

Margate Civic Society

(Founded 1968)
Registered Charity No. 257884



Winter 2007/08
Newsletter
Issue No. 349

"The love of our town leads us"

President: Mr Ralph Handscomb

Chairman: Mrs Margaret Main



Season's Greetings



A number of changes to the Committee were made at the Annual General Meeting in October when those present elected Margaret Main as our Chairman (in succession to Steve Villette who remains on the Committee keeping an eye on planning applications submitted to Thanet District Council); Pat Snow took over as Treasurer (from Phil Johnson who has retired from the Committee); and Garry Cowans took over as Membership Secretary (from Pat Snow). Others on the Committee were re-elected for another year. As a society, we are indeed fortunate that we are able to fill all the positions on the Committee with willing and able volunteers.

As a rule, little feedback is received from members as to the form and content of each issue of our Newsletter. However, the inclusion of the letter from former Margate-resident Arnold Schwartzman as a three-page feature in the last issue (No. 348) generated a number of favourable comments from many of our readers to various Committee members. A few of our members remembered him from their schooldays whilst others were his contemporaries with similar memories of life in Margate during the late-1940s and the 1950s. Your Editor had the privilege of meeting Arnold Schwartzman when he made a fleeting visit to Margate at the end of September with his sister, Diana, (who also once lived in Margate) and his daughter. He had flown in from California the previous day *en route* to an international design conference being held in Amsterdam a few days later. Arnold Schwartzman's love of Margate is unquestionable and the town should indeed be proud to regard him as one of its 'sons'. His latest book (he has had ten titles published to date) is entitled *London Art Deco* and, whilst it clearly does not relate to Margate, it is reviewed briefly in this issue of the Newsletter for members' information. Amongst the credits given in the book is one to John Tribe who the author met at Art School in Margate and who also went on to achieve recognition in the world of design and television. Another contemporary of Arnold Schwartzman is Laurie Brooks who has very kindly written in this issue of the Newsletter on his memories of Margate's cinemas.

May I take this opportunity to wish all members a very merry Christmas and a peaceful and happy new year. □

James Brazier
Newsletter Editor

Welcome to new members

We extend a warm welcome to the following new members who have recently joined the Society:

Mr Alan Ayres
Dr Alasdair and Mrs Kim Bruce
Mr Claude Vala
Mr & Mrs R. Ford
Mr & Mrs Graph
Ms Alexandra Hallier
Mrs Ann Miles
Mr & Mrs J. M. Maynard
Mr N. Nunn (Life Member)
Mrs Joy Tragner
Mr Ian White & Ms Jacqui Dowton
Mrs L. Whyley
Mrs Diana Ziekenoppasser (née Schwartzman)

and we welcome back Mrs Iris Johnston to our membership. □

Garry Cowans
Membership Secretary

SUBSCRIPTION REMINDER

Members are reminded that annual subscriptions were due for renewal on 1st October 2007. If you have not renewed your subscription, this issue of the Newsletter will be the last one that you will receive. To ensure that you do receive future issues of the Newsletter without interruption, please send your subscription to the Membership Secretary whose address is shown on the back page of this Newsletter. The subscription rates for the current year are also shown on the back page. □

Garry Cowans
Membership Secretary

Roc Doc Walks

(No charge is made for these walks)

Sunday, 20th January 2008 (2 hours)

Walpole Bay

Meet outside the Walpole Bay Hotel at 11.00am

Saturday, 16th February 2008 (2 hours)

Kingsgate

Meet outside Fayreiness Hotel at 11.00am

Sunday, 2nd March 2008 (2 hours)

Minnis Bay, Birchington

Meet by the tidal pool at 11.00am

For further information: Tel: 01843 577672
www.thanetcoast.org.uk

Reports of our Meetings

Since taking over editorship of the Newsletter, your Editor has submitted reports on our meetings to both the *Isle of Thanet Gazette* and *Thanet Extra*. Both of these local newspapers have very kindly included those reports – sometimes abridged – in their *Organisations* and *Clubs Round-Up* columns respectively for which the Society is most grateful. The reports, as submitted to both newspapers, on our last three meetings are reproduced below.

October

Over 70 members attended our first meeting of the season which also served as the Society's Annual General Meeting when the committee for the ensuing year was elected and the annual accounts approved. After successfully completing those formalities, members were given a most interesting talk by Jane Bishop on the history of the Walpole Bay Hotel where we have held our meetings for a number of years in this superb venue. Jane told us that, although the Walpole Bay Hotel is well over 90 years old, it has been in the ownership of only two families throughout its life: the Budge family and, since 1995, the Bishop family. The hotel was first opened in 1916 and in 1927 refurbished and extended to double its original size. That extension incorporated the impressive entrance steps to the hotel, the sprung maple dance-floor and the passenger lift which – after 80 years – is still in excellent working order. Jane told how she and her husband Peter had bought the hotel 12 years ago despite having had no experience of running a hotel. The absence of such a track record did present major difficulties in funding the purchase of the hotel but thanks to the kindness of the Budge family, the Bishop family was allowed to fund the purchase over a number of years. Jane told how, some years ago, she received a telephone call from a BBC producer regarding the hotel: that phone call led to the hotel being featured in the TV programme *One Foot in the Past* which Jane then replayed to us on a large TV screen. Jane ended her talk with an invitation to members to walk around the hotel afterwards and see the many fascinating exhibits in her museum. The evening was thoroughly enjoyed by all those present.

November

At our November meeting, John Haywood, Turner Contemporary's Marketing Director, gave a slide presentation showing the latest designs for the proposed art gallery which the architect David Chipperfield had revealed at the public-consultation meeting held at the Theatre Royal in October. John told us that the proposals had reached the RIBA detailed-design stage (Stage D) and that the plans are expected to be submitted to Thanet District Council for planning approval by the end of November*. Those plans should not change dramatically from those shown to the Society. Members expressed enthusiastic approval to the latest design which took the form of six interlocking blocks each with sloping roof. We were told that the windows had been designed to allow the gallery to benefit from both the northern light and the southern light: the northern light being regarded as the most suitable for display of works of art. The importance of the Rendezvous site is its position giving unrivalled views over the sea and its potential to act as a magnet drawing people into the gallery via the Old Town. It is this latter element which, it is hoped, will provide the impetus to the successful regeneration of the town. John drew our attention to the most striking feature of the gallery being the proposed cladding of the exterior with recycled glass which will give the building a milky-white opacity. John also proudly told us that David Chipperfield had recently won the prestigious RIBA 2007 Stirling Prize for his design of the Museum of Modern Literature in Marbach, Germany, which had enhanced the architect's reputation as one of international renown. At the end of John's talk, questions were asked ranging from the provision of car parking to getting rid of the smell which often pervades the harbour area. It was quite evident from the questions asked that members were very supportive of the new proposals and much appreciative of the gallery's potential to act as a catalyst in the process of Margate's regeneration. John very kindly offered to give a further talk to the Society in a year or two's time which was accepted with much enthusiasm. **It is understood that the plans have now been submitted to TDC for planning approval - Ed.*

December

Around 60 members attended our December meeting when Richard Filmer gave an slide presentation on traditional Kentish trades, crafts and industries. The speaker concentrated on those crafts which were reliant on specialist Kentish skills trades ranging from chestnut cleaving to agricultural stilt-walking. This was a most fascinating talk illustrated by a superb collection of photographs showing craftsmen at work on trades which have now virtually disappeared in Kent. Many of those trades had existed for centuries yet within a generation or two, most of those trades are now almost extinct with just one or two small firms struggling to keep going. Within another generation, it is likely that those now remaining will have long gone. Many of those skills were passed from generation to generation within families. The talk reminded everyone just how much change there has been within the agricultural community and most within living memory. One of the lasting memories of the talk was a slide showing an agricultural worker stringing hops whilst on stilts some 20 feet high casually smoking a cigarette yet expected to tie 800 knots an hour. Richard Filmer is undoubtedly an expert on Kentish trades, crafts and industries and members thoroughly enjoyed the talk. □

Note: Our next meeting will be held on 7th February 2008. Members are reminded that we do not hold meetings in January. Details of our monthly meetings from February to May are shown on the inside back page of this Newsletter.

Report on Margate Day



Margate Civic Society tour of the Royal Sea Bathing Hospital development

Paigle Properties, the developers of this prestigious housing development at Westbrook – which was awarded a Town Pride plaque and certificate by the Society in 2007 – have very kindly offered to take our members on a tour of the development on **Wednesday, 30th January 2008** starting at 11.00am. Paigle have asked that they be notified in advance of the number of members wishing to join the tour on that day. If you would like to put your name down for this tour, please contact our Secretary, Tony Snow, on 01843 221838. Early contact with Tony Snow is recommended as tour numbers will be limited. Do make a note in your diary for this tour and do let Tony Snow know early if you wish to take advantage of this kind offer by Paigle in order to secure your place. □



The latest design for the Turner Contemporary art gallery as presented at a public meeting held at the Theatre Royal, Margate on 16th October by the RIBA 2007 Stirling Prize architect David Chipperfield

Roc Doc Talk

ISLE OF THANETTHE RETURN

An introduction to the effects of global climate and sea-level changes on the British Isles in the past. What are the implications for Thanet in the future?

To be presented by Dr Alasdair Bruce ('The Roc Doc') & Mrs Kim Bruce at the Walpole Bay Hotel on Thursday, 17th January 2008 at 7.00pm

Tickets £4.00 available in advance only from the Walpole Bay Hotel, Fifth Avenue, Cliftonville, Margate CT9 2JJ Tel: 01843 221703



Garry Cowans (our new Membership Secretary) and Margaret Main (our new Chairman) at the Society's stand in the Queen's Hall

Celebrations to mark the 150th anniversary of Margate being granted a Charter of Incorporation were held at the Winter Gardens on Sunday, 16th September 2007. A half-page advertisement in a local newspaper listed the events that were planned to take place on that day but, unfortunately, the wording of the advertisement stated that tickets could be obtained (free of charge) from the Winter Gardens Box Office. The reality was that tickets were required only for the celebration dance held that evening. It might well be that it was due to this misleading wording that the numbers of the public who attended the day's events were lower than expected. Margate Civic Society took a stand at the exhibition held in the Queen's Hall of Margate past, present and future and was successful in attracting a lot of interest from visitors to the exhibition and in recruiting some new members. Well done Garry and Maggie! □



Town Pride Awards 2008

It is time to start inviting nominations for the Margate Civic Society Town Pride Awards. As you know, these awards are seen as quite prestigious, receiving a lot of coverage by the local media. Members of the Society can propose anything which they consider has in the last year improved the appearance of anywhere covered by the Civic Society. It really does encourage people if we can show how much their efforts are appreciated by the community.

Don't forget also to let us know of any 'sore thumbs' for the Town Shame List. We will automatically include any that haven't been improved since last time. The closing date is 28th February 2008. Judging will take place in March and the awards will be presented as usual at our May meeting. Can you pick a winner?

Please contact our Chairman, Margaret Main (see back page for contact address). □

Nos. 14-15 Cliff Terrace, Cliftonville, Margate – now Grade II listed!



From a circa-1920 postcard – once full of life



Now looking sad and neglected

Members will be pleased to learn that 14-15 Cliff Terrace has recently been listed as a Grade II building. For many years, this prominent-corner building has been empty and neglected. Indeed, as recently as 2006 the building was nominated for Town Shaming as part of our Society's annual Town Pride awards. It is understood that, recently, the building was the subject of a planning application which proposed its conversion to ten flats and entailed the demolition of parts of the building. The granting of listed building status by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport now provides the protection which this building has long deserved as being a building of special architectural and historic interest.

In English Heritage's letter to Thanet District Council, the principal reasons for designating the building as a Grade II building are given as follows:

- *the red-brick Queen Anne-style elevations with classical detailing are lively and the height of the building is notable, reflecting the need to maximize the provision of rooms for boarding along the seafront*
- *even more remarkable is the fenestration, clearly tailored so that holiday boarders could enjoy much-coveted sea views*
- *the consistent survival of the original timber sashes and glazing is noteworthy*
- *14-15 Cliff Terrace also has strong contextual interest, standing in contrast to and having group value with the Grade II-listed Fort Paragon.*

English Heritage's adviser, writing in support of his recommendation to the Secretary of State that 14-15 Cliff Terrace be granted Grade II status, described the building as follows:

Nos. 14-15 Cliff Terrace is a four-storey plus attic block in red brick and is mid-C19 in date and character. The most impressive feature of Nos. 14-15 Cliff Terrace is the dramatic fenestration: two large, three-storey oriel windows dominate each of the two seaward elevations. Barely any brickwork is visible, aside from the last bay on the north elevation, suggesting that an unusual structural approach may have been used in the building's construction to allow for the almost blanket coverage of the elevations with windows. The oriels are four-light windows with moulded timber mullions, dentil cornices in the entablatures and, on the upper two-storeys, segmental or triangular pediments. The lights contain sash windows, the outer ones using curved glass, and all are original. The ground floor contains traces of C19 shop fronts including consoles and a fascia with dentil cornice. Much of the rest of the shop fronts is later work. The elevations are terminated by a bracket cornice and the attic storey with dormer windows and three ranges of chimney stacks.

It is very good news for the town and, of course, for this most attractive building that it should, as last, be granted Grade II status. Let us hope that it will not be too long before the building is restored to its former glory and brought back into use. The kind assistance of Andrew Emmerson, Conservation Architect with Thanet District Council, with this article is acknowledged. □

From High-Class Confectionery Shop to Eyesore!

The Nayland Rock Refreshment Rooms,

... CLOSE TO THE STATIONS.

ON THE BEACH, below Buenos Ayres.



Teas! Teas! Teas!

. . . A fresh brew for each customer.

HIGH CLASS CONFECTIONERY. ◊ ◊
CHOCOLATE by all the BEST MAKERS
By Weight or Fancy Boxes. . . .

Ices! Ices! Ices!

ALSO AT 48, MARINE TERRACE,
AND 114, HIGH STREET.

Copy of an advertisement appearing in a 1903/04 guide to Margate published by W T Pike & Co of Brighton



← This derelict site was once the location of the Nayland Rock Refreshment Rooms where freshly-brewed tea was available for each customer. This site has been an eyesore for a number of years and, in recent years, has been nominated for Town Shaming. A planning application from the owner for the erection of a single-storey building for use as a café bar together with a roof terrace was, it is understood, approved three years ago and an application to renew that approval was recently announced by Thanet District Council in the local press. This site is crying out for redevelopment. Let us hope that the proposed work commences without further delay. What visitors to the town must think of Margate when they pass this eyesore as they venture the short walk along the promenade to Westbrook Bay can only be imagined.

→ Another photograph of the same site today taken from the end of the pathway from the promenade leading to Canterbury Road and looking more towards the west taking in the Nayland Rock Hotel.

As can be seen from the 1903 advertisement above, this area was once popular with visitors to the town being only a short distance from the railway station, Dreamland amusement park, the Sun Deck (remember that?) and all the other facilities that once attracted customers – both visitors and local residents – in their thousands. Perhaps, one day... □



LATE NEWS

As this newsletter goes to print, Margate Charter Trustees are replacing the fibre-glass flagpole next to the Surfboat Memorial with a new flagstaff of the same design as that which originally stood proudly on this site neighbouring the former Nayland Rock Refreshment Rooms. It is understood that the erection of the new flagstaff will commemorate the 150th anniversary of the granting of the Charter of Incorporation to Margate in 1857 and that work will be completed in time for the Blessing of the Sea ceremony on Sunday, 6th January 2008. The replacement flagstaff by Margate Charter Trustees is very good news for Margate and makes a most fitting way to mark the 150th anniversary of the town's Charter of Incorporation. □

Society members say good-bye to Dreamland Cinema

It was after our October meeting at the Walpole Bay Hotel that the company operating Dreamland Cinema announced that the cinema would be closing at the end of the month. One of our members, Lorraine Foster suggested that the Society arrange for members to have a good-bye visit to the cinema before it finally closed. Lorraine then spoke to the cinema manager, Roy Jackson, who kindly offered to take a group from the Society around the building on Saturday, 20th October starting at 11.30am. Word of the Society's tour of Dreamland Cinema was passed around to most of those who regularly attend our monthly meetings. In turn, those who had been contacted directly, passed on the word to other members 'through the grapevine'. A few days later, members began to gather at the bottom of the steps leading into the cinema shortly after eleven o'clock that Saturday morning. At the pre-arranged time, Roy Jackson emerged from the building expressing his huge surprise as to the large number present. He told us that he was expecting only half a dozen – not nearly forty! However, Roy did us proud with leading us around the cinema despite suffering from a cold which had affected his voice. Roy told us that he had been the manager for some eight and a half years but, being a 'Margate lad', had known the cinema as a filmgoer for more than fifty years.

It was a most nostalgic visit for most of those on the tour. Memories of the days when the queue (an orderly one) for evening performances would extend out of the cinema into Marine Terrace came flooding back to many. Many recalled with much affection the once-familiar sight of the uniformed commissionaire welcoming filmgoers and smartly opening the doors at the top of the flight of steps. We really did not know how lucky we were at the time to have enjoyed such luxury on our doorstep. To enter the cinema in its heyday was truly to enter into another world – a Land of Dreams!

Sadly, those days passed many decades ago – long before the stalls were converted into a bingo-hall and the circle converted into twin cinemas in 1974. Despite ever-

falling attendances, the twin cinemas carried on and it was the announcement that a new multiplex cinema was to be opened at Westwood Cross that proved to be the final blow for the cinema operators. We were also told of the problems the management had with the behaviour of those spilling out from the clubs on Marine Terrace late most nights and with vandalism generally in the vicinity.

Roy showed us the sad remnants of the foyer kiosk – now only a shadow of its former self – before leading us up the magnificent circular steps leading to the circle. Roy then took us into one of the two cinemas where he had arranged to show us some 'Pearl & Dean' advertisements. Sadly, the advertisements were modern ones which bore no comparison with those from the Fifties and Sixties. However, it was good of Roy to lay on a reminder for many of going to 'the pictures'.

The tour culminated in what for most of us was a first – a visit to the projection room. This entailed us climbing the stairs to an exit door which led to a metal gantry along which we walked before re-entering the building through a doorway into the projection room. There we were shown the two projectors each believed to date from the early Fifties but still in good working order. Yes, it was a most memorable visit and one that will probably never be repeated. On leaving the projection room, the Art Deco fin could clearly be seen in the long and dark shadow of Arlington House. The fin looked forlorn and seemed to have lost all semblance of it having once been a proud monument to modernism. Sadly, we were not shown the magnificent Compton organ but Roy did tell us that he believed it still to be in good order. Let us hope that he is right!

Our thanks to Lorraine Foster and to Roy Jackson for making all the arrangements: everyone who attended appreciated the tour but were saddened to see the sad state of what at one time had been considered by many as Margate's premier entertainment attraction. □



This group photograph was taken shortly before the start of the tour. The smiles might reflect thoughts of happier times when Dreamland Cinema really was a Land of Dreams showing films from Hollywood and which were often far removed from reality. There were fewer smiles on faces at the end of the tour!

The organiser, Lorraine Foster, is standing in the front-row, second from the right (between Jack Pilcher and Pat Snow)

LATE NEWS

As part of next year's budget cuts by Thanet District Council, Margate Museum is threatened with closure. This must not be allowed to happen!

Memories of Margate Cinemas



Laurie Brooks re-winding a film for the last time at Dreamland Cinema on 29th October 2007

I am at present (for another week or so before it closes) the relief projectionist at Dreamland Cinema. I have, for the past six and a half years, worked – mostly on Mondays – to relieve the regular projectionist, long-serving Derek Ray. In addition, I actually worked at the cinema as “fifth” projectionist (i.e. “re-wind boy”) in the autumn of 1949 when I was aged 17. So, I do know a little bit about it!

In 1949, our organist (who later emigrated to California, USA) was Lewis Gerard, a very nice man. The manager was Mr Van Gessel, and later, the assistant manager (a friend of mine) was Ben Maudsley.

Of course, we all went to “the pictures” regularly in those days and long before I worked there and on many occasions afterwards, I was a regular patron at Dreamland and the other Margate cinemas – the Parade, the Plaza, and the Cameo.

I can just remember a visit to the Regal when I must have been about six years old and my grandma took me to see *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*. I remember the Regal as having a very nice atmosphere. I left Chatham House Grammar School in Ramsgate when I was sixteen years and four months old in September 1948 and my first job was as Assistant Stage Electrician at the Hippodrome Theatre in Cecil Square. On my very first morning my boss and mentor, Reg Miller, took me out through a door at the back of the Hippodrome and showed me the remains of the Regal auditorium – just a weed-covered heap of rubble (the frontage of the cinema and part of the foyer survived the bomb and stood for quite a few years afterwards). He told me that, in his opinion, the Hippodrome must have been moved a foot further north when the bomb blew the Regal up in 1941! I have always marvelled that the theatre survived, virtually intact, being so close to the Regal (the auditoriums were, in fact, parallel to each other, side by side). Of course, the Hippodrome now the site of the library, was itself demolished quite a few years later but not before I had become Chief Electrician! (My final employment at the Hippodrome was over Christmas and into the New Year 1957 when I worked for a company that put on a circus.)

Whilst I went to the pictures regularly in Margate between 1945 and 1957 it would be to Dreamland, the Parade, the Plaza or the Cameo. I was never taken to the Astoria which was also bombed. I cannot comment on it – except to say that my lifelong friend, ex-actor and Radio Caroline disc-jockey Carl Conway, has told me quite a bit about the cinema and always speaks very warmly of it. I know only too well where it stood and always insist on

calling that site in Northdown Road “Astoria Corner”. Odd that the site had originally been a garage and after the cinema went it was, once again, to become a garage (well, a “filling-station” anyway). I sometimes wonder whether the planning application for it to become a garage once more needed no “change of use” planning permission as it was simply reverting to its original purpose!

Other Thanet cinemas I worked at were the Odeon (Broadstairs); the Odeon (Ramsgate); the Picture House (Ramsgate); the Carlton (Westgate-on-Sea); and the Ritz (Birchington) which later was re-named the Regal; as well as the Hippodrome when it was a cinema.

As to the future – as I said to the reporter from the *Isle of Thanet Gazette* (and am quoted in the 31st August 2007 issue) – the larger, pre-war cinemas “have had their day”. Dreamland cinema was built to be a “super-cinema” (i.e. with over 2,000 seats) and its design was perfect for just exactly that as is very evident from its shape when viewed from the outside. When it was converted to a “twin” in 1974 it lost many of its original facilities – the central heating, the plenum plant complete with washer etc and, of course, the Compton organ which spoke into the whole auditorium. It had been designed so specifically for its original purpose that it must have been difficult to “re-jig”.

As for the Grade II-listed Art Deco feature of the fin at the front of the complex, I suppose it deserves to be preserved as it is such a landmark and a monument to the Art Deco style. But, will it not be rather like – for want of a better analogy – trying to preserve someone’s head without their body? Unless a suitable development is built behind the fin (assuming that the cinema, in its entirety will be demolished – eventually if not immediately) then it will be a pointless exercise, merely drawing attention to the fact that Margate’s great days are over.

But, maybe the great days are not over and in the fullness of time the present era will be seen for what it is – a temporary deflection in Margate’s fortunes. Could it be that the Dreamland Cinema complex will take on a new role as the Turner Centre? It has been suggested that, in many ways, the entire building is not so far removed from being an ideal subject for conversion to a prestigious gallery to display the master’s works. The auditorium has no windows. Good point. It is lofty, allowing for two or three floors. And the frontage on to the seafront offers excellent views of the very scenes that inspired Turner himself. □

Laurie Brooks

(This article was kindly written for this issue of the Newsletter by Laurie Brooks on 23rd October 2007 – just nine days before Dreamland Cinema closed)

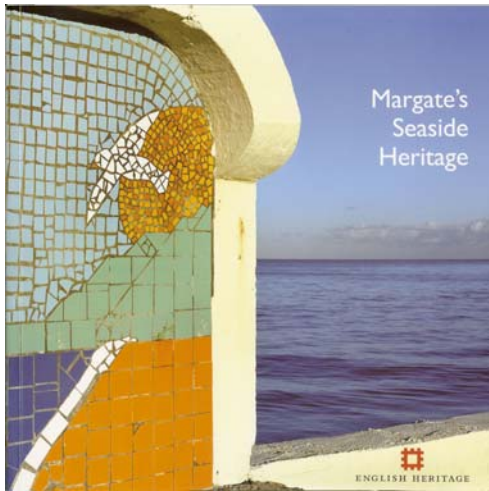


*Goodbye
Dreamland
Cinema – you
served us well for
72 years. We will
miss you*

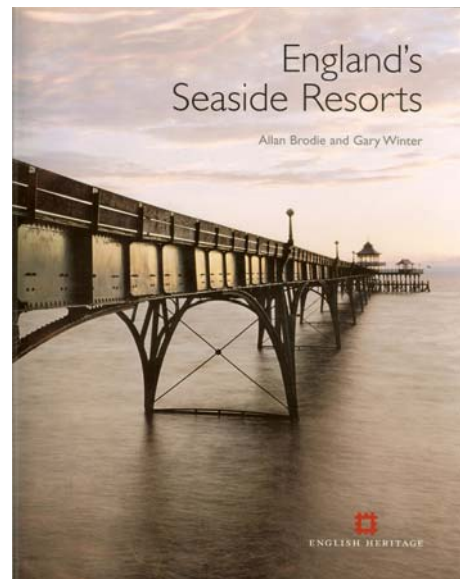


Book Reviews

Margate's Seaside Heritage by Nigel Barker, Allan Brodie, Nick Dermott, Lucy Jessup and Gary Winter
72pp softback published 2007 by English Heritage in their Informed Conservation series of books at £7.99. Copies are available from all good bookshops or direct from English Heritage (EH Sales Tel: 01761 452966)



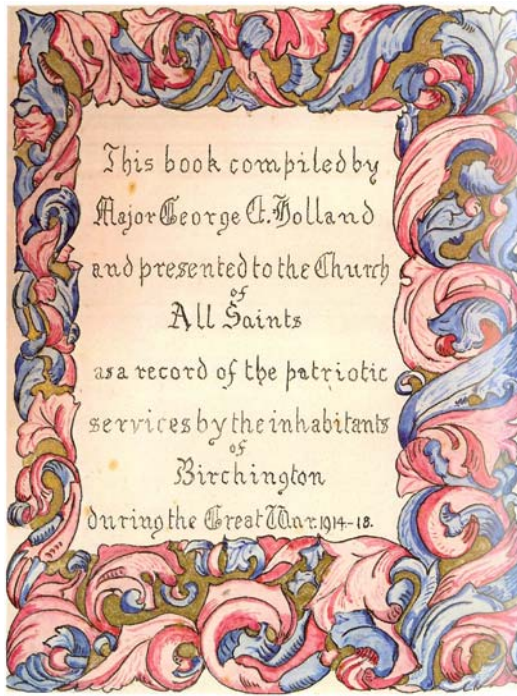
This super little book on Margate's rich architectural heritage was launched at the Theatre Royal on 18th September 2007 by English Heritage in their 'Informed Conservation' series of publications. Its launch coincided with a conference held in Hastings on coastal town regeneration. Five acknowledged experts – four from English Heritage and Thanet District Council's Conservation Architect, Nick Dermott – have put together this delightful book which will appeal to local residents as much as to the wider public for whom it is intended. The contemporary colour photographs of many of our rich tapestry of buildings are quite superb and the reproduction of the old photographs and prints is of the highest quality. English Heritage has recognised Margate as being an historic seaside town possessing a wealth of good architectural features and, like most other seaside towns, has suffered from a long-term decline resulting in the neglect of much of its legacy of fine buildings and features. But, most importantly for Margate, English Heritage chose our town as the subject of a coastal town which has the potential to capitalise on its heritage and architecture because it has the ingredients necessary to reverse this decline thanks to the huge investment – both public and private – being committed to the regeneration of the town. The Turner Contemporary art gallery, the redevelopment of the former Royal Sea Bathing Hospital and the redevelopment of the Dreamland site are, of course, the prime factors. This book should help, in no small way, to revitalise our town. Anyone interested in Margate's fine old buildings should have a copy of this book which comes highly recommended to members of our Society.



England's Seaside Resorts by Allan Brodie and Gary Winter

208pp hardback published 2007 by English Heritage at £24.99. Copies are available from all good bookshops or direct from English Heritage (EH Sales Tel: 01761 452966)

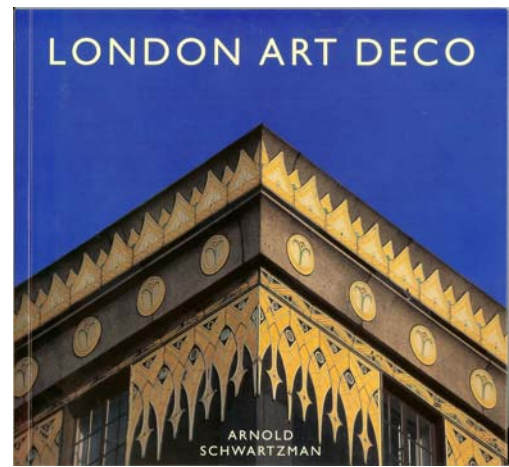
There can be no question about the growing interest nationally in the wealth of seaside architecture that can be found around our coastline and of the urgent need for action to be taken to ensure that so many buildings of architectural interest around our coastline are protected. It was only two years ago that English Heritage published Peter Williams's lovely book *The English Seaside* which featured outstanding colour photographs of seaside scenes. That book was followed last year by the publication of Fred Gray's much acclaimed book *Designing the Seaside: Architecture, Society and Nature*. (both these books were reviewed in earlier Newsletters). Seaside resorts have made an enormous contribution to the cultural identity of our country and it is recognised by most that they contain some of the finest examples of our built heritage. Seaside resorts retain a special place in the nation's collective memory and this latest book should enhance that memory. The authors (who are also co-authors of English Heritage's *Margate's Seaside Heritage*) spent four years visiting coastal towns in their research for the book and they deserve much credit for their endeavours for the book is an absolute delight. The text demonstrates the depth of their research and the quality of the colour photographs and the reproduction of many old maps and prints are again of the highest quality. Margate receives its share of attention throughout the book but, for local readers, the wealth of information in the book on other towns and their architecture is perhaps of greater interest. Perhaps one day, the Government will recognise the need for greater investment in the rich heritage of many of our seaside resorts which might encourage more holiday-makers to once again visit these towns. It seems that more and more families are appreciating the benefits of living near the coast and with the increase in air fares and 'climate change' we might see our seaside towns restored to much of their former glory. This book is recommended reading for anyone with an interest in seaside architecture.



This book compiled by Major George C. Holland and presented to the Church of All Saints as a record of the patriotic services by the inhabitants of Birchington during the Great War 1914-18

This 52-page A5 softback book has just been published in full colour by Michael's Bookshop, 72 King Street, Ramsgate at £5.99. Until its recent publication, only one copy of this remarkable and historic book existed and its condition was such that access to it was strictly controlled. Jennie Burgess, Birchington's Parish Archivist, has very carefully scanned each of the handwritten and hand-coloured pages and Michael's Bookshop has published the complete book without any loss of quality in the colour reproduction. Although slightly reduced in size to A5, the result is an absolute delight. Indeed, now that it is available in this form, researchers will have unlimited access to the wealth of information contained within it. For those who are not familiar with this book, it records the magnificent war work achieved by Birchington inhabitants during the First World War. It contains not only a listing of all the men who served with HM Forces during the war but also contains lists of the women who played such an important part in that war in so many different ways. The book lists all those who served as Special Constables and records the achievements of the people of Birchington in all aspects of the war. It also, of course, includes a Roll of Honour in memory of those who lost their lives during that terrible war. The production of the original book was the work of one man – Major Holland – who had the foresight to record a community's contribution to the war effort. At only £5.99, this beautifully produced social history book cannot be recommended highly enough. Copies are available from either Jennie Burgess (Tel: 842988) or Michael's Bookshop (Tel: 589500).

If only other communities had produced similar records of their contribution to the war effort both in respect of the First World War and the Second World War. □



London Art Deco by Arnold Schwartzman
154pp softback published 2007 by Aurum Press Ltd at £14.99 – ISBN 978 1 84513 243 9

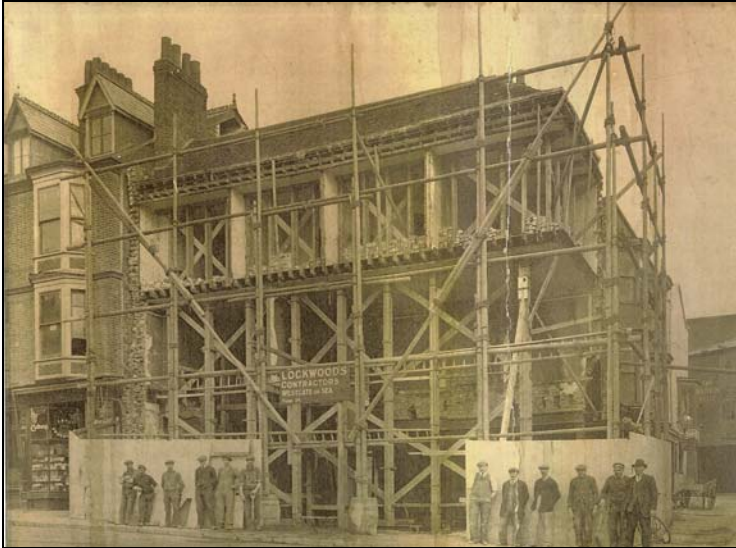
The author's name should be familiar to readers of the Newsletter as he was featured in earlier issues of the Newsletter (No. 345 and No. 348) and readers will be aware of his formative years living in Margate and of him now being a renowned graphic designer (as well as a documentary film-maker) living in California. Readers should not, therefore, be surprised by the content of this his latest book which follows his *DECO Landmarks: Art Deco Gems of Los Angeles* which was published in 2005.

The colour photographs in the author's *London Art Deco* are simply stupendous and their reproduction quite fantastic. The book is a superb catalogue of much of the capital's Art Deco legacy dating from the 1920s and 1930s and is structured to cover all types of buildings – department stores, hotels, cinemas, residential buildings, memorials, factories, etc – as well as lamps, clocks and signage. All the many photographs are in full colour enabling the reader to fully appreciate the stunning beauty of this legacy. Anyone with any interest in building design, and particularly Art Deco, will find this modestly-priced book simply indispensable. The text flows effortlessly and adds much useful information to the superb illustrations. The book is highly recommended. □



The above design will be familiar to those who ever visited Dreamland cinema. Like so many of the cinema's internal features, it is a typical Art Deco design and bears similarities to some designs by René Lalique, the famous French Art Deco designer. Let us hope that these most attractive Art Deco features in Dreamland cinema do not become 'lost' now that the cinema has closed.

The Camera returns to The Hoy



Wooden scaffolding encasing The Hoy Public House circa 1920



Metal scaffolding encasing the same building – September 2007

The old photograph, above left, shows workmen from the Westgate-on-Sea building firm of A. G. Lockwood & Co standing in front of the building known for many years as The Hoy Public House (it was renamed after the Second World War as The Benjamin Beale Public House). Lockwood's Prime Cost Book for the period shows that Lockwood's commenced work there in January 1920 and finished in September 1921. In those days, any building firm of repute had its own wooden scaffolding: there were no hire firms. Metal scaffolding started to appear after the Second World War when it was almost impossible to buy timber. Following this, the hire firms appeared as not many building firms could afford the initial outlay.

The whole front of the building was taken out and rebuilt as one sees it today – which must have presented a challenge, least of all to the scaffolders. They were paid an extra penny an hour and started work half an hour before starting time and they climbed all over the scaffold to check knots, ties, etc to ensure that it was all safe. Note the barrels which contained sand which was rammed down into which the uprights were planted.

The only workmen in the old picture who can be identified are: extreme right (wearing a trilby hat) is Lewis Haismer, General Foreman; and sixth from right is Les Setterfield, carpenter, who later became Foreman Carpenter (as was his father before him).

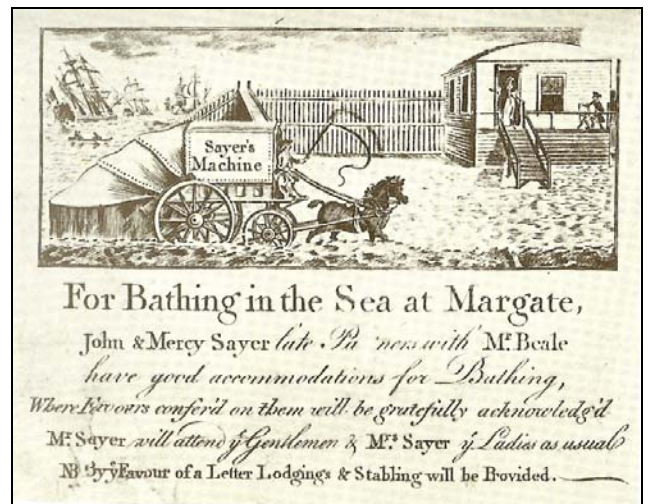
The work was carried out for the brewery firm Meux & Co. □

Queenie Johnson

Benjamin Beale invented the modesty hood which was attached to the rear of the early bathing-machines. He was a resident of Margate and, as a Quaker, would have been teetotal. One wonders what he would have thought about having a public house named after him! Interestingly, the address of the public house today is Fort Hill but it used to be The Parade. – Ed.



Benjamin Beale's engraved trade card (1753)



John & Mercy Sayer's engraved trade card (1791)

Benjamin Beale falsely claimed that he invented the bathing-machine. It is generally accepted that bathing-machines were first used at Scarborough in the 1730s. According to the late George Clarke in his book *Historic Margate* (first published in 1957 to coincide with the town's Charter Centenary celebrations), Benjamin Beale was born around 1717 and died in 1775. □

What's on

Margate Civic Society (talks all start at 7.30pm at the Walpole Bay Hotel):

January	No meeting (But see the announcement on the third page of this Newsletter for details of a talk to be given by Dr Alasdair Bruce and his wife Kim on Thursday, 17 th January at 7.00pm at the Walpole Bay Hotel: Dr Bruce and Mrs Bruce have recently joined our Society)
Thursday, 7 th February	'Margate Buildings' by Mr Damien Cooke
Thursday, 6 th March	'The Devil's Garden' by Mr Russell T. Bowes
Thursday, 3 rd April	'An Update on Dreamland and other aspects of Margate' by Mr Mick Tomlinson
Thursday, 8 th May	2008 Town Pride Awards followed by a talk 'The Slums of Fort Hill' by Mr Nick Dermott, Conservation Architect, Thanet District Council

Turner Contemporary (all talks start at 6.00pm). Please note that the talks in January and February will be given at the Margate Media Centre, King Street but, from March 2008, the talks will be given at the former Marks & Spencer store in the High Street. These talks, which are open to everyone and admission is free, are recommended. Places are limited, so please book early (Tel: 280261) to avoid disappointment. The theme of this new series of talks is sustainability.

Tuesday, 15 th January	'Sustainability: An Introduction' by Steve Rees
Tuesday, 12 th February	'Contemporary Art and the Quest for Ecological Citizenship' by Maja and Reuben Fowkes
Tuesday, 18 th March	<i>Both the title of the talk and the name of the speaker were not available at the time of going to print</i>

Kent Family History Society – Thanet Branch (talks all start at 7.30pm for 8.00pm at Birchington Village Centre)

Wednesday, 16 th January	'Britain on the Home Front in WWII: A trip down Memory Lane' by Lt-Col Mike Martin
Wednesday, 20 th February	'Ramsgate: Its Development and Historic Associations' by Brian Fagg
Wednesday, 19 th March	'A War without an Enemy' by Audrey Gillett
Wednesday, 16 th April	'Finding a Family: Adoption' by Tony Farnham

Useful telephone numbers:

Organisation	Phone No.	Contact name/Notes
Thanet District Council – Press Office	577034	Cheryl Pendry
Margate Museum, The Old Town Hall, Market Place	231213	Bob Bradley, Curator
Margate Public Library – Local Studies Collection	223626	Cecil Square building closed during building works – due to re-open 7 th January 2008
Westgate Heritage Centre	832617	Dr Dawn Crouch, Curator
Birchington Heritage Trust Museum, Birchington Library	846502	Open Mondays and Saturdays – 9.30am to noon (both days)
Birchington Parish Archivist	842988	Jennie Burgess
Margate Historical Society	227574	Mick Twyman, Secretary
Isle of Thanet Historical Society	835587	Barry Hopper, Chairman
Isle of Thanet Archaeological Society	07906 360725	Val Robbins, Secretary
Isle of Thanet Geographical Association	863110	-
Kent Family History Society (Thanet Branch)	842933	Cliff Cole
Draper's Windmill Trust	226227	David Keep, Chairman
Margate Lifeboat Fund-Raising Committee	832846	Laurie Walton, Treasurer
Friends of Margate Cemetery Trust	230274	Vera Jenkins
Friends of Quex	842040	Edna Elven, Membership Secretary
Friends of Westgate Pavilion	226542	Mike Emery, Secretary
Turner Contemporary	280261	Victoria Pomery, Director
The Powell-Cotton Museum, Quex House, Birchington	842168	-
The Shell Grotto, Grotto Hill, Margate	220008	Sarah Vickery
Manston Spitfire & Hurricane Museum	821940	-
RAF Manston History Museum	825224	-
Cliftonville Residents' Association	226033	Keith Chadband, Chairman
Westgate & Westbrook Residents' Association	831474	Norman Smith, Treasurer
Birchington Residents' Association	843594	Roger D. Walford



Margate Civic Society

www.margatecivicsociety.org.uk

Founded in 1968, the Margate Civic Society is a registered charity. It is also affiliated to both the Kent Federation of Amenity Societies and the Kent History Federation.

The Society's purpose and aims are to encourage high standards of architecture and town planning in Margate and its environs (Birchington, Westgate-on-Sea, Cliftonville, Westbrook, Garlinge, Acol, Sarre and St Nicholas-at-Wade); to stimulate public interest and care for the history and character of the area; and to encourage the preservation, development and improvement of features of general amenity and historical interest. To this end, Town Pride awards are given annually to those buildings which have been refurbished, cleaned or modified and which, in the opinion of the Society, have enhanced the appearance of the town. New high-quality buildings are also eligible for the award. The Society also vets planning applications and makes known to Thanet District Council any objections to those applications which it considers necessary.

Evening meetings are held monthly between October and May at the Walpole Bay Hotel, Fifth Avenue, Cliftonville. The lectures, mostly illustrated with slides, are interesting and of local interest; they are also varied in their appeal. A few afternoon meetings are sometimes also held. A newsletter is published four times a year.

Committee for 2007/08:

President: Mr Ralph Handscomb

14 Eastern Esplanade, Cliftonville, Margate CT9 3AB (Tel: 293169)

Chairman: Mrs Margaret Main

32 Gordon Road, Cliftonville, Margate CT9 2DN (Tel: 229678)

Vice-Chairman: Mr Harry Scobie

45 Cornwall Gardens, Cliftonville, Margate CT9 2JG (Tel: 291298)

Secretary: Mr Tony Snow

34 Royal Esplanade, Westbrook, Margate CT9 5EG (Tel: 221838)

Treasurer: Mrs Pat Snow

34 Royal Esplanade, Westbrook, Margate CT9 5EG (Tel: 221838)

Membership Secretary: Mr Garry Cowans

C/o 32 Gordon Road, Cliftonville, Margate CT9 2DN (Tel: 221938)

Newsletter Editor: Mr James Brazier

"The Moorings", 25 Barnes Avenue, Westbrook, Margate CT9 5EQ (Tel: 298038)

Other Committee Members:

Mr Jack Pilcher, 7 Queen Bertha's Avenue, Birchington CT7 9BH (Tel: 833767)

Mr Steve Vilette, 29 The Ridgeway, Cliftonville, Margate CT9 2TL (Tel: 221250)

Mrs Daphne Rowley, "Spring Cottage", 11 Pembroke Avenue, Westbrook, Margate CT9 5EA

Mr Peter Blore, 29 Yoakley Square, Margate CT9 4BA (Tel: 291778)

If you are interested in joining our Society, please fill in the enrolment form below.



Enrolment/Renewal Form

I enclose the sum of £

Name:

Address:

Tel:

Subscription rates for 2007/08:

	Individual	Joint	Junior (under 18)	Corporate
Annual	£5.00	£8.00	50p	£10.00
Life Membership	£40.00	£60.00	-	-

and send it to the Membership Secretary (Mr Garry Cowans) C/o 32 Gordon Road, Cliftonville, Margate CT9 2DN