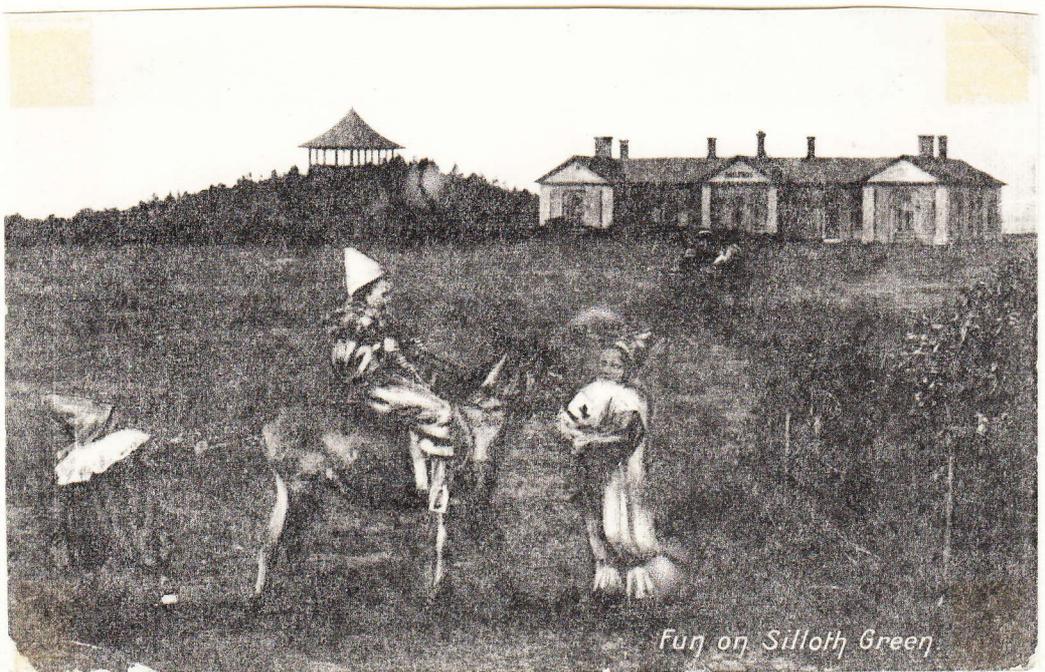


The Baths Pre-1900



Silloth Baths (Amusement Arcade)

'The Baths' must have been erected early in the town's development - there was an advertisement offering lodgings at the Baths in the Silloth Gazette, August 1860.

In 1872 the Baths were put up for sale -

'The Baths - containing 6 Hot and Cold Plunge and Shower Baths and one large Cold Swimming Bath, with dwelling house attached, Let to Mr Dobinson Studholme at an annual rent of £84.

Martinus entry.

To be sold by auction by Mr C P Hardy on 27 August 1872'.

By 1883 Silloth was a favourite resort for sea bathing and its fine stretch of sandy beach (now gone) presented a very animated appearance during the bathing season, 'where hundreds could be seen disporting in the watery element'. The 'weak and delicate' to whom sea bathing might have been 'injurious', could be accommodated at the 'Baths', a large building near the beach erected at a cost of £2000.

The Baths were run by a Mr & Mrs J Bell in the 1880s. Sea water was pumped in at high tide and heated. A hot sea water bath was said to be very beneficial to one's health. The baths were in the cellars and the Bells ran a cafe and boarding house on the ground floor. Dr Barton informed me it was not an unusual sight in the 1920's to see guests from the Queens or Solway Hotels walking across the Green in their bathrobes to 'take the waters'.

In 1920 Holme Cultram Urban District Council were offered the chance to purchase the Baths after the death of Mr Bell, for the sum of £1350 freehold. The Council were in favour but because of opposition from the Silloth Ratepayers Association a plebiscite (a referendum) was held and the public voted against the purchase - 260 against - 202 for, and one unmarked ballot paper, total votes cast 463.

The 'Baths' business was carried on by the Findlay family who put them up for Sale in 1931, again the Town Council were asked to make an offer, but did not. The Baths may have remained empty for a while after that (I have only found one recorded occupier prior to World War II - in Kelly's Directory 1938 - Silloth Baths & Tea Rooms, Louis J Riddiford, proprietor). Some local people remember the building being surrounded by barbed wire during the War and it could have been used by Airforce personnel.

The Blake family finally made the alterations to turn the 'Baths' into an amusement arcade, a boon to holiday makers caught on the sea front on a cold, wet, windy day. The building has been added to but planning approval needed restricts development.

Public Houses and Hotels

It was said that once there was a pub (or hotel) or church on every street corner in Silloth. It is still nearly true, though they are not of the same character as pre-First World War.

In 1915 the thousands of men who came to build the biggest munitions factory in the British Empire, at Gretna, 'started to make massed attacks on alcohol'. Lloyd George - seeing that the widespread drunkenness was a serious threat to Britain's efforts in France - acted swiftly and nationalised the public houses in the area near the factory. Most were in the city of Carlisle but those in Silloth and west to Maryport were included. Many were closed and the excessive drinking was stopped.

But the demon drinkers left a hangover behind, for the State public houses continued. At one period there was a plan to extend the system to other parts of the country. The take-over happened in 1916, but in 1971 it was all brought to an end when the brewery, pubs and hotels of The Carlisle & District State Management Scheme were sold back to private enterprise.

All Silloth's pubs and hotels were taken over by the Scheme:

- The Albion Inn, Eden Street
- The Royal Inn, Solway Street (now the Huntsman)
- The Balmoral Hotel, Criffel Street
- The Criffel Hotel, Criffel Street
- The Cumberland Inn, West Silloth
- The Solway Hotel, Criffel Street (now the Golf Hotel)
- The Queen's Hotel, Marine Terrace
- The Skinburness Hotel

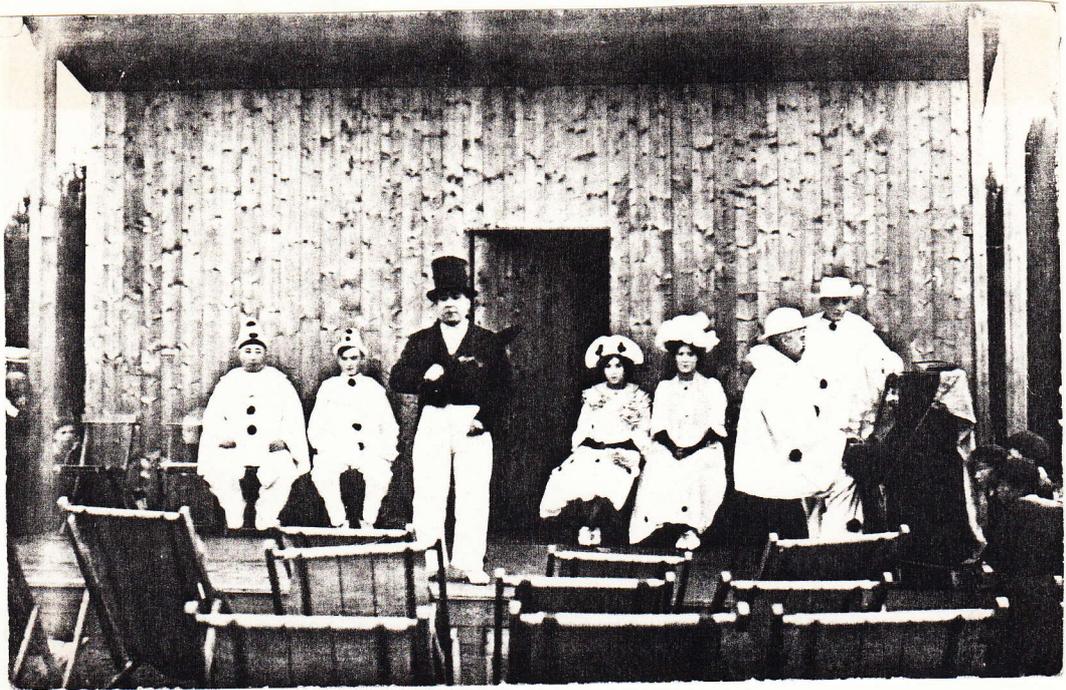
As well as the above-mentioned pubs and hotels, Silloth has now quite a few other places of refreshment and entertainment:

- The Grove, nightclub, Criffel Street
- Silloth Social Club, Waver Street
- Royal Airforce Association Club, Pettril Street
- Silloth-on-Solway Golf Club
- The Fisherman's Cove, restaurant
- The Tipple Inn, Solway Lido
- The Sunset Inn, Stanwix's

Early 1900's



Pierrots - Early 1900's



David Fuller, Jack Gascoigne, George Worthing,
Harry Hardy, Marion St. John, Tommy Ellis,
Tweed Andrews, Maisy Ashley.



Teddy Steele of Wolsty Hall Farm on his milk
round at Sea View.