

Margate Civic Society

(Founded 1968)

Registered Charity No. 257884



Summer 2015
Newsletter
Issue No. 379



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

Although the results of the recent general election for the two Thanet parliamentary seats were not wholly unexpected, the results of the local council elections took everyone by surprise when Thanet District Council became the first local authority in the country to become Ukip controlled. It will be interesting, in the coming months, to see how that change in control of TDC will manifest itself. It will also be interesting to see how Margate Charter Trustees cope with its change of membership during a challenging time ahead in reaching agreement with the new Westgate Parish Council over the splitting of the Charter Trustees' assets. Apart from losing three members - resulting from the 'hiving off' of Westgate-on-Sea - the Charter Trustees lost a further fifteen members in the recent elections. This means that of the twenty Charter Trustees existing at 31st March 2015 (the day before Westgate Parish Council was created) just two remain in post - Cllr Iris Johnston and Cllr Mick Tomlinson. On 1st June, Cllr Robin Edwards was made Town Mayor of Margate following his election as a TDC councillor just four weeks earlier. The new Mayor and his fellow Charter Trustees will face real challenges if, indeed, a sound settlement is to be reached with the new Westgate Parish Council over the splitting of the Charter Trustees' assets!

Just four days after the results of the TDC elections were declared, the inaugural meeting of the new Westgate Parish Council meeting was held on Wednesday, 13th May at, appropriately, Westgate's fine Town Hall Buildings - the first time that the building has been used as civic offices. After the election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman, the first item to be considered on the agenda was the name of the new body. By a vote of nine to one, the Council decided to change its name from Westgate Parish Council (as provided for in the formal Order made by TDC) to Westgate-on-Sea Town Council and to notify TDC's Monitoring Officer of that change of name. It will be interesting to see whether the change of name will be that simple.

The first meeting of Westgate Parish Council lasted just over an hour-and-a-half and most of that time was taken up discussing just two matters: Councillors' Allowances and the new Council's entitlement to a share of Margate Charter Trustees' assets. Perhaps the new councillors had seen the public notice in that day's edition of *Thanet Extra* in which was set out a table showing the new rates of allowances for TDC councillors! Richard Styles, Town Clerk of Ramsgate Town Council, was appointed as temporary Town Clerk for a minimum three-month period. Just eight members of the public attended the meeting which was an historic occasion in the continuing story of local government in Westgate-on-Sea. □

James Brazier
Newsletter Editor

Welcome to new members

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

Philip Chandler
Ron Stilwell
Dr Steven Alexander
Philip Williams
Cllr Edward Jaye-Jones
Cllr David Morrish & Pat Morrish
Max & Katie Tillings
Jeff & Margaret Godden
Cllr Mrs Lesley Game

Roger Hayes
Membership Secretary

Civic Day 2015

**WWI Centenary and
75th Anniversary of
Operation Dynamo**

'Bring along your own memento' event

This year, we will be holding our Civic Day event on **Sunday, 21st June**. Plans are afoot for our Society to again participate in this national event which is overseen by Civic Voice. This year, we are holding a '**Bring along your own memento**' of anything connected with the First World War or anything relating to Operation Dynamo (the evacuation of Dunkirk). Initially, we felt that it would be timely to hold such an event during the centenary of the First World War. However, having regard to this year being the 75th anniversary of Operation Dynamo and to the important part played by Margate in that historic event, we felt that the event should be widened to embrace both anniversaries. We would like to see all ages, particularly school-children, bringing along objects - such as postcards, letters, certificates, badges, medals, etc - for identification or whatever.

We will also be showing, throughout the day, slide-presentations of Margate during the First World War and of Margate's role in Operation Dynamo. Our '**Bring along your own memento**' event will be held in "The Drum" meeting room at the back of Droit House from 11.00am to 4.00pm. We are most grateful to Thanet Visitor Information Service for making this space available to us. Do be certain to make a note of the date (**Sunday, 21st June**) and the venue in your diary.

Your Committee very much look forward to seeing you at our Civic Day event this year and to you giving it your full support. □

Pamela Pople
Chairman

Presentation of the Society's 2015 Town Pride Awards

The results of the judging of this year's prestigious Town Pride awards were announced by our Chairman, Pamela Pople, at our meeting held on Thursday, 14th May at The Walpole Bay Hotel. Pamela reported on the high standard of the refurbishment works and of the attractive architecture of the new developments for all the properties nominated by members of the Society for this year's Town Pride awards and our Vice-Chairman, Harry Scobie, acting in his capacity as Vice-Chairman of TDC, presented the awards in the absence of our President, Ralph Handscomb, who was recuperating following an operation.

This year, the Panel decided to award one Town Pride Plaque & Certificates and three Town Pride Commendation Certificates.

The **Town Pride Plaque & Certificate** was awarded to:
Crescent Victoria Hotel, 25-26 Fort Crescent, Margate
and the three **Town Pride Highly Commended Certificates** were awarded to:

St Cecilia's House, 83 Sea Road, Westgate-on-Sea
4 Bridge Road, Westbrook
12 Zion Place, Margate



Max and Katie Tillings, owners of St Cecilia's House, with their Town Pride Commendation Certificate - with TDC's Vice-Chairman, Harry Scobie, and our Chairman, Pamela Pople



St Cecilia's House, 83 Sea Road, Westgate-on-Sea (Renovation - house was originally known as West Bay Lodge)



Paul & Carol Chawner, owners of 4 Bridge Road, with their Town Pride Commendation Certificate - with TDC's Vice-Chairman, Harry Scobie, and our Chairman, Pamela Pople



4 Bridge Road, Westbrook (Renovation)



Alex Hurd, owner of 12 Zion Place with his Town Pride Commendation Certificate - with TDC's Vice-Chairman, Harry Scobie, and our Chairman, Pamela Pople



12 Zion Place, Cliftonville (Renovation)



*Crescent Victoria Hotel,
25-26 Fort Crescent, Cliftonville
(Recently re-opened as a hotel)*



Semir Pervan, Hotel Manager of the Crescent Victoria Hotel, 25-26 Fort Crescent, Margate proudly holding this year's only Town Pride Plaque and Certificate - with TDC's Vice-Chairman, Harry Scobie, and our Chairman, Pamela Pople



All of the winners of this year's Town Pride Awards proudly displaying their awards together with Harry Scobie and Pamela Pople

Margate Civic Society donates £150.00 to RNLI Margate

Following the presentation of the 2015 Town Pride Awards, James Brazier gave an illustrated talk on Margate's involvement in Operation Dynamo (the Evacuation of Dunkirk) 75 years ago. During that talk, James explained the major role of the Margate Lifeboat (*The Lord Southborough*) in that operation and of the awards made to members of her crew for their heroic endeavours during the evacuation. It was therefore very fitting that, at the end of James's talk, our Chairman, Pamela Pople, presented a cheque from Margate Civic Society for £150.00 to Fred Piggott of RNLI (Margate) as a donation from the Society from its surplus Time Ball funds. Fred Piggott profusely thanked the Society for their most generous donation and explained that the funds would be used locally by the Margate RNLI rather than passed to their national body. **JB**



The great success of the evening was due to the huge amount of work that had been put into it by our Chairman, Pamela Pople. Thanks Pamela - from us all!

Society members visit Dunkirk on 75th anniversary of Operation Dynamo (the Evacuation of British & Allied Troops from Dunkirk in 1940)

Our Society marked the 75th anniversary of Operation Dynamo with a talk to the Society on the subject on Thursday, 14th May and followed that with a coach trip to Dunkirk on the following Tuesday. Forty-seven members and guests had a most interesting day in Dunkirk thanks to the excellent organisation of the trip by Mike Wilton (our Treasurer) and Geoff Orton (our Secretary). Our first stop was at the Memorial du Souvenir Museum in Dunkirk where we were shown a short film - in English - outlining the events of late May and early June 1940. There were numerous exhibits to see but perhaps the most poignant was a wooden casket bearing a silver plaque (see separate article on page 7).

After spending an hour or so at this most interesting museum, the coach took us to the Dunkirk Memorial where we spent thirty minutes. Thanks go to Geoff for suggesting

that we fit in a visit to this memorial at which a major commemoration service took place just a few days after our visit. The original plans for the day did not include this visit but it was really appreciated by everyone that we did include it. Thanks again, Geoff.

As we drove into Dunkirk, we passed a number of interesting looking ships moored in the harbour. One of these was the paddle-steamer Princess Elizabeth about which, I have to admit, I knew nothing (and was probably not alone amongst the party in not knowing anything about it). I took a photo of the Princess Elizabeth during my free time but, because the sun was behind it, the photo showed the paddle-steamer somewhat 'silhouetted'.



The paddle-steamer Princess Elizabeth in Dunkirk Harbour

Just six days later, I visited the Operation Dynamo exhibition in the Ramsgate Tunnels (the exhibition had only opened that day) and there, at the entrance to the free exhibition, was a display stand containing excerpts from the Log of the paddle-steamer Princess Elizabeth.

The Log showed that the Princess Elizabeth had been at Dover from 26th May 1940 for maintenance works and that it left for La Panne to assist in the evacuation of troops from the Dunkirk beaches just three days later. On 30th May, The Princess Elizabeth disembarked about 450 troops at Margate. Shortly afterwards, she left Margate for La Panne returning to Margate the following day (31st May) and disembarked 374 troops at the end of the Jetty. Only an hour later, she sailed to Bray beach during which she was attacked by enemy aircraft when passing Dunkirk. At 1.15am on 1st June, she left Bray for Margate once again. She embarked troops off Bray beach and proceeded to Margate. Due to the number of vessels that were landing troops at Margate Jetty, the Princess Elizabeth anchored off Margate until she was able to disembark 510 troops at the end of the Jetty around 9.00am that day. Immediately after, she sailed for Sheerness for coal and ammunition. Later that day, she left Sheerness for Bray but ran into fog and went, instead, the following day to Dover where she was ordered to remain. On 3rd June, she sailed from Dover arriving off the entrance to Dunkirk harbour later that day. On 4th June, she berthed at Dunkirk's east pier and embarked about 380 French troops which she disembarked at Dover that same day. The total number of troops which the Princess Elizabeth brought back from Dunkirk during Operation Dynamo was 1,673 - of which most were brought ashore at Margate. What a story! If you haven't yet visited the exhibition at Ramsgate, do go along to it. It is very good.



The Memorial du Souvenir Museum at Dunkirk is housed in these blockhouses built in 1874 and just a short distance from the centre of the town. The WWII British anti-aircraft gun outside the museum is believed to be a 4.7 inch gun

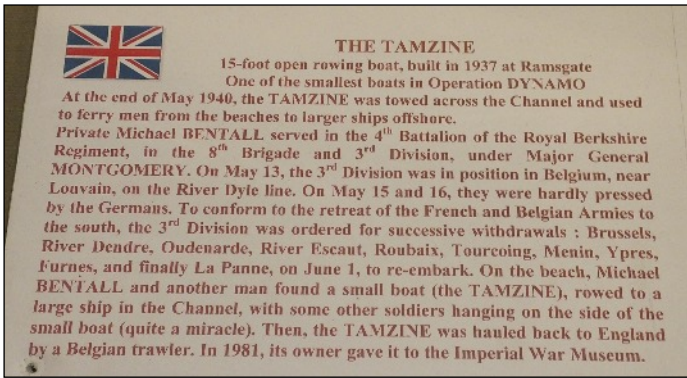


The large sign outside the museum

Here are the remnants of the fortifications of Dunkirk, which were built in the late XIXth. Century, after the 1870-1871 war between the French Emperor NAPOLEON III and the King of Prussia WILHELM Ist.

These blockhouses were adjacent to the BASTION 32, which was the headquarters of the French naval and land forces defending the perimeter around the city, during the Battle of Dunkirk. The BASTION 32 was also an allied major command center during OPERATION DYNAMO, in May-June 1940.

A close-up photo of part of the large sign above telling the history of the blockhouses



The Tamzine on display at the Imperial War Museum London. The Tamzine is the smallest surviving 'Little Ship' that was used in the evacuation of Dunkirk and, as such, is worthy of inclusion in the IWM. The Tamzine was built at Margate - not Ramsgate - in 1937

Those who attended James's talk just a few days earlier were interested to see information displayed in the museum on the clinker-built rowing boat the *Tamzine* shown in the above photo. According to that information, the *Tamzine* was built in Ramsgate but, as those who attended James's talk know, the *Tamzine* was built in Margate. However, it was good to see the boat mentioned in the museum. Interestingly, reference was made in two of the books on sale in the museum to the boat having been built in Margate!

After our visit to the museum, we visited the CWGC Dunkirk Memorial to the Missing just outside Dunkirk. It was a most moving occasion seeing the lists of names of those British servicemen who lost their lives in the defence of Dunkirk in 1940 and who have no known grave. Adjoining the Dunkirk Memorial is Dunkirk Town Cemetery containing both WWI and WWII graves. Among the latter are a number of 'Known Unto God' graves whose names are undoubtedly inscribed on the Dunkirk Memorial.



The Cross of Sacrifice at Dunkirk Town Cemetery adjoining the Dunkirk Memorial



The Carol Peters coach awaits our return at the Dunkirk Memorial



The group photograph taken by our Editor at the Dunkirk Memorial especially for our Newsletter

After our stop at the Dunkirk Memorial, we were dropped off by our coach-driver in the centre of Dunkirk for shopping and sightseeing. With some two-and-a-half hours to ourselves, we went our separate ways. With so much to see in Dunkirk, the time went all too quickly for each of us. As can be seen from the photos on this page, it was a lovely day with a glorious sky but the photos do not indicate the force of the wind that day. Coming from Margate, we all had experience of strong winds but the wind at Dunkirk that day was something quite different. Certainly, around the harbour basin, where there were strong vortices, one had to be careful when anywhere near the quayside!

Of course, the restaurants and bars proved popular with many of our party but others ventured further afield braving the strong winds along the coast that day. Each of us came away with our own memories of a most interesting day.

For those Society members who did not join us that day, it is hoped that the photos on this page will provide a flavour of what there is to see in Dunkirk.

JB



The scene looking across the Dunkirk beaches from near Dunkirk's East Mole. The scene today gives no indication of the horrors that took place on those same beaches 75 years ago. On the day of our visit, the beaches were deserted - probably because of the high winds whipping up the sand. But what a magnificent sky!



The former barge Entreprenant (Enterprise) in Dunkirk's Bassin du Commerce. She was built in 1965

The octagonal lighthouse tower of Leughenaer at La Place du Minck. Believed to be the Dunkirk's oldest monument, the lighthouse was built in 1405 and stands 28 metres tall. According to legend, the light was to deceive ships: instead of leading ships to safety towards the port, the lighthouse enticed them to run aground on the numerous sandbanks off the coast to be plundered



The majestic three-mast Duchess Anne (built 1901) - a former training ship - with the last French lightship Sandettié (built 1947) behind. They are both Dunkirk's Bassin du Commerce and are moored opposite Dunkirk's Port Museum



The striking statue of Jean Bart in the centre of Dunkirk. During WWII, 70% of Dunkirk was destroyed but this statue, in the centre of Dunkirk, survived



A Tale of Two Caskets



At the end of my talk, on Margate's role in Operation Dynamo (the evacuation of troops from Dunkirk), to the Society at our May meeting, Geoff Orton (our Secretary) asked if I was aware of the casket in the Mayor's Parlour which contained sand from Dunkirk's beaches. I said that I wasn't aware of it but that I would seek it out and arrange to photograph it as soon as I could. The next day, I sent the Mayor, Cllr John Edwards, an e-mail asking if I could call into Mayor's Parlour to photograph the casket.

Just five days later, members of the Society made their timely visit to Dunkirk (see separate report on pages 4-6). Our first stop at Dunkirk was at the town's museum where, after only a few minutes after viewing the introductory film, Suzannah Foad came up to me and asked whether I had seen the casket in the museum containing sand from Margate. "No, I hadn't," I answered. "Please take me to it." On our short walk to the display case concerned, Suzannah told me that the casket was made from oak from Holy Trinity Church, Margate. I could barely contain my excitement. And then I saw the casket in one of the many display cases. I was not disappointed. For me, seeing it - after having been made aware of its existence barely moments before - turned out to be the highlight of my visit to Dunkirk that day.

I took a few photographs of it to remind me of exactly how it looked and then relayed, to others in our party, the information about the casket which Suzannah had kindly passed on to me.

The inscription read on the plaque affixed to the lid of the casket read:

THE DUNKIRK RE-UNION
AT MARGATE

MAY 27 - JUNE 3, 1950

THIS CASKET MADE OF BRITISH OAK
FROM THE HOLY TRINITY CHURCH, MARGATE
(DESTROYED BY ENEMY ACTION)
CONTAINS SAND FROM THE MARGATE BEACH
WHERE 46,000 BRITISH & ALLIED TROOPS WERE
LANDED IN 1940 FROM THE DUNKIRK BEACHES
TO COMMEMORATE THE 10th ANNIVERSARY OF
THE EVACUATION OF DUNKIRK

My thoughts returned to the casket in the Mayor's Parlour that Geoff had told me about only five days earlier and, indeed, whether it was similar to the one at Dunkirk. It did not take me long to find the answer. Just two days later, Carol Partington, the Acting Finance Clerk to the Charter Trustees, kindly contacted me on behalf of the Mayor and arrangements were made for me to photograph the casket with the results shown below. It is with very grateful thanks to all those mentioned in this report that this tale can be told. I just wish that I had known about the two caskets when I gave my talk to the Society just a few days earlier on the 75th anniversary of the Dunkirk evacuation! □

JB

P.S. - The casket in the Mayor's Parlour is just one of a large number of historic artefacts belonging to the Margate Charter Trustees. It is considered very important that assets, such as the Dunkirk Casket, remain in the ownership of the Charter Trustees and are not split with Westgate Parish Council.



The casket made of oak from Holy Trinity Church, Margate. The church was destroyed by enemy bombing on 1st June 1943

The informative inscription on the plaque on the lid of the above casket



*The inscription on the plaque reads:
DUNKERQUE - MARGATE
1940 - 1950*



The casket containing sand, seashells and French ribbons (presumably presented to Margate's Mayor by the Mayor of Dunkirk when the reciprocal exchange of such similar gifts took place at Margate during the Operation Dynamo 10th anniversary commemorations in 1950)

New Beach Houses under construction at Westbrook Bay

These photographs, taken in April 2015, show the eleven Beach Houses currently under construction at the rear of the former Royal Sea Bathing Hospital at Westbrook. The houses are described as contemporary and must be considered to be the ultimate in upmarket 'beach huts'. You simply could not live any nearer to the sea than this! Perhaps the houses will be nominated for a Town Pride Award from Margate Civic Society next year?

JB



The temporary hoarding alongside the promenade at Westbrook Bay



An artist's impression of how each of new Beach Houses will look with the Sea Bathing Hospital building in the background



Brief details of the new development



Another view of the temporary hoarding alongside the promenade at Westbrook Bay with members of the public taking the opportunity to view the works



Facilities for viewing the works



An artist's impression of how the new Beach Houses will look once completed

The 'Father' Willis Pipe Organ in the former Royal Sea Bathing Hospital

The following enquiry was recently received by e-mail from Bryn Clinch:

Have you any information regarding the 'Father' Willis Pipe Organ that is, or was, in the Hospital Chapel? I have, so far, been unable to discover its fate which seems to be unclear. As you may know, 'Father' Henry Willis was arguably the finest British organ builder, having built such magnificent instruments as those in the Royal Albert Hall, Liverpool Anglican Cathedral (the two largest in the country), also the original at Canterbury Cathedral and many other significant instruments.

Any information, photos, etc would be greatly appreciated as I play a 'Father' Willis of approximately the same size and date. If the organ is still in situ, I would like to update The National Pipe Organ Register on which the organ is 'listed', together with the specification, but its fate is unclear.

Any information would be greatly appreciated.

*Thank you!
Bryn Clinch*

Nick Dermott writes:

The last time I was in the Chapel, which was about a year ago, the organ was still in-situ. It is of course protected by virtue of the listing. I doubt it has been operational for twenty years.

Are any of our members aware of the current position regarding this organ? If so, please contact our Newsletter Editor (see page back for contact details). □ **JB**



These photos of the organ were kindly supplied by Nick Dermott, TDC's Heritage Advisor. These two photos were taken in 2011

Walpole Bay Tidal Pool - English Heritage concedes that the pool was built in 1937 - not in 1900!

An article appeared in the last issue of the Newsletter (No. 378 - Spring 2015) on the then recent listing at Grade II of the Walpole Bay Tidal Pool. In that article, I disputed English Heritage's claim that the pool was built in 1900. I am pleased to report that English Heritage have conceded that the pool was not actually built until 1937. However, the pool remains listed at Grade II.

I drew English Heritage's attention to the error in the date and received the following reply:

Dear Mr. Brazier

I am really sorry for the mistake in the date of the Walpole Bay Tidal Pool. The date of 1900 was supplied by the applicant, a local swimmer, and that date was also quoted on a website of lidos and tidal pools throughout the British Isles.

I have checked the details and see that information that was supplied about the construction of the structure to us without a reference actually appears in a 1938 publication and the structure first appears on a 1940 Ordnance Survey map.

I am getting the date changed in the List Entry in the National Heritage List for England.

*Best wishes, Carole Ryan,
Heritage Protection Adviser, English Heritage*

The Marine Sands Tidal Pool, which was built in the same year as Walpole Bay Tidal Pool, is not currently listed. However, the Marine Sands Tidal Pool is not considered to be at risk and, indeed, was restored in the last couple of years as part of the recent coast protection works along Marine Drive. □ **JB**

Turner to Dickens Flagship Walking Route - Mosaics

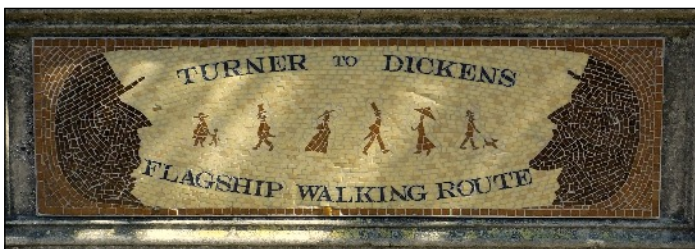
Margate Civic Society & Margate Town Team agree to share the cost of cleaning and renovating these attractive mosaics in Margate

At the Society's Committee meeting held on 11th May, it was agreed to share with Margate Town Team the estimated cost of £500 to clean and renovate the mosaics at the Margate end of the Turner to Dickens Flagship Walking Route. These ten mosaics are set in the wall of Holy Trinity & St John's CE Primary School at the junction of Addington Street and St John's Road, Margate and are pictured below. There are corresponding mosaics in Broadstairs relating to Charles Dickens. The ones at Margate are considered to be in a poor state, having been in place since around 2009. Hitherto, the artist has maintained them but has asked now that someone else takes on responsibility. Your Committee agreed in principle to

use the £275 remaining from KCC's grant towards the Jubilee Clock Tower Time Ball Restoration Appeal to carry out the renovation work on the mosaics this year, subject to their approval. KCC have now approved the use of those funds and thanks go to both Cllr Will Scobie and Cllr Mo Elenor for giving their support to our Society's appeals.

Mike Wilton
Treasurer

An earlier article on these mosaics appeared in Newsletter No. 355 (Summer 2009)



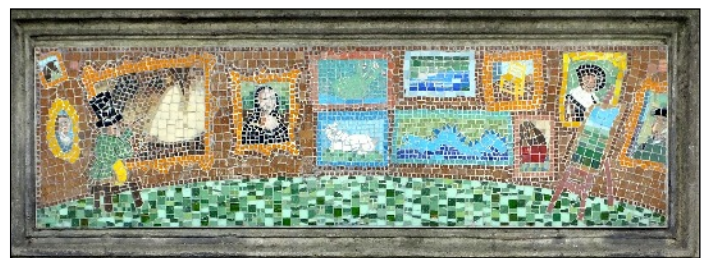
The title mosaic featuring both Turner (on left) and Dickens (on right)



These four panels in Addington Street depict scenes from Turner's life



Turner on a Train



Turner in an Art Gallery



Based on Turner's 'Ulysses deriding Polyphemus - Homer's Odyssey'



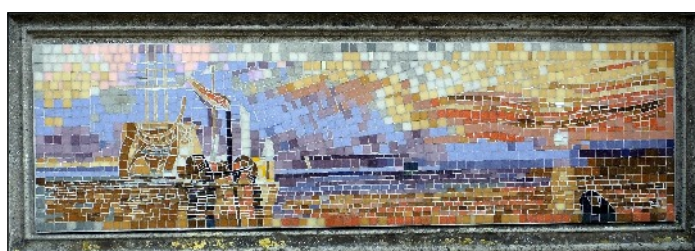
A Turneresque Sky



Turner in Margate



Turner in a Dream



Based on Turner's 'The Fighting Temeraire'



Based on Turner's 'Rain, Steam and Speed'

Beating the Bounds in 1935 - Latest Developments



In the last issue of the Newsletter, readers were asked if anyone could identify the location seen in the above photo showing the Mayor (Alderman F. L. Pettman) with the Chief Constable and a member of the Council during the Beating the Bounds ceremony held on 1st April 1935.



Chris Sandwell came up trumps by identifying the location as being the Westgate end of Westbrook Avenue as shown above. For those who are less familiar with the exact location, a second photograph is shown below of the junction with Old Boundary Road. The distinctive three-storey houses can be seen in the background of all of these pictures.



Thus the original photograph shows the Mayor of Margate approaching the former Westgate-on-Sea boundary where he presented his authority for the Borough of Margate swallowing up Westgate and Birchington to form what became known for a while as 'Greater Margate'. Many thanks go to Chris for identifying where the original photo was taken.

Chris also came up with the following two photographs relating to the Beating the Bounds ceremony in 1935. The first shows the temporary 'pylons' that were positioned either side of the Canterbury Road near the bottom of Brooksend Hill. It was intended that these temporary structures marking the western boundary of 'Greater Margate' would be replaced by stone (or brick) structures but it seems that was never done. Judging by the photograph, it would appear that the temporary pylons were made of wood.



The farm cottages to the left of the picture still remain

The photograph below is particularly intriguing. It shows what appears to be a metal boundary sign bearing the name of Margate's Mayor in 1935. It was almost certainly erected in time for the Beating the Bounds ceremony that year or, possibly, shortly afterwards. It is not known where this boundary maker was placed nor whether it still remains in situ. It might be unique or it could be that a number of these were placed in positions to mark the new boundary of 'Greater Margate'.



Certainly, this marker was intended to remain in place as a permanent feature. It is difficult to judge the size of the marker but it is thought likely that it would have been around eighteen inches wide. Do any of our readers remember this marker (or others like it)? It is thought that it could now be completely overgrown and, therefore, hidden from view or it might be that it was salvaged during WWII when metal was sought for the war effort. It would be very good to know its fate 80 years after its likely erection in 1935.

JB

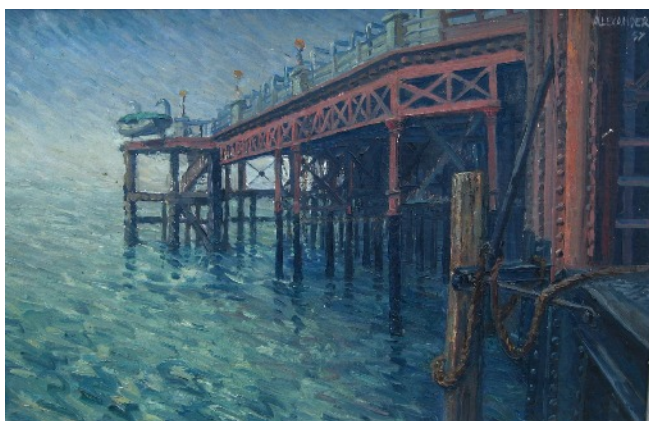
Turner Contemporary mounts major exhibition of Margate-artist Christopher Alexander (1926-1982) from 30th June to 6th September

Members will recall the superb evening in April last year when Christopher Alexander's son, Steven Alexander, presented Part I of his talk on his father's artwork illustrated with paintings and sketches by his late father. That was followed by Part II of Steven's talk to us last April. Now we have something even more special to look forward to: Turner Contemporary are mounting a major exhibition of Christopher Alexander's work which will open on Tuesday, 30th June and run for ten weeks to Sunday, 6th September.

An excellent two-page article on Christopher Alexander's artwork was published in the Summer 2015 issue of the magazine *This England* and the *Isle of Thanet Gazette* published another very good article by Richard Lewis in its issue dated 22nd May 2015. In the latter article, Richard Lewis takes a look at the life and work of Christopher Alexander who was born, lived and died at Margate. If you missed the article in the *Gazette*, a full-length version of it will appear in the forthcoming book by Richard Lewis titled *Discovering More Artistic Thanet*.

Whatever you do this summer, do go along to Turner Contemporary to see the exhibition of Christopher Alexander's work. Because the exhibition will feature a number of local views - especially those of Margate - it will undoubtedly appeal to our members. Indeed, it is expected that some of the paintings will feature buildings such as the Jetty, the Sun Deck, the old lighthouse and others which, sadly no longer exist. The exhibition will be a real treat for lovers of Margate. During the ten weeks that the exhibition will be on display, the exhibition of Grayson Perry's artwork will also be on show. Victoria Pomery and all her staff are to be congratulated on putting on two most attractive exhibitions running concurrently for most of the summer period. Visitors to the gallery during those ten weeks, who come primarily to see Grayson Perry's artwork, will have the added pleasure of seeing a local artist's work displayed in the town's major art gallery. □

JB



The Pier End at Margate by Christopher Alexander (Reproduced by kind permission of Steven Alexander)
Margate Pier (better known as The Jetty) was destroyed during a storm in 1978. Christopher Alexander died in 1982 - at the early age of 58. This painting shows the gantries which allowed passengers to disembark from ships whatever the height of the tide

Coach Trip to Imperial War Museum London - 22nd September

The Society's next coach trip will be to the Imperial War Museum in London, on Tuesday 22nd September 2015. The ticket price will be £13.00 and we plan to leave Thanet around 9.00am, arriving at the IWM by 11.00am. Pick-up to return home will be at 5.00pm, so there will be time to visit the museum and then do some shopping or sightseeing. The date is three months away but is before our next meeting and so we want to tell you about it now. If you would like to join us, please write to Mike Wilton at 30 Barrington Crescent, Birchington CT7 9DF, saying how many tickets you would like and where you would like to board the coach (Wheatsheaf, Beacon Bingo, Hussar, Summerlands or Birchington Square). Cheques should be made out to Margate Civic Society, please. □

Mike Wilton
Treasurer

James Brazier

Are you aware that this edition of your summer newsletter (Number 379) is the 40th issue that has been written by James Brazier, who took on the role of Newsletter Editor 10 years ago in the summer of 2005?

The first Newsletter under his editorship was Number 340 (Autumn 2005) which you can see by logging on to our website www.margatecivicsociety.org.uk and viewing our newsletter archive.

The Society's very first newsletter was produced in January 1969, which can also be seen on our website - far removed from what we have come to expect today.

This is, in itself, no mean feat and is worthy of recognition, so on behalf of the Committee and indeed Members, I should like to express our thanks to James for the tremendous job he has done, creating such excellent editorials, jam-packed with fascinating articles and wonderful photographs, one of the finest newsletters in Thanet.

Thank you!

Pamela Pople
Chairman

**Dreamland opens on Friday,
19th June 2015**
Don't miss it!

Heritage Open Days 2015

This year's Heritage Open Days are **Thursday, 10th September to Sunday, 13th September**. Do look out in the local press, etc for details of local organisations participating in this year's Heritage Open Days. □

CHAR-A-BANC CORNER

According to the hand-written description on the back of this postcard, this photograph shows the 1925 Margate Butchers' outing at the corner of Union Row and Hawley Street with India House in the background. However, local postman Chris Sandwell immediately correctly identified the location of the photograph as being taken outside the former George Hotel (now The Ambrette Restaurant) in Hawley street looking down King Street towards the sea with the building on the far right of the picture being what was, for many years, Lawrence's Cycle Shop. Can any of our readers identify any of the butchers shown in the photograph?



Note the railings on the left of the picture

A favourite destination of these popular char-a-banc outings was Pegwell Bay although some ventured further afield to

anywhere where there was at least one public house! The char-a-banc was a popular form of transport for works outings throughout the 1920s. The chassis of many of them had seen service as Army trucks in France & Flanders during WWI. After the war, the trucks became surplus to the Army's requirements and were sold off. They were then converted into



George Hotel circa 1900 (note the same railings on the right of the picture)

Reproduced courtesy of Anthony Lee - www.margatelocalhistory.co.uk

char-a-bancs and proved to be very popular in holiday resorts such as Margate. The one above was operated by the East Kent Road Car Company as can be seen in the photograph. Notice that almost everyone in the photo is wearing a hat.

The above postcard is courtesy of Clive Baker who runs the Margate Collectors' Fair at Union Church, Union Crescent bi-monthly. The next Margate Collectors' Fair will be on Saturday, 18th July and the one after that will be held on 12th September. The fairs are run in conjunction with Margate United Church and entrance to these fairs is free.

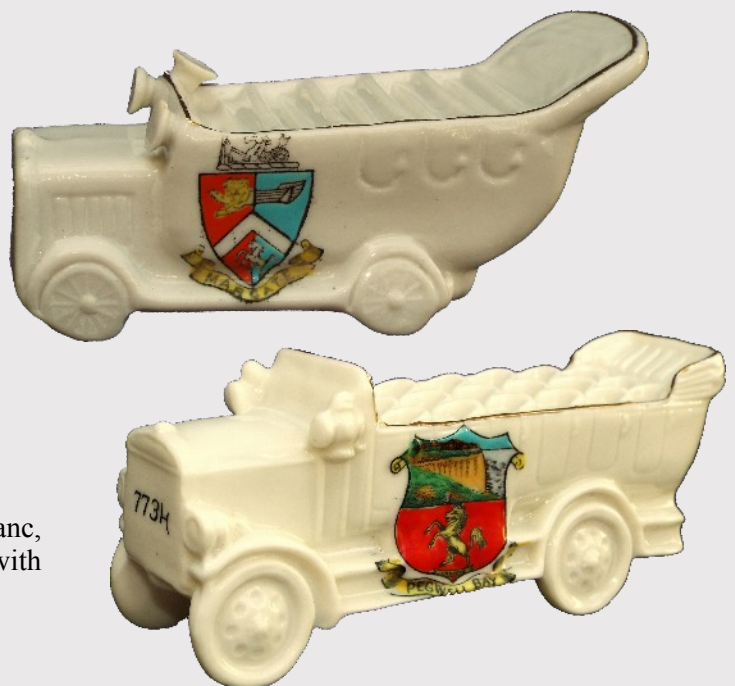
JB

(Thanks also go to Richard Clements for his assistance with researching the Margate Butchers' Annual Outings in the 1920s)

China souvenirs from the 1920s

Two examples of crested china char-a-banc souvenirs dating from the 1920s. The one on the right bears the official Margate coat-of-arms whilst the one below bears an unofficial crest for Pegwell Bay made up by the crested china manufacturer showing the cliffs at Pegwell Bay above Invicta, being the symbol for Kent. Note that the number plate on the char-a-banc below reads HELL when turned upside down! That probably aptly describes the ride in those vehicles.

The name char-a-banc, sometimes shown as charabanc, derives from the French *char à banc* ("carriage with wooden benches").



The Victory Lugger/Northern Belle Memorial Tablet on the Stone Pier

The two photographs below show how the new memorial tablet has weathered badly after just two years resulting in some of the words in the inscription already being illegible:



Photo taken 27th April 2013



The memorial tablet draped with both the Union Flag and the Flag of the United States shortly before its unveiling on 27th April 2013



Photo taken 18th March 2015

The Victory Lugger/Northern Belle Memorial Plaque was unveiled on Saturday, 27th April 2013. It replaced an earlier memorial of the same shape that had stood in exactly the same position on the Stone Pier just a few feet away from Droit House.

The stone is very exposed to the weather and it is likely that the salt air is the primary cause of the early loss of some of the lettering on the replacement memorial as evident from these two photographs taken just two years apart. One wonders how long it will be before more of the text will become illegible. □

JB

What's On

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

Date **Subject**
2015

1st October AGM followed by 'Margate Caves and Thanet's Underground Heritage' by Rod LeGear

5th November 'The Royal School for Deaf Children in Margate' - speaker yet to be confirmed

3rd December Christmas Social Evening - arrangements yet to be confirmed

Please do encourage your friends and neighbours to join our Society. With our evening talks, our outings, our Newsletter and our website, we are very active and we are also involved in much of what is going on in our area. We provide good value for money and we are a friendly group of like-minded people who care greatly for Margate and its environs. The Society is a founder member of Civic Voice and an active participant in Civic Day each year



Westgate Heritage Centre (in the back of St Saviour's Church) - **Summer/Autumn Programme 2015**
On the first Saturday of each month at **10.30am**, there will be a talk by Dr Dawn Crouch, Curator of Westgate Heritage Centre

Summer/Autumn talks at the Westgate Heritage Centre – all start at 10.30am (unless otherwise stated):

Saturday, 4th July: The Heritage Centre celebrates the **150th birthday of the “new town” of Westgate-on-Sea.** The talk will explain how Westgate-on-Sea came into being with the building of the first two houses in 1865.

There will also be an **evening social event on Wednesday, 22nd July at The Knot Public House, St Mildred's Bay at 7.00pm for 7.30pm** with a talk by Dr Crouch, illustrated with photographs from the extensive collection of James Brazier, telling the story of how Westgate-on-Sea came into being 150 years ago by looking at its first development at St Mildred's Bay in 1865. Tickets are £10 (including buffet) are available from the Heritage Centre or enquiries@westgateheritagecentre.org.uk

Saturday, 1st August: “One year on -Westgate in 1915” – a look at the way the war had affected the town in the first year from August 1914

Saturday, 5th September: “The end of an era” – an illustrated talk by Dr Dawn Crouch on Sir William Ingram (died 1924) and Lady Ingram (died 1925) and their influence on Westgate-on-Sea over a period of nearly 50 years

There will also be another **evening social event on Wednesday 22nd September, 7.00pm for 7.30pm in the Council Chamber of the Town Hall Buildings** (above the Carlton Cinema) - “Victory and Peace at Last” - How Westgate celebrated after VJ Day and prepared for a new chapter, an illustrated talk by Douglas Neve. Tickets £10 including refreshments. Numbers limited. No ‘disabled access’

Saturday 3rd October 10.30 am: “October 1973 – Water, water everywhere.” John Naden, who was a young Police Constable at the time of the Canterbury Road flooding, will share his experiences of that night.

Saturday 7th November 10.30 am: The Heritage Centre remembers the men of Westgate who died in both World Wars. Those who died in 1945 will be especially remembered

Saturday 5th December 10.30 am: “A Westgate Family” - an illustrated talk by Sally Whitworth in which she will share her research on the Huckstep family

Come and browse through our collection of material and photographs of Westgate, which is growing all the time. We have large-scale maps and plans which reveal great detail about your street or area

Forthcoming Exhibition of Christopher Alexander's Artwork at Turner Contemporary

An exhibition of Christopher Alexander's artwork will go on display at Turner Contemporary from Tuesday, 30th June to 2015 to Sunday, 6th September 2015. Don't miss the exhibition

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 Newsletter is published four times a year.

Committee for 2014/15:

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)
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Vice-Chairman: Mr Harry Scobie, 59 Gloucester Avenue, Cliftonville, Margate CT9 3NP (Tel: 078 6227 6466)
(e-mail: harryscobie@hotmail.com)

Secretary: Mr Geoff Orton, 25 Norman Road, Westgate-on-Sea CT8 8RR (Tel: 01843 835085)
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Membership Secretary: Mr Roger Hayes, 11 Saltwood Gardens, Cliftonville, Margate CT9 3HQ
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Planning and Conservation issues: Mr Mike Thompson, 7 Seymour Avenue, Westbrook, Margate CT9 5HT
(Tel: 01843 832834) (e-mail: mike.thompson6565@btinternet.com)

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 2014/15:

	Individual	Joint	Junior (under 18)	Corporate
Annual (Paper Newsletter*)	£10.00	£14.00	£3.00	—
Annual (Electronic Newsletter#)	£9.00	£13.00	£2.00	£20.00

Please note that Life Membership subscription is no longer available

and send it to the Membership Secretary, Mr Roger Hayes, 11 Saltwood Gardens, Cliftonville, Margate CT9 3HQ

* 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