arts community at this time.

For our first year we are delighted that we have broken even and established the Festival. We may not have raised any funds yet but we certainly hope that our contribution towards publicising the Trust positively through our events and magazine has kept the issue of raising funds for our beloved Royal Hall at the forefront of everybody's minds."

Since the Trust was formed back in 2001, a small group of dedicated trustees has worked hard to first save and then find funds to complete the restoration of the Royal Hall. The current trustees are:

Russell Davidson  
Michael Booth  
Michael Hine  
Mitzi Mina  
Gordon Pearson  
Peter Syson

Davidson Large LLP Solicitors  
ex-Chairman Harrogate Symphony Orchestra  
Retired Tourism Manager  
Press Officer, Sothebys  
GPO Direct Marketing  
Rubber Band Graphic Design

*Front cover picture:  
'Royal Hall in Snowfall' by Rob Howe*

The Trust Administrator is Wing Commander Howard Hughes RAF (Ret'd)



# TOURS OF THE ROYAL HALL

## HARROGATE'S PALACE OF GLITTERING GOLD

Within the 'Primetime' programme for 2011 organised by the Harrogate Museums & Arts are four FREE guided tours of the recently restored Edwardian theatre, the Royal Hall.

The Hall was the major entertainment venue for the rich and famous who came to visit Harrogate to take the waters. See the beautifully gilded interior and many of the original features.

**Wednesday 16th February at 11am and 1pm  
and  
Monday 9th May at 11am and 1pm**

Meet at the Royal Hall, Ripon Road, Harrogate.

Places are limited – so please book your place by telephoning 01423 556188 or email: [museums@harrogate.gov.uk](mailto:museums@harrogate.gov.uk)

Dates could be subject to change but notice will always be given if this occurs.

# ROYAL HALL SOUVENIRS



*A photograph of the Royal Hall has been turned into a fascinating jigsaw puzzle. There are two versions - 520 pieces at £10.99 & 1,000 pieces at £14.99.*



*This hardback book details the history and the restoration of the Kursaal/Royal Hall. It is wonderfully illustrated and costs just £14.99.*



*A watercolour painting of the Royal Hall by Barry Cloughton has been produced as a print and as a coaster. The prints are £5.50 and the coasters £1.99.*



*A polo shirt has been created with a specially commissioned Royal Hall embroidered logo and sells for £13.99.*



*The front cover of a Royal Hall programme from 1926 has been used to produce a period postcard and retails at only 40p.*

*They all make ideal gifts and presents for Christmas or at any time of the year.*

All the above items are only available from The Harrogate Tourist Information Centre, Royal Baths, Crescent Road, Harrogate.

# Celebrate Christmas

with **Thomas**

*'...the solo version of Il Divo...'*  
*The Sunday Express*

With Special Guests  
Classical Brit Award Winners

## BLAKE

Guests include West End Star  
**Vicky Ekanoye**  
& exciting new soprano  
**Joanna Marie Skillett**



Show starts at 7.30pm. Tickets £29.50 Concession £25 (subject to booking fee)  
from Harrogate International Centre. Tel 0845 130 8840.

Thomas Spencer-Wortley, has pledged to donate some of the proceeds from his concert at the Royal Hall on 21st December to the Trust.

Described by the Sunday Express as '...the solo version of Il Divo...', English tenor Thomas Spencer-Wortley has wowed audiences with his powerful and charismatic performances. Thomas has performed with the greats including Katherine Jenkins and Beverley

Knight, whilst artists such as All Angels and Camilla Kerslake are amongst his guests who have performed in his stunning concerts. Performances have been made in such diverse arenas as concert halls, to London Fashion Week, to singing the national anthem live on BBC's 'Match Of The Day'.

In addition to his concert performances he is also Derby County Football Club's official tenor and regularly

sings at home games in front of crowds of 33,000. Following the release of his debut album 'Crederè' in August 2009 Thomas' career has gone from strength to strength which has seen his fan base, both in the UK and internationally, increase steadily.

This newsletter is published by the Royal Hall Restoration Trust.

Charity Number 1090032

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