Collaborations between communities and conservation professionals

Community Buildings

Kate Giles
Department of Archaeology University of York
Early modern town halls and market halls

Shrewsbury town hall (Shropshire)
Chipping Norton town hall (Oxfordshire)

Blandford Forum Town Hall (Dorset)
Godalming market hall (Surrey)

Borsay P 1989 The English Urban Renaissance: culture and society in the provincial town
Tittler R 1991 Architecture and power: the town hall and the English urban community 1500-1640
Case study: Stratford Upon Avon Guildhall

15th century Holy Cross Guild complex: hall, almshouses, chapel

King Edward VI Grammar School
HLF-funded historic buildings survey
FAS Heritage Ltd.

The Lower Hall – chapel and chaplains’ parlours?

Crucifixion featuring St. John the Baptist

George Bailey  1898
Antiquary 34
The Guildhall first floor
The Schoolhouse (the Pedagogue’s House)
The will of Thomas Hannys

‘for the new bielding and setting up of the Almshowses nowe being within the town of Stratford….adioynyng next unto the Scholehowse and hit to be doon before and above any and all other and all other [sic] workes to be disposed for my soule’.
‘..a place quadrant beyng in length every wey lxxv foote or thereupon, where as the olde almsehouse now be And to be made with an hall, a Parlour, buttry, kechen and littell oratory for a chapel having other chambers both byneth and above for lodgynd the seid poore people conveniently and made to there ease with chimneys and draughts thereto necessarie moce after the patron and forme of a platt therefore drawen by me and herunto annexed’
The Infill House

1427/8
£10 ‘scolehws’
Masters and Proctors Accounts

1568 as the ‘old school with chamber over it’

Tree-ring dating
Felling date of 1425
Stratford Guildhall in the 16th century

John Shakespeare, Chamberlains’ Accounts payments
1563/4  2s. for ‘defasyng ymages in ye chapell’

1564/5, another 2s. for ‘takynge doune ye rood loft in ye Chapell’.

'Mr Shaxsper' sells stone to the Stratford Corporation, 1597/8
Chamberlains Accounts
The Queen’s men and the Troublesome Raigne of King John

July 2011 Students from TFTV perform in the Guildhall
'And where as of late I have bargayned wth oon Dowland, and diverse other masons for the beldyng and setting up of the Chapell of the holy Trinitie withyn the Towne of Stratford Upon Avon aforesaid And the Towre of a Steple to the same I will that the saide masons sufficiently and ably doo and fynysshe the same with good and true werkmanshipp And they truly to performe the same making the saide werkes aswise of length and brede and hyght such as by the advise of myne executors’ (TNA, PROB/11/11; SCLA ER 1/121).
Giles K, Masinton A and Arnott G 2012 ‘Visualising the Guild Chapel, Stratford-upon-Avon: digital models as research tools in buildings archaeology’, Internet Archaeology 32
http://intarch.ac.uk/journal/issue32/giles_index.html
Antiquarians at Stratford

Thomas Fisher (1772-1836) A Series of Antient Allegorical, Historical, and Legendary Paintings Which Were Discovered in the Summer of 1804 on the Walls of the Chapel of the Trinity at Stratford upon Avon in Warwickshire

Ernest William Tristram (1882-1952) Professor of Art and Design at the Royal College of Art
Future plans?

- HLF funded opening up and ‘restoration’ of the Guildhall as a heritage attraction by KES
- New website for Friends of the Guild chapel
- Similar projects: Boston Guildhall
Other public buildings?

Assembly Rooms Coffee
Houses, Inns and pubs
Mechanics Institutes

Borsay P 1989 *The English Urban Renaissance: culture and society in the provincial town*
Habermas J *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere*
Other public buildings?

- Town halls
- Market halls
- Trade Halls
Village Halls

Significance
National Heritage Register 268 buildings, mostly Grade II
Often 19th century former schoolrooms and reading rooms
Listed for historical, architectural and aesthetic merit (patron, materials)

Burchardt, JFS 1999 ‘Reconstructing the rural community: village halls and the National council of Social Service 1919 to 1939’, *Rural History* 10: 2, 193-216
Significance

“Village Halls were therefore agents both of preserving and of modernising the identity of the village community”
Burchardt 1999, 213

NCSS National Council for Social Service - fragmentation and isolation of rural life and ‘better living’
Co-ordinates initiatives of NFWI (National Federation of Womens’ Institutes), YMCA and WEA and British Legion
Development Commission, Ocfordshire Rural community Council, Canegie UK Trustees ‘Village Halls Loan Fund’
1920s war memorials – legacy for the living as opposed to the non-utilitarian crosses and memorials favoured by gentry and clergy

1939 1, 126 village halls (Performing Rights Society data)
Late 1920s onwards all NCSS halls have RIBA-approved architects
NCSS guidance notes 1953-1955 - 20th century society project?
ACRE guidance and major surveys 1998 (Ronseal) and 2009 Rural Community Buildings Policy Position Paper

- Democratisation
- Secularisation
- Homogenisation
NHPP and future research?

NHPP Sarah Tunnicliffe and Jeremy Lake English Heritage
Hunns, V 2014 Village Halls and Public Buildings: the importance of the historic environment, *Terre du Rocher*
At the heart of the community?

Are We In Here? - a "state of the nation play" examining what it means to be English (not British) at the beginning of the 21st century. A village is trying to celebrate an occasion, but the old guy who organized all the pageants has died; a village committee struggles to find people to "do what we do" apparently with little success whilst the salsa, karate, and belly dancing clubs fight them for the room in the hall. They all unite to fight a developer who would take the village green, whereupon skeletons rise from beneath it...But whose?

Stewart Howson
HLF - funded Village Hall projects

Finchingfield, Essex