

Margate Civic Society

(Founded 1968)

Registered Charity No. 257884



Autumn 2018
Newsletter
Issue No. 392



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

As we celebrate our fiftieth birthday, this issue of the Newsletter contains an eclectic mix of articles which, it is hoped, will be of interest to our members. Mike Wilton, on page 15, reminds us of the Society's very first meeting in November 1968 and, perhaps more importantly, our plans for our Christmas meeting in December to mark our Golden Jubilee. In his report, Mike refers showing photographs of our members that were taken in the 1960s. Members are requested to contact Mike Wilton to arrange for him to scan any photographs for that purpose. Mike's contact details are shown on the back page of this Newsletter.

There is also a report on the listing at Grade II of the former Thanet School of Art (known colloquially by many as the former Margate Art School but today officially known as the Adult Education Centre). This building well deserved listing as it adds much interest to the fine architecture generally of Hawley Square. Arnold Schwartzman was invited to contribute his memories of attending the Art School over sixty years ago which he responded to positively despite living on the other side of the planet.

With all the events that took place this year to mark the centenary of women first getting the vote in 1918, it is fitting that we remember the former Margate Pioneer Society which was founded in 1897 but which, sadly, did not quite survive to mark its own centenary. The aims of the Margate Pioneer Society were to further the progressive interests of women, to instil a feeling of comradeship and to endeavour to ameliorate class distinction. Importantly, the Margate Pioneer Society also threw themselves wholehearted into the campaign for votes for women. The Society also assisted many charities especially during the two World Wars. In 1940, their premises - the Pioneer Hall in Clarendon Road - was used as a canteen for the Forces stationed in the town. After the fall of Dunkirk, the members of the Society were scattered in various parts of the country and the hall was closed. Fortunately, the Pioneer Society's last President took care of a number of its artefacts when it finally closed.

Also in this Newsletter is a nostalgic article by Lynda Smith recalling her days as a 'Margate Girl'. If any other member would like to write-up their memories of Margate in past times, please do submit them to any member of the committee for possible publication in a future issue.

Lastly, I have reported at some length on the long-standing 'squabble' between Westgate-on-Sea Town Council and Margate Charter Trustees over the splitting of the latter's assets as at the end of March 2015. As this 'squabble' has not been reported on recently in the local press, I felt that a record of it ought be made - if only for posterity. □

James Brazier
Newsletter Editor

Welcome to new members

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

Tracey Gurney
Merys Maria Bott & Des Thomas Schwerdtfeger
Mr & Mrs J Grover
GRASS (Gordon Road Area Street Scheme)
Harry Smith (now Joint Member with Lynda Smith)

Sally Whitworth
Membership Secretary

The Annual General Meeting of the Margate Civic Society

will take place at the Walpole Bay Hotel on Thursday,
4th October 2018

Any proposals or nominations should be submitted as
soon as possible before the meeting to the Secretary at:

25 Norman Road,
Westgate-on-Sea, Margate CT8 8RR

Geoff Orton
Secretary

Subscriptions now due

Our new year commences on 1st October 2018 and subscriptions for the year become due on that date. Please note that the subscription rates for 2018/19 remain the same as for 2017/18 and are shown on the back page of this Newsletter. Any donations we receive on top of the subscriptions are very much appreciated. Members can renew their subscriptions at the AGM or by post before, or shortly after, the AGM to me at:

C/o 25 Norman Road
Westgate-on-Sea, Margate CT8 8RR

We also offer the facility of membership payment by electronic transfer. For details of this facility, please see our website: www.margatecivicsociety.org.uk

Sally Whitworth
Membership Secretary

**See pages 4 & 5
for details of
this year's
Heritage Open
Days**


heritage open days

President's Report



*Ralph Handscomb, President,
Margate Civic Society*

This has been a strange year of climatic differences. Long cold winter, miserable spring followed by this hot weather with no rain since May. It had to rain of course when the cricket tests got going against

happenings. I, for one, am unable to thank Pamela enough for all that she manages to do.

Harry Scobie, our Vice-Chairman, gives us the use of his house for Committee meetings but has had some problems which has caused him to spend less time on Committee business. However, he still chairs the Committee meetings at his house and, when able, joins us at our monthly meetings helping with the raffle.

Geoff Orton, our Secretary, writes numerous letters for other members to TDC, Civic Voice and other organisations. He also attends various meetings which he appears to enjoy. He is also involved with Drapers Windmill and Monkton Nature Reserve.

Mike Wilton, our Treasurer, keeps the accounts, organises day-trips to the Continent and, later this year, to Sheffield Park and the Bluebell Railway. Mike also manages our website and has put together some old films of Margate. We also give a great thank you to Mike's wife, Heather, for her organising the raffle.

Sally Whitworth, our Membership Secretary, has continued in her role as Membership Secretary, advising the Committee of any new members.

Mike Thompson, our Planning and Conservation Officer, keeps up with planning matters, looking at applications on new and old housing and helps out on any other Committee enterprise.

James Brazier, our Newsletter Editor, was voted in as a Vice-President at our AGM last year. We enjoy his interesting Newsletters full of the unexpected and unknown parts of our area as well as up-to-date news on the happenings at Margate Charter Trustees and the goings-on in Westgate-on-Sea.

That sums up our present Committee but we would welcome some new blood. It is extremely difficult for these few to keep everything together. It would be good to have representatives from other parts of our environment - Birchington, St Nicholas-at-Wade, Sarre and Acol. All these villages fall within the Society's area and if some residents from communities were to join us on the Committee and give us their views and news of their villages, it would provide for greater coverage of what is going on in Margate and its environs.

Finally we must thank the Walpole Bay Hotel - Jane, Peter, Justin and family and staff for all their help and assistance they give us when we use their facilities. It is a great place to hold our meetings.

So, once again, I will say thank you to all our members and those who attend our meetings and support the raffle and day-trips I and wish you all the best for the rest of the year. □

**Ralph Handscomb
President**

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India. Now from drought we enter into flooding. It is not only the weather that is causing trouble: there is Brexit, Trump, wars in both the Middle East and elsewhere bringing rising numbers of refugees, starvation, disease. I could go on with this theme for ages but you all know and will feel the same way as I do. But we are the lucky ones - or are we?

What has been happening with MCS and your Committee. We had some very interesting and informative speakers at our monthly meetings at the Walpole Bay Hotel venue. Our February meeting was cancelled owing to the weather but we had an extra talk in June about the Margate Caves bringing us up to date with the renovation and possible opening to the public of the Caves early next year. Our Town Pride Awards were a great success thanks to the magnificent efforts of our Chairman and some of the Committee members. It all looks very simple when presented at the meeting but a great amount of work goes into these awards behind the scenes and we should thank all those who give their time and expertise in completing this task. It has been quite a good year for the society. On Saturday, 16th June (Civic Day) we did stewarding at 12 Arthur Road in Cliftonville which, earlier in the year, was awarded a Town Pride plaque which you will have read about in the last Newsletter. I am not going into details of what your Committee have worked on and achieved in the past year as you will be getting a much better report from our Chairman and probably from our Secretary.

As I am sitting back and taking less action in the activities of the Society, it is probable you will soon be needing a new President as I have now entered my ninetieth year. It has been a long journey with the Civic Society; I have been with you for almost 30 years which is quite a long time. Anyway, once again we must come to the Committee. I don't think it has changed much since last year.

Our Chairman. Pamela Pople has continued to keep the Committee together and has done so much sterling work with the help of her husband Ray in organising speakers, Town Pride Awards, our Christmas event and other

The Royal Sea Bathing Hospital Chapel – A Proper Cultural Future Lies Ahead?

The Chapel was proposed (by Steve Villet) as a Heritage Open Day site a couple of years ago and the 'Dog & Duck' developer was then keen on 'community possibilities' but concerned about health & safety whilst utility trenches were being dug. A small party was allowed inside and an 'undercover organ agent' subsequently reported to the British Institute of Organ Studies that the 'Father Willis' organ was not beyond redemption and very much 'site-specific'.

At that time, the developer had suggested a 'ten-year peppercorn rent' if the community were interested in applying the building to community use. Regrettably, he subsequently fell out with TDC and retracted the offer before we could get Historic England properly on the case – but a preliminary scout of the exterior with Dr Andy Brown of Historic England didn't reveal anything alarming.

Further reflection on the status of the Chapel has led us to think that the original rather bare Grade II listing seriously undervalued the importance of the building and we are now in correspondence with Historic England to upgrade to II* as a preliminary measure to afford greater protection for what ought to be (and is) of national significance.

The main heads of argument are :

- 1) the architect Sir James Knowles was a Great Victorian known even more for his literary connections than his considerable architectural achievements. He was very closely involved with Tennyson and designed the noble Lord's property at Aldworth in Sussex (from which Alfred took his title) as a favour. He corresponded with W E Gladstone and T H Huxley to devise a Great Debate setting up the Metaphysical Society of the Great & Good to combat Darwinism and all its works. He founded, and edited for many years, the 'Nineteenth Century' – the premier intellectual review of its day (it lived on until well into the last century as, of course, the 'Twentieth Century'. He was responsible for designing much of Victoria Street including the Army & Navy Stores and also the layout of Leicester Square. And, according to the blurb for his 1980 biography, 'it was his deft handling of the special campaign that prevented the building of the Channel Tunnel in the early 1880s. He became a KCVO in 1903 when King Edward VII decided to spontaneously knight his unsuspecting Sandringham guest. And he wrote a well-received 'Legends of King Arthur and His Knights'. All very mock-medieval!
- 2) Sir Erasmus Wilson ought also to be remembered as a considerable philanthropist and the Chapel commemorates his largesse to the 'scrofulous poor'. He also spent £10,000 (half a million in today's money?) on setting up Cleopatra's Needle on the Embankment. And he had a bungalow in Westgate about which the Society will hear more very soon. Clearly, very much a national figure and important for the overall 'national therapeutic history'.

- 3) 'Father Willis' – the doyen of nineteenth-century organ-builders. Through Nick Dermott, TDC Heritage Officer, we have obtained a further report from the expert Martin Renshaw stating: 'I think the most important thing is that it is among the very few organs that has not been altered – or restored at all'. The Director of Works at Canterbury Cathedral reckons that the organ alone merits Grade I listing status.
- 4) We applied to the Stained Glass Museum at Ely Cathedral to see whether their Curator could identify the provenance of the Chapel windows. Within hours, Dr Allen replied with a copy of the 1882 *Illustrated London News* feature on the opening of the Erasmus Wilson Wing and the Chapel: definitely Clayton and Bell, leading glaziers of the High Victorian. I note that Ramsgate Town Council's coat-of-arms has a lifeboatman and a coastguard for supporters and I propose Sir Fortitude and Sir Prudence to support Margate's coat-of-arms should that eventuality arise. For interest, in the same edition of the *Illustrated London News*, we were reported to be bombarding Alexandria.

You will have noted that lately 'underbedded' Margate is in the process of growing hotels again and 'rebedding' apace: Fort Road Hotel is scheduled to reappear, the Nayland Rock Hotel is under exploration, and the proposed Dreamland Hotel (opening 2020) is looking to find further attractions to extend 'the season' and bring in a cavalcade of business conferences.

All part of the 'Turner Effect' whose momentum we still intend to perpetuate with Arnold Schwartzman's and Uwe Derksen's proposed Margate School – riding along on the crest of a wave and all that.

The Chapel itself may yet revive as a rather more secular community focal point: we do not have a conservatoire on the island (as Ian Dickie of Margate Museum has observed) and the Chapel functioned as such within living memory (1980s). In this technological age, it has potential as the Sea Bathing Museum and of course as an extra art gallery (did I hear Christopher Alexander's name?) and general High Victoriana interest. Funds are out there to be sought!

The Heritage Strategy Workshops last October identified empty public buildings as being ripe for enhancing our considerable cultural heritage – the Chapel is one such and the Old Town Hall another. According to the universal propaganda being peddled, the community is now about to take charge as the local authority retires from the scene.

It is to be hoped that the Powers That Be come to understand that Attractions = Footfall = Expenditure = Employment. Margate's 'Heritage Offer' is a vital part of the coastal economy that seeks to interest all those health and wellbeing types who might like to spend a few days at the seaside to recharge metropolitan batteries – just like Karl Marx did in the 1860s (though he wouldn't probably have attended the Chapel even if it had been built then). *Plus ça change!* □

Geoff Orton
Secretary

HERITAGE OPEN DAYS - SEPTEMBER 2018

This year, the three civic societies in Thanet - Margate Civic Society, The Ramsgate Society and the Broadstairs Society - have again acted together with TDC to produce the brochure showing those properties in Thanet which are participating in this year's Heritage Open Days during the period 6th September to 16th September. Further details of those properties in Margate and its environs which are participating in this year's HODs are shown below.

MARGATE

12 ARTHUR ROAD, Cliftonville CT9 2EN
www.thanet.gov.uk

Saturday 8th & Sunday 9th September and Saturday 15th & Sunday 16th September 2:00pm to 4:00pm

Margate Civic Society is stewarding the former Hotel Cecil, now fully restored and open to the public on selected dates. A tribute to local craftsmen and a flavour of genteel life in 1890s Cliftonville. Winner of a Margate Town Pride Blue Plaque this year.

Not suitable for wheelchairs and there are stairs to surmount. No toilets available and parking in street may be difficult.

ST JOHN THE BAPTIST CHURCH

Victoria Road, Margate CT9 1LN
www.stjohnschurchmargate.org.uk

Saturday 8th September 10:00am to 5:00pm

Margate's Parish Church: one thousand years of history – a guided tour by a local historian at 2:00pm on Saturday. Many unique architectural features and it was the incumbent, the Reverend David Railton, who suggested the Tomb of the Unknown Warrior in Westminster Abbey.

Generally accessible with local street parking. No public toilet facilities.

MARGATE MUSEUM

Market Place, Margate CT9 1ER
Email: friendsofmargatemuseum@gmail.com
www.margatemuseum.wordpress.com

Friday, Saturday and Sunday 7th, 8th and 9th September and Friday 14th, Saturday 15th and Sunday 16th September 11:00am to 4:00pm (last entry)

Current exhibition is 'Margate Women and the Vote'. The Trust for Thanet Archaeology will be displaying material from the recent excavations at Margate Caves alongside Droit House on Sunday 16th September.

Access very limited for wheelchair users. Toilet and parking facilities nearby.

MARGATE (Continued)

GUIDED WALKS led by Robin Colyer (Vice-President of Margate Civic Society)

No booking necessary. Each walk about 90 minutes each.

Saturday 15th September - meet at 2:00pm at Droit House for the 'Six Squares' walk: Cecil, Hawley, Charlotte, Addington, Caroline and Trinity

Sunday 16th September meet at 2:00pm Margate Railway Station for the 'West of The Brooks to Westgate-on-Sea' walk' - includes Nayland Rock, former Royal Sea Bathing Hospital, Westbrook Bay and St Mildred's Bay ending at Westgate Railway Station where walkers can return to Margate by bus or train.

DRAPERS WINDMILL

St Peters Footpath, Margate CT9 2SR
Tel : 01843 835085
www.draperswindmill.org.uk

Saturday 8th & Sunday 9th September and Saturday 15th and Sunday 16th September 2:00pm to 4:00pm

A smock mill which is the very last of the nineteen windmills found in Thanet in the late-nineteenth century. Built c1845 by John Holman of Canterbury. Restored 1965 to 1974 by volunteers.

Toilet facilities available and local street parking. Access to mill itself restricted to the reasonably mobile and the stairs are very steep.

THANET VISITOR INFORMATION CENTRE

The Droit House, Stone Pier, Margate CT9 1JD
www.visitthanet.co.uk

Thursday 6th September to Sunday 16th September 10:00am to 5:00pm

An exhibition in conjunction with Margate Museum in historic Droit House's 'Drum Room'. Explore some of the characters behind Margate's famous "Shell Ladies". A special exhibition to celebrate 2018's 'Extraordinary Women'.

Wheelchair access. Toilet and parking facilities nearby.

Members are strongly recommended to take advantage of Heritage Open Days

WESTGATE-ON-SEA

WESTGATE HERITAGE CENTRE

Town Hall Buildings, 31 St Mildred's Road,
Westgate-on-Sea CT8 8RE

E-mail: curator@westgateheritagecentre.org.uk

www.westgateheritagecentre.org.uk

Saturday 15th September - talks at 12:30pm and 2:30pm
by Dr Dawn Crouch, Curator/Historian

Supporting this year's theme by National Heritage of
'Extraordinary Women', we shall be honouring Westgate-
on-Sea women and the important roles they participated
in the Great War.

*Limited access as the exhibition is on the first floor and
stairs are steep.*

BIRCHINGTON

POWELL-COTTON MUSEUM

Quex Park, Park Lane, Birchington CT7 0BH

www.quexpark.co.uk

Saturday 15th and Sunday 16th September
Museum & Gardens 10:00am to 5:00pm
Quex House 1:00pm to 4:00pm

Thanet's own 'stately home' which hosted King
William III on his journeys to and from Holland House.
Extensive gardens with developing 'heritage
conservatory' plans and a unique wildlife museum.

*Generally accessible for the disabled and less mobile and
there are toilet/parking facilities.*

BIRCHINGTON HERITAGE

Burley Gallery, Birchington Library, 7 Alpha Road,
Birchington CT7 9EG

www.birchingtonheritage.org.uk

Saturdays 8th and 15th September 10:00am to 1.00pm

Generally accessible with toilet and parking facilities.

MONKTON

Monkton Nature Reserve

Canterbury Road, Monkton CT12 4LH

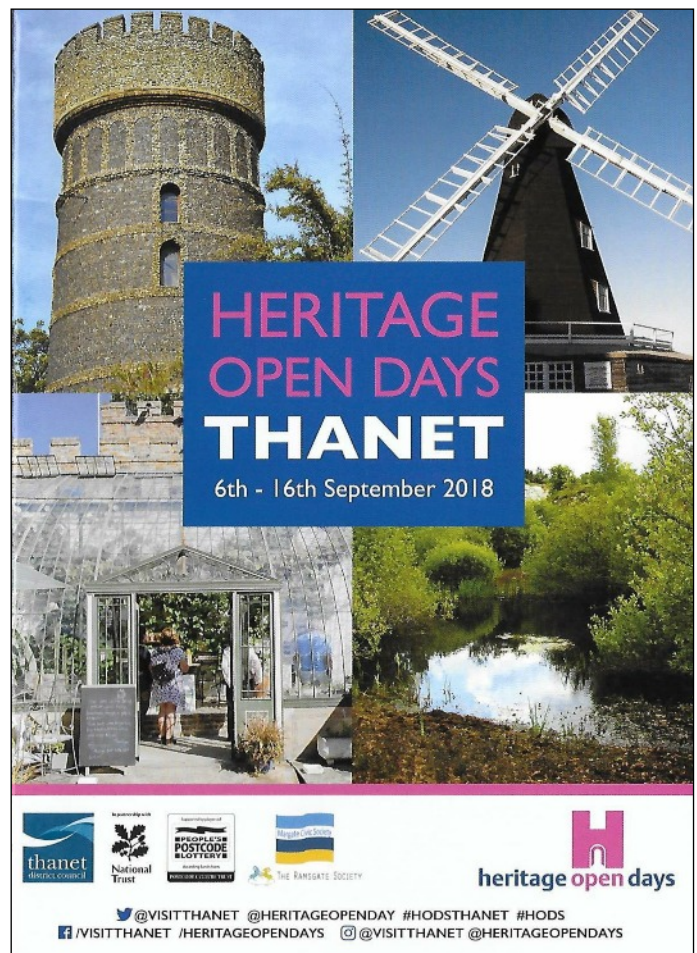
Tel: 01843 822666

E-mail: monktonnaturereserve@hotmail.com

www.monkton-reserve.org

Saturday 15th September 11:00am to 5:00pm
Thanet's premier inland nature reserve and home of
Thanet Observatories. Sixteen acres of diverse wildlife
habitats with two wildlife ponds, 26 species of butterfly,
eight species of rare orchids, and a variety of adventure
trails.

*New accessible paths for the disabled. Cafeteria and
disabled toilet facilities available.*



*The front cover of the brochure produced for this
year's Heritage Open Days in Thanet. In addition
to the attractions in the Margate area, the
brochure also contains detailed information on the
attractions participating in this year's Heritage
Open Days in both the Ramsgate and Broadstairs
areas.*

STOP PRESS

LATE ADDITION TO THIS YEAR'S LIST OF HERITAGE OPEN DAYS ATTRACTIONS

THEATRE ROYAL

Addington Street, Margate CT9 1PW

Tel: 01843 292795

Email: boxoffice@yourleisure.com

[www.theatroyalmargate.com/event/heritage-
open-days](http://www.theatroyalmargate.com/event/heritage-open-days)

Saturday 15th September 1:00pm to 5:00pm

The second oldest theatre in England (1787)

*Partial access for disabled and those with mobility
problems. Toilet and nearby parking facilities.*



Margate's former Art School now Grade II Listed

It is very good news that the impressive building, now known as Margate Adult Education Centre which is situated at the north-western corner of Hawley Square, has been granted Grade II status. When it was opened in 1931, it was known as the Thanet School of Art & Crafts. It soon became known as Thanet Art School and, many years later, as Hilderstone being an offshoot of the Adult Education Centre at Broadstairs known as Hilderstone.

The building was designed in 1929 by the Kent County Council Architect Major W H Robinson ARIBA and was opened in 1931 by Lord Northbourne. The School of Art was equipped with several large drawing and work rooms, studios, a printing room, a library and a large exhibition hall. Courses were offered in drawing, design, handicraft, dress design and dress making, etching, lithography and typography. The School also had a department of architecture, in conjunction with Canterbury College of Arts. The artist Walter Sickert lectured at the Thanet School of Art in 1934.

The building is of brick construction with full length windows in an Art Deco style. The interiors comprise a number of studios arranged around a central exhibition space. The building is executed in an austere Art Deco style. The massing of the building is similar to other municipal art colleges, such as the Grade II listed Great Yarmouth College of Art, although built in a more contemporary style as befitted its role as the school of architecture within both Thanet School of Art and Canterbury College of Art. While the form of the building is, to some extent, dictated by its function, the *façades* of the building are well balanced, and overall the building anticipates the more mature Art Deco buildings of the 1930s.

The design of the building is echoed in the internal fixtures and fittings. With the exception of the light fittings in the studios, the interiors are largely complete. Joinery throughout the building is predominantly in dark wood with understated Art Deco detailing, particularly over the door cases on the ground floor and at the tops of both pillars and pilasters in the central exhibition space. The Art Deco theme is continued in the glazing (including over the lightwell) and in the radiators. The plan form of studios around a central exhibition space has been maintained. Other specialist fittings, such as the silversmithing rooms and pottery kiln in the basement also survive intact.

There have been some minor internal alterations to the building – a number of stud partitions have been inserted, and a floor inserted into the central exhibition space. In addition, a lift and a reception desk have been inserted, again in the central exhibition space. However, the inserted floor is still used as an exhibition space, and the inserted doorway for the reception desk has joinery to match the original fittings. Despite these minor changes the original plan form of the building is clearly legible.

Major W H Robinson was one of the Kent County Council architects and was responsible for a number of buildings in Kent and south London. Overall, the Adult Education Centre, Margate, is a good, little altered example of a municipal art college. It sits within Margate Conservation Area, and holds group value with the other buildings on

Hawley Square (all Grade II listed, except the Theatre Royal, which is listed at Grade II*) and numbers 5 Cecil Street and 6 Cecil Street.

The building is surrounded on the south and west sides by iron railings in panels, each of which is a square St Andrew's cross flanked by four pairs of vertical bars. The panels are joined by a continuous top rail. The rainwater-gutters comprise iron down-pipes topped by iron hoppers decorated with small raised square.

The principal reasons given for listing this important building at Grade II are as follows:

Architectural interest:

- as a competent and well executed art college in an austere Art Deco style by a noted local architect;
- for the unity of design both inside and outside the building;
- for the survival of internal fixtures and fittings, and legibility of the original design; and
- for the survival of specialist functions, including studios, kiln and workshops.

Group value:

- for its relationship with the other listed buildings around Hawley Square. □

JB



These two images above showing the building when first built are courtesy of Thanet District Council

Some memories of Margate Art School by one of its former students

News of the listing at Grade II of the former Margate Art School came through in early July. Knowing that one of its alumni was none other than Margate Civic Society member Arnold Schwartzman, your Newsletter Editor immediately passed on the good news concerning the listing of the Art School to Arnold and invited him to contribute a few words on his memories of the former Margate Art School. Within a couple of hours, Arnold came back by e-mail with this super article. - Ed

In 1951, on leaving King Ethelbert Secondary Modern School Birchington at age 15, my only talents seemed to lay in my fondness to draw. It was suggested by a guest at my parents' hotel, Abram Games, the distinguished poster designer of the iconic symbol for that year's Festival of Britain, that I attend Art School.

Believe it or not, I was a very shy boy lacking with self confidence, which prompted my father to enrol both of us for evening classes at the local Thanet School of Art & Crafts in Hawley Square. (Some years later, my Margate-born sister, Diana, also attended the Art School as a full-time student.)

My father would sit alongside me in the rather cramped primary-school desks. We had wonderful tutors, including Messrs. Alexander, (the MCS newsletter had previously featured a story on his artwork), Bayly, Vickerman and Willis.

On my later full-time enrolment I had to fill in an application form with Mr Smith, the daunting school principal, looking over my shoulder.

I hesitated when it came to spelling out the name of the course that I wished to take "Commercial Design", as I was not certain if there were one or two 'm's in the name. Thank goodness it later became known as Graphic Design!

The building had two floors and a basement where there was a pottery kiln, and the students' entrance cloakroom. The ground-floor's north side held the principal's office plus a reception room and an art storeroom where full-time students could apply for materials such as sable-hair brushes, paints, inks and handmade paper, all free issues, as were the tuition fees by courtesy of the Kent County Council.

On the south side of the building were two classrooms one of which contained an etching, stone lithograph and letterpress printing presses.

The wood-panelled building's interior was immaculately kept by Mr. Rodwell, the school's caretaker.

The school had a grand staircase leading to the upper floor contained the life class, plus the students' locker room. On the opposite side of the large well, were the dressmaking classrooms.

On a recent visit to the building, I found that the easels remain in the life class, and on the wall of the ground-floor classroom where I first joined evening classes, hangs a self-portrait of one of my fellow students, Willy Craiker (not certain of

spelling). He was a brilliant young artist who went on to win a scholarship to the Royal College of Art, London. Sadly, he died of an illness during his studies there.

After two years of full-time study at the school, I obtained the Ministry of Education's Intermediate Certificate in Commercial design, then going on to the Canterbury College of Art, Canterbury, where I graduated three years later with the Ministry's National Diploma in Design.

Canterbury College of Art is now one of the campuses of the University for the Creative Arts, of which I later became a member of their Board of Governors.

Today, Canterbury is the only remaining art school of the several that graced the south-east coast of Kent.

A bid to create another Margate art school is at present in the offing, as Thanet sorely needs an art school for all the aspiring young artists that I have since learnt from giving talks to the local schools. Would it not be wonderful if we could have a new home, or perhaps return to the building in Hawley Square?

Below is a photograph of one of our annual art school Christmas parties. I am the one in the back-row wearing a bow-tie. Flanking Mr. Moody, the regional principal, are members of the teaching staff, including Christopher Alexander, Clifford Bayly and Bernard Willis.

Among the fancy-dressed students in the front-row was my good friend Trevor Kemp, whose wonderful *papier-mâché* owl mask, pasted together with fish glue, produced a fowl aroma that permeated throughout the building! □

**Arnold Schwartzman OBE, RDI
Hollywood, California**



A relaxed Arnold Schwartzman on a visit to the Newsletter Editor's home in 2009



Remembering the Margate Pioneer Society - Founded 1897

Today, the Margate Pioneer Society is largely forgotten. We are grateful to one of our members (Chris Wyer), who has helped ensure that a number of the Margate Pioneer Society's artefacts have been saved for future generations.



The badge worn by members of the Margate Pioneer Society



Chris Wyer with the Margate Pioneer Society's banner and board listing all of the Society's Past-Presidents. These historic artefacts were given to Chris by the Society's last President, Mrs Marion Bullwinkle, to pass on to Margate Museum



The silver-and-enamel badge proudly worn by Past-Presidents of the Margate Pioneer Society (the badge bears the Birmingham 1942 hallmark on the reverse)

The images of the two badges shown on this page are courtesy of Richard Clements



The foundation stone outside the Pioneer Hall, Clarendon Road, Cliftonville. The stone was laid by the President, Mrs HJ Giles, on 2nd March 1937

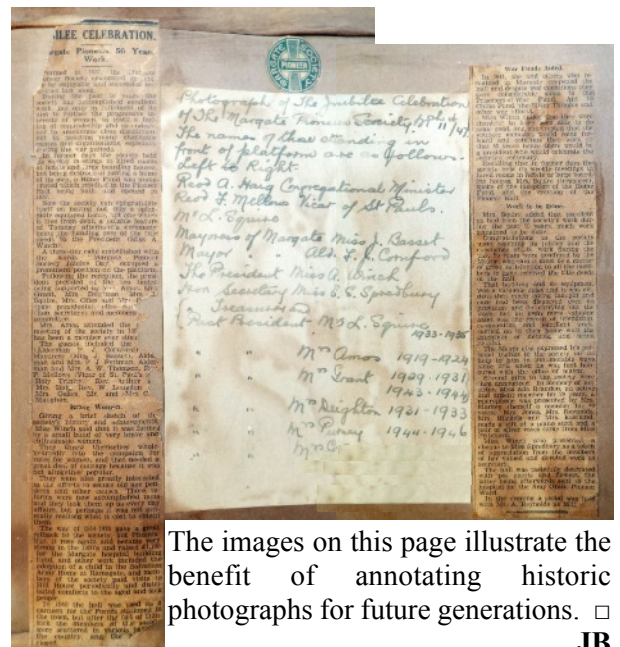
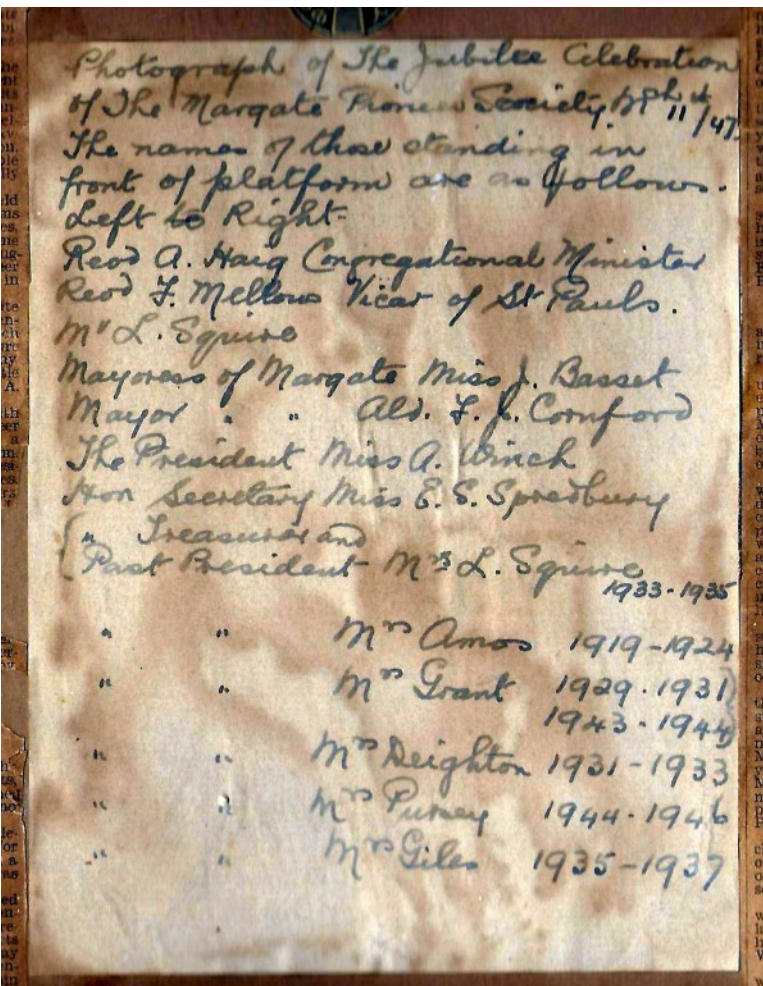
When Margate Pioneer Society celebrated their Golden Jubilee - November 1947



This photograph was taken by Sunbeam Photos and shows the celebrations to mark the Society's Golden Jubilee. It had been kept in its original picture-frame and was held in safe-keeping by the Society's last President, Mrs Marion Bullwinkle who recently passed it to Chris Wyer to give to Margate Museum along with the board listing all of the Society's Past-Presidents since the Society was founded in 1897 (see page 8). It would appear that the Society just missed reaching its centenary.



The former Pioneer Hall in Clarendon Road still exists and is, I believe, now used by the Lighthouse School Margate. In its early days, the Society promoted women's suffrage and it is fitting that this photograph is published in our Society's Newsletter in 2018 being the centenary year of certain women getting the vote for the first time.



The images on this page illustrate the benefit of annotating historic photographs for future generations. □
JB

Stuck on the back of the picture-frame containing this evocative photograph is a newspaper report of the occasion together with a hand-written list of those who can be seen standing at the back of the hall. Few men were invited to attend the occasion but the Mayor of Margate, Alderman F J Cornford, can be seen standing next to the Mayoress of Margate, Miss Jessie Basset. The three-tier cake that was especially baked for the occasion can also be seen standing on the piano. According to the newspaper report, the cake was embellished with the words: 'Margate Pioneer Society Jubilee Day'

A Margate Girl

I reflect on my life at the age of 71. It is true that growing old does not always mean that you feel your age.

I was born at 7 Ramsgate Road on Saturday 14th December 1946. It was a Saturday and my Dad, Reginald Clark, told me he did not get to see Margate FC play that Saturday afternoon. National Health was still two years away, so my parents paid for the midwife to attend. My parents lived in the house with my grandparents and where my Mother, Joan Clark (*née* Beerling) had lived for many years from a young girl.

My Dad had returned from the Second World War on or about 6th March 1946, nine months before my birth. He had been given leave in August 1945 when he and my Mum had married in the Ramsgate Registry Office after a four-year correspondence; I still have their letters. I was named Lynda Louise after the song "Mah Lindy Lou" by Paul Robson; this was a better name than Mable which was Dad's suggestion after his Mother's name.

My Maternal Grandparents were Walter Beerling and Nellie Maud Beerling (*née* Dagg). The house, which still stands, has three floors and at that time had no inside bathroom but did possess an inside toilet. There was a front room and a back room, where Pop, my grandfather, would sit and smoke his roll-ups by the fire. They ate at a large table in the back room. The kitchen was lower than this floor as these houses are on a downward slope.

I remember nothing about the 18 months we lived there together as we soon moved into 126 Dane Valley Road, which was a new council house. My Dad worked at the Empire Garage, in Belgrave Road (now a discount furniture store). A Margate Councillor was a regular customer there, and, being on the housing list, Dad asked if there was a chance of a council house. We moved in 1948 – I was to live there for the next 16 years.

The house at Dane Valley had three bedrooms, a bathroom, two living rooms and a kitchen. To help with washing there was a tin boiler, fuelled by gas. As it was on the corner of Invicta Road, it had three gardens: front, back and side. Dad planted a hedge around the side garden almost immediately and, because of rationing, we kept chickens there for their eggs. There was also a brick-built shed, outside toilet and coal shed. There was a fire-place in both downstairs rooms. The back room had a built-in boiler where the fire would heat the water. Therefore, in the summer unless you light the fire you had no hot water; baths were taken on a Sunday afternoon.

At the corner of Dane Valley and Invicta Road stood a phone box and this proved to be very useful to us. We would receive pre-arranged calls from my Uncle in Bognor Regis there as well as make them.

The railway from Victoria to Ramsgate ran in front of the house and in 1948 the trains were powered by steam. The strip of land between Dane Valley and our house was a dumping ground for building rubble and junk of all sorts from all the new houses that had gone up after the war. Children from a very young age played there. Also, the best playground in Margate was on that same patch of land, the swings and roundabouts would be considered dangerous now. Many a child went home with some injury or other.

Buses into Margate were frequent and the No 54A stopped opposite. Mostly we walked, people did in those days. Local shops consisted of a grocers, newsagent and greengrocers. We had a weekly delivery of groceries, which was left in the shed by the delivery boy. We had two newspapers delivered daily, my Mum did the crossword and, when I was older, I had the Beano once a week. The rent man called once a week and would sign the rent book when it was paid.

The first memory I have was of my little tricycle and wheeling down the hill. I came a cropper one day when I fell over the handlebars and smashed my face. My Mum was frantic with worry that I might have lost some teeth but I just had a fat lip. We had freedom to play out at a young age.

I attended Drapers Mills Infants School at four and a half, from September 1951. I remember clearly it was raining very hard the first morning my Mum took me. I was so frightened that I cried in fear something nasty would happen to her on the way home. One day I was made to stand in the corner at class and told my parents that I was chattering while the teacher was chattering. We would sing the alphabet while waiting in the corridor to attend class. There was an hour and a half for lunch as most children went home for their meal and that was dinner of course, the evening meal was tea.

Drapers Mill School was so named because of the wind mill which stood there. The School and Mill remain to this day. My Headmaster at Primary School was Mr Towes. He was dedicated to restoring the Mill and there is a plaque to his memory. For a short while there was a tuck shop at the base of the Mill.

When I started school, Mum was "encouraged" to go to work. She did housework in the mornings. In the school holidays she would walk me to my Grandparents to be looked after. They had a white kitten which I played with. One day it went missing never to return. I heard it used to crawl from the coal cellar through to the kitchen via a small hole and word was that it might have got stuck, but we shall never know.

Before houses were built on College Road, a circus would come most years. I met my first love on the swings at Dane Valley who travelled with the circus. He sang Poppa Piccolino to me; I was about six at the time. Later, when the Council grassed the land opposite our house, the circus would set up there instead.

The 3rd June 1953 was Queen Elizabeth II's Coronation day and all the children from the area were invited to have tea and cake in the open set up across from the Dane Valley Arms, a local pub. I have a photo taken at the time of myself and others at the tables laid out. There were plans to have a halt on the Victoria-Ramsgate railway line at the Dane Valley Arms but it never came about. There had been a halt at Ramsgate Road very close to Margate station and my Mother would use this convenience to travel to her school in Ramsgate.

Very close by were allotments and my Dad lost no time in renting one; he was always a keen gardener. Sundays were not a day of rest for Dad as he would work on his allotment. He had made a cart and walked to Margate sands bringing

back seaweed for compost. I know of this very well as I would go along with him having a ride back on top of the seaweed. On Sunday evenings, there were baked jacket-potatoes cooked in the ashes underneath the fire, they tasted delicious. The vegetables he grew were a credit to him. His brussel-sprout plants were taller than I was and he always had flowers to cut and bring home

Afternoons in school holidays would be spent with my Nan in Margate town. After the shopping was complete, we would sit on the slope - the seats that run along the front of Marine Gardens. Margate had the Jetty then where ships and paddle-steamers would dock. In the summer months we might join thousands of others on Margate sands where it was difficult to find space to sit. There was a boating pool close to Marine Drive, now covered over by the sand. Occasionally, I would sit and watch Punch & Judy and one day I was chosen to climb the ladder and sit with the puppets. A first-aid hut was situated where the Sands Café now stands. Lost children had their names called out on the loud speaker from there and one day I too became lost... On very special occasions, we would have tea at Reeve's in Margate High Street.

Our area was lucky to have Rediffusion, a broadcast relay service, which was a wired network for radio and television. When we owned a television it was so small that a large magnifying glass was placed in front of it. One of the first programmes I was to watch was Muffin the Mule with Annette Mills. Andy Pandy was another popular children's programme of the time.

Dad's parents lived in Bognor Regis. This was to be our yearly holiday destination from 1948 onwards. A car would be borrowed from the garage for the journey.

A class at Drapers Mills Junior School had organised a trip to Sackett's Hill Farm. The farm is very close to the school, across fields. There was an apple orchard and pigs with a large old barn. The person who showed us children around said we were welcome to visit in our own time. Very soon afterwards I did visit the farm and was to do this all through that summer. The railway ran between our house and the farm but I knew of a crossing over the line via steps up one side and down the other. I was still only ten years old. I enjoyed a ride on the back of a tractor at the farm and played in the barn. It was a different life without health-and-safety.

There were many children of the same age group, called the "baby boomers". One friend lived in Dane Gardens which was made up of prefabs - prefabricated bungalows which came pre-decorated with fixtures and fittings included. The inside was very adequate and I believe many families did not want to move from these homes when conventional homes were offered.

Presents at Christmas were mostly made by Dad. These included a wendy house, a doll's house and a shop with a till. A Rovex clockwork train set with a Margate station was one of my favourite toys; it had a tunnel and was manufactured in Margate. The train set was later handed down to my children. There were many manufacturers in the Ramsgate Road area such as Klingers which made nylon.

I attended Lausanne (girls), Secondary Modern School at eleven. St John's, the town's boys' school, was just a street



Lynda Smith with her husband, Harry, at Margate Clock Tower on 24th May 2014 shortly before Lord Boyce performed the ceremony to mark the Society's success in reinstating the operation of the Time Ball atop Margate Clock Tower. It was largely thanks to Lynda's efforts that the necessary funds were raised

away. Our headmistress was Miss Appleby. Some outdoor games such as hockey and netball were played within the school grounds, but we would use the ground where Morrison's car park now is for summer sports days. Our year was lucky to be offered a typing and book-keeping course when our final year had ended. What I learned then has remained with me ever since. Before finishing this course, I was lucky enough to be offered the post of Junior Clerk at the Thanet Water Board in Victoria Road Margate (I was granted the time off to sit the RSA examination).

The general office I worked in was located at the front of the building and the Chief Engineer Mr J Leslie Unitt's office was located next to this. The drawing office was on the second floor. At the rear of the building was a small yard where there was also a small kitchen area for tea making for the staff. I was responsible for collecting the "tea money" each week. To my delight, I was in charge of the small telephone-switchboard during Doris's, our telephonist, lunch-break.

I was a teenager in Margate in the 1960s so there was no end of interesting entertainment to occupy us. Dreamland amusement park was very popular with day-trippers and holiday-makers. You did not need money to fill our weekends with fun. On Sunday evenings, I would meet with friends at the Rendezvous Club at Dreamland Ballroom. The live groups that we danced to there more than half a century ago - such as Brian Poole & the Tremeloes and Acker Bilk & his Paramount Jazz Band - are now legendary. □

Lynda Smith

A Town Council for Margate?

Local government finance is not everybody's favourite subject but it does happen to be one of mine. After leaving school at seventeen with a handful of O-levels, I applied for and was offered a job by Margate Corporation as a general assistant in the Rates Office. Shortly afterwards, I was advised by the Borough Treasurer (Stanley Sykes) to study for the Institute of Municipal Treasurers & Accountants (now the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy [CIPFA]) examinations which I proceeded to do through a correspondence course. Through internal promotion and appointment to more senior positions at two other local authorities in the area as I passed stages of the IMTA examinations, I decided that I would make local government finance my career. In 1966, I took up a more senior position at the London Borough of Bromley and passed the final IMTA examination that same year. Three years later, I secured a senior position back in Margate Corporation's Borough Treasurer's Department. After a couple of years, I was promoted to the position of Chief Accountant - a post I continued to hold up to the 31st March 1974 when the local government structure outside London was reorganised. It was then when Margate Corporation became part of Thanet District Council and Margate Charter Trustees was created as a corporate body with the responsibility of acting as trustees of Margate's Charter of Incorporation dated 1857 which, very importantly, had established Margate as a Borough having its own Mayor.

You may be asking yourself why I am telling you all this. Well, it is because I want readers to know of my background and my involvement at a senior level with the 1974 reorganisation of local government and, more specifically, with the creation of Margate Charter Trustees.

After spending the last 20 years or so of my career as a chief officer at one of the district councils in Surrey (rising to the position of Borough Treasurer at the end of my career), I retired in 2001 after 43 years of unbroken service in local government finance.

My wife and I retired to Margate in 2004 and I renewed my membership of Margate Civic Society getting elected to the MCS Committee later that year and taking over as Newsletter Editor the following year.

Needless to say, I took particular interest in TDC's Council Tax bills each year and I soon noticed the huge increases each year in the Margate Charter Trustees' precept. Having been involved in the creation of Margate Charter Trustees in 1974, I was aware of the severe restrictions on spending by Charter Trustees across the country. It was apparent to me that Margate Charter Trustees were, in effect, acting as if they were a Town Council. I wrote to the Clerk of Margate Charter Trustees asking what power they had to spend at the level they were spending. I was told that the Charter Trustees were operating under Section 137 powers. I challenged that story and pursued it endlessly. Eventually, in the spring of 2010, I wrote to the District Auditor drawing his attention to the Charter Trustees acting *ultra vires*.

I was confident that I was right and that the Charter Trustees were wrong. Eventually, in September 2010 the District Auditor wrote to me thanking me for drawing this

serious matter to his attention and sending me a copy of the letter he sent to the Charter Trustees instructing the Charter Trustees to cease spending forthwith on anything beyond matters relating to the Mayor and administrative costs relating to the Mayor. As you can imagine, that letter caused a 'few ripples' to say the least with the Charter Trustees. The Charter Trustees tried to argue that a previous District Auditor had told the Charter Trustees in writing that they could spend under Section 137 powers but, needless to say, that letter could not be found amongst the Charter Trustees' files. The following year, their precept fell dramatically and continued for a time at that lower level.

A few years later, when the Charter Trustees were giving consideration to their annual draft budget, it was very apparent that the Charter Trustees seemed to be oblivious to the District Auditor's letter of September 2010 and it fell to me to write to the Charter Trustees drawing their attention to that letter. As a subsequence, major deletions were made by the Charter Trustees to their draft budget to ensure that they were keeping within their spending powers. Again, I was not the most popular person with the Charter Trustees but I felt that I was acting for the people of Margate.

It was simply bad luck for the Charter Trustees that, with my background knowledge and professional qualification, I had returned to Margate and taken an interest in their spending.

Things settled down for a while until TDC decided to conduct a community governance review with a view to setting up a Town Council for Margate in place of its Charter Trustees. That community governance review established that there simply was no appetite for having a Town Council for Margate but, during that review, very limited interest was generated in Westgate-on-Sea for Westgate to have its own Parish Council. TDC in its wisdom, decided in 2014 to create a new Westgate Parish Council in 2015. The first thing the new Parish Council did was to change its name to Westgate Town Council and, six months later, to Westgate-on-Sea Town Council.

Readers of the Newsletter will have read of some of the consequences of setting up that Town Council. Perhaps the most significant was the 'squabble' between the Town Council and Margate Charter Trustees over the splitting of the Charter Trustees' assets as at 31st March 2015. As one who sat through meetings of both the Town Council and the Charter Trustees at which this 'squabble' became more and more acrimonious and terribly unpleasant, I can tell you that it reflected very badly on both of the two bodies. Neither side seemed to understand exactly which assets were to be divided between them. There was no argument over the division of the cash held by the Charter Trustees as at 31st March 2015 which resulted in a payment of £20,643 to the Town Council. There was, however, a huge dispute over the division of the remaining assets; the Town Council at one time demanding an additional £83,000 and the Charter Trustees offering £30,000 in settlement.

Once again, I felt it necessary to intervene as I felt that proper consideration was not being given to the legal requirements of the situation. I informed the Charter Trustees that, in my opinion, there was no basis for the £30,000 that had been offered to the Town Council. Indeed,

I was told by a number of the Charter Trustees that the figure of £30,000 had been recommended by a member of TDC's finance staff. With my background knowledge, qualification and my extensive experience, I wrote to the Charter Trustees' external auditor (PKF Littlejohn LLP) lodging a formal objection to the payment of £30,000 to the Town Council as I considered that there was no basis whatsoever for that figure.

The external auditor duly investigated my formal complaint and, in August 2017, issued a Public Interest Report criticising the Charter Trustees for making such a payment without their being a basis for that sum. Once again, the Charter Trustees had come in for criticism for its financial management and, once again, I was regarded as being the ogre. In my mind, I was simply acting on behalf of the people of Margate. It was, in effect, their money and it ought not to have been given away to Westgate-on-Sea Town Council.

As a result of the Public Interest Report, a thorough review of all of the Charter Trustees' assets was conducted and it was calculated that the sum which should have been paid to the Town Council was £11,627 rather than £30,000. The Charter Trustees wrote to the Town Council informing the Town Council that an overpayment of £18,373 had been made and requesting repayment of that sum by the Town Council to the Charter Trustees.

Correspondence passed to and fro between the two bodies in which the Town Council refused to repay anything. The Charter Trustees had requested a formal response from the Town Council to their request for money to be repaid but that request was never formally submitted to the Town Council for consideration and no vote was ever taken on the matter.

In addition to the £30,000, the Charter Trustees also offered to the Town Council two silver presentation cups which in some way related to Westgate. These two cups were handed over with great ceremony by the then Town Mayor of Margate (Cllr Robin Edwards) to the then Chairman of the Town Council. The Charter Trustees' Town Sergeant, dressed in his uniform, accompanied the two cups for security purposes and remained present throughout the ceremony. Later, it was discovered that at least one of the cups did not belong to the Charter Trustees but was being held by them in 'safe custody'. This led to the Charter Trustees requesting the return to them of the two silver cups. The two cups were surreptitiously returned to the Charter Trustees towards the end of 2017 without any ceremony whatsoever. Surprisingly, the value of those two silver cups never featured in arriving at the original figure of £30,000.

A most bizarre letter was sent by the Town Clerk at the end of February 2018 to the Charter Trustees. Not only was that letter sent over the name of the former Interim Town Clerk and contained numerous references to that matter having been discussed with the Interim Town Clerk, but it also claimed that the request from the Charter Trustees had been considered by the Town Council in January 2017. That date was obviously wrong as the Public Interest Report had been issued only in August 2017. Feeling very aggrieved by the Town Council's behaviour and acting, once again, on behalf of the people of Margate,

I wrote again to the Charter Trustees' external auditor in July 2018 regarding the manner in which the request from the Charter Trustees had been handled by the Town Council. Whilst I would not expect the Town Council to decide to repay even a ha'penny of the overpaid £18,373, I would have expected the Town Council to have given proper consideration to the request from the Charter Trustees and for the Town Council to have taken a formal vote on the matter. After all, that is what democracy is all about.

We are talking about public money and, in my opinion, it is essential that it is treated and accounted for in the correct manner. My professional qualification demands the highest standards in accounting for public money and, after a career of 43 years in local government finance, I simply feel unable to sit back and allow miscarriages of justice to take place without making my voice heard. Undoubtedly, I have caused embarrassment to a number of councillors - and others - but it would have been wrong for me to have looked the other way.

It is all a bit like Brexit: some of those who voted for the creation of a Town Council for Westgate are now beginning to question whether they actually want what they voted for. It is very evident that having a Town Council is a huge expense and that most of its costs are administrative. Indeed, a recent letter in *The Times* complained about the quantity of red tape which a very small parish council has to contend with being required by law to adopt a councillor privacy policy, a risk-assessment schedule, a code of conduct, a complaints procedure, a publication scheme, a document retention and disposal policy, an information and date protection policy, an e-mail privacy notice, a social media policy and more. Whilst all these policies, etc may well be fine for a large county council or even a district council, to apply that same legal requirement to small parish councils seems to be 'overkill' and simply uneconomic. Indeed, across the country a number of town councils and parish councils (including Birtley, Brierley, Southsea and Lickey End to name a few) have in recent years resolved to abolish themselves and for the services they provided to be transferred to their district councils.

Yet the new Town Mayor of Margate (Cllr Julie Dellar) has announced her wish for a Town Council to be created for Margate in place of the Charter Trustees. There are a number of routes by which that objective might be achieved but on the evidence of TDC's community governance review held in 2014, it does seem highly unlikely that such a result could be achieved in the foreseeable future. Indeed, there is even a growing number of residents who are already beginning to talk about the possibility of abolition of Westgate-on-Sea Town Council.

Interestingly, Canterbury City Council recently announced that, following their recent community governance review, they were not proceeding with the proposal to create Town Councils for Canterbury, Whitstable and Herne Bay because there was no evidence of support for Town Councils in any of those towns!

What will happen next? Like Brexit, we will simply have to wait and see and just hope that, in the words of George Formby, things 'will turn out nice again'. Some hope! □

James Brazier CPFA, Newsletter Editor

Queenie Johnson 1928-2018



Queenie Johnson standing outside Lockwoods Yard at Westgate where she had worked for Ivor Read for many years. The poster on display in the window announces the auction sale by Rogers & Hambidge of Lockwoods on 4th April 2002



Queenie Johnson in her living room at St Peter's in holding the Silver Jubilee mug that she had been presented with as a schoolgirl 75 years earlier in 1935

I am sorry to report that our Society recently lost one of its stalwart members - Queenie Johnson who died, aged 90, in Shottendane Nursing Home on 29th July 2018 after many years of serious ill-health.

Queenie Johnson was a life member of Margate Civic Society for as long as anyone can remember – certainly for at least the last two decades. Queenie was born in 1928 in Margate as Queenie Lillian Pain. She married Arthur Johnson, a motor mechanic, in 1953: he was 22 years older than Queenie. Queenie spent much of her life living in Westgate-on-Sea and was employed full time by Lockwood's from 1945 to 1955 and later, part-time, from 1984 to 2002 when Lockwood's closed. Her time at Lockwood's meant that she knew as much as anyone of the history of Lockwood's. In 2006, Queenie contributed a superb article for our Newsletter on the history of Lockwood's. That article was published in the Summer 2006 Newsletter and can still be accessed on the Society's website. Later, Queenie contributed to at least three more superb articles that were also published in our Newsletter.

Although Queenie held Margate in great affection, Westgate-on-Sea was her special love. Indeed, when the Westgate Heritage Centre was first set up, Queenie took an active part in ensuring its success. For many years, Queenie lived in Westgate before moving eastwards into Westbrook where she lived for a time in Gresham Avenue. In later years, she moved for a time into one of the Yoakley Homes before making her final move to sheltered accommodation at St Peter's. I frequently visited Queenie with my wife, Sue until Queenie's health further deteriorated necessitating her to go into Shottendane Nursing Home last August.

Prior to that, I visited Queenie when she lived in the Yoakley Homes before moving into sheltered accommodation at St Peter's around ten years ago. Queenie spent time in and out of various hospitals and I remember visiting her at the Victoria Hospital, Deal where she was an in-patient for a while only a few years back.

Queenie loved local history and researching her family history. She retained her enthusiasm for those subjects certainly up to the time she went into Shottendane Nursing Home. She also retained her sense of humour and her positive outlook to life regardless of her serious illnesses over many years.

Up until around six years ago, Queenie carried out much of her research on her laptop computer and was a subscriber to the Ancestry UK website. Sadly, with the decline in her health she felt unable to continue with that research - which saddened her greatly but I never once heard her complain about anything. She saw the good in everybody and took everything that life threw at her - including various cancers which eventually ended her life.

Due to her illness, Queenie was sadly not able to attend any of our Society meetings over the last two decades although she did manage to join a party of Society members on a walk around Margate Cemetery which I led eleven years ago. Nevertheless, Queenie will be sadly missed by all those who knew her.

Queenie's funeral took place on 13th August 2018 at Margate Crematorium which was attended by family members and friends including six members of Margate Civic Society. □

JB

For further information on Queenie Johnson and the articles to which Queenie contributed, see:

<i>Newsletter 343</i> (Summer 2006)	Her article 'Memories of AG Lockwood & Co (Builders), Westgate-on-sea'
<i>Newsletter 359</i> (Summer 2010)	75th Anniversary of King George's Silver Jubilee
<i>Newsletter 360</i> (Autumn 2010)	Coronation of King George VI - parade of local schoolchildren in Cecil Square
<i>Newsletter 365</i> (Winter 2012)	Queenie Johnson's 'Guide to Margate' broadcast on BBC Radio Kent

26th November 1968

What is the significance of that date, you may ask? Well, it is the day that Margate Civic Society was formed. The inaugural meeting was held on Tuesday 26th November 1968 at Westgate Public Library and we are very pleased to say that, coming up to the fiftieth anniversary, we're still going strong.

Newsletter No. 1 is available to see on our website and it is very different from the well-produced and edited Newsletter that you are reading now. It comprises just two pages, typewritten on what was called foolscap paper, and contains a short article about Hawley Square by David Scurrall. The preservation of Hawley Square, in particular No. 54, was a main reason for the formation of the Society. What else happened on that day? According to Wikipedia, nothing of great interest. The Vietnam war was in its thirteenth year and showed no sign of ending. The US President was Lyndon B Johnson. Our Prime Minister was Harold Wilson; Theresa May was 12 years old. Discussion was taking place in Parliament about the building of a Channel Tunnel, although of course construction didn't start until 1988.

The No. 1 record in the Top Ten was the theme from "The Good, the Bad and the Ugly" by the Hugo Montenegro Orchestra. Second was "Eloise" by Barry Ryan and third was "This Old Heart of Mine" by the Isley Brothers. Others

in the Top Twenty included Jimi Hendrix, Val Doonican and Des O'Connor. Those were the days...

New films going the rounds that week included "Bullitt", "Ice Station Zebra" and "The Lion in Winter". Television programmes which were new in autumn 1968 included "Dad's Army", "Sportsnight", "Please Sir!" and "Joe 90". The average cinema admission price was 4/10d (24p). A typical beer of the day, Watney's Red Barrel, cost around 1/10d a pint (9p). A loaf of bread was 1/7d (8p). Petrol was around 6/2d a gallon (31p). The average house price was £3,900. Things seem so much cheaper than today but of course the average wage was only around £17 a week.

New cars first seen in 1968 included the Jaguar XJ6 and the Ferrari 365. More realistically, perhaps, the Mini, first introduced in 1959, was a best-seller at a price of £600. The last steam-hauled passenger service operated by British Rail had taken place a few months earlier, on 11th August.

We are going to celebrate the golden anniversary of the Society at our meeting on 13th December, by making it a 1960s themed evening. Elsewhere in this issue, you'll see that we're asking members to have a bit of fun and send us photos of themselves from 1968 or thereabouts. We will scan and print them and display them on a board so we all can try and guess who they are and say: "Gosh, don't they look young?" In the meantime, of course, we're continuing the good work which many members of our Society have been busy doing for the last fifty years. □

Mike Wilton, Treasurer

What's On

Margate Civic Society (talks all start at 7.30pm at the Walpole Bay Hotel, Fifth Avenue, Cliftonville)

Date	Subject
2018	
4th October	AGM followed by 'Thanet's Gift to the World' by Dr Andrew Brown BA, PhD, MCBA, Planning Director, South East Planning Group, Historic England
1st November	'Time to Thank Them' by John Drewy, Patron of The Nursing Memorial Appeal
13th December	Christmas 50th Anniversary Celebratory Event - a 1960s-theme evening with films, music, photo-quiz, raffle and refreshments - full details to be confirmed



Westgate-on-Sea Heritage Centre Autumn Programme 2018

Please note that the Heritage Centre cannot meet at its usual venue until January 2019, as extensive repairs are being carried out to St Saviour's Church windows.

Saturday 6th October - In the Function Room of The Swan, 75 Sea Road, Westgate-on-Sea, 10.00am to 12 noon.
10.30am - Illustrated talk by Sally Whitworth on the Rammell family, major Thanet landowners with a connection to Streete Court.

Saturday 3rd November - At Christ Church URC, 54 Westgate Bay Avenue, Westgate-on-Sea, 10.00am to 12 noon.
10.30am - 'Commemorating the Centenary of the Great War' - A short talk by Dr Dawn Crouch on Westgate-on-Sea in November 1918, followed by a tribute to the men of the town who lost their lives in the Great War.
There will also be a display of material about each man.

Saturday 1st December - In the Function Room of The Swan, 75 Sea Road, Westgate-on-Sea, 10.00am to 12 noon.
'Memories of Fairdales' by some members of the Heritage Centre, with slides of events there by Colin Osborne. John Fairdale Ltd of Linkfield Road Westgate produced high-quality clothing for leading retailers from the 1950s to the 1980s. If anyone has memories to share, please contact the Heritage Centre via the website or phone 01843 832617.

Margate Civic Society

www.margatecivicsociety.org.uk

Supported by



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 digitally illustrated, are interesting and of local interest; they are also varied in their appeal. A Newsletter is published four times a year.

Committee for 2017/18:

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)

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)
(e-mail: geoff.orton@tesco.net)

Treasurer: Mr Mike Wilton, 30 Barrington Crescent, Birchington CT7 9DF (Tel: 01843 844717)
(e-mail: wilton@btinternet.com)

Membership Secretary: Ms Sally Whitworth, C/o 25 Norman Road, Westgate-on-Sea CT8 8RR (Tel: 07949 835777)
(e-mail: whitworthandbird@hotmail.co.uk)

Newsletter Editor: Mr James Brazier, "The Moorings", 25 Barnes Avenue, Westbrook, Margate CT9 5EQ
(Tel: 01843 298038) (e-mail: jasbrazier@talktalk.net)

Planning and Conservation issues: Mr Mike Thompson, 7 Seymour Avenue, Westbrook, Margate CT9 5HT
(Tel: 01843 832834) (e-mail: mike.thompson6565@btinternet.com)

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