

Subject:	Blue Plaques
Director/Head of Service:	Head of Regeneration and Economic Development
Decision Issues:	These matters are within the authority of the Executive.
Decision type:	Non-key
Classification:	This report is open to the public.
CCC Ward(s):	Barton, Northgate, Sturry South
Summary:	<i>The Canterbury Blue Plaque Scheme has been running since 2003 and 13 plaques have been erected. Nominations have been received via the City Council's web site and three nominations are considered to be worthy of implementation.</i>
To Resolve	That three blue plaques honouring: Alfred Palmer; William Sealy Gosset; and Count Louis Zborowski be erected.
Next stage in process	The plaques will be commissioned and locations agreed with the three property owners.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

1. Introduction

The City Council launched its Blue Plaque scheme in the Summer 2003. The idea was to display a traditional blue plaque on the home of notable people, or on the site of a notable event. Local residents were asked to nominate people to commemorate with a plaque. During the autumn of 2003 a list of over 60 possible nominees for a plaque was drawn up and the City Council's Executive agreed a short list of six names for implementation in 2004. A further seven plaques were erected in 2006/2007.

The list of 13 blue plaques are (in alphabetical order);

- John Blaxland (1769 – 1845) and Gregory Blaxland (1771 – 1852) lived at Watergate House in Fordwich from 1769 to 1806. The Blaxland brothers were pioneers and explorers of Australia, and are important figures in Australian history.
- Thomas Byrne VC (1867 – 1944) lived at 30 Notley Street, Canterbury from 1914 to 1944. Thomas Byrne won his VC at the battle of Omdurman on 2 September 1898.
- Joseph Conrad (1857 – 1924) lived at Oswalds, Bishopsbourne from 1919 to 1924.
- Thomas Sidney Cooper (1803 – 1902) lived at Vernon Holme, Harbledown from 1849 to 1902.

- Peter Cushing (1913 – 1994) lived at Seaway Cottage, Whitstable from 1959 to 1994.
- John Deane (1800 – 1884) lived at 65 Island wall, Whitstable from 1848 to 1854. John Deane was the co-inventor of diving apparatus and the diving helmet.
- Ian Fleming (1908 – 1964) wrote 'You only live twice' at the Duck Inn, Pett Bottom in 1964.
- 1st Earl Kitchener of Khartoum (1850 – 1916) lived at Broome Park, Barham from 1911 to 1916.
- Henry Moore (1898 – 1986) lived at The Orchard, Marley lane, Kingston from 1934 to 1940.
- Professor Cyril Northcote Parkinson (1909 – 1993) lived at 36 Harkness Drive, Canterbury from 1988 to 1993. He created the famous 'Parkinson's law' .
- The Philosophical and Literary Institute opened in Guildhall Street in 1825. The building has now been incorporated into Debenhams.
- James Simmons (1741 – 1807) lived at 24 High Street, Canterbury (now ASK Restaurant) from 1802 to 1807. Simmons was a MP, Alderman and Mayor and was responsible for reshaping Canterbury into a 'Georgian' town.
- Mrs Ann Thwaytes (1789 – 1886) benefactor of Herne Bay and the clock tower, lived at 30 Central Parade from 1835 to 1841.

2. Detail

The Canterbury Blue Plaque Scheme is based on the famous London scheme, which was launched by the Royal Society of Arts in 1867. The scheme is now run by English Heritage and several towns and cities run their own versions of the scheme. The rules for blue plaques are quite strict and are strictly adhered to. The procedure is that nominations are sought from local people. Notices in the local press, radio and in 'District Life' invited people to give us suggestions. We then have to make sure that the nominations fit the criteria. If they are approved they are then discussed and agreed by the City Council's Executive. We then have to obtain the permission of the owner of the building to install the plaque.

The criteria for the scheme is as follows

1. That the person to be commemorated is regarded as being eminent by a majority of members of their profession or calling.
2. They should have genuinely contributed to human welfare or happiness and deserve recognition.
3. They should have had such exceptional or outstanding personalities that the well-informed passer-by recognises their name.
4. The people commemorated must have been dead for at least ten years (or until the centenary of their birth) and any events to be commemorated must have

happened 20 years previously. A site or event must be recognised nationally or locally as being of special significance and worthy of recognition.

5. Their stay in the Canterbury district should have been significant as a period of time, or in importance, within their life and work.
6. Plaques will only be placed on the residence or site of residence of the person, or the place where the significant event took place. Plaques shall not be erected on redeveloped sites of former houses, i.e. where the original building or site no longer exists save in exceptional circumstance.
7. Only one plaque will be erected for each person/event and they must not otherwise be appropriately commemorated in the district.

Over the past three years several nominations for additional plaques have been suggested. They are as follows:

- Alfred Palmer ROI 1877 – 1951 Artist, founder member of the East Kent Arts Society, lived at the Manor House, Fordwich 1910 – 1951 (Nominated by Mr and Mrs Ratcliff). Palmer is a well known local artist with works in the Beaney. He is also well known in South Africa where he created several public murals (Johannesburg railway station). Palmer also founded the Purbeck Art Club and he is included in the Swanage Art Trail. Criteria 1, 4, 5, 6 and 7 apply.
- William Sealy Gosset 1876 – 1937. Statistician, known by the pen name 'Student' famous for the Student t distribution. Born and spent his early years at 6, St Martin's Hill, Canterbury. (nominated by Hans Hockey a statistical consultant from New Zealand). The Student t test has proved to be fundamental to modern statistics, especially hypothesis testing and estimation. The Student t is a probability distribution when the sample sizes are small. Gosset developed it when he worked in quality control for Guinness. He has been referred to as the 'Faraday of statistics'. Criteria 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 and 7 apply.
- Count Louis Zborowski 1895 – 1924 constructed two Chitty Chitty Bang Bang cars in this workshop 1921 – 1922. The workshop was at 16, St Radigund's Street, Canterbury. (Nominated by David Paine author of 'The Zborowski Inheritance'. Count Zborowski is a well known local engineer and racing driver. His legacy of the Chitty Chitty Bang Bang cars and the Romney, Hythe and Dymchurch railway are well known both regionally and nationally. All seven criteria apply.

3. **Relevant Council Policy**

Objective 15 of the Corporate Plan 2008 – 2012 is to 'safeguard the quality of the natural and built heritage of the district'.

4. **Consultation planned or undertaken**

The nominations above are the result of a general consultation via the city council's web site. Owners of the various buildings for proposed plaques have been approached but no formal consultation has been undertaken.

5. **Options available with reasons for suitability**

- (a) Agree and install three plaques

- (b) Proceed with one or two plaques
- (c) Do nothing.

6. **Reasons for supporting option recommended, with risk assessment**

The plaque for Alfred Palmer has been under consideration for several years and the owners of the manor House would like to proceed. The other two plaques were nominated in 2008/09 and a decision on whether to proceed or not is now appropriate.

7. **Implications**

- (a) Financial Implications. The cost of producing and installing the plaques (approx £150 per plaque) can be found in the 2009/10 conservation budget. This is unlikely to be available in future years.
- (b) Legal Implications. N/A

Other implications

- (c) Staffing/resource. None
- (d) Property Portfolio. N/A
- (e) Environmental/Sustainability. N/A
- (f) Planning/Building Regulations. N/A
- (g) Human Rights issues. N/A
- (h) Crime and Disorder. N/A
- (i) Biodiversity. N/A
- (j) Safeguarding Children. N/A
- (k) Energy efficiency. N/A

8. Conclusions

The installation of a further three plaques will add to the scheme and provide additional interest for visitors.

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