

# Margate Civic Society

(Founded 1968)

Registered Charity No. 257884



Summer 2019  
Newsletter  
Issue No. 395



Margate Civic Society is a  
Founder Member  
of Civic Voice

Four years ago, Thanet District Council became the first local authority in the country to become Ukip controlled. However, that control was not to last long as a number of Ukip councillors defected to other groups resulting in TDC reverting to Conservative control. This year, we have had local elections which saw the total demise of Ukip on TDC and resulted in a 'hung council' under a Tory leader. It will be interesting to see how that will work out. More recently, we have had European Parliament elections resulting in no Ukip members being elected as MEPs but a very large number of the newly-formed Brexit party members being elected MEPs. We have also had the announcement of the resignation of the Prime Minister, Theresa May MP.

Three years ago, reference was made in a previous Editorial to Theresa May's claim that 'Brexit means Brexit' whilst no-one knew what Brexit meant. We are now beginning to find out what Brexit means as our country gets deeper and deeper into a constitutional crisis like no other since the Second World War.

However, things at Margate continue to improve with the town receiving more and more positive reports from the media. Margate is becoming increasingly fashionable and is attracting many artists and entrepreneurs from around the country. The recent planning application for change of use of the upper floors of *Imperial House*, 2-14 High Street, Margate from residential to hotel, with the creation of a fifth-floor to facilitate a roof-top restaurant, is very good news for the town. This fine building was erected in 1880 as *The Imperial Hotel*. Let us hope that, following on from the creation of the Sands Hotel and the improvement to a good number of other premises along Marine Drive which back on to the High Street, our lower High Street will see a return to its former glory when it was the town's main shopping location.

At our March meeting held at the Walpole Bay Hotel, we were entertained by a talk given by Mary Smith, a former Head Teacher at Maidstone Grammar School for Girls entitled 'A Schoolgirl's War in WWII'. This talk proved to be particularly interesting and many of our members expressed regret that they were not able to attend that talk. Well, Mary Smith is giving her talk again but this time to Birchington Heritage Trust on 26th September 2019. Consequently, those who missed her talk at the Walpole Bay Hotel will have the opportunity to hear it at Birchington. Details of Birchington Heritage Trust's meetings are shown on page 15. It is hoped that Birchington Heritage Trust will also similarly include our meetings in their Newsletter. □

James Brazier  
Newsletter Editor

## Welcome to new members

We extend a warm welcome to the following new member has recently joined the Society:

Kate Wilson

Sally Whitworth  
Membership Secretary

## Civic Day 2019

### Saturday, 22nd June

**Saturday, 22 June**, is the Ninth National Civic Day which is a celebration of what makes the place where we live attractive, enjoyable and distinctive and this year, **Margate Civic Society** have decided to celebrate the continuing regeneration of the Cliftonville Conservation Area and to steward **No. 12 Arthur Road, Cliftonville** (which received a plaque at last year's Town Pride Awards). This is an excellent opportunity for members and the local community to visit this beautifully-restored late-Victorian house (which is part of the **Dalby Square Townscape Heritage Initiative**) and will be open for public display. Those who have visited before, will be pleased to see that the ground floor of the house has now been decorated with other works also carried out, so well worth a second or even a third visit!

Entrance is FREE and all are most welcome.

The house will be open from 10.00am to 4.00pm. During the afternoon, there will also be ample opportunity for visitors to find out more about the Society as well as how to become a member, should they so wish.

We hope you will give your support and look forward to seeing you there! □

Pamela Pople, Chairman

## Appeal to our Members

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. □

Pamela Pople, Chairman

# Presentation of the Society's 2019 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, 9th 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, presented the awards in the presence of the former Mayor (Cllr Rosamund Dixon - representing the Mayor's Parlour) and the former Mayor's Consort, Geoffrey Dixon. The current Mayor and her fellow Councillors were unable to attend our meeting due to a meeting of Margate Charter Trustees held on the same evening. The Society's President, Ralph Handscomb, and the Society's four Vice-Presidents (Felicity Stafford, Robin Colyer, Tony Snow and James Brazier) were also in attendance for the evening's awards as was John Edwards, another former Mayor of Margate.

This year, the Judging Panel decided to award one Town Pride Plaque & Certificate and to award three Town Pride 'Highly Commended' Certificates as follows:



**Town Pride Plaque & Certificate** was awarded to:

Brompton Villas, Westgate Bay Avenue, Westgate-on-Sea

and the three **Town Pride 'Highly Commended' Certificates** were awarded to:

The TS Eliot mural design by Arnold Schwartzman and located in the Waiting Room on Platform 1 at Margate Railway Station

The Mulberry Tree, Dane Road, Margate

The Dane Park Project (Colourful Margate)

## The Society's 2019 Town Pride Plaque & Certificate was awarded to: Brompton Villas, 34, 34A & 34B Westgate Bay Avenue, Westgate-on-Sea



The new development with its gables, its tiled-overhanging and its black-and-white decoration has ensured that it fits into its location perfectly

This is a sensitive new development of three houses blending in beautifully

with the adjacent properties as can be seen in the accompanying photograph, There is an abundance of traditional architectural details, paying homage to neighbouring properties including the multiple gables, the tile hanging to the upper elevations, the black-and-white timbered bay and the use of salvaged burr-bricks being incorporated into the front boundary wall so typical of the area.



L to R: Harry Scobie (Vice-Chairman, Margate Civic Society), Colin McAtamney (Director, S J M New Developments Ltd - Site & Project Manager) holding the Certificate, Shaun Holley (Director, S J M New Developments Ltd - Site & Project Manager) holding the Town Pride Plaque and Pamela Pople (Chairman Margate Civic Society)

Westgate-on-Sea has a strong and historical heritage as the Town was founded and grew rapidly in the late Victorian period, also extending into the Edwardian era and there is strong architectural evidence of both periods.

Seamlessly designed to preserve the Conservation Area's ambience that blends so well with adjacent properties.

The development is a commendable project using exceptionally high-quality materials that is an asset to Westgate-on-Sea!

A worthy winner of this year's Town Pride Plaque, indeed.

**Town Pride ‘Highly Commended’ Certificates for 2019 awarded to:**



*Photo: courtesy of Mike Wilton*

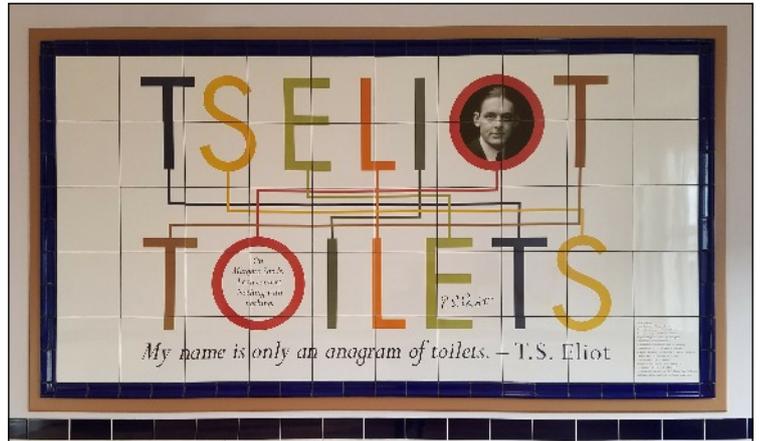
*Mulberry Tree Public House, Dane Road, Margate*



*L to R: Harry Scobie (Vice-Chairman, Margate Civic Society), Darren Petrucci (Landlord of the Mulberry Tree Public House) and Pamela Pople (Chairman, Margate Civic Society)*



*Kamilla Blanche (Curator & Producer of Arnold Schwartzman’s TS Eliot mural) with Pamela Pople (Chairman, Margate Civic Society)*



*Photo: courtesy of Kamilla Blanche*

*Arnold Schwartzman’s TS Eliot mural at Margate Railway Station*



*Collage courtesy of Mike Wilton  
Dane Park Project, Margate*



*L to R: Harry Scobie (Vice-Chairman, Margate Civic Society), Stephanie Nsom (Chair, Colourful Margate [Dane Park Project]), Steve Darling (Secretary, Dane Valley Woods) and Pamela Pople (Chairman, Margate Civic Society)*

The line-up of the 2019 Town Pride Awards proudly held by their winners



L to R: Colin McAtamney (Brompton Villas), Stephanie Nsom (Dane Park Project) holding her daughter Jasmine Hess Senevirathne, Shaun Holley (Brompton Villas) holding the Town Pride Award 2019 Plaque, Kamilla Blanche (TS Eliot mural at Margate Railway Station by Arnold Schwartzman OBE, RDI) and Darren Petrucci (The Mulberry Tree Public House)



Harry Scobie, our Vice-Chairman, presents Pamela Pople, our Chairman, with a bouquet of flowers from the Committee as a token of thanks for all the hard work Pamela has put into this year's Town Pride Awards to make it such a success

The impressive cast-aluminium plaque design now used by our Society



Uwe Derksen holding the cheque for £100 awarded to him by our Chairman, Pamela Pople and Arnold Schwartzman OBE RDI, towards The Margate School as a token of support of the project

A selection of informal photographs taken at our Town Pride Awards evening



*A thoughtful-looking Kamilla Blanche saying a few words on behalf of Arnold Schwartzman for the 'Highly Commended' certificate awarded for his TS Eliot mural*



*Harry Scobie selecting members of the audience to select another winning lottery-ticket. Here, Harry has asked Rosamund Dixon to draw a ticket whilst Robin Colyer and Tony & Pat Snow look with anticipation at the remaining raffle prizes*



*A study in concentration!*



*A charming photo taken by Stephanie Nsom of the Dane Park Fountain with cherry-blossom in the foreground*

Artwork 'Cherry Blossom Margate' by local artist Grace Attlee. Copies of this artwork are available for sale (limited edition) in A3 format from Lovelys Gallery at 248 Northdown Road, Cliftonville for £35 each with all the proceeds going to the Dane Park Project. Lovelys Gallery is the first local business to sponsor this year's campaign



For more information on the Dane Park Project, please go to : <https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/cherrytrees2019>

## Coach trip to Boulogne-sur-Mer - 21st May 2019

Fifty-three members of the Society, with friends and relatives, enjoyed a coach trip to Boulogne on Tuesday 21st May. This was our fifth annual spring trip to a Continental destination, something that has proven to be a good way of raising funds for the Society, whilst at the same time giving members a good-value day out.

We left Margate at 8am and following our usual pick-ups through to Birchington, made our way to the Eurotunnel terminal at Cheriton. We had a slight hiccup there; we were on our way to our scheduled train departure when we were guided into the brand-new French-passport control. We apparently were the very first people, or guinea-pigs, to pass through the building, but unfortunately that privilege caused us to miss our booked departure and we had to wait half-an-hour for the next train. Nevertheless, we had a smooth and incident-free ride to Boulogne where we arrived at 1pm local time.



*Society members making their way through the gardens in Boulogne*



*Members of the party enjoying the sunshine in Boulogne*

We arranged two places for people to leave the coach. Firstly, at Nausicaá, Europe's largest aquarium, where a number of people got off. The rest of the party stayed on the coach and were taken to the Old Town of Boulogne, where we were dropped off by the old Town Walls and went our separate ways.

Following a walk around the town walls and gardens, a number of people made their way into the main restaurant-lined street of the Old Town, Rue de Lille, where meals were enjoyed and perhaps a glass of wine, or two. The



*Ray & Pamela Pople, Richard & Glenys Clements and Iris Johnson waiting for their lunch in Boulogne*



*Catholic church of Saint Nicholas, Boulogne*

The committee would like to thank members, and their friends and relatives, for supporting our trips. As already mentioned, they're good for fund-raising whilst giving members an interesting and enjoyable day out at a good price. We're always looking for suggestions for places to go, so if anyone has a recommendation, please let any member of the committee know.

Having said that, please support our next trip, on Sunday 22nd September. This promises to be exceptional: the "Salute to the 40s" vintage festival at Chatham Historic



*Rue de Lille, Boulogne Old Town with Notre Dame Cathedral at rear*

Dockyard. Even if you've been to the Dockyard before, there's always such a lot of interesting things to see there, and added to these for this weekend are music, vehicles and re-enactments of that iconic period – and not just wartime. The ticket price is only £27 which includes the coach fare and entry into the Dockyard; we're leaving Margate at 9.30am and should be at the Dockyard by 11.30am, leaving again at 5.30pm so plenty of time there to really enjoy yourselves.

For tickets or further details, please contact Mike Wilton at [treasurer@margatecivicsociety.org.uk](mailto:treasurer@margatecivicsociety.org.uk) or on (01843) 844717. □

**Mike Wilton**  
Treasurer



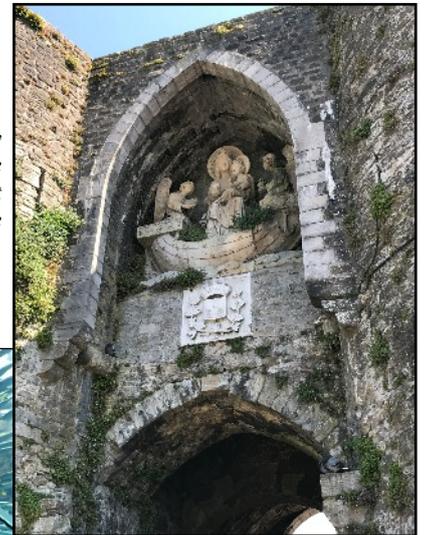
*A view of the dome at Notre Dame Cathedral, Boulogne*



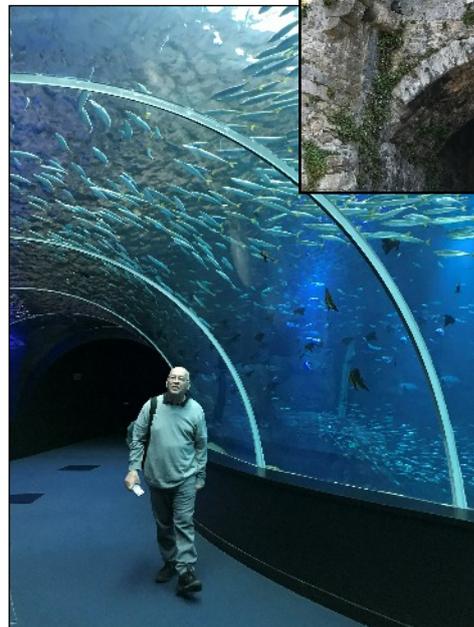
*A shark at Nausicaá, Europe's largest aquarium*



*Carolyn & Keith Lewis, Gay & Peter Schofield and Margaret & Jeff Godden tucking into their lunch in Boulogne. Bon appétit!*



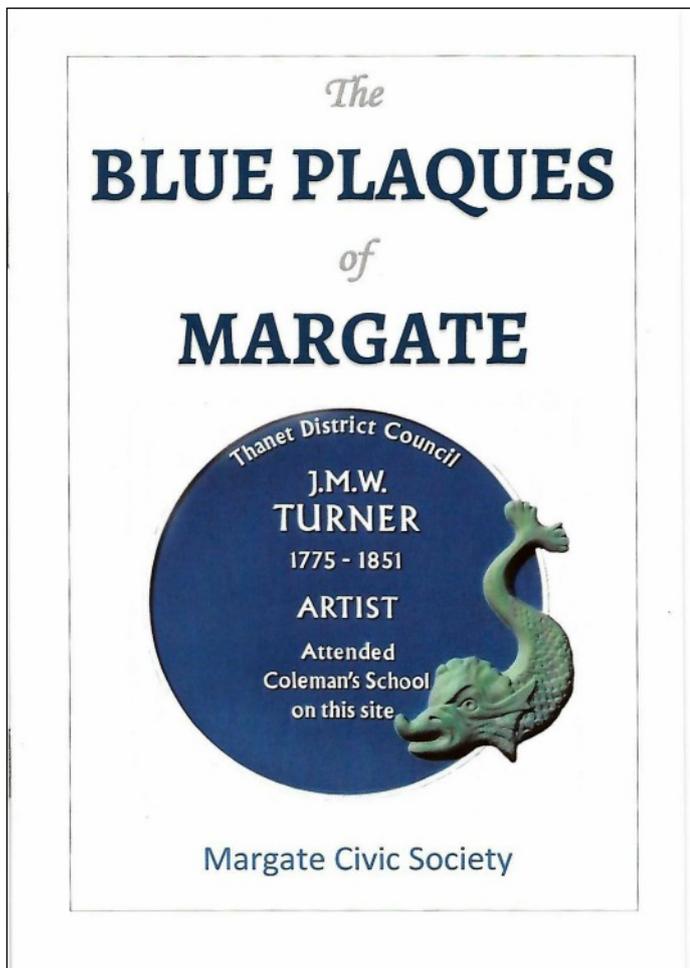
*Depiction of Our Lady of the Sea above the gate into the citadel at Boulogne*



*Reg Hogg walking in the tunnel through the water-tanks at Nausicaá*

All the photographs accompanying this article are courtesy of Mike Wilton and Charmian Amos

## Margate's Blue Plaques - new booklet published by Margate Civic Society



This super eight-page A5 booklet lists all of the twelve Blue Plaques marking the former residences of Margate's prominent personalities of yesteryear. Most of the Blue Plaques were put up by Margate Civic Society (these are the ones bearing an image of a dolphin [or is it a sturgeon?]) some thirty years ago whilst others were put up privately. The latest Blue Plaque put up in Margate is that to T S Eliot near the Nayland Rock Shelter.

The booklet was written and compiled by our Treasurer, Mike Wilton, and copies will be on sale at only 50p each at 12 Arthur Road, Cliftonville on Civic Day (22nd June 2019) and at our future meetings.

Each of Margate's Blue Plaques is illustrated in colour in the booklet which is printed on high-quality paper. The booklet contains a plan of Margate showing the location of each of the Blue Plaques.

The Society is most grateful to Mike Wilton for producing this booklet. The Society is having only a limited number printed so do look out for it and purchase a copy whilst stocks last. □

A big thank you to Mike Wilton for organising the very successful day-trips to the Continent over the last five years and for producing the Society's Blue Plaques booklet just published. For Mike to take on these tasks in addition to serving as the Society's Treasurer as well as its Webmaster demonstrates his outstanding commitment to our Society.

### Margate Civic Society

## Our Autumn 2019 coach trip **CHATHAM HISTORIC DOCKYARD** **'SALUTE TO THE 40S' FESTIVAL**



**Sunday 22nd September**

Leave Margate 9.30am

Return from Chatham 5.30pm

**TICKET PRICE £27**

which includes Dockyard admission

All the usual Dockyard attractions plus one of Britain's best vintage festivals



Coach pick-ups at Wheatsheaf, Clock Tower, Hussar, Summerlands and Birchington Square

Tickets on sale at our meetings or contact Mike Wilton on (01843) 844717 or email [treasurer@margatecivicsociety.org.uk](mailto:treasurer@margatecivicsociety.org.uk)

# Cllr Mick Tomlinson again appointed Town Mayor of Margate at the annual Mayor-Making Ceremony ceremony held at the Queens Hall on 22nd May 2019



The Town Mayor, Cllr Mick Tomlinson. Standing next to the Town Mace



The Mayor with his wife, Shirley, the Mayoress of Margate



The Town Mayor reading his acceptance of office

The historical position of Mayor of Margate dates from 1857 when the town was granted its Charter of Incorporation. In 1974, the Borough of Margate became part of Thanet District Council and Margate Charter Trustees came into existence with the right to appoint a Town Mayor for Margate. Margate Charter Trustees, as a body, is largely ceremonial and the appointment each year of the Town Mayor attracts many dignitaries to the event. This year (2019) is the third time that Cllr Mick Tomlinson has served as Town Mayor. He previously served as Town Mayor in 2005 and again in 2010. These photographs taken at the Mayor-Making evening give a flavour of the occasion and illustrate the pride that Margate has in still having a Town Mayor as its civic head. □



JB

The Mayor with this year's Mayor's Cadet - Grace Maskell, 438 (Thanet) Sqdn, Air Training Corps



The Town Mace was presented to the town by Sir George Bowyer, Bart, MP, in 1864. It was formerly the property of the town of Kinsale, Eire. The Mace represents the Mayor's authority

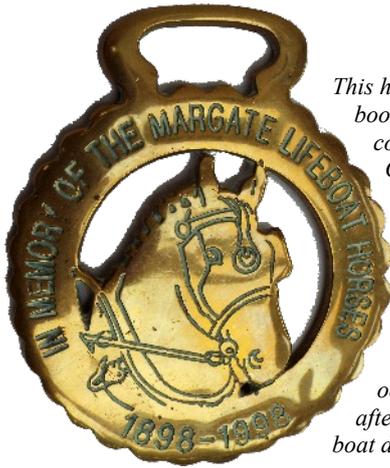


Seven of the eight Charter Trustees present at the Mayor-Making. The previous Deputy Town Mayor, Linda Potts, was seated at the top table on the stage at the Queens Hall. The remaining nine Charter Trustees were absent from the occasion. Cllr Mick Tomlinson is wearing the robes of Honorary Burgess. He was made an Honorary Burgess in 2007



L to R: Revd Dawn-Louise Watson (Mayor's Chaplain and Vicar of St John's Church, Margate), Judge James O'Mahony (Honorary Town Recorder), Mr Roy Potts (Consort of the Deputy Town Mayor), Cllr Linda Potts (Deputy Town Mayor), Shirley Tomlinson (Mayoress), Cllr Mick Tomlinson (Town Mayor), Ingrid Spencer (Mayor's PA), Alan Miles (Honorary Town Clerk), Julie Dellar (immediate past-Town Mayor) and Ray Dellar (immediate past-Mayor's Consort)

## A chance find leads to the discovery of a long-lost tragedy at Margate



*This horse-brass was found at a car-boot sale in 2018. But what did it commemorate? An enquiry to Chris Sandwell yielded an immediate response: the horse-brass was produced in memory of a tragedy at Margate when four horses lost their lives in an attempt to launch Margate Lifeboat in 1898. The tragic incident occurred less than four months after the Friend to all Nations surf-boat disaster*

It is now largely forgotten that, long before our lifeboat was launched by a motorised tractor, the lifeboat was launched by horses - sometimes eight in harness and, at other times, six or four in harness. On Thursday, 24th March 1898, there occurred a tragic incident when eight horses attempted to launch the lifeboat in a northerly gale and, sadly, four of those eight horses lost their lives.

It is easy to forget that horses provided the means of transport for many purposes in those days. The railway provided transport for long distances but horses were used for a multitude of purposes and were a familiar sight to everyone whether they lived in the country or in a town. Today, horses are rarely seen in an urban environment although it is becoming more common to see them in funeral corteges.

The tragic incident in 1898 is today forgotten. Indeed, when the horse-brass illustrated above was discovered, I knew nothing whatsoever about the incident it having occurred a little over 120 years ago.

The accompanying newspaper report from *The Whitstable Times and Herne Bay Herald* provides a good report on the incident.

Someone was sufficiently moved in 1998 to commemorate the centenary of the incident producing horse-brasses.

Do any of our members know who produced these horse-brasses? (I'm told that it wasn't the RNLI.) □

JB



*Margate Lifeboat "Quiver No. 1" in Margate Harbour at very the end of November 1897 with six horses in harness. It is believed that the occasion was to celebrate the good work of the lifeboat and its crew during the severe storm of 29th November 1897*

### ACCIDENT TO THE "QUIVER" LIFEBOAT. FOUR HORSES DROWNED. MAN INJURED.

Shortly after nine o'clock on Thursday night, the "Quiver" was launched from the Jetty Sands, between the Pier and Jetty. Some difficulty was experienced in getting it down the slipway, eight horses being used for the purpose. On launching it, it was at once struck by heavy seas, a strong northerly gale blowing at the time; and, the crew and drivers having to save their own lives, landed in the surf; they made strenuous efforts, by means of ropes, assisted by willing helpers, to prevent damage to it. Ultimately, they proceeded to the Jetty, the decking of which is undergoing repairs and is still in a very unfinished state, a result of the November gale, and having the "Quiver" in tow, succeeded in placing it in a position of safety on the west side of the Jetty. It is believed to have been considerably injured, as it was forced against the pier several times. It was towed yesterday (Friday) morning, and was found to have lost the rudder, besides, in all probability, having sustained other injury. Happily, none of the crew or drivers were injured.

Great anxiety was felt for the safety of the horses by which the carriage was drawn. It was perceived, in the darkness, by those on the pier, that four of them were in great peril, as they were apparently harnessed to the carriage. Every minute the sea rolled in with greater force, and the poor animals were seen to be struck by the waves and forced against the pier. It was soon seen that three were dead, but one was observed to make frantic efforts to escape, in which it was encouraged by the spectators calling it to them. The four were, however, drowned, and their carcasses were in the morning (Friday) found near Marine Terrace sea-wall. They belonged to Mr. Ovenden.

Another untoward incident was an accident to Mr. H. Scott, a plumber, who, it is stated, in hurrying to the sands under the Jetty to see, and if necessary, to assist in the launch, ran against a pile and broke his leg. Superintendent John Eastland, of the Ambulance Corps, assisted by members and by the police, many of whom hold certificates of efficiency, very quickly arrived, rendered prompt and skilful aid to the sufferer, and removed him with the utmost care on the ambulance litter to the Cottage Hospital.



*This photograph of Margate Lifeboat "Quiver No. 1" was taken on the sands beneath the Jetty in 1893 to mark the appointment of Thomas Jephcott (standing on the sands at the bow of the lifeboat) as Honorary Secretary of the Margate RNLI. The tragic incident in 1898 with the loss of life of four horses took place on the other side of the Jetty*

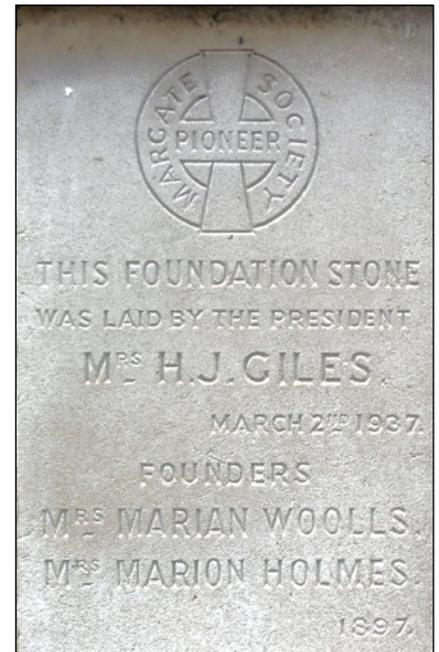
## Remembering Mrs Beatrice Mary Giles (1881-1960), Mayor of Margate for 1952/53 and Margate's first woman Honorary Freeman in 1957



*Photo courtesy of Margate Charter Trustees  
Councillor Mrs B. M. Giles wearing her  
robes as Mayor of Margate*

HONORARY FREEMEN	
1905	HENRY BARGRAVE DEANE
1920	WILLIAM BOOTH REEVE
1952	WILLIAM HENRY HUGHES
1952	EDWARD COLEMAN
1941	FREDERICK LEWIS PETTMAN
1941	WILLIAM GREENWOOD SUTCLIFFE
1949	PETER TERRY GROVE LL.B.
1949	GEORGE ARTHUR ABBOTT
1950	WILLIAM CHARLES REDMAN
1950	GEORGE BROOME FARRAR
1950	FREDERICK JAMES CORNFORD
1957	Mrs. BEATRICE MARY GILES
1957	WALTER JAMES PERKINS
1957	LEONARD MUNRO COBB
1957	THE RIGHT HONOURABLE SIR WINSTON L.S. CHURCHILL, KG, PC, OM, G.H., F.R.S., M.P.
1959	Mrs. MAUD EDITH VENNER
1965	Mrs. PHYLLIS COBB
1972	HARRY VIVIAN WARD
1972	ERNEST EDWARD WOODARD
1972	JOHN HENRY MAY THOMAS
1972	REGINALD GEORGE WARD

*The full list of Honorary Freeman of the  
Borough of Margate as shown on the  
Honours Board in Margate Museum*



*Foundation stone laid by Mrs B. M. Giles  
for Pioneer Hall on 2nd March 1937*

One of the benefits of publishing our Newsletter as a PDF is that it is available on the Society's website three months after its publication. All of the Society's Newsletters since 2005 can be accessed on the web by anyone anywhere in the world at any time simply by searching for key words. As a consequence, your Editor often receives enquiries concerning particular articles that have appeared in past Newsletters going back to 2005 (all of the Society's Newsletters from issue No. 340 to issue No. 394 are on the web).

One such enquiry was recently received from a Tony Stead who is researching Mrs B. M. Giles. Tony Stead, who lives in Cambridgeshire at Little Wilbraham, is researching his family history and had come across the article on the Margate Pioneer Society which was featured in issue No. 392 and in which reference was made to Mrs B. M. Giles who was married Tony Stead's grandfather's brother, Henry John Giles, a master butcher in Margate.

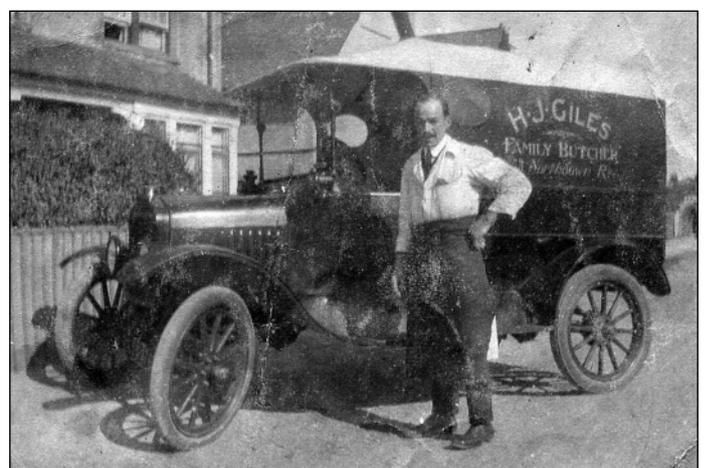
To remind readers, Mrs B. M. Giles was President of Margate Pioneer Society from 1935 to 1937 and it was during her presidency that the foundation stone of Pioneer Hall in Clarendon Road was laid.

Mrs Giles' name is listed on the Margate Pioneer Society's Board of Past-Presidents that has now been passed on to Margate Museum. Your Editor was aware that Mrs Giles had served as Margate's Mayor in 1952 as there are full reports of her, as Mayor, unveiling the Second World War tablets at Margate War Memorial, Birchington War Memorial and Westgate-on-Sea War Memorial.

Tony Stead, however, provided addition information which it was felt would be of interest to members of our Society.

Mrs Giles was invited to be Mayor in 1952 which meant the achievement of her ambition as, for more that twelve years, her late husband Councillor H. J. Giles had been a member of the Town Council but never became Mayor.

When he died in 1938, Mrs Giles decided to carry on his work and was elected as a councillor for Pier Ward. She became the second lady Mayor of Margate (Mrs M. H. Hatfeild being the first in 1926 when Mrs Giles' husband was serving as a member of the Town Council). Mrs B. M. Giles (*née* Norvell) was born at Reading in 1881. Her husband, Mr H. J. Giles, had been a butcher in the West End of London for some years previously and it was due to his ill-health that he sought the exhilarating air of Margate. He acquired a butcher's business in Trinity Hill in 1908 before transferring his business to premises in Northdown Road. During the First World War, he had been a special constable. He gave up his butcher's business in 1923 and ran a private hotel with his wife in Athelstan Road. In 1926, he was elected to the Town Council and died in 1938, aged 58. His wife continued to run the private hotel in Athelstan Road and was very active in a number of local organisations including the Margate Hotel & Board Houses Association and the Margate Pioneer Society.



*This posed photograph of Mr H. J. Giles with his butcher's van,  
showing a Northdown Road address on its side, probably dates from  
around the time of the First World War*

## JUBILEE CELEBRATION.

### Margate Pioneers 50 Years Work.

Formed in 1897, the Margate Pioneer Society celebrated its jubilee by enjoyable and successful festivities last week.

During the past 50 years the society has accomplished excellent work, not only in fulfilment of its aim to further the progressive interests of women, to instil a feeling of comradeship and to endeavour to ameliorate class distinction, but in assisting many charitable causes and organisations, especially during the war periods.

In former days the society held its weekly meetings in hired rooms at hotels and large boarding houses, but being desirous of having a home of its own, a Home Fund was inaugurated which resulted in the Pioneer Hall being built and opened in 1937.

Now the society can congratulate itself on having not only a splendidly equipped home, but one which is free from debt, a notable feature of Tuesday afternoon's ceremony being the handing over of the title deeds to the President (Miss A. Winch).

A three-tier cake embellished with the words "Margate Pioneer Society Jubilee Day," occupied a prominent position on the platform.

Following the reception, the president presided at the tea tables, being supported by Mrs. Amos, Mrs. Grant, Mrs. Deighton, Mrs. Squire, Mrs. Giles and Mrs. P. (past presidents), Miss Spr. (hon. secretary) and members of the committee.

Mrs. Amos attended the 50th meeting of the society in 1897 and has been a member ever since.

The guests included the (Alderman F. J. Cornford) Mayoress (Miss J. Basset), Alderman and Mrs. F. J. Pettman, Alderman and Mrs. A. W. Thomson, Rev. F. Mellows (Vicar of St. Paul's & Holy Trinity), Rev. Arthur & Mrs. Haig, Rev. W. Longdon, Mrs. Oakes, Mr. and Mrs. C. Maughan.

#### Brave Women.

Giving a brief sketch of the society's history and achievements, Miss Winch said that it was formed by a small band of very brave and enthusiastic women.

They threw themselves wholeheartedly into the campaign for votes for women, and that needed a great deal of courage because it was not altogether popular.

They were also greatly interested in the efforts to secure old age pensions and other causes. Those reforms were now accomplished facts and they took them up as every day affairs, but perhaps it was not generally realised what it cost to obtain them.

The war of 1914-1918 gave a great setback to the society, but Phoenix-like, it rose again and became very strong in the 1920's and raised £1,100 for the Margate hospital building fund, and other work included the adoption of a child in the Salvation Army Home at Ramsgate, and members of the society paid visits to Hill House periodically and distributed comforts to the aged and sick people.

In 1940 the hall was used as a canteen for the Forces stationed in the town, but after the fall of Dunkirk the members of the society were scattered in various parts of the country, and the hall was closed.



An Edwardian postcard looking south down Athelstan Road. Athelstan House is marked on the postcard with a X. Note the tram in the distance and not a motor-car in sight!

#### War Funds Aided.

In 1941, she and others who remained in Margate reopened the hall and despite war conditions they gave considerable sums to the Prisoners of War Fund, Aid to China Fund, the Silver Thimble and other war efforts.

Miss Winch added that they were thankful to have been able to do some good, and she trusted that the younger members would come forward and continue that work so that 50 years hence there would be a president who would celebrate the society's centenary.

Recalling that in former days the society held its weekly meetings in hired rooms in hotels or large boarding houses, Mrs. Squire (treasurer), spoke of the inception of the Home Fund, and the erection of the Pioneer Hall.

#### Work to be Done.

Mrs. Squire added that excellent as had been the society's work during the past 50 years, much work remained to be done.

Congratulations to the society upon reaching its jubilee and the excellence of its work during the past 50 years were proffered by the Mayor, who said it must be a matter of great satisfaction to all the members to have received the title deeds of the hall.

That building and its equipment was a valuable asset and it was evident that much loving thought and care had been displayed over its provision and in carrying out the work, but an even more valuable asset was the record of friendship, co-operation and excellent work, carried on in their home with the intention of helping and being helpful.

The Mayor also expressed his personal thanks to the society for its help to him in innumerable ways since 1942, when he was first honoured with the office of mayor.

Several gifts to the society were then announced. In memory of her sister, Miss Ada Brandon, an active and ardent member for 29 years, a microphone was presented by Mrs. Markey (herself a member for 46 years), Mrs. Jones, Mrs. Reynolds, Mrs. Stickels and Mrs. Eastland, made a gift of a piano stool and a pair of silver vases came from Miss Pritchard.

Miss Winch also presented a cheque to Miss Spredbury as a token of appreciation from the members of her valued and devoted work as secretary.

The hall was tastefully decorated with pot plants and flowers, the latter being afterwards sent to the hospital for the Amy Grant Pioneer Ward.

In the evening a social was held with Mr. A. Reynolds as M.C.



Athelstan House, Athelstan Road - run successfully by the Giles family for many years as a private hotel

Mrs B. M. Giles lived for 43 years in Margate and had devoted much of her time to hospital work. During the First World War, she was a British Red Cross nurse and later helped raise funds for Margate General Hospital. During the Second World War, she helped with the evacuation of children from Margate in 1940 and it is recorded that a number of Dunkirk survivors were billeted for a time at her hotel. It is believed that Giles Gardens (off Yoakley Square) was named by the Town Council after both Mr H. J Giles and his wife, Mrs B. M. Giles, in recognition of their valuable service to the town over many years. □ **JB**

The previous article on the Margate Pioneer Society featured a photograph of members celebrating their 50th anniversary with a special dinner at the Pioneer Hall. Unfortunately, the reproduction in the earlier Newsletter of the accompanying press cutting was deficient. As the cutting contains much interesting information, it is reproduced alongside this article for the interest of readers who were unable to read it previously

# The Hall-by-the-Sea

This fascinating account by Arthur Reeve of the Hall-by-the-Sea was found amongst the late Mick Twyman's huge ephemera collection relating to old Margate. Unfortunately, neither date of the article nor the publication in which it appeared are, to date, known. Nevertheless, the account contains a wealth of information regarding the origin of the Hall-by-the-Sea and its subsequent acquisition by 'Lord' George Sanger, who claimed at the time to be the World's Greatest Showman and it was thought that members of our Society would be interested to read the full article. It is believed that the account was first published around 1905.

'Lord' George Sanger has featured on a number of occasions in our Newsletter - see issues Nos. 346 (Spring 2007), 348 (Autumn 2007), 356 (Autumn 2009), 362 (Spring 2011, and 363 (Summer 2011). □

JB



*This Edwardian postcard published by Messrs Gale & Polden of Aldershot shows the ballroom of the Hall-by-the-Sea shortly after it was opened. The décor and the chandeliers show how extravagantly it was fitted out*



*It is believed that this photograph of the frontage of George Sanger's Hall-by-the-Sea dates from 1876. Note the depictions of his zoological gardens housing 'beasts, birds & reptiles from all parts of the Universe' in the large panels shown above the entrance to the restaurant. The Cinque Ports public house can be seen on the extreme left of the photo. Dreamland Cinema now stands on the original site of the Hall-by-the-Sea*

*The images accompanying this article are also from the Mick Twyman Collection*

# THE HALL-BY-THE-SEA.

TRANSFERENCE OF A FAMOUS MARGATE ENTERTAINMENTS ENTERPRISE.

SOME CHAPTERS IN THE HALL'S HISTORY.

The Hall-by-the-Sea, Margate, one of the historic centres of sea-coast entertainments, has lately changed hands, and a recent announcement in the advertising columns of the "Gazette" notified that the premises, after undergoing renovations and alterations, will be re-opened on Boxing Day. This change in the proprietorship and control of this famous amusements centre, known to countless Margate visitors and residents since the early seventies, suggested to a "Gazette" representative that an interview with Mr. Arthur Reeve, so long associated with the Hall's management, might prove of more than ordinary public interest.

## A RAILWAY STATION.

In reply to questions, Mr. Reeve said that the Hall-by-the-Sea was originally constructed for the purposes of a railway station by the old Kent Coast Railway Company, and was completed about 1866. The idea was to run trains between Margate, Broadstairs, and Ramsgate in opposition to the South-Eastern Railway. Various difficulties arose, among them difficulties of steep gradient, but there were probably other reasons which stood in the way of the Kent Coast Railway's enterprise. At all events, the railway station never materialised, although the lines and permanent way were constructed, and remained intact for many years. Visitors to the zoological gardens will remember the fine central path which, fringed by trees, led to the famous menagerie. They were walking, unknowingly perhaps, on the railway embankment, which was never developed for use as originally intended.

## MESSRS. SPIERS AND POND.

Asked what happened when the railway project fell through, Mr. Reeve told the "Gazette" representative that the property was then taken over for a term of seven years by Messrs. Spiers and Pond, who conducted it as a house of entertainment, with music and dancing. At the expiration of their tenancy, the Kent Coast Railway Company submitted the property for sale by auction, but it failed to find a buyer.

## IN MARGATE HANDS.

Subsequently the Hall-by-the-Sea was purchased privately by the late Mr. Thomas Dalby Reeve, the father of Mr. Arthur Reeve. The purchase money, it is now disclosing no secret to say, was £3,750, the property acquired including the Hall premises and some allotment gardens at the rear, to which were added afterwards a small portion of ground extending to what is known as "The Ditch," and the ground now used for the purposes of the Margate Football Club;

so that there were three separate purchases, all indicating the wisdom and foresight of Mr. Dalby Reeve, for the property has since risen enormously in value.

#### WHERE MR. ARTHUR REEVE CAME IN.

"When did you first become associated with the enterprise?" asked the "Gazette" representative.

"I married, in 1873," said Mr. Reeve, "Miss Harriett Sanger, the younger daughter of the late Mr. George Sanger, of circus fame. My father once mentioned to me, in the course of conversation, that he had purchased the Hall-by-the-Sea property, a proposition more in the line of Mr. Sanger's business than his own. The result was that in 1874 Mr. George Sanger acquired the property."

#### A ROMANCE.

Answering some further leading questions, Mr. Arthur Reeve related to the interviewer some interesting facts which contain some of the elements of romance.

He said:—"In those days, in the Dane, opposite what is now known as the Mulberry Tree Hotel, there was a meadow and a pond, which caught the water descending from the two hills. In days when the rainfall was exceptionally heavy, the pond was filled, and the overflow went into the meadow. It happened, about the year 1870, Sanger's circus came to Margate, and was overtaken by a thunderstorm of exceptional violence, with a torrential downpour of rain, with the result that all the waggons and travelling equipage had great difficulty in extricating themselves from the morass at the foot of the two hills. In this emergency a friendly policeman suggested to Mr. Sanger that he should pull his vehicles up on to some land on the Cliftonville Estate, then owned by my father, which was done, without asking permission. On the following morning Lieutenant Twigg, one of the organisers of the circus, called at my father's mineral water factory in Hawley-street, to explain the emergency of the situation and to offer his apologies. He also offered to pay any expenses which the circus might have incurred in this matter. My father assured him that there was no need either for payment or apologies in the circumstances, and the result was an invitation to attend the circus. After this, Mr. and Mrs. Sanger and their two daughters came to tea with us at Hawley-street. Another result of the gathering was that on the 21st December, 1873, Arthur Reeve and Miss Harriett Sanger were married from the old and famous Amphitheatre in Westminster Bridge-road, at the parish church of Lambeth. We took up our residence at Hamilton Villa, Tivoli-road, and I continued to assist my father in his business as a mineral water factor and brickmaker. The brickfield was situated close to the present embankment which rises from the marshes at Tivoli."

#### THE GENESIS OF THE ZOOLOGICAL GARDENS.

In answer to some queries as to how the popular Zoological Gardens at the Hall-by-the-Sea had their beginning, Mr. Reeve said: "One morning a brickmaker came to Hamil-

ton Villa and informed me that there were six or seven waggons, heavily laden with trees, from Canterbury, waiting outside the Hall-by-the-Sea. Though no notice of their coming had been previously received, the brickmakers were soon assembled, the ground was dug, and the trees were quickly planted. Thus the Zoological Gardens were established in February, 1874. To the Gardens was later added the famous zoological collection which has given delight to countless thousands of visitors and residents, young and old."

#### DEVELOPMENTS.

"Later," Mr. Reeve proceeded, "an additional piece of land, extending to what is known as 'The Ditch,' was added, and subsequently the marsh land adjoining Eaton-road was acquired."

#### JOINED THE SHOW.

"When did you actually join the Hall-by-the-Sea?" asked the interested Pressman.

"I was always fascinated by the show business," replied Mr. Reeve, "and I soon afterwards left my father's business for the Hall, becoming managing director in association with Mr. John Reeve, who, though he bore the same surname, was not related to the family."

#### "LORD" GEORGE.

"In the year 1884," Mr. Reeve went on to say, "the death occurred of Mr. George Sanger's eldest daughter, and thereafter Mr. George Sanger came to Margate to take charge of the Hall, while I journeyed to many places on the Continent in charge of the circus. We travelled through France, Belgium, Switzerland, Holland, Germany, and Austria, having many strange adventures by the way, and later brought the circus back to the old country, touring England, Scotland, and Wales. Afterwards I went into private business, taking an hotel at Snodland, which I conducted for three years. Subsequently I went to London, securing the contract with the 'Evening News' for the supply of horses and carts for the delivery of their newspapers, and incidentally conducted the business of a jobmaster and horse dealer. I made a speciality of 'black,' or funeral, work, constantly travelling to Holland to purchase horses of the required stamp and colour. I later went to the farm at Tottenham, of which I am still the owner. After an interval of twenty-nine years I again resumed the management of the Hall-by-the-Sea."



An early-postcard view of the former flower gardens at Dreamland

## What's On

**Margate Civic Society** (talks all start at 7.30pm at the Walpole Bay Hotel, Fifth Avenue, Cliftonville)  
Guests: £3.00 nominal fee (unless otherwise specified)

**Date Subject**

**2019**

- 3rd October AGM followed by 'Nautical Chic: High Style on the High Seas' by Amber Butchart (Fashion historian and author working across cultural heritage, broadcasting and academia) (Guests £4.50 nominal fee)
- 7th November 'Doing Our Bit' by Steve Hookins (a presentation given in character about the roles carried out by some of the Home Front's unsung heroes in WWII)
- 12th December Christmas Soirée - with poetry readings by Anthea & Harry Preston, music, quiz, raffle and refreshments (Guests £4.50 nominal fee)



### Westgate-on-Sea Heritage Centre Summer Programme 2019

Please note that, from the beginning of May to the end of August, the Heritage Centre at the back of St Saviour's Church is open every Saturdays (except 20th July) from 10.00am to 12noon and on every Wednesday from 11.00am to 1.00pm. On the first Saturday of every month, a talk will be given starting at 10.30am as listed below. Refreshments available

**Date**

**2019**

- 1st June Illustrated talk by Sally Whitworth - 'Robert Hovenden FSA and his home, *The Hockeridge*'
- 6th July Illustrated talk by Dr Dawn Crouch - 'How Westgate celebrated the Peace in 1919'
- 3rd August Illustrated talk by Dr Dawn Crouch - 'The end of an era: the break-up of the Westgate Estate in August 1919'
- 7th September Illustrated talk by Dr Dawn Crouch - 'The Day War Broke Out (3rd September 1939)' based on personal memories of Thanet people
- 12th October Subject a speaker yet to be determined

**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**

### Margate Walks by Robin Colyer (starting at Droit House)

**Date**

**2019**

- Saturday, 22nd June starting at 2.00pm Margate Old Town (Note: this is Civic Day)
- Saturday, 27th July starting at 2.00pm West of the Brooks and Hartsdown
- Saturday, 24th August starting at 2.00pm Six Squares
- Sunday, 15th September starting at 2.00pm Margate Old Town (Heritage Open Days)

In addition to the above walks, Robin is also organising a tour of St John's Church on Saturday, 14th September (Heritage Open Days) starting at the West Door of St John's Church at 2.00pm

# Margate Civic Society

[www.margatecivicsociety.org.uk](http://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.

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

✂.....

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I enclose the sum of £ .....

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Annual (Electronic Newsletter#)	£10.00	£14.00	£2.00	£20.00

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and send it to the Membership Secretary, Ms Sally Whitworth, C/o 25 Norman Road, Westgate-on-Sea CT8 8RR

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