

BLUE PLAQUES GROUP UPDATE

Group activity update:

The Group last met in person at the Town Hall on Wednesday 2nd March 2022 at the Town Hall.

Current plaques:

Mrs Margaret Maitland Fowler – The Parthenon, Bath St (Iceland) & Miss Eleanor Doorly – 23 St Mary’s Crescent

Unveilings for the Blue Plaques for Eleanor Doorly and Margaret Fowler took place on Wednesday 23rd March at 12:30pm and 1:15pm respectively at 23 St Mary’s Crescent and The Parthenon, Bath St (current home of Iceland). The Deputy Mayor covered the event and the turnout included family members, representatives from King’s High and Kingsley School, town council members, representatives of local interest groups, members of Tamworth and District Civic Society and local press.

There were some auditory issues on Bath Street due to traffic and roadworks noise plus other pedestrians using the pavement. Reception then took place in the Council Chamber with drinks and cakes followed by presentations on both recipients. Members of the Blue Plaque Group considered the day a success – four Plaques have now been erected in town since September 2021.

Progress with other nominations:

1. A joint plaque for Christopher (Coin designer, Royal Mint) and Janey (Professor of Fashion, Royal College of Art) Ironside at 11 Lansdowne Circus is being pursued. Property owner has agreed to have the Plaque installed. Virginia Ironside has been in touch and agreed to the Plaque, with input into the text. A Listed Building Consent application will be necessary.
2. Travelodge are happy for a Special Interest Plaque commemorating the headquarters of the Camouflage Unit to be located on the property. Text for plaque and request for permission to locate the Plaque on the building has gone via Travelodge to the property owners in Birmingham. Awaiting a response.

This Plaque will cost around £750 so additional funding sources are being investigated by Group members.

3. Nomination for William Munger Heynes at 11 Percy Terrace. William was the Head of the Technical Dept for Jaguar Cars. 2022 is the 100th anniversary of his joining Jaguar – JLR has offered to fund entire cost of Plaque. Needs to be in situ by end of 2022. DSO to ascertain current property owners and contact for permission to have the Plaque on the frontage. Property not listed.
4. Nomination for Nelly Thornton. Nelly became the model for the Rolls Royce bonnet ornament sculpture “Spirit of Ecstasy” and was later know by the name Eleanor

Velasco Thornton. She was also the mistress of Baron Montagu of Beaulieu. Nelly lived at 24 Charlotte Street, Leamington Spa for part of her childhood and lived from 1880 – 1915 when she sadly drowned on the SS Persia when it was torpedoed during the First World War.

AOB:

The Group is meeting with Eleri Usher from WDC Design on 14th April at the Town Hall to discuss an updated version of the Blue Plaques Walks leaflet with a view to a new version being ready by early summer.