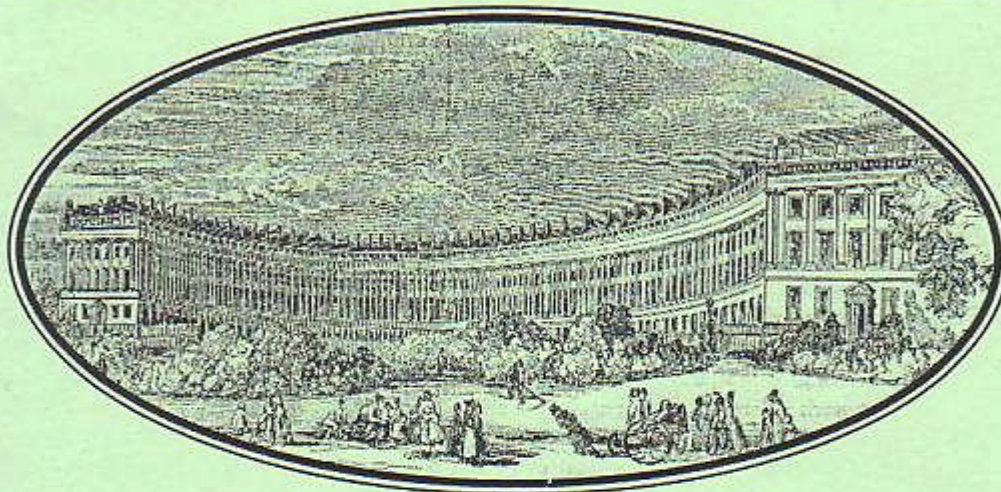


THE ROYAL CRESCENT SOCIETY
NEWSLETTER

ISSUE NUMBER 47

SPRING 2002



Annual General Meeting
at 6.30pm on Sunday 28th April 2002
in the Royal Crescent Hotel
● All residents welcome ●

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PUBS AND CLUBS

Letter from the Editor

Dear Residents and Members,

My thanks to those who have contributed articles to this issue of the Newsletter, especially to Anne Quigley and Martyn Daniels who have recently arrived in the Crescent and have already taken such an interest in the activities of the Society.

If you come across articles of interest to residents in the newspapers, please let me know, as they may help in treating certain topics. For instance, there is an article in this issue about the licensing of pubs and clubs. You may have read recent newspaper reports about Chester, where the night life has begun to damage the city's image. Seeing what has happened there may help Bath to avoid such problems and all residents need to be informed and vigilant.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Stephen Conlin, No.29.

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Published by the Royal Crescent Society

<i>President</i>	<i>Sir John Barraclough, KCB, CBE, DFC, AFC, FRSA</i>
<i>Vice-Presidents</i>	<i>The Right Hon. The Earl of Stockton</i>
	<i>Mr. Michael Daw</i>
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<i>Treasurer</i>	<i>Michelle Little</i>
<i>Secretary</i>	<i>Ian Woodhouse</i>
<i>Editor</i>	<i>Stephen Conlin</i>

The Royal Crescent Society
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

All residents of the Royal Crescent and Friends of the Society are cordially invited to the Annual General Meeting of the Society which will be held at the Royal Crescent Hotel (by kind co-operation of the General Manager) at 6.30pm on 28th April 2002. Our Ward Councillors, Gerry Curran and Andy Furse, have also been invited.

This event is of course free and all who attend are welcome to speak on any issue affecting life in the Crescent or its environment. Only paid-up members are permitted to vote; a membership form and the formal calling notice accompany this Newsletter, and will be available at the meeting. After the meeting there is an opportunity to meet your Councillors and neighbours. Wine will be served, for which we ask those who stay after the meeting to pay £5, with any profit going to the Railings & Ha-ha Appeal Fund.

The Committee very much hopes that you will be able to come. If you can participate, even better, but if you just listen you will learn more about the setting of your home, your neighbours and about things happening here which affect you. It is not necessary to give advance notice of any points you wish to raise, though it might make it easier to give a full answer to your query.

Chairman's Notes

Of the two issues I mentioned in the last Newsletter, there has been forward movement on the Railings and Ha-ha project and backward movement on the byelaw for events in the Park.

Having seen the wisdom of not exempting religious services from the proposed byelaw, because of the very real risk of abuse of the interpretation of religion, the Council is now seeking counsel's opinion on whether such an omission contravenes the Human Rights Act. Although we are in no hurry to see the proposed byelaw enacted, as it would reduce control over noisy events, it is irritating that the

Council has seen fit to waste tax-payers' money in this way. We can only assume that they have failed to read either part of the relevant Article 9. The first part states that everyone has the right to freedom of religion and to manifest his religion — but not that they should be given extra privileges to that end. The second part states that these rights are still subject to law and the need to preserve public order and protect the rights of others. Meanwhile however the Council's events co-ordinators do appear to be taking some account of complaints made in the past when deciding which events to allow in the Park, so I am hopeful that we shall be spared some of the excesses have endured in past years.

Our letter to the Heritage Lottery Fund about the withdrawal of the grant towards our restoration project eventually elicited the reply that they would still be prepared to make the grant if ownership of the Railings and Ha-ha could be re-defined with charitable status. We are therefore exploring means of doing so with the Council, and hope to report more progress soon. It will be emphasised to both Council and HLF that discussions will involve only the narrow strip of land on which these boundaries lie, and not the Lawn which they contain. It will also be emphasised that this route is the only way in which the restoration, so badly needed, is likely to become possible in the foreseeable future.

Is everyone as flummoxed by the recent parking questionnaire as I was? We are asked to express opinions on various options with very little explanation of their implications, and the option most of us had expected, of the Crescent being included in Zone 7, was conspicuous by its absence. I have written to say that the Royal Crescent, being overwhelmingly residential street, should be in a residential rather than a commercial zone, which I fear a central zone would be with even fewer concessions for residents than now.

I cannot close without mentioning the sterling work performed over the years by Mr & Mrs Oswald, who are now stepping down from the Committee. Their efforts in ensuring the smooth running of the Society and its various functions will be sorely missed in their

BATH RACECOURSE

FIXTURES 2002

Tuesday 30 April		First Race 2.00pm
Tuesday 7 May		First Race 2.25pm
Monday 20 May		First Race 2.00pm
Friday 31 May	Evening	First Race 6.35pm
Saturday 15 June		First Race 2.00pm
Wednesday 26 June	Ladies Evening	First Race 6.45pm
Monday 8 July		First Race 2.00pm
Sunday 14 July	Family Fun Day	First Race 2.20pm
Thursday 25 July		First Race 2.00pm
Tuesday 6 August		First Race 2.00pm
Sunday 18 August	Ladies Derby	First Race 2.25pm
Friday 23 August	Evening	First Race 5.25pm
Monday 9 September		First Race 2.00pm
Monday 16 September		First Race 2.10pm
Monday 30 September		First Race 2.30pm
Wednesday 16 October		First Race 2.00pm

(All fixture times may vary - please check press for details)

Car parking and children under 16 FREE. Racecourse located at top of Lansdown Hill, 2 miles North of Bath City Centre.

Call (01225) 424609.

New Residents: Home at last

They say that when you arrive at the place you know you belong, everything just fits and you immediately take on a new relationship with everything around you.

We came to Bath last summer to stay with a friend for the weekend and on entering her flat asked the question, "Are you thinking of buying?" She said that we would love Bath and she was right. It was not the flat but the city, or should I say village. It was the hills, the stone buildings, the fact you could walk from countryside, through town to the city in a relatively short space of time. It was the grandeur of the architecture, the bustle of the shops and it was certainly the friendliness of the people. Imagine a city laid to siege all year round by tourists, snapping this and peering through windows into that. They are ferried about in open-decked buses, with headsets that remind them constantly of the native tongue. Yet through all this intrusion, the village remains and the villagers remain.

We knew Bath was where we wanted to set up our new marital home, but who would have guessed it would be on the Crescent? When we saw the flat we decided there and then. It was not hard to choose. It was an easy decision. Yes there was hard work ahead. Yes it was different to the flats in London and Toronto and the house we were selling in Hampshire, but it felt right. Perhaps it was the huge Bath City dresser built into the kitchen, or the hugeness of the kitchen itself or perhaps the quaint little garden out the back - all walled off from the intrusion of others. Perhaps it was everything and much more. When we moved in our furniture fitted like a glove. It was too were under the effect of *déjà vu*.

Our friends in the States and Canada all wanted to see pictures of our new house. "Just look on the internet at http://www.freefoto.com/pictures/ukwest_of_england/bath," I was greeted by one over-enthusiastic friend, "What you own all that? I am sure he wasn't too disillusioned when we described what w

We have now become accustomed to being watched by the tourists. Like all voyeurs, they observe, patiently waiting for that "experience". Annie was approached one day by one couple, who she thought were American, only to discover that they too lived in Bath. They were merely looking in on the Crescent to get ideas for their courtyard.

However, you soon realise the privilege you have just being part of it. Even your car forgives the cobblestones, as they navigate past the hotel's parking arrangements and those tourists taking that one group photo. They too know that they will be parked on the Crescent. They are only disappointed when there are no spaces and they have to park elsewhere and out of camera. The only downside of living on what must be one of the most well-known streets in Europe is that the Council or English Heritage don't pay us to live here and maintain it for their guests. Ah, but then it wouldn't be home.

Martyn Daniels

A.E.EADES

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Bath International Festival: Opening Night Friday 17th May 2002

Opening Night will start at 6pm with the traditional Procession. This year school and community groups have been working with a team of local artists on a Golden Jubilee theme.

The procession will start from the Circus and move round the Royal Crescent, down Marlborough Lane, through the Park and back up to the Circus. From 6pm until midnight, the Royal Crescent, Brock Street, the Circus, parts of Gay Street and Bennett Street, Upper Church Street, Royal Avenue, Catherine Place and part of Marlborough Buildings will be closed to traffic. There will also be an additional road closure on either side of the Golf Course (Weston Road up to Royal Victoria Park and Cavendish Road up to Park Place) for one hour between 9.30 and 10.30pm.

The main stage this year once again features artists from Bath International Music Festival's World Music Weekend. Musicians from Rajasthan and Mali will have been working together in Bath for several days and Opening Night will be the first opportunity to hear them live. '10', a big band from the Guildhall School of Music and Drama in London follows, and the music concludes with a lively Latin American band, *Conjunto Sabroso*. The bandstand in the lower part of the Park will showcase bands from City of Bath College, whose performance is assessed as part of their course. The fireworks will go off from the Golf Course at 10pm. The firing site further up the Golf Course was very successful in 2001 and the same site will be used in 2002.

The layout of the Park will be very similar to last year. Stage erection will start on the Tuesday. Marquees will be erected on Wednesday, there will be a lighting trial on Thursday night, and soundchecks will take place throughout the afternoon on Friday.

If you have any questions about the event please do not hesitate to contact Elizabeth Webb, Head of Music, on (01225) 462231 or Steve Hunt, Event Manager, on (0117) 904 2275.

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Royal Crescent Residents: Frederic Harrison
Freedom - and the Crescent - Revisited

In November 1921 an illustrious resident of the Crescent, Frederic Harrison, who lived at No.10, was presented with the Freedom of the City of Bath at the Guildhall. Shortly afterwards the usual bronze plaque was fixed to the house recording his time there, from 1859 until his death in 1923.

Harrison was a true 'man of letters' of his day and indeed an intellectual giant. He published several of his most important works while he lived here. The titles give a flavour of some of his specialisations: *Positivism, its Aims and Ideals* and *The Philosophy of Common Sense* and *The Positive Evolution of Religion*. As a barrister he was a member of two Royal Commissions and for a time was Professor of Jurisprudence and International Law at Lincoln's Inn Hall. He was an admirer of Comte's positivist philosophy and was a contemporary and friend of George Saintsbury, who lived at No.1.

On his ninetieth birthday in 1919 he was paid a remarkable tribute. An appreciative address was presented to him in his library, on the first floor of No.10, signed by the Prime Minister Lloyd George, the leaders of both the Liberal and Labour Parties and by many prominent figures in the Church, the professions and the arts.

In this country his name and contribution fell into semi-obscurity despite a lengthy entry in the National Dictionary of Biography. However in far-off California, in the State University at Fullerton, Professor Martha Vogeler and her husband were in the latter part of the twentieth century developing a deep interest in Harrison. This culminated in her definitive biography *Frederic Harrison, The Vocations of a Positivist* which shone new light on the man as 'one of the most vital and engaging of his age'.

Coming right up to date, in September 2001 Professor Vogeler brought Harrison's surviving descendants to Bath and revisited the room that had been the setting for the presentation of the Address.

They kindly presented the present owner, Michael Daw, with specially printed copies of Harrison's response to being made a Freeman of the City and a wonderfully detailed description of the way his library had been furnished. Michael had arranged for a private showing of Harrison's portrait, now in the vaults of the Victoria Art Gallery, and presented the descendants with a digital reproduction of the painting. John and Barbara Walker from the upper floors of No.10 joined in what became quite an event: John has the distinction of having actually read some of the great man's works.

Harrison's great-granddaughter Christian and his great-grandson Matthew were thrilled by the visit and a jolly time was had by all.



Professor Vogeler and her husband viewing the portrait of Harrison in the vaults of the Victoria Art Gallery

▼ **Air quality.** There is a new monitoring scheme in London Road. Only nitrogen dioxide is being monitored and not particulates. There are real concerns about the damage to stone caused by the latter which can penetrate beneath the surface of our buildings and cause them to peel. These particulates also evade the body's defences; they enter the lungs, and there are several other carcinogenic pollutants from road traffic.

▼ Bath's application for a 'Heritage and Transport' package from Government, totalling £14 million, has been refused. As a result, several transport projects are in abeyance. The Council may nevertheless fund Lambridge Park and Ride, in order to reduce the number of private vehicles entering Bath along the already-congested London Road. Lucky Salisbury received £23 million for a by-pass consisting of several small schemes. Is this what is meant by 'joined-up government'?

▼ **Action on Waste** is here to help people find solutions to waste problems. We can help you to make the difference locally. Here are some examples of ideas we've helped people to get off the ground:

- Community composting sites to which local people may bring their bulky garden waste.

- Local booklets and directories to help people find the local shop that reduce, reuse and recycle.

- Junk swaps where people can clear out their homes and gardens and swap with their neighbours.

Action on Waste can offer you support in lots of ways, helping to:

- organise your own projects, events and activities

- publicise your ideas

- raise funds for your ideas

- contact others who can help you

- find the training, information and resources you might need.

We can take you on visits to learn more about the issues e.g. landfills, recycling depots, composting sites.

The Recycling Consortium is a not-for-profit company that works to promote waste issues. The Consortium undertakes education projects and publicity campaigns and has been running for five years. The co-ordinator for the Action on Waste project in Bath and North East Somerset is based at envolve (formally Bath Environment Centre).

Contact Ellie Dale, Development Officer,
Action on Waste in Bath and North East Somerset,
The Recycling Consortium,
c/ o envolve, Green Park Station,
Green Park Road, Bath BA1 1JB.
Tel. 01225 787920.
Email .ellied@recyclingconsortium.org.uk
www.recyclingconsortium.org.uk

Planning

▼ It may not always be necessary to apply for Listed Building Consent if you are planning a minor change to your property. The Council's Built Heritage Group usually has a duty architect on hand to discuss any proposal, which could be based on simple diagrams and photographs. This informal service could save you time and money, since you would be finding out how the proposal is viewed, and at this stage the services of an architect or designer would not be necessary.

If the duty architect thinks it unlikely that consent is going to be necessary, he will recommend that you make a submission of several copies of your plans, clearly drawn, with a letter asking if consent is needed. You should then receive a letter detailing what is being permitted and saying that the Council's representatives do not believe that Listed Building Consent is needed. This letter should be kept with the deeds, to be shown to any prospective purchaser in the future.

Built Heritage Group, Trimbridge House, Trim Street,
Bath BA1 2DP
Telephone 477547.

HERE AND THERE IN THE CRESCENT

▼ The Festive Dinner of the Royal Crescent Society took place on 6th January 2002 in the Royal Crescent Hotel. This was Twelfth Night and a very pleasant way of finishing the Christmas season. Over fifty diners assembled for wine in the entrance hall of the Hotel's garden buildings and we then occupied the main dining room for the evening. The company was divided between five tables and, after Sir John Barraclough had said Grace, the three-course dinner was served by a most attentive staff.

The menu was generous, consisting of salmon for the first course, with creamed potato and a fragrant tarragon dressing. Roast rack of lamb was served with dauphinoise potato and tomato gateau. As a vegetarian I was delighted with the effort that had gone into the dishes served for that option. We all enjoyed the white chocolate mousse with a raspberry jelly, followed by coffee and *petits fours*.

A splendid array of donated goodies made for some keen buying of raffle tickets, and all proceeds went towards the Railing and Ha-ha Appeal. There was excitement as the bidding reached a climax for the 'star prize' of a week's accommodation in Chamonix.

Our thanks are due to the General Manager and staff of the Hotel for making this occasion possible.

Stephen Conlin

▼ More culinary interest is promised during the Bath International Festival with this year's 'BITE' - Bath International Taste Extravaganza. This includes the event held in Green Park Station on Sunday 2nd June, when restaurants set up stands and guests may try dishes from several different establishments. The Festival programme, pages 45-49, gives details of the various offers and events, including several in the Royal Crescent Hotel.

▼ In the last issue of the *Newsletter*, the 'entitlement' for the Hotel's guests to park in Zone 7 was discussed. This, it was said, was based on the Hotel's properties in Crescent Lane on the sites of the former mews buildings, stables and other outbuildings. It should follow that other residents whose property embraces such sites should also be entitled to permits for Zone 7. Councillor Furse has been asked to confirm if this is the case. The matter of Council officials' failure to answer residents' letters on this subject remains unresolved.

▼ The stage erected just below the Ha-ha in the week before the opening night of the Bath International Festival, Friday 17th May 2002, will be taken down on the following Saturday morning, and the main site in the Park will be cleared of rubbish, as usual. This is to reassure new residents who may think they have moved to a fortnight-long concert venue. The Council has now installed extra-strong lampposts on the Gravel Walk, as several of these were snapped off on the Opening Night in 2000.

▼ Letter to the Editor

Sir - I expect this one has been discussed before, but it does seem rather odd to me that we have to park nose-to-tail when a more enlightened approach might be to allow parking at an angle, with the front of the car towards the pavement. My calculations suggest that we could increase the amount of legitimate parking by at least two-thirds, from forty to sixty or more cars. This is probably not enough to satisfy everyone's requirements but would surely be a huge improvement on the current restrictive arrangements. The outer part of the Crescent, currently designated a single yellow line, could then be re-designated to double-yellow status, thus ensuring that access is possible at all times and at the same time preventing inconvenient 'double parking' which seems to occur towards the

Fifteen Years Ago

Avon and Bath City Councillors finally agreed on March 13th 1987 to proceed with the coach and HGV vehicles ban on the Royal Crescent for a twelve-month trial period. Bath City Councillors made a late move to include other streets, but this was not successful. The Chairman of the Traffic Committee of the Royal Crescent Society, Capt. Francis Burne, warned residents through a special issue of the Newsletter that the Press might approach them for comment.

Residents of the Circus voiced concern that traffic chaos would ensue in their area. This was the first victory in a campaign against heavy traffic that had already lasted seven years. *Of course the Crescent was still open at the western end at this stage, so that through traffic of smaller kinds continued.*

The opening night of the Bath International Festival would, as usual, feature madrigals in the Crescent and the Circus, and jazz and military music. The organisers said that fireworks might be included.

In February *Northanger Abbey* was shown on BBC 2. The Corporation had been careful to consult residents before the filming, which took place in August 1986. Unfortunately the black tape used to cover the signs on the gates of the Lawn stripped off the lettering, which had to be repainted at the expense of the BBC. The filming of *Vanity Fair* in the Crescent had been abandoned, after a letter from a BBC production team had 'announced' that it was about to take place. The Society had not been consulted and several residents complained directly to BBC management.

Ten Years Ago

Work to replace the tarmac paving bordering the Lawn with pennant stone was 'probably' going to be funded by Bath City Council, but the Director of Engineering and Property Services said that this would not start until the railings and their bases were put into a bet-

ter condition. The Society did not have funds to cover such expensive work. It was believed by Committee members that the cause of the major deterioration of the railing bases since they were last reinstated in 1975 must have been the heavy weight of passing traffic. This was disputed by the responsible representatives of Bath City and Avon Councils. The Council debated a new traffic order to limit the number of open-topped tour buses using the Crescent to five per hour, but a number of objections, many from residents of Bathwick Hill, had resulted in the rejection of this proposal.

The concerns of the Society were listed, 'the problem of pitch invasions on the Lawn, the vexed question of residents' parking and the never-ending requests to use the Crescent and the Lawn for film or commercial purposes. Now there is the pressing problem of the restoration of the Ha-ha and its cost'.

The Newsletter looked forward to the José Carreras concert on Sunday June 28th 1987, which twelve thousand were expected to attend. The Lawn was to be used for the stage.

Living in Bath: Pubs and Clubs

Bath has become busier and busier in the evenings as a result of the opening of new pubs and clubs. Whilst such developments are seen as a way of regenerating run-down Northern cities, we may reasonably ask if this is the way Bath should go. The licensees of the newer youth-orientated pubs and clubs have no doubt that this is the right direction, and one of them prefaces his statements about longer opening hours with "What Bath needs...", as if he speaks for everyone in the city. George Street at 11pm on a Friday or Saturday night is not

a pretty sight. In case we think we are at a safe remove from it may be wise to consider that the quiet pub on the corner - where - could become tomorrow's club-scene mecca. We are likely to suffer the passing of stragglers from late-night venue

Your right to peace at home is now strengthened by the Euro Convention on Human Rights. The Council also has a statute to prevent disorder under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998.

Council Licences

Every night club and late-night pub can operate only with a licence issued by the Council, called a Public Entertainment Licence (PEL) which lasts for 12 months. The PEL is reviewed annually, and renewed automatically if there have been no objections. Ward Councillors are consulted every year, and take no action unless they have been approached by residents with complaints. The Council has a policy to license public entertainment in such a way as to prevent nuisance. 'Nuisance' could take the form of being disturbed in home by noisy music from within licensed premises, by patrons on the outside coming and going noisily, or by anti-social behaviour. I can name a few.

Magistrates' Licences

The licence to sell alcohol after 11 pm is separate. It is called a Special Hours Certificate and is issued by Magistrates. Late night alcohol licensing is not, at present, under Council control, and can be challenged by the Police: for further information call the Police Licensing Officer on (0117) 9455154. However, licensees must hold the PEL in order to hold the late alcohol licence, and can only sell alcohol up to the time limit on the PEL. It is this PEL, issued by Council, which residents can challenge, for example by requesting earlier closing time.

If you have a complaint about a late-night club or pub the first step would be to approach the licensee, or possibly the owner of the premises or the head office, in the case of a large brewery. Make a note of the response. If you are not happy with the outcome, the next step would be to write with details to:

The Principal Licensing Officer,
9 -10 Bath Street,
Bath BA1 1SN.

It is important to have a record of dates and times of any disturbances. Again, keep copies of all relevant correspondence. If the disturbance is still occurring, then you have grounds to object to the renewal of the PEL. Your objection will be most effective if you can attend the Council's Licensing Committee. This body is responsible for deciding whether to renew a PEL in its existing form, or whether to impose conditions or reduce hours of operation.

Note that your objection and evidence to support it will be made available to the licensee in advance of any hearing, otherwise it will not be allowed.

Councillors can help

If you have a genuine complaint but do not want to deal directly with the licensee, or if you are unable to attend the licensing hearing, then contact your ward councillor who can act on your behalf.

Stephen Conlin

Licensing information supplied by the Abbey Residents' Association, whose members are in the front line.