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Exploring the Market Place: past and present

Heritage Open Days
Organised by Salisbury
Civic Society

Heaven Hair

49 to 51 New Canal

49 and 51 began as separate buildings. 49 is of two storeys with timber framed walls, a tiled roof and an oriel window. It included, at some point, a drive enabling carriages to pass from Canal to the area behind, a space referred to in the deeds as a stone walled garden. The heavily timbered front to 49 has a separate doorway giving access to Heaven Hair above. The space behind 49 was roofed over in the 19th century. Little is known of the early history of 51.

In the 14th century the buildings on the current site of 47 and 49 were owned by Richard Todeworth and later by Henry Russel (see 9 Queen Street). In 1365 they were sold to the owner of the George Inn, passing on his death, to his wife. Much of the 14th century buildings were later demolished, but some parts remain and were revealed during major restoration in the mid 1960s. These parts can be seen upstairs in Heaven Hair.

Since the later part of the 18th c. the buildings have had a wide range of tenants including in 49, the Diocesan survey for the Sarum Archdeaconry, Bennett's wholesale hosiery, Tatum's solicitors, the Hampshire Downs Sheep Breeders Association, and Waters and Rowlence, Auctioneers and Estate Agents. Harding an architect and surveyor, and Woodrow the corn and seed merchants, occupied 51 and were followed by Knapman Laws and Bament, auctioneers and estate agents, Imperial Livestock and General Insurance, and Wessex Saddleback Pig Society. The turnover in tenants continued until the 1960's with Commercial Union moving to 49 in 1931, Mrs M Smith, certified midwife, commission writer Fred Brooks and Allaways Printing amongst others. By 1964 Knapman, Son and Bament had moved to 27 Market Place. The building was empty before embarking on a major restoration combined with work creating Old George Mall in its present form.

Subsequent to the creation of the Mall, Elliott footwear occupied 49-51 followed by Bally, and in 1985 by Laura Ashley. Several others occupied the premises until replaced in 2015 by Nationwide Building Society downstairs .

The upstairs of 49-51 was occupied from 1979-1999 by Hair Loft, before becoming Heaven Hair. Heaven Hair is worth a visit to view the timber roof structure and windows, and experience the general feel of the building. There are two rooms to explore overlooking New Canal. The back door upstairs may be open and the tarmacked space above the old stone walled garden behind 49 may then be seen.

One long time city resident describes a runaway steer on market day, escaping from what was known as Knapman's yard behind the building. The animal is said to have entered the building and climbed up the stairs. Extracting the animal must have been an interesting task!