

# Friends of Valley Gardens

## **News**

Basically there is no news for this newsletter. All our projects have ground to a halt during lockdown. I presume a lot of the people we need to deal with have been furloughed as many of our e-mails have gone unanswered. Some of the funds we have been given have to be spent by a certain date and not being able to move forward is very frustrating.

However the garden team have been busy and have cut back the privet bushes to the side of the wall near the roundabout. This has revealed a chimney that was probably an air vent for Gala Land. They also removed the fallen tree by the pond before Christmas.

The first aconites and snowdrops started flowering on Jan 7<sup>th</sup> this year and the snowdrops planted behind the vase bed last March are now in full flower.

We have renewed our insurance with the RHS and a copy of the certificate will appear on our website. The website is being visited a lot more now but strangely the most visited page by some distance is the one about the big houses on the park side of the Crescent.

We may have to move the date of the First Aid Course from March 1<sup>st</sup>, but as we haven't had anyone volunteer to attend the course that shouldn't be a problem.

Unfortunately only one other person registered for Easyfundraising and they haven't used the app yet. That is a shame because it really is an easy way to raise money. I've left the information on the next page in the hope a few more members may yet register for and use the scheme.

Plans have been submitted to the council for the old Municipal School building. The plans for the building itself seem reasonable and look like they keep the outside features largely intact. However the annex they hope to build next to it is completely devoid of any architectural merit.

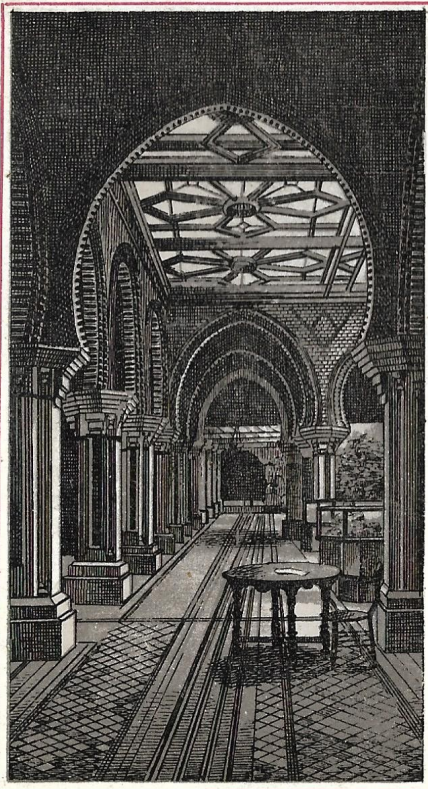
*Newsletter 23 February 2021*



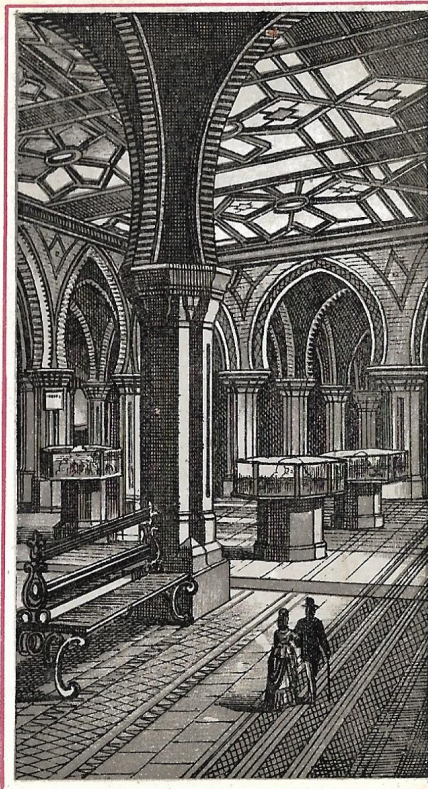
*Top – Early flowering Aconites*

*Bottom – The possible air vent to Gala Land*

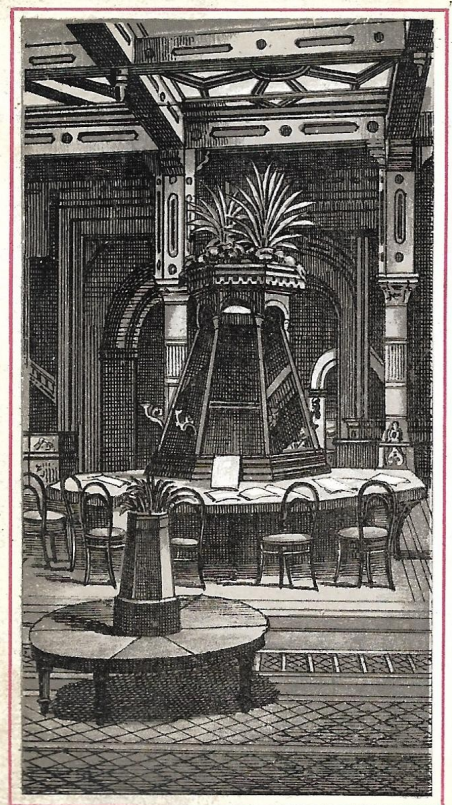




*Aquarium. Corridor from the Orchestra.*



*Tanks and Moorish Arches.*

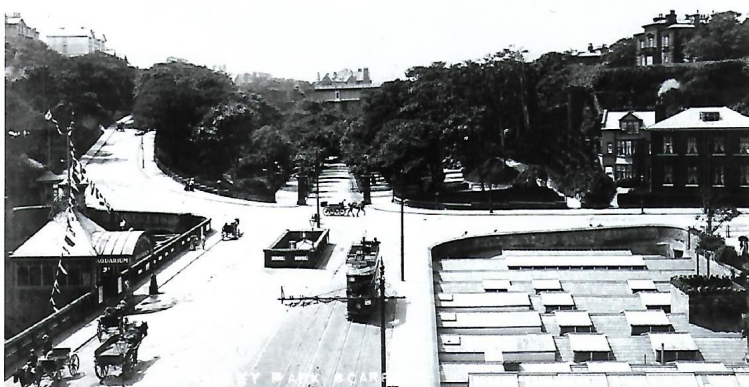


*Aquarium. Reading Room.*

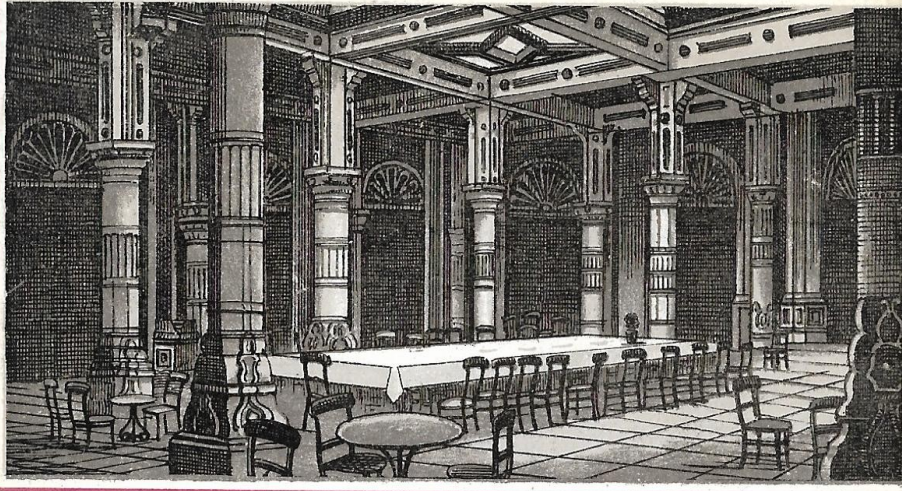
The lithographs above are taken from the Royal Aquarium Album of Scarborough produced in the 1880's. There are 24 pictures in the album, not all of them of the Aquarium (officially the People's Palace and Aquarium). However they are the first pictures I have found that really show the scale and opulence of the building.

The Aquarium was designed by Eugenius Birch, who also designed the pier in North Bay and the Scarborough to Whitby railway line. Work started on the Aquarium in 1874 and it opened in 1877. It covered two and a quarter acres, the majority being underground so it didn't spoil the sea views. It was more of a zoo than an aquarium with seals, monkeys, alligators and tigers. It also had a concert hall, reading room, shooting gallery, orchestra and played host to visiting celebrities.

Despite its grand design and range of activities it was never a financial success and was taken over by the council in 1925 and renamed Gala Land. The council turned it into a glorified amusement arcade but still couldn't make it pay its way and it was demolished in 1966 to be replaced by the underground car park.



***The Aquarium entrance  
on the left, Valley  
Gardens in the centre  
and Londesborough  
Lodge top right***



*Aquarium. The Dining Room.*



*Aquarium. Seal Tanks and Corridors.*



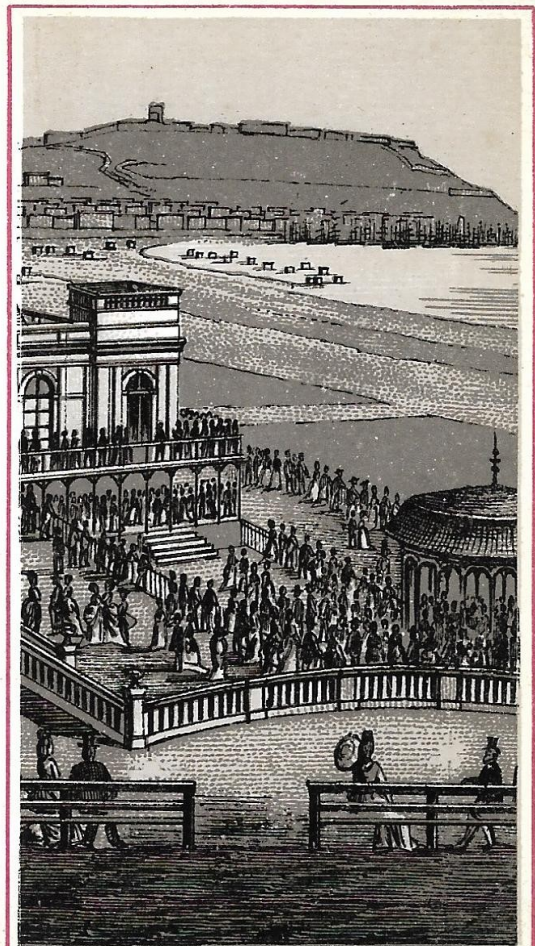
There is a way that you could help raise funds for the club without leaving the house, providing you do at least some of your shopping on line. Easyfundraising is a website that has an agreement with a lot of on-line retailers, and if you shop with the retailer, they will donate a small percentage of the sale to The Friends of Valley Gardens, through the Easyfundraising website. The percentage of the sale that comes to the Friends is generally small – Amazon gives 0.5%, Marks and Spencers 2%, John Lewis up to 3%. But it does add up if enough members sign up.

The site has been recommended by a number of charities and scores highly on feedback scores.

If you want to use it and help raise funds, Google 'joining Easyfundraising'. Then type in, Friends of Scarborough Valley Gardens into the box asking who you wish to support. From then on, just follow the instructions.

To activate donations you need to go to the Easyfundraising site first and choose a retailer and Easyfundraising will transfer you to the retailer's site. However, if you download the donation reminder, then when you search for items you want to buy it will indicate which retailers give a donation and you click on the pink reminder button.

It really is very straightforward to use and a number of organisations claim to raise over a thousand pounds a year by using Easyfundraising. Give it a go. It is something you can do to help while we are stuck at home.



*The Spa.*