

Margate Civic Society

(Founded 1968)

Registered Charity No. 257884



Winter 2011
Newsletter
Issue No. 365



**Margate Civic Society is a
Founder Member
of Civic Voice**

The year 2011 will undoubtedly go down in Margate's history as one of great note. Of course, the two highlights of the year were the opening of Turner Contemporary on 16th April by Tracey Emin with Jools Holland and the Royal Visit on 11th November when HM The Queen and HRH The Duke of Edinburgh visited the town. There are photographs of the Royal Visit elsewhere in this Newsletter.

There can be little doubt that the opening of Turner Contemporary has provided a much-needed boost to the town's fortunes. Visitor-numbers to the gallery have far exceeded expectations and there is a real 'buzz' in the Old Town with many new businesses opening in the last few months. Yes, there were a number of sceptics in the town who felt that Turner Contemporary would never contribute to the regeneration of the town but that number has certainly fallen dramatically since April judging by the comments of many people published in the local papers. Indeed, there can be few remaining who still hold their pessimistic views.

The year also saw the completion of the renovation of the Arcadian on Fort Hill - but what a shame that the former Fort Road Hotel looks such a disgrace to the town. Thanet District Council has placed a CPO on the building but it remains to be seen what the outcome will be.

The saga of the Tesco store at the Arlington Centre rumbled on with little progress seemingly being made. It now seems that the new store on that site will not be on the scale previously feared - which will please many. The expected opening of a Tesco Express store at Westbrook in the spring of next year would seem to support that happening. Let's just hope that, whatever the outcome at the Arlington Centre, Arlington House will be given a long-overdue facelift before too long. The building will be 50 years old in 2013 - and already looks it!

The Winter Gardens celebrated its centenary in August with a small exhibition in the Queen's Hall. Sadly, TDC felt unable to allocate the funds necessary to restore the building to its former glory. However, in the current economic climate, it is probably unrealistic to expect TDC to now carry out all the restoration work in the foreseeable future but let's hope that this elegant Edwardian building is not allowed to deteriorate any further. □

**James Brazier
Newsletter Editor**

Welcome to new members

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

Ms Louise Drelaud
Mr Colin Harvey
Mrs Steve Kilbee
Ms Jennifer Moyse
Mrs Clare Wheeler
Mrs Valerie Kirschner
Mr Sudhr Deshpand
Mrs Ida Windsor
Mrs Ann Greenwood
Miss Joanna Smith

**Lynda Smith
Membership Secretary**

New Committee Appointments

At our AGM held on 6th October 2011, the Committee for 2011/12 was elected. Apart from the following changes, the Committee remains unchanged from last year:

Secretary: Ms Fiona Kempa
Minutes Secretary: Mr Geoff Orton

Contact details for all Committee post holders are shown on the back page of this Newsletter. □

SUBSCRIPTION REMINDER

Members are reminded that annual subscriptions were due for renewal on 1st October 2011. If you have not renewed your subscription, please note that 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, Mrs Lynda Smith, 5 Addington Square, Margate CT9 1NN. The subscription rates for the current year are shown on the back of this Newsletter. Any donations we receive on top of the subscriptions are very much appreciated. □

**Lynda Smith
Membership Secretary**



**We wish all our members a very
Happy Christmas
and a peaceful New Year**



Memories of the Royal Visit to Margate on Friday, 11th November



Cllr Iris Johnston, Mayor of Margate, introduces Her Majesty The Queen to a WWII veteran shortly after the completion of the Armistice Day commemorations held in Margate Old Town on 11th November 2011

Photo courtesy of Thanet District Council

Photo: Mike Nichols

The visit by Her Majesty The Queen and HRH The Duke of Edinburgh to Turner Contemporary on 11th November 2011 was an honour for the gallery. The historic moment came after a hugely successful first seven months, which has seen Turner Contemporary welcome over 300,000 visitors.

Her Majesty The Queen met with gallery Director Victoria Pomery, Chair John Kampfner and key members of staff. She was taken on a tour of the gallery, where she was introduced to guests including artist Tracey Emin, architect Sir David Chipperfield, and Deputy Director of Tate Alex Beard



Photo courtesy of Turner Contemporary

Photo: © Alastair Fyfe

Queenie Johnson's *Guide to Margate* broadcast on BBC Radio Kent

The Queen's visit to Margate on 11th November was very well covered by both the national and international media; it was also very well covered by BBC Radio Kent. Amongst the many clips broadcast by Radio Kent on that special day was a very nice item that had been recorded only the previous day. Radio Kent had contacted Margate Civic Society seeking to make contact with Queenie Johnson, one of our members who has featured in our Newsletter in recent times. It seems that Radio Kent had Googled "Margate" and "Queen" and had been taken to our Newsletters, featuring Queenie Johnson, as PDF files on the web. I immediately contacted Queenie to seek her agreement and her permission to give Radio Kent her e-mail address and it

took off from there. The result was that a Radio Kent presenter arranged to call on Queenie at her home later that day in St•Peter's and to take her to various locations in Margate where Queenie recorded her memories of those places - St•John's Church, Dane Park, Dreamland Amusement Park and the Lido. Appropriately, the edited recording was broadcast at around the time the Queen was being presented to local veterans by the Town Mayor, Cllr Mrs Iris Johnston. Although the broadcast recording was just under four minutes long, it was most pleasing to listen to. Queenie Johnson also very much enjoyed making the recording. Very well done Queenie - and very well done Radio Kent! □ Ed.

The Royal Visit to the town's Lifeboat Station



The Queen holding the bouquet of flowers presented to her by Aisne Gaspa, daughter of crew member Peter Gaspa, with her mother



The Queen signing the Visitors' Book in the Lifeboat Station

Photos by Barry (Sheerness RNLI)



Margate Lifeboat with her crew standing and seated, left to right:

Mike Baker, Chairman of Margate RNLI Station Branch

Paul Hodson, LOM (Lifeboat Operations Manager), Margate Station Branch

Admiral The Lord Boyce, Chairman of the RNLI and Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports

Rev Brian Sharp, Station Chaplain

Alen Head, District Inspector

Peter Barker, Deputy Launching Authority, Margate Station



RNLI Chairman Admiral The Lord Boyce presents Rev Brian Sharp with his RNLI Chaplain's Badge

Chris Sandwell and Les Manning proudly holding their RNLI long-service certificates presented to them by the Admiral The Lord Boyce. Chris Sandwell had served as a member of the lifeboat crew from 1966 to 2011 and Les Manning had served as a member of the crew from 1965 to 2011 and as Head Launcher from 2001 to 2011

Margate's WWII War Memorial Tablets renovated in time for Remembrance Sunday



Thanks to the efforts of the Mayor of Margate (Cllr Iris Johnston) and the Margate Branch of the Royal British Legion, Thanet District Council arranged for all the lettering on the town's WWII tablets to be painted black in time for this year's Service of Remembrance. It seems that, last year, the memorial had been cleaned by blasting the stone with high-pressure hoses when the lettering appears to have been damaged to such an extent that it was extremely difficult to read many of the names incised into the stone.

By painting all the lettering black, each name can now be clearly read as can be seen from these accompanying photographs. Interestingly, it would seem that the WWII names had not previously been painted. The WWI names at the base of the War Memorial Cross were also not painted until 1962 when Cllr Ernest Sheen (a professional signwriter) generously undertook the task at his own expense. □

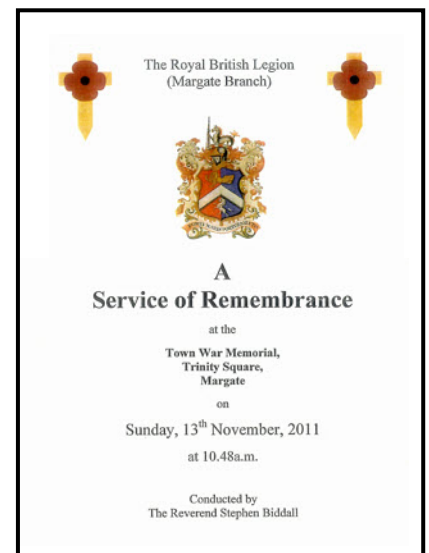
“THEIR NAME LIVETH FOR EVERMORE”



The town remembers - Remembrance Sunday, 13th November 2011



The scene at the town's War Memorial at Trinity Square on Remembrance Sunday when the Service of Remembrance was this year conducted by the Rev Stephen Biddall. The weather was remarkably kind for the time of the year and might have contributed to the higher attendance this year



This photograph shows all of the recently-restored WWII tablets at the rear of the WWI War Memorial Cross (see close-up photographs of each of the tablets on the opposite page). The panel at the far right lists the names of civilians from the whole of the Borough of Margate area (including Birchington) who lost their lives in WWII; the same panel also includes the name Alistair Leighton who lost his life in the Falklands War 1982



The Battle of Margate

From time to time, we have enquiries from members of the public about happenings in Margate and our area.

The most interesting one that I have recently had was a request from a naval officer from Portsmouth requesting information on the Battle of Margate 1387.

Up to two days previous to this request, I had never heard of the Battle of Margate but in an article in the *Isle of Thanet Gazette* by Eileen O'Brien on 4th February 2011 was a story of long-lost and forgotten villages including Minnis Bay, Gore End, St Nicholas-at-Wade, Shuart and several others, and in one small paragraph was a short piece that read: "...for example Stonar - a successful port with its own mill, church and market - was burned to the ground by the French in 1385".

After a number of enquiries to Eileen O'Brien, John T. Williams and Bob Varnham, the story started to unfold:

In 1386, Richard II, aged 20, was on the throne and Parliament agreed to the commissioning of a fleet under Richard FitzAlan, Duke of Arundel, to attack the French fleet that was being raised by the Duke of Burgundy (known as Philip the Bold), (Charles VI was King of France).

On 16th March 1387, Arundel arrived in Sandwich and took command of 60 ships. The French had gathered an army of 30,000 men and a fleet of 1,200

vessels at Sluys the previous autumn but Burgundy fell ill and the fleet was dispersed.

The ships that Arundel engaged in battle on 24th March 1387 were part of a 250-vessel fleet carrying wine from La Rochelle to Sluys. They were by far inferior in arms and manpower and many were burned or sunk and over 50 were captured. The wine was sent to London and sold at a very favourable price which made Arundel very popular. Unfortunately for Arundel and his co-commander the Duke of Gloucester, The King felt threatened and had Arundel's head removed along with his titles, land and possessions. Later, however, his son was repossessed of title, etc., when he became a staunch follower of The King.

These details, along with some lengthy biographies were sent to Andy, the naval officer, who was extremely grateful for the information which he wanted for a retiring admiral's farewell-dinner speech.

And on that note, I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy and Prosperous New Year. □

**Ralph Handscomb
President**

Can you help with the photograph taken during WWI?



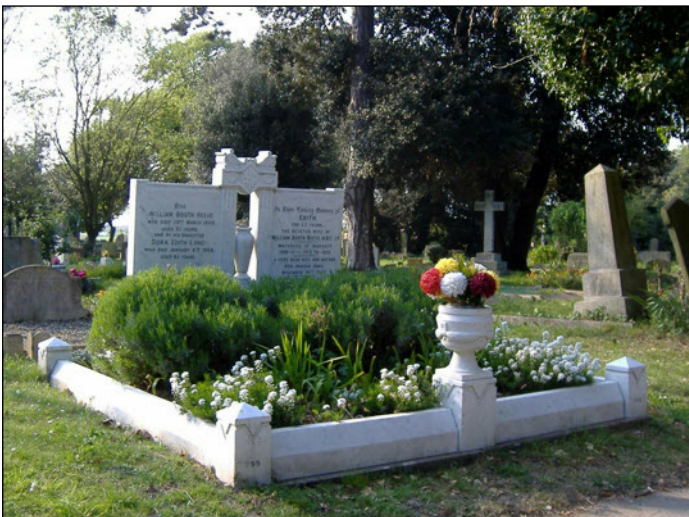
This superb photograph is reproduced in our Newsletter thanks to Suzannah Foad, a member of our Society. The photograph shows a ceremony taking place in Cecil Square in front of the Baptist Church. The photographer was almost certainly standing on the external balcony of the Hippodrome. The photograph seems to show a presentation being made to a local soldier during the First World War by the Mayor, Alderman William Booth Reeve. Unfortunately, it is not known what the presentation was, who the soldier was (and whether he survived the war) or the date on which the ceremony took place.

It is considered that the ceremony was the presentation of a military award to a local soldier - possibly a medal although the Mayor seems to be holding a certificate which he might be about to present to the soldier. What else can be gleaned from the photograph? Well, it will be seen that many of the soldiers lined up in front of the buildings are wearing steel helmets. These were not issued before 1915 and, generally were issued from 1916. The fact that the soldiers are wearing steel helmets outside a fighting zone would seem to indicate that helmets were a novelty at that time.

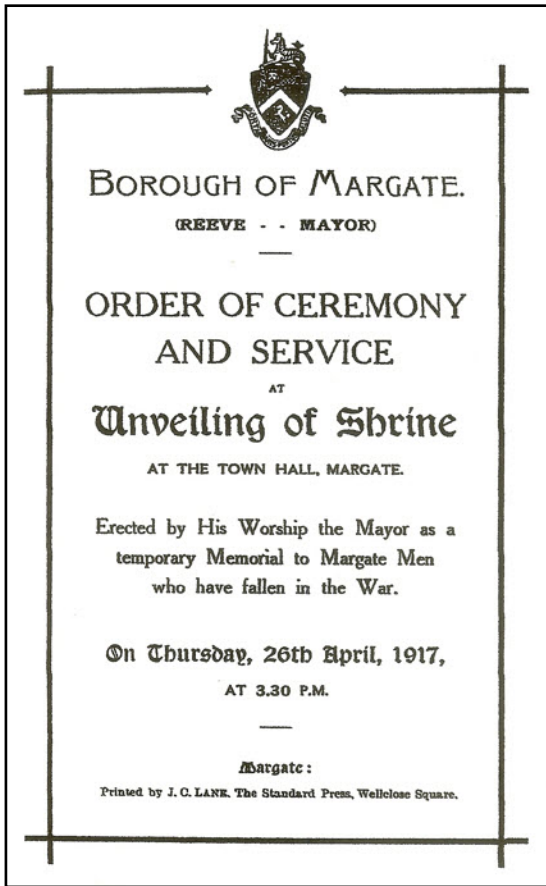
On the extreme left of the picture, is an animal - possibly a goat - which could be a regimental mascot. Some of the soldiers, particularly the group in the front row immediately outside the entrance to the Baptist Church look quite small in stature. Might they be cadets? If any of our readers can identify the event or can add any information which might lead to such identification, please do contact us.

William Booth Reeve served as Mayor continuously from 1913 to 1919. At the end of the war, he was awarded the MBE and also granted the Freedom of the Borough by the Borough Council in recognition of his services to the town during the Great War. □

The impressive grave in Margate Cemetery of William Booth Reeve MBE, JP and his wife Edith. William Booth Reeve served as Mayor of Margate for 1910-11 and continuously from 1913 to 1919. His wife, Edith, served as Mayoress for the same years



Margate's Temporary War Memorial



The front cover of the Order of Ceremony and Service for the Unveiling of Margate's War Shrine on 26th April 1917



The original War Shrine was a triptych comprising just three panels. A fourth panel was later added and the panels realigned. An 'overflow' Roll of Honour was later required in order to accommodate the ever-increasing list of the fallen. Both the original War Shrine and the 'overflow' triptych are on display on the staircase walls at Margate Museum. The town is very fortunate that they still exist. The War Shrine was personally paid for Alderman William Booth Reeve as Mayor of Margate. Both Rolls of Honour were constructed by Messrs Paramor & Sons, builders, at their Eaton Road premises. □



The 'overflow' triptych Roll of Honour in Margate Museum



The stone tablet outside the former United Servicemen's Club in Eaton Road, Margate in honour of William Booth Reeve MBE, JP

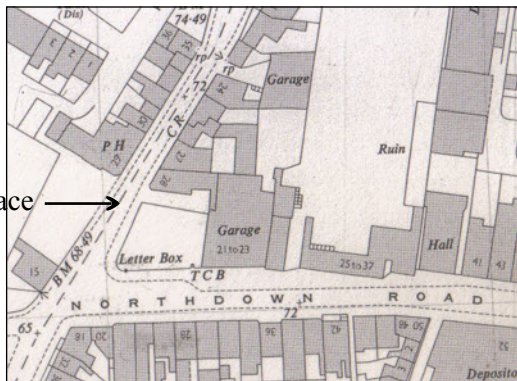
Do you remember Kerr's Garage in Northdown Road?



Kerr's Garage 1962

It was in 1920 that John William Kerr (1869-1936) opened a coal- and removal-yard in Northdown Road, near the junction with Zion Place in Cliftonville.

Before coming to Margate, John had been a haulier in Northampton and also one of the first motor-cyclists in the country. Gradually, he specialised in the motor-car, John had one of the first petrol-pumps in the town. His sons, John Oglivy Fairley Kerr (1900-1971) and George Gordon Kerr (1910-1995), took over on the death of John in 1936.



Zion Place →

Map showing location of Kerr's in 1936 before Margate Corporation placed a CPO on the site in order to re-align Zion Place

George Gordon Kerr retired in 1962. The same year, the council made a compulsory purchase order on the garage-site in order to straighten the end of Zion Place. John junior



Kerr's New Garage

and his son, another John, along with his sister, Anne Edwina Kerr, bought a new piece of land a few yards along the road and rebuilt the business. The site chosen was formerly the West Ham



The junction of Zion Place and Northdown Road before Zion Place was re-aligned

Union Convalescent Home for Boys, in Northdown Road.

John Oglivy Fairley Kerr also had a huge interest in radios and his enthusiasm led to his father, John William, also becoming involved with tinkering with the appliances. John William even installed the first radios in Margate Hospital. Margate Museum should still have a 1924 radio sold by Kerr's. The date is known by a receipt which was found in the back of the radio.

John recalled of his early days at the garage: "When I first started work, holiday makers would be grateful for parking space at the garage. We could have up to 100 cars parked in overnight."



John Kerr

On the retirement of Anne Edwina Kerr in the 1980s, John's daughter Jane and her mother, Barbara Anne, joined the business around 1986 and continued with her father until January 2000 when John Kerr retired and sold the business. It was the end of 80 years of service.

I thought it may be interesting to add that John William Kerr also had a distinguished war record, having been mentioned in despatches for service with the Royal Naval Air Service and was in the Suvla Bay Landings (1915). He was wounded in subsequent fighting. John was a member of the Union Lodge of Freemasons, a Druid (Providence Lodge No 441) and a Past Supreme President of the Margate L.A.I.O.O.F (Loyal Ancient Independent Order of Odd Fellows). He had also been President of the Thanet Motor Club. □

A Town Council for Margate?

At a meeting of the Executive of the Margate Charter Trustees held on 8th November 2011, consideration was given to the creation of a Town Council for Margate (similar to the Ramsgate Town Council that was created a couple of years ago to replace the Ramsgate Charter Trustees). Further consideration by the Margate Charter Trustees of this important matter will take place at their meeting on 9th January 2012. This will be a public meeting to which any one may attend. The meeting ought to attract a good number of local residents to hear the arguments both for and against the possible creation of a Town Council to replace the Margate Charter Trustees.

The Margate Charter Trustees, as a legal body, was created in 1974 under the provisions of the Local Government Act 1972. It was that Act of Parliament which provided for the reorganisation of local government from 1st April 1974 when Thanet District Council came into being in replacement of the former local authorities including Margate Borough Council. From that same date, the Margate Charter Trustees became the legal body responsible for the safe custody of the former Borough Council's Margate's Charter of Incorporation. The Charter Trustees can also appoint a Town Mayor and engage in ceremonial matters. That, effectively, was the limit of their powers. In recent years, Margate Charter Trustees decided to incur expenditure on other matters which it deemed were in the interests of the town - the Charter Trustees believing that they had authority to incur such expenditure under powers contained in Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972. Expenditure by the Charter Trustees on such matters had increased significantly in more recent years until last year when a local resident questioned whether Section 137 powers were applicable to Charter Trustees. The District Auditor investigated the matter and subsequently determined that the Charter Trustees had acted *ultra vires* as they had no legal powers to incur expenditure under Section 137 and were told that they could only incur expenditure on:

- appointing a Mayor;
- ensuring the safe custody of the Charter of Incorporation; and
- acquiring, holding, administering, maintaining and improving historic property of a ceremonial nature.

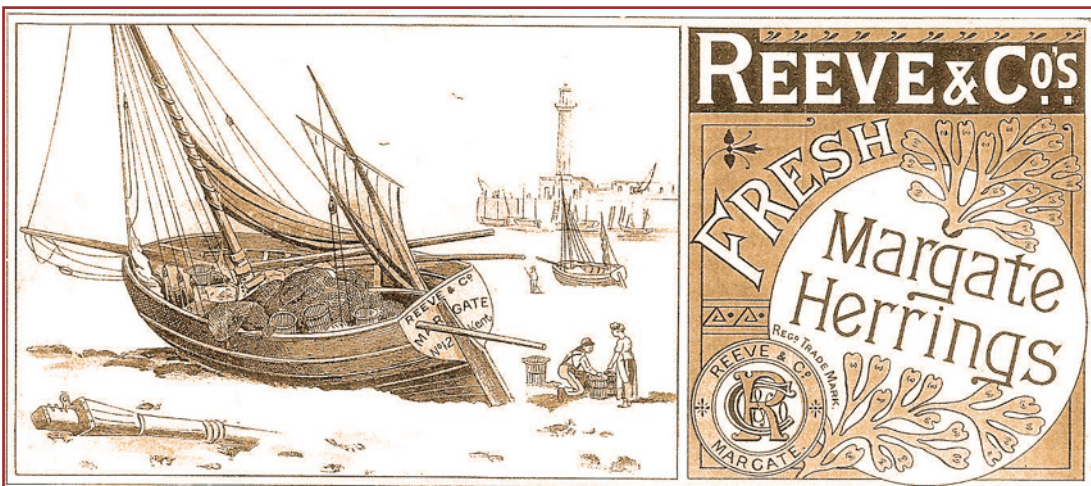
It is because the District Auditor has 'clipped the wings' of the Charter Trustees that consideration is being given to the possible creation of a directly-elected Town Council which, if created, would replace the Charter Trustees. Currently, the Charter Trustees are those TDC councillors whose wards fall within the former Margate Borough Council area (excluding Birchington).

If a Town Council were to be created for Margate, the Town Council could seek the transfer of some minor services from Thanet District Council and the Town Council would be able, lawfully, to grant financial assistance to other bodies and organisations in much the way that the Charter Trustees had given financial assistance to outside bodies when it was acting *ultra vires*.

The possible creation of a Town Council will raise numerous issues - not least being the annual cost involved (including the cost of holding elections for town councillors) and the consequent increase in Council Tax levels. In addition, consideration will need to be given as to whether the Town Council area should include Westgate-on-Sea and even whether it should include Birchington (which is currently covered by Birchington Parish Council). These issues will undoubtedly generate much interest in our area next year. It will be interesting to see what the result is but it might be that the decision is simply that the Charter Trustees should continue to function as they were intended so to do in 1974. But I wouldn't bank on it! □

James Brazier

The annual costs of a Town Council would be met by issuing an annual precept upon TDC in the same way as the Charter Trustees currently finance their expenditure. TDC then convert that into a Council Tax Band D sum by dividing the precept by the number of Band D equivalents for the area concerned. The actual Council Tax borne by each household is then calculated according to which Council Tax Band their property falls into. It might sound complicated but, in reality, it is quite simple. However, meeting any increase in the precept is another matter.



This advertisement probably dates from around one hundred years ago - but isn't it a delightful one? I wonder how fresh Margate herrings tasted? Very good I should think!

Margate Paradiso - an award-winning-style presentation by Arnold Schwartzman at the Walpole Bay Hotel



In September, Oscar-winning film director Arnold Schwartzman OBE, RDI with his wife, Isolde, came to the Walpole Bay Hotel to give a talk about the “love letter to Margate” film *Margate Paradiso* that he proposes to make next year. Arnold has lived in Hollywood, California for over thirty years but spent his boyhood living at his parents’ hotel in Lewis Crescent, Cliftonville. Arnold spoke very fondly of his home town and told how he intends to make a positive, quality movie about both the town’s past, present and future.

Amongst the many interesting images shown during Arnold’s presentation was this picture above showing him receiving an Oscar for his documentary feature film Genocide in 1982.



Photos by Marta Patlewicz



including Elizabeth Taylor and Orson Welles.

The event was kindly supported by the University for the Creative Arts and the Walpole Bay Hotel.

In 1982, Arnold was appointed the Director of Design for the Los Angeles 1984 Olympic Games. Among his most recent projects is the creation of the two murals for the Grand Lobby of Cunard's new ship *Queen Elizabeth*.

He is a Governor and past Chairman of BAFTA Los Angeles, and past Chairman of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences, documentary executive committee. He is also a Governor of the University for the Creative Arts (UCA).

Arnold was appointed an OBE in 2002 for services to the British Film Industry in the USA, and in 2006 was conferred the distinction of Royal Designer, RDI by The Royal Society of Arts.

Arnold’s huge affection for his home town is remarkable as is his creative energy. He deserves every success. □

As can be seen from these photographs taken during Arnold Schwartzman’s PowerPoint presentation on Sunday, 25th September 2011 in



the Ballroom at the Walpole Bay Hotel, there was not an empty seat in the room. Indeed, Jane Bishop, the owner of the hotel, was obliged to turn a number of people away as the room had reached its capacity before the presentation even started. Arnold held everyone’s attention throughout his delivery as is evident from these photographs. The picture on the right shows the Mayor of Margate (Cllr Iris Johnston) and the Chairman of Thanet District Council (Cllr Doug Clark) seated behind next to his Escort, Louise Drelaud. It was good to see those, and so many others, present for this very special occasion.



A closer look at one of Turner's paintings of Margate currently on display at Turner Contemporary



Margate by J. M. W. Turner - painted in 1784. This painting is one of four of Turner's watercolours currently on display at Turner Contemporary of local scenes that Turner painted when he was only nine years old

The above watercolour is currently on display at Turner Contemporary. The caption states that it is a view of Margate looking towards the Harbour. The buildings on both the left and right almost certainly no longer exist but where exactly did Turner paint this picture? My belief is that the view of Margate would be that seen from near the current entrance to Margate Caves in Northdown Road looking west. In the actual watercolour, Reculver Towers can be seen on the horizon. The cluster of houses in the middle distance are, I believe, the houses in the Old Town and would certainly include the larger houses in King Street. Indeed, the rather large square-looking building is probably the home of Francis Cobb. It has been suggested by others that the view might be that seen from around the former Neptune Square area at the top of Fort Hill. It would be interesting to know what other members think the actual location might be. If you haven't yet seen this picture, do ensure that you go along to the present exhibition at Turner Contemporary All the World is Youth and take a good look at the picture. And please do let us know where you think Turner painted this scene from. The building on the left with the hipped roof gives the impression that it was industrial rather than residential. Also, the tall chimneys and the ventilation apertures along the bottom edge of the roof would seem to indicate industrial use. Hooper's 'Horizontal Mill' was near this site and perhaps the buildings on both the left and the right were connected in some way with that mill. □

James Brazier



Hooper's 'horizontal mill' as depicted in this engraving published in 1790 - just six years after Turner painted the picture above

VIEW OF MARGATE BY MOONLIGHT.

Published as the Act directs by Bellamy & Roberts, Sep. 1. 1790.

The Localism Act 2011

The much-heralded Localism Bill received the Royal Assent on 15th November 2011. Following the Royal Assent being granted, the following text was published by the Department for Communities and Local Government on 16th November 2011 listing a summary of the changes introduced by the Localism Act and is reproduced for the interest of our members:

Power shift from Whitehall to communities gets underway

An era of Whitehall control has ended with a historic shift in power back to local people, as the Localism Bill becomes law.

The Localism Act will trigger the biggest transfer of power in a generation, releasing councils and communities from the grip of central government.

The flagship legislation, which late yesterday afternoon received Royal Assent, puts a raft of new rights and powers at the disposal of local people to take charge of their future, delivering on more than 30 coalition agreement commitments.

Key measures to increase the power of local government through the Act include:

- Introducing a **new general power of competence**, giving councils unprecedented freedom to work together to improve services and drive down costs. Councils are now free to do anything - provided they do not break other laws
- Opening the door for the **transfer of power to our major cities** to develop their areas, improve local services, and boost their local economies
- Ending the ineffective system for overseeing the behaviour of councillors by **abolishing the Standards Board**
- Clarifying the **rules on predetermination** in order to free up councillors to express their opinions on issues of local importance without the fear of legal challenge
- Enabling councils to **return to the committee system** of governance, if they wish, regardless of their size. Centrally set rules interfering in how councils set up their own affairs are being scrapped
- Giving councils greater control over **business rates**. Councils will have the power to offer business rate discounts, which could help attract firms, investment and jobs. The Act cancels unfair **backdated business rates**, which threatened to cripple key businesses. It stops plans to impose a **business rate supplement** on firms if a simple majority of those affected do not give their consent, and simplifies the process for claiming **small business rate relief**
- Introducing **new planning enforcement rules**, giving councils the ability to take action against people who deliberately conceal unauthorised development
- Increasing powers for councils to **remove illegal advertisements** and graffiti and prevent fly-posting, and giving **planning authorities stronger powers** to tackle abuses of the planning system
- **Reforming homelessness legislation** to enable councils to provide good quality private rented homes where appropriate, freeing up social homes for people in need on the waiting list
- Allowing councils to keep the rent they collect and use it locally to maintain social homes through the **abolition of the housing revenue account**
- Passing greater powers over housing and regeneration to local democratically elected representatives in **London**.

Key measures to increase the power of local communities include:

- Introducing a new **Right to Bid**, which will give residents the opportunity to take over treasured local assets like shops and pubs and keep them part of local life
- Introducing a new **Right to Challenge**, making it much easier for local groups with good ideas to put them forward and drive improvements in local services
- Consigning **Bin Taxes** to the dustbin of history, by removing the ability of councils to charge families for overfilling their bin and to introduce extra tariffs for taking away household waste
- Increasing **transparency on local pay**, by requiring councils to publish the salaries of senior officials working in local authorities, enabling local people to understand how public money is being spent in their area

- Giving communities the right to **veto excess council tax rises**. Previously only central government had the power to 'cap' increases
- Introducing a new right to draw up a **neighbourhood plan**, giving local people a real voice to say where they think new houses, businesses and shops should go - and what they should look like
- Enabling communities to bring forward proposals for development they want - such as homes, shops, playgrounds or meeting halls, through the **Community Right to Build**
- Freeing home sellers and buyers from red tape through the **abolition of Home Information Packs**. The Act removes HIPs once and for all from the statute books
- Enabling people to swap their social home, for example because they wish to move jobs. A **national home swap scheme** will give access to details of all other tenants who may be a match
- Giving social tenants **stronger tools** to hold their landlords to account. Landlords will be expected to support tenant Panels - or similar bodies - so tenants can carefully examine the services being offered. **The Tenant Services Authority will be abolished**
- Requiring **developers to consult local communities** before submitting certain applications. This gives people a chance to comment while there is still scope to make changes
- Ending decision making by unaccountable officials on important infrastructure projects such as train lines and power stations. The Act **abolishes the Infrastructure Planning Commission**, and restores responsibility for taking decisions to elected, accountable Ministers.

Secretary of State for Local Government and Communities Eric Pickles said:

"The Localism Act pulls down the Whitehall barricades so it will no longer call the shots over communities - bug bears like housing targets and bin taxes are gone.

"Today marks the beginning of an historic shift of power from Whitehall to every community to take back control of their lives.

"For too long, local people were held back and ignored because Whitehall thought it knew best. That is changing for good. Councils have their General Power of Competence and residents have a real power over decisions like council tax, town hall pay, planning, community buildings or local services."

Decentralisation Minister Greg Clark said:

"For the best part of a hundred years Parliament has been passing laws that increase the Government's powers at the expense of people and communities.

"This historic Act begins to reverse a hundred years of centralisation. It puts power into the hands of citizens, community groups and local councils. It breaks the monopoly on all new policy initiatives having to come from Whitehall by giving a new right of initiative to people in their local areas.

"The Localism Act is not the end of the journey towards a more permissive, flexible Britain but it makes a great stride in a direction that the Government will continue to travel."

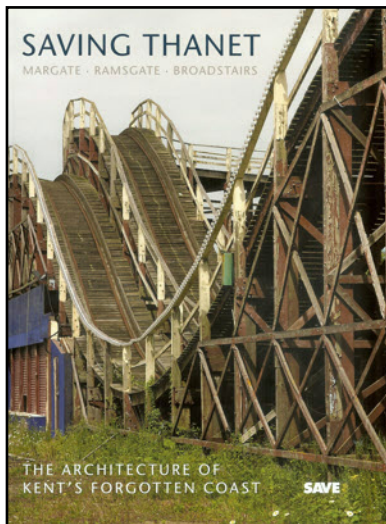
Communities Minister Andrew Stunell added:

"This Act marks a huge cultural change not just for those local communities and local councils, but for those in Westminster, and perhaps even more for those in Whitehall.

"There has been gathering frustration at the way in which local communities and local councils have had their decision making taken away from them. We needed to change that culture: it was long overdue change, and this Act makes a start on achieving it."

The Localism Act provides an opportunity for local organisations - such as Margate Civic Society - to become more involved in local matters. It will be interesting to see how the Act is implemented and how it will operate within the democratic process. - Ed

Book Review



Saving Thanet: The Architecture of Kent's Forgotten Coast sb 64pp A4 format edited by Amicia de Moubray and published by SAVE Britain's Heritage at £15.00. SBN: 978-0-905978-67-3

This super little book was published and launched on 7th October 2011 at Turner Contemporary. It is the latest in a fine

series of book on Britain's architectural heritage published by SAVE and deals specifically with much of Margate, Ramsgate and Broadstairs' architectural gems - including a number which are considered 'at risk'. The book is profusely illustrated with superb photographs. The book contains a Foreword by Will Palin and essays by Clive Aslet and our own Nick Dermott (as well as many other contributors). It is a 'must have' for anyone seriously interested in Thanet architectural gems and particularly so for those who share concern for those properties which are 'at risk'. Thanet District Council does not escape criticism in the book and one hopes that the necessary investment will be forthcoming to ensure that many of the Isle's remaining important buildings are not lost forever. This book is highly recommended. □

Awards on display at Turner Contemporary

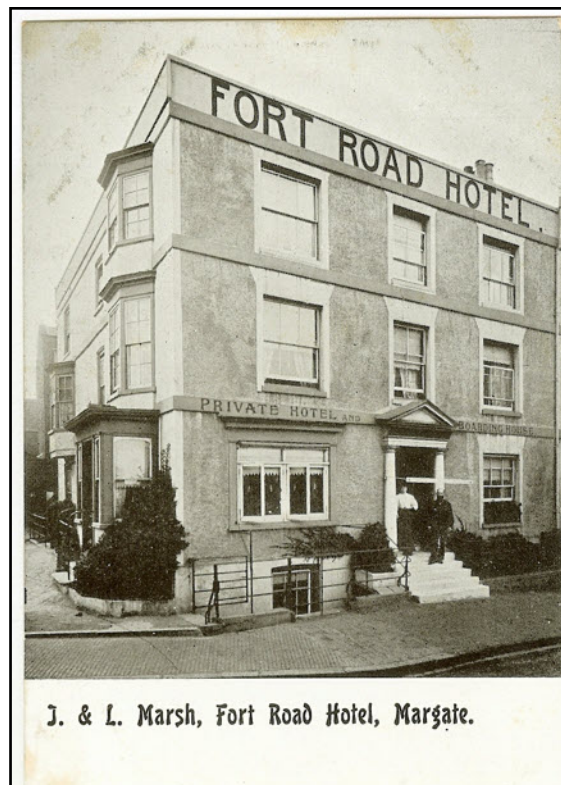


Turner Contemporary has already received a number of awards which can be seen proudly on display on the right-hand wall just inside the main entrance to the gallery.

Heading the awards is our Society's Town Pride plaque and Certificate awarded in May of this year followed by two plaques from The British Guild of Travel Writers: one being the Global Award and the other the UK Tourism Award.

The Queen unveiled a plaque during her visit to the gallery recording her visit on 11th November and it is expected that that plaque will be added to those shown on this page. □

The Fort Road Hotel - as it was 100 years ago



J. & L. Marsh, Fort Road Hotel, Margate.

Courtesy of Richard Clements

Sadly, the current state of the above property looks nothing like it did in Edwardian times when the proud owners were photographed outside its once grand main entrance doorway. Earlier this year, Thanet District Council was reported to have put a Compulsory Purchase Order on the property but still no progress seems to have been made. It is understood that planning permission for the 'Iconic Site' neon light that was erected near the top of the building expired at the end of November 2011. The nearby once sad-looking Arcadian building has been restored and now looks most attractive. But what will be the fate of the Fort Road Hotel building and how much longer will the town have to wait before this eyesore is remedied? □

Report on the KFAS Autumn Conference held at Turner Contemporary

The Kent Federation of Amenity Societies held their 2011 Autumn Conference at Turner Contemporary on Saturday, 12th November. The theme of the conference was 'Localism and the Big Society'. Among the speakers were Laura Sandys (President of KFAS), Clive Aslet, Tony Burton (Director of Civic Voice), John Walker (Chairman of KFAS), and Cllr Chris Wells who kindly funded the hire of the facilities from his KCC Community Services budget.

Our Society's President, Ralph Handscomb, gave the formal welcome to the delegates which included a number of members of Margate Civic Society. It was a most interesting day covering a wide range of subjects and providing an opportunity for delegates to meet and discuss with others present the many challenges which the Localism Act will, undoubtedly, present in the coming months and years. □

What's On

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

Date	Subject
2012	
January	No meeting
2nd February	'Archaeology of Thanet' by Ges Moody
1st March	'Thanet Links (1)' by John Robinson
5th April	'The Kent Air Ambulance' - speaker to be announced
3rd May	Presentation of our Society's 2012 Town Pride awards followed by 'The Margate Clock Tower and its Time-Ball' by Mike Bundock

Westgate Heritage Centre (in the back of St Saviour's Church) - **Autumn/Winter Programme 2011/12**

Open on the first Saturday of each month from 10.00am to 12.30pm with a short talk given at 11.00am by Dr Dawn Crouch (Curator)

Date	Subject
2012	
7th January	'Westgate's Lost Houses - Part 3 (Westgate Bay Avenue)'
4th February	'Westgate Celebrates! - Past Coronations and Jubilees'
3rd March	'The Growth of Westbrook and Garlinge - based on new material

More Pictures from the Past



This wonderful image is taken from a stereoscopic slide dating from 1860-1880. It shows Holy Trinity Church dominating the skyline and the pyramid-shaped roof of the Seamen's Mission Tower that once stood in the Neptune Square area (and which be seen in James Webb's magnificent oil-painting *Margate 1869* now hanging in Turner Contemporary).

The harbour has a good number of fishing boats in it and there are a number of what appear to be some form of lockers lined up along the length of the harbour wall.

The former Pier Hotel can just be made out in the picture but the other hotels are less distinguishable.

Looking at this image makes one realise just how much of the harbour area has changed over the last 150 years or so. □

Courtesy of Richard Clements

This image probably dates from around 1900. Note the large number of bathing-machines in operation.



Margate Civic Society

www.margatecivicsociety.org.uk



Founded in 1968, the Margate Civic Society is a registered charity. It is a founder member of Civic Voice and is 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 2011/12:

President: Mr Ralph Handscomb

14 Eastern Esplanade, Cliftonville, Margate CT9 3AB (Tel: 01843 293169) (e-mail: handscomb@talktalk.net)

Chairman: Mrs Pamela Pople

Hurston Cottage, Sloe Lane, Westwood, Margate CT9 4DX (Tel: 01843 221689) (e-mail: pamela@hurstoncottage.co.uk)

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Treasurer: Mr Mike Wilton

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Mr Julian Smith, 1 Barn Crescent, Margate CT9 5HF (Tel: 01843 298292)

Mr Geoff Orton, 25 Norman Road, Westgate-on-Sea CT8 8RR (Tel: 01843 835085) (e-mail: geoff.orton@tesco.net)

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

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Enrolment/Renewal Form

I enclose the sum of £

Name:

Address:

Tel: **e-mail:**

Subscription rates for 2011/12:

	Individual	Joint	Junior (under 18)	Corporate
Annual (Paper Newsletter*)	£9.00	£13.00	£2.00	—
Annual (Electronic Newsletter#)	£8.00	£12.00	£1.00	£15.00
Life Membership	£75.00	£100.00	—	—

and send it to the Membership Secretary, Mrs Lynda Smith, 5 Addington Square, Margate CT9 1NN

* A Paper Newsletter means that a black-and-white printed copy of the Newsletter will be delivered to you

Electronic Newsletter means you will have a full-colour copy e-mailed to you which you can view on screen or print