

Friends of Valley Gardens

January/February 2023 No 42

Municipal School Footpaths

You will have seen that work has started on the conversion of the old municipal school (Westwood College) into flats.

However one area of concern for the Friends is that the council appear to have included the patch of land between the end of the building and Valley Bridge Road in the sale. This piece of land is crossed by two footpaths that many people use to reach the Tesco store or go to the bus stops and railway station. Neither footpath has been designated as a public right of way, so the new owners would be well within their rights to put a fence across the boundary with the park and prevent access to these footpaths.

At our last committee meeting we decided to initiate the process of getting these footpaths designated as rights of way.

We have already contacted the council to get them to confirm that they no longer own the land and we have written to the new owners to inform them of what we intend to do. There is a chance that the new owners will voluntarily have the paths designated as rights of way and that would save us a lot of work.

However it seems more likely that we will have to go through the full process and to do that we will need to

1. Prove the footpaths form a continuous route from public highway to public highway.
2. Provide documentary evidence that the footpaths have existed for more than 20 years.
3. Prove that the footpaths have been in continuous use for the last 20 years.

The first two requirements are very straight forward and we have plenty of maps to cover the evidence required. The third requirement needs input from those who use the footpaths on a regular basis. We will be asking members to complete a questionnaire detailing their use of the paths. Unfortunately the form runs to eight pages but most of the questions are tick boxes so shouldn't be too long winded to fill in. Watch out for the form being attached to the next newsletter.

Work Parties

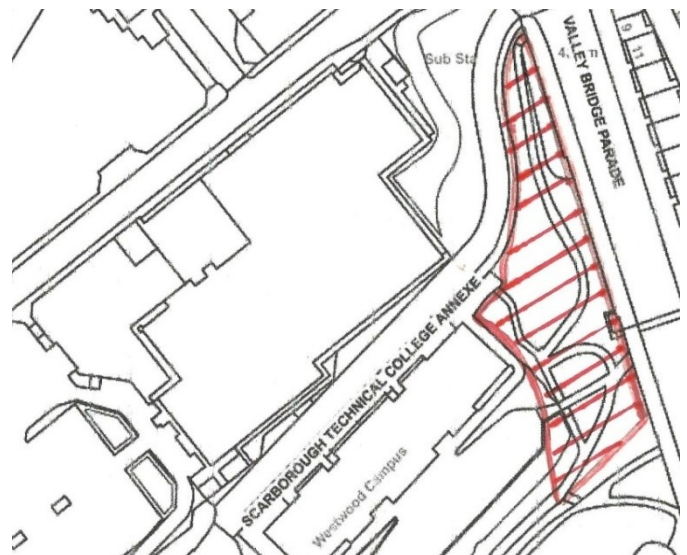
Sunday February 5th

Sunday March 5th

Meet under the bridge at 9.30am

The December work party had to be cancelled as the paths were frozen.

The work party in February will be litter collecting and the one in March, a general tidy up. Please note the earlier start time of 9.30am.

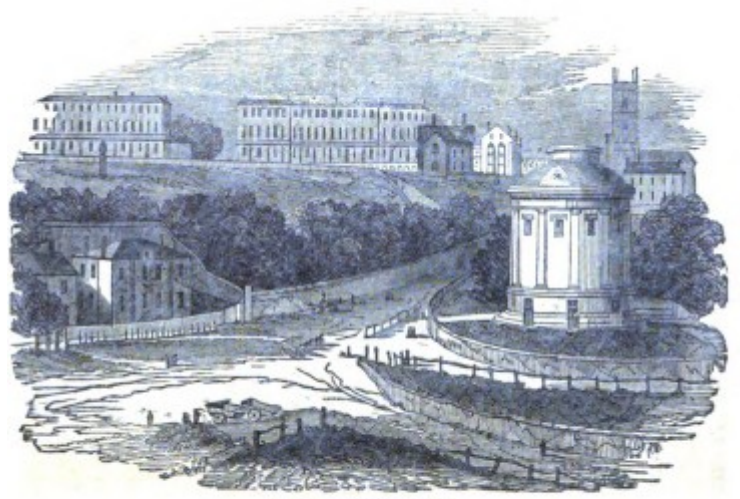


***The footpaths next to Westwood
The first snowdrops out on the 6th January***

Other News

You may have noticed the cables stretched across Valley Road. These were placed there to monitor the speed of the traffic using the Valley and the results are now in. It will take a bit of time to analyse them fully, but I was surprised at just how busy the road is with between three and five thousand vehicles per day using it. On most days the average speed of the traffic was more than 30mph and again on most days more than half the traffic exceeded the speed limit, although generally it was only by a few miles per hour. However, there were also a number of cases of traffic exceeding 70mph.

The tufted ducks have returned to the pond this winter and a couple of days ago I watched a cormorant diving in the pond and emerging with fish in its beak. This did surprise me a little as I thought we had lost all the fish a couple of years ago.



THE MUSEUM.



Vernon Road

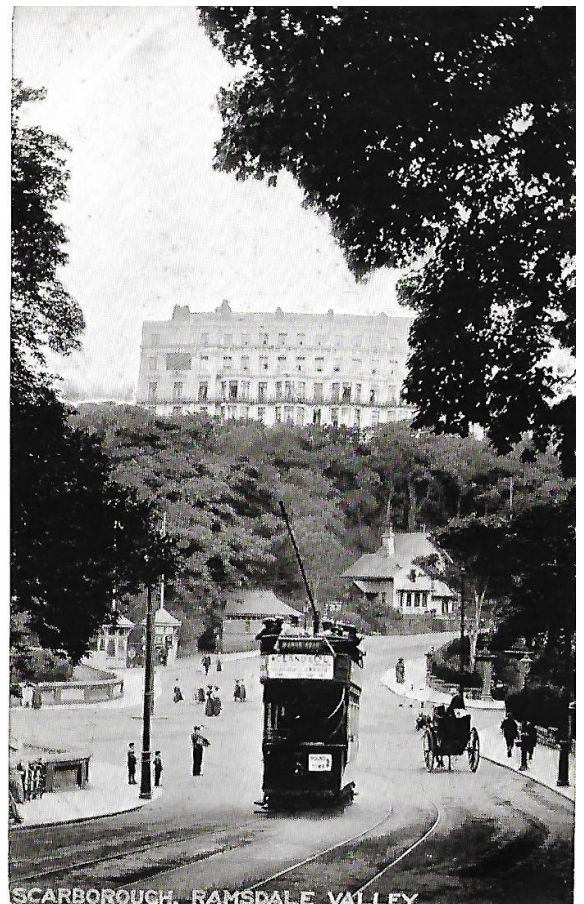
I thought, in this newsletter, I would take you on a journey up Vernon Road as it would have appeared in the early 1930's.

Vernon Road was constructed in 1791 using money donated by a clergyman called Dr Falconer and in fact the road was named Falconer's Road until the 1920's. The Georgian House opposite the Geology Museum was built in the 1830's and appears to have been apartments, a boarding house or flats for most of its existence. In 1930 it was probably the Grove Boarding House but by the late 30's it had been converted to flats.

Heading up the hill we pass under the bridge, built in the 1860's by Lord Londesborough. The iron bridge replaced a previous wooden one that I presume was deemed too rickety for the Prince of Wales and Lord Londesborough to use.

The houses on the right that currently accommodate the Hole in the Wall pub were built in the 1840's and probably haven't changed that much over the years. The larger building contained a shop in the 1930's, one that sold stationery, cigarettes, magazines etc. The smaller building was a pub called the New Road Inn.

Down the middle of Vernon Road ran the tramlines. Scarborough had trams from 1904 until the system was closed down in 1931.



SCARBOROUGH - RAMSDALE VALLEY

***From the top
Falconer's Road in 1840
Grove Boarding House 1918
Edwardian trams on Falconer's Road***

Vernon Road continued.

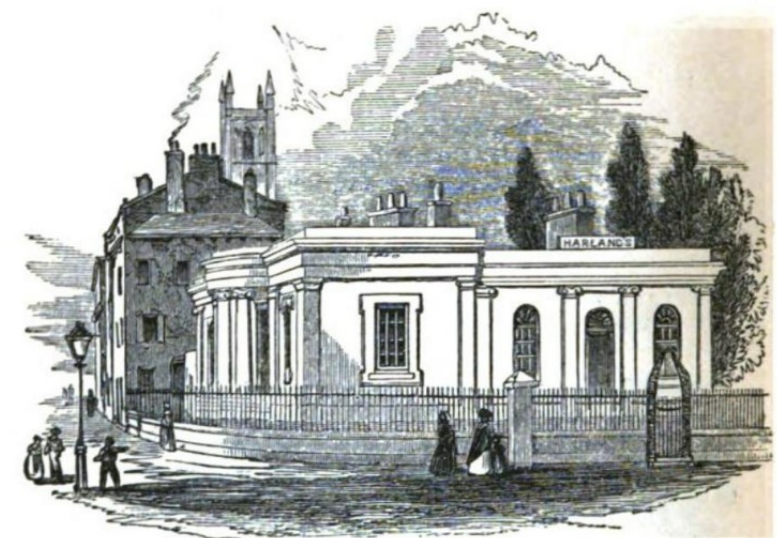
Just beyond the Hole in the Wall is an untidy weed infested gap that was occupied until recently by the E T W Dennis Printworks. This was an extremely large building that was constructed sometime around 1930. It obviously had a chequered history and I've no idea who occupied it when it was first built. In the 1940's I think it was a restaurant that catered for the many visitors that arrived on the excursion trains. It could seat 300 people at a time and often served 2000 meals in a day. In the fifties it was a skating rink, probably roller skates and then, until its demolition in 2014 it was the printing shop. E T W Dennis produced, among other things, postcards and is credited with being the first company in Britain to produce picture postcards in 1894.

Opposite the printworks is the White House, built in the early 1840's and until the mid 1870's known as East Villa. It would appear to have been temporary accommodation for the clergy judging by the number of different reverends that occupied it in this early period, including the Archbishop of York, who stayed in the house for the autumn of 1865. After it became the White House, its history is difficult to separate from the other two White Houses in Scarborough on Deepdale and Stepney Drive.

In 1932, next to the printworks, was Thompson's garage. It was later bought by the Tesseyman family and remained as a business selling and repairing cars until the 1960's when it became a United bus depot and finally the car park to the Palm Court Hotel.

Across the road from the White House, where the Brunswick Centre is now, was an impressively large building called Leighton House where the painter, Lord Leighton was born in 1830. In 1930 it was a boarding house.

Where the Brewers Fayre is now, was the Scarborough School of Art. The first building on the site was the Harland public baths, but in 1880, the baths were closed and the building converted to an Art School. Both Leighton House and the Art School were destroyed in a German bombing raid on May 10th 1941



***Photographs from the top
The Vernon Road Restaurant in the late 1940's
Leighton Boarding House
The Harland Baths in 1840***