


HOUGHTON AREA OFFICE TREASURES



10 items of interest documented in the Houghton Area Office building and grounds. It is assumed that many of the items were originally located in other Houghton Urban District Council premises, probably the Old Rectory building, and were then relocated to the new Council Offices when they opened in November 1968. These items were removed prior to the Council Offices' demolition in June 2011 when Paul Lanagan pointed out that they were about to be demolished inside the building! He has since "kept an eye out" for them and this document is updated accordingly.

ID NO	IMAGE	DESCRIPTION/ NOTES	LAST SEEN IN SITU	CURRENT LOCATION	FUTURE PLANS?
HAO01	 <p>Gilpin Thorn Sign Post Pre-1950s (possibly Victorian)</p>	<p>A wooden sign post accompanied the historic Gilpin Thorn, which was thought to have been planted by Bernard Gilpin in the 16th century. It is often seen in photographs from the 1950s.</p> <p>Houghton Heritage Society has since discovered a transcription of the original wording.</p>	<p>In December 2008, info rec'd from a retired Council Officer who said that:</p> <p><i>"...the Gilpin Thorn info plaque, although damaged was in storage [below the stairs in the council offices] as stated, ask to speak to the caretaker Alan Strong, who will show you it.it is a wooden sign on a wooden post..."</i></p>	Unknown	Unknown
HAO02	<p>HMS Wellard Plaque 1941</p>	<p>This plaque was erected in the stairwell of Houghton Area Office. The inscription reads:</p> <p>THIS PLAQUE IS PRESENTED TO H.M.S. WELLARD TO COMMEMORATE HER "ADOPTION" BY THE CITIZENS OF HOUGHTON-LE-SPRING URBAN DISTRICT DURING WARSHIP WEEK DECEMBER 6 - 13 1941. WAR SAVINGS CAMPAIGN HOUGHTON-LE-SPRING SAVINGS COMMITTEE.</p>	October 2010	Was at the Hetton Centre as of 28/07/11	This sign has now been permanently erected in the meeting room of Houghton Library thanks to the diligence of Houghton Heritage Society and the support of Sunderland City Council.



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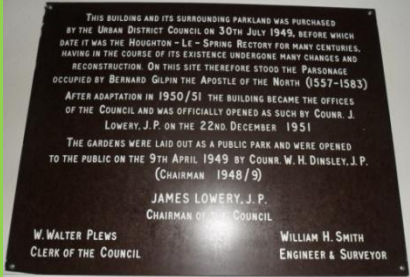
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HAO03	 <p>HMS Wellard Shield 1941</p>	<p>This shield was erected in the stairwell of Houghton Area Office. The inscription reads:</p> <p>PRESENTED BY THE LORDS COMMISSIONERS OF THE ADMIRALTY TO HOUGHTON-LE-SPRING URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL TO COMMEMORATE THE ADOPTION OF HMS WELLARD DURING WARSHIP WEEK DECEMBER 1941</p>	October 2010	Was at the Hetton Centre as of 28/07/11	This sign has now been permanently erected in the meeting room of Houghton Library thanks to the diligence of Houghton Heritage Society and the support of Sunderland City Council.
HAO04	 <p>War Savings Plaque 1943</p>	<p>This plaque was located on the stairwell of Houghton Area Office. The inscription reads:</p> <p>WAR SAVINGS CAMPAIGN 1943. PRESENTED BY THE AIR MINISTRY IN RECOGNITION OF SUCCESSFUL ACHIEVEMENT IN 'WINGS FOR VICTORY WEEK'.</p>	October 2010	Was at the Hetton Centre as of 28/07/11	This sign has now been permanently erected in the main room of Houghton Library thanks to the diligence of Houghton Heritage Society and the support of Sunderland City Council.



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HAO05	 <p>War Savings Plaque 1944</p>	<p>This plaque was located on the stairwell of Houghton Area Office. The inscription reads:</p> <p>WAR SAVINGS CAMPAIGN 1944. PRESENTED BY THE WAR OFFICE IN RECOGNITION OF SUCCESSFUL ACHIEVEMENT IN 'SALUTE THE SOLDIER WEEK'.</p>	October 2010	Was at the Hetton Centre as of 28/07/11	This sign has now been permanently erected in the main room of Houghton Library thanks to the diligence of Houghton Heritage Society and the support of Sunderland City Council.
HAO06	 <p>Rectory Grounds Plaque 1951</p>	<p>This plaque was located on the stairwell of Houghton Area Office and reads:</p> <p>THIS BUILDING AND ITS SURROUNDING PARKLAND WAS PURCHASED BY THE URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL ON 30TH JULY 1949, BEFORE WHICH DATE IT WAS THE HOUGHTON - LE-SPRING RECTORY FOR MANY CENTURIES, HAVING IN THE COURSE OF ITS EXISTENCE UNDERGONE MANY CHANGES AND RECONSTRUCTION. ON THIS SITE THEREFORE STOOD THE PARSONAGE OCCUPIED BY BERNARD GILPIN THE APOSTLE OF THE NORTH (1557-1583) AFTER ADAPTION IN 1950/51 THE BUILDING BECAME THE OFFICES OF THE COUNCIL AND WAS OFFICIALLY OPENED AS SUCH BY COUNR. J. LOWERY, J.P. ON THE 22ND DECEMBER 1951. THE GARDENS WERE LAID OUT AS A PUBLIC PARK AND WERE OPENED TO THE PUBLIC ON THE 9TH APRIL 1949 BY COUNR. W. H. DINSLEY, J.P. (CHAIRMAN 1948/9) JAMES LOWERY, J.P. CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL W. WALTER PLEWS CLERK OF THE COUNCIL WILLIAM H. SMITH ENGINEER & SURVEYOR</p>	October 2010	Was at the Hetton Centre as of 28/07/11	This sign has now been permanently erected in the meeting room of Houghton Library thanks to the diligence of Houghton Heritage Society and the support of Sunderland City Council.



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ID NO	IMAGE	DESCRIPTION/ NOTES	LAST SEEN IN SITU	CURRENT LOCATION	FUTURE PLANS?
HAO07	 <p>Coronation Noticeboard 1953</p>	<p>This was erected in 1953, possibly by the WI or Houghton Townswomen's Guild. The middle panel featured the Gilpin Crest, followed by a dedication message under the heading PUBLIC NOTICES...</p> <p>Although captured in the background of many photographs between 1954 and 2008, no known close-up shots exist of the wording on the middle panel.</p> <p>The noticeboard was renewed in the 1970s, but was in a very sorry state by 2005.</p>	<p>Last photographed <i>in situ</i> on October 4th 2008. At this time the middle panel was missing (it was last photographed in 2005).</p> <p>The noticeboard is thought to have been in storage in the Council Offices, under the stairs, by December 2008.</p>	<p>Advised in March that:</p> <p><i>"The notice board was collected several years ago as part of a scheme for the school children to do the trellis fence and site the notice board..."</i></p>	Unknown
HAO08	 <p>Foundation Stone 1967</p>	<p>This foundation stone was originally set in the south-east corner of the Houghton Area Office building.</p> <p>It was removed mid April 2011 prior to the building being demolished</p>	Early April 2011	<p>Wrapped in cloth and stored in the so-called tithe barn, Rectory Park, 21/04/11.</p>	Unknown



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ID NO	IMAGE	DESCRIPTION/ NOTES	LAST SEEN <i>IN SITU</i>	CURRENT LOCATION	FUTURE PLANS?
HAO09	 <p>Official Opening Plaque 1968</p>	<p>This plaque was located inside the foyer of Houghton Area Office. It reads as follows:</p> <p>THIS PLAQUE COMMEMORATES THE OPENING OF THESE OFFICES ON NOVEMBER 1ST 1968 BY COUNCILLOR E. KELLY J.P. CHAIRMAN OF THE HOUGHTON-LE-SPRING U.D.C.</p>	March 2011	Was at the Hetton Centre as of 28/07/11	This sign has now been permanently erected in the meeting room of Houghton Library thanks to the diligence of Houghton Heritage Society and the support of Sunderland City Council.
HAO10	 <p>John Mawston Seat & Plaque 1987</p>	<p>This seat was placed in the grounds of Houghton Area Office in 1987 in the year that Cllr John Mawston was Mayor of Sunderland. The plaque reads:</p> <p>PRESENTED TO COUN. J. MAWSTON J.P. MAYOR OF SUNDERLAND 1987/88 IN MEMORY OF HIS MOTHER AND IN RECOGNITION OF HIS SERVICES TO THE HOUGHTON FEAST STEERING COMMITTEE</p>	<p>April 2013</p> <p>Has been badly painted some weeks ago and has since had minor vandalism to the woodwork</p>	Still <i>in situ</i>	Unknown



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GILPIN THORN SIGN POST PRE-1950S (HAO 01)



1954



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HMS WELLARD PLAQUE 1941 (HAO 02)



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HMS WELLARD SHIELD 1941 (HAO 03)



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WAR SAVINGS PLAQUE 1943 (HAO 04)



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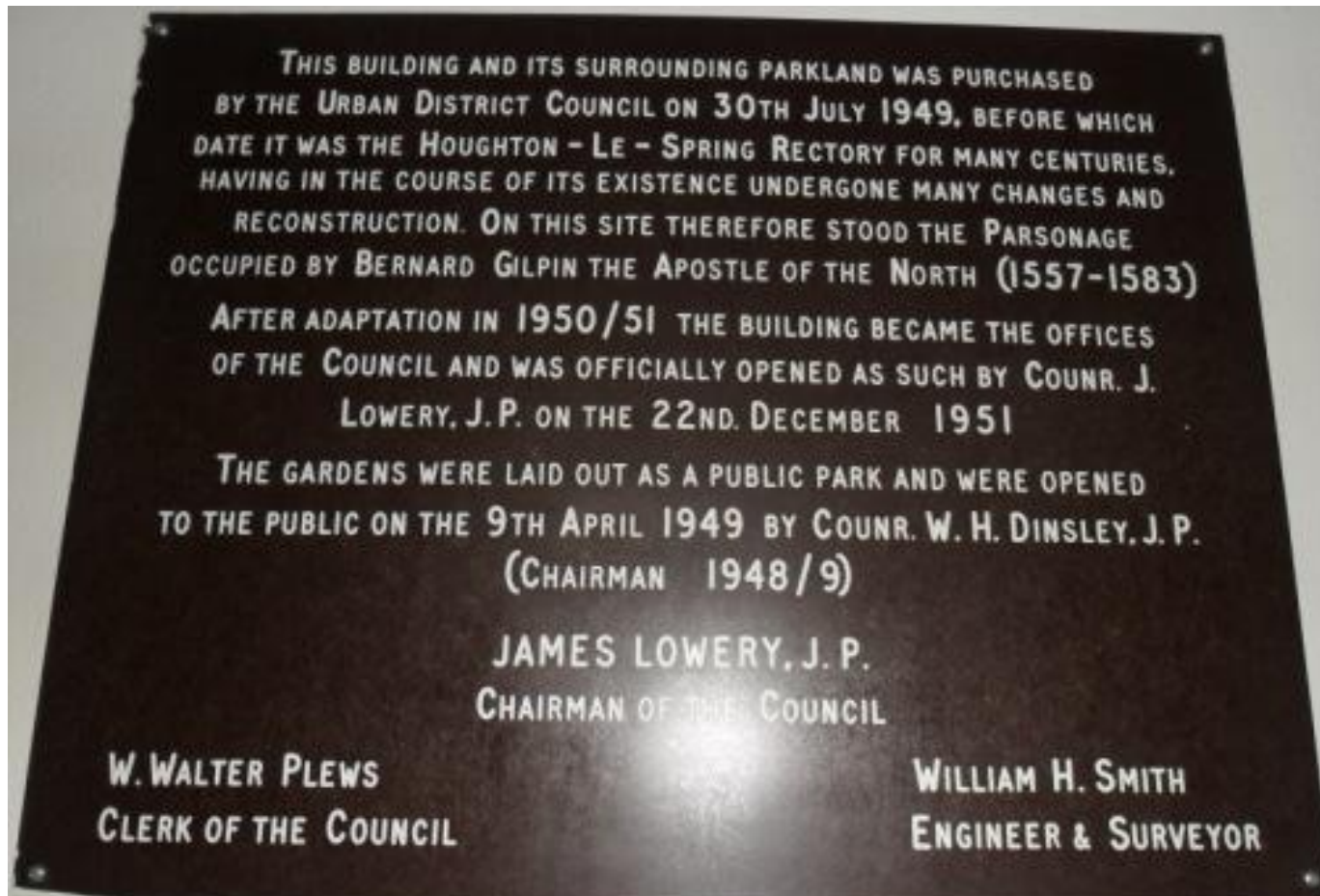
WAR SAVINGS PLAQUE 1944 (HAO 05)



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RECTORY GROUNDS PLAQUE 1951 (HAO 06)



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CORONATION NOTICEBOARD 1953 (HAO 07)



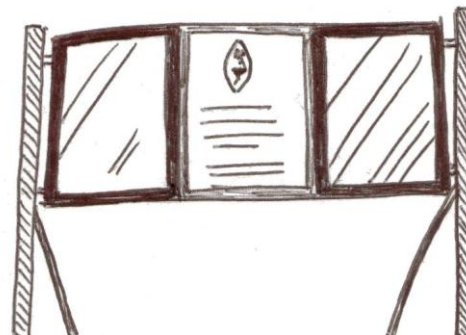
Circa October 1960s



October 2001



October 4th 2003



October 8th 2004



October 8th 2005

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FOUNDATION STONE 1967 (HAO08)



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OFFICIAL OPENING PLAQUE 1968 (HAO 09)



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JOHN MAWSTON SEAT & PLAQUE 1987 (HAO 10)



October 2008

