

# Margate Civic Society

(Founded 1968)  
Registered Charity No. 257884



Spring 2008  
Newsletter  
Issue No. 350

*"The love of our town leads us"*

President: Mr Ralph Handscomb

Chairman: Mrs Margaret Main

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This is an important year in the Society's history as we celebrate our 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary. To mark this milestone, Roy Adsett – one of our Vice-Presidents and one of the key members who founded our Society in 1968 has very kindly contributed to this Newsletter the fascinating story of how the Society came into being four decades ago. Sadly, many of the personalities involved in the creation of our Society are no longer with us or have moved out of the district. We are all indebted to Roy – who now lives in Ramsgate – and his team who felt so strongly about the loss of a number of Margate's historic buildings in the late 1960s when town centre development was the fashion throughout the country and so many architecturally important heritage buildings were being pulled down in the pursuance of 'modernisation'. Undoubtedly, the creation of our Society proved to be successful in the preservation of many other old buildings although, sadly, far too many of Westgate's fine buildings have been lost in recent years including both *Eventide* (originally *St Mildred's Court*) in St Mildred's Road and *Sea Tower* in Sussex Gardens.

In recognition of our Society's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the Kent Federation of Amenity Societies has decided to hold their Annual General Meeting at Margate this year. Their meeting, which will also include a number of talks on the theme of the regeneration of seaside resorts, will be held at the Walpole Bay Hotel on Saturday, 17<sup>th</sup> May and will be open to members of our Society. It is understood that the programme for the day will start at 9.45am with the AGM being held at 10.00am followed by talks given by Nick Dermott (Heritage Developments Advisor, Thanet District Council), Derek Harding (Programme Manager for Margate Renewal Partnership) and Roy Adsett (Vice-President of our Society). After a lunch break, there will be a guided walk around Margate. Members wishing to attend these events should contact Steve Villette (Tel: 01843 221250) for further details.

By coincidence, the number of the Newsletter is 350 – which itself marks a milestone in the Society's history. Originally, the Newsletter was published monthly and it was only in the last three years that it changed both its format and its frequency of publication to quarterly – hence arriving at number 350 after 40 years.

This Newsletter also includes a most interesting article on Lockwood's engineering heritage written by Tim Keenan, a long-standing member of the Society. Contributions for inclusion in future issues are always welcome from members. □

**James Brazier**  
Newsletter Editor

## *Welcome to new members*

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

Mrs Josephine Balkwill-White  
Mr John Cotterill  
Mr J. D. & Mrs L. A. Naylor  
Peter Ball Associates  
Mr George & Mrs Jill Ross  
Mrs Pamela Wood  
Mrs Susie Hewins  
Mr Keith & Mrs Carolyn Lewis  
Mr Graham Knight  
Dr Fiona Sherriff  
Mr Arnold Schwartzman OBE, RDI

We are sorry to learn of the passing of Mrs Marjorie Balkwill who was a member of the Society for 35 years and we extend our condolences to her family. □

**Garry Cowans**  
Membership Secretary

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## Temporary reprieve for Margate Museum

As part of Thanet District Council's 2008/09 budget cuts, the Council has discontinued, with effect from 31<sup>st</sup> March 2008, its annual grant of £100,000 to the East Kent Maritime Trust which runs both the Margate Museum and the Ramsgate Maritime Museum. This withdrawal of funding poses a real threat to the operation of these two locally important museums. It is understood that TDC has agreed to provide limited funding to the East Kent Maritime Trust of only £20,000 in its 2008/09 budget and that will be TDC's final grant to the Trust. In addition, it is understood that TDC intends to take back the upper floor in the old Town Hall building from Margate Museum in order to use it for Council meetings. This is all very sad news for the future of our town's museum which tells the story of our seaside heritage. □

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## Roc Doc Walks

*(No charge is made for these walks)*

**Thursday, 10<sup>th</sup> April 2008 (2 hours)**

Pegwell Bay

Meet by Viking Ship *Hugin*, Cliffsend at 11.00am

**Wednesday, 28<sup>th</sup> May 2008 (2 hours)**

Dumpton Gap

Meet at the top of the slope at 11.00am

**Saturday, 28<sup>th</sup> June 2008 (2 hours)**

Kingsgate

Meet outside the Fayreness Hotel at 11.00am

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

# Visit to the Royal Sea Bathing Hospital

## Wednesday, 30<sup>th</sup> January 2008



*Welcome to the former Royal Sea Bathing Hospital*

Back in May 2007, Margate Civic Society presented its annual Town Pride Awards and, for the first time, marked one of the awards as 'Outstanding'. It was presented to Paigle Properties for their exceptional contribution towards restoring some pride in Margate with their work at the Royal Sea Bathing Hospital. The project received more nominations from our members than anything ever since the inception of the awards.

One of our members, Lorraine Foster, suggested that it would be very nice if we could have a look around the site so we approached Paigle with the idea. They couldn't have been more accommodating, it just being a question of how and when – a Wednesday in late January being the favoured option. The proposed visit was duly announced at the December meeting and in the Newsletter. My goodness! I wondered what we had started. The response was incredible and my phone never stopped ringing. I had to remind several applicants that the invitation was for paid-up Civic Society members only but, after a little weeding out, we still had about eighty people wanting to come. The numbers illustrate the great degree of interest in this landmark project. We had so many people that it was decided to go as three groups – two at eleven o'clock and another at noon.



*One of the groups listening attentively to their guide (Kelly-Ann) next to the impressive bronze statue of Sir Erasmus Wilson. Part of the former nurses' home can be seen in the background*

It was a cold and sunny day (too cold for some) when we were treated to a potted history and then a look around the place – mostly exterior but we did get a good look (and warm up) in the extensively restyled entrance lobby with its super chandeliers. The lobby had certainly changed since I last saw it when the hospital was still open.

We had understood that the visit would be to view the exterior only but the expression 'third time lucky' really came true for the noon group as when we were in the entrance hall, a lovely lady resident kindly invited the whole group (28 plus me!) in to see her apartment where we were able to appreciate the comfort and quality of her home. How fortunate we were.

I think I can speak for all of us when I say just how impressed we were by the attention to historic detail and the overall quality of the work being carried out by Paigle Properties and how lucky we were, thanks to Leigh and Kelly-Ann, in having the special opportunity to tour the site of the regenerating Royal Sea Bathing Hospital. □

**Tony Snow**



*The Civic Society's Town Pride Award plaque awarded to Paigle Properties in 2007 and now proudly displayed near the entrance to Alexandra Court at the former Royal Sea Bathing Hospital*

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## *Carousel*

Margate Operatic Society celebrated its centenary last year with the superb production of *Crazy for You*. Their next production – *Carousel* – will be staged at the Winter Gardens from Tuesday, 27<sup>th</sup> May to Saturday, 31<sup>st</sup> May. Tickets are available at £10 or £9 for senior citizens and children and may be obtained from the Margate Operatic Box Office on 01843 297780.

Although the cast is made up of amateur talented thespians, the quality of their productions is extremely high and the town is most fortunate in having its very own successful operatic society. If you have not yet attended one of their productions, do make an effort to do so. You will not be disappointed. □

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## **Blue Plaques**

Elsewhere in this Newsletter is a quiz based on the Blue Plaques which adorn a number of properties in our area. They unquestionably add interest to our street scenes and you might be surprised by some of those notables who are featured on these Blue Plaques. Of course, the agreement of the present owners of properties once lived in by notables is necessary before any further Blue Plaques can be erected but can you suggest the names of other notables whose residency in our area should similarly be marked by Blue Plaques? Suggestions to the Editor please. □

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## Margate Civic Society was formed 40 years ago. To mark the Society's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary, Roy Adsett, Vice-President, tells the fascinating story of how our Society was born

The comprehensive redevelopment of historic but run-down town centres was all the rage amongst planning officials and local councillors in the 1960s. Throughout the country, townscapes and buildings of architectural and historic interest were falling to the bulldozer by the hundreds, if not thousands.

Predictably, there was a backlash. Civic societies, the broad objectives of which were to preserve and enhance these features and to encourage public interest in them, were springing up – usually under the auspices of the Civic Trust – throughout the length and breadth of the land.

Margate was no exception. Margate Corporation's development plan for the Old Town included the demolition of Cobb's brewery – a listed building constructed in 1807-08 – and a large area from the south side of Cecil Square to St John's church. Two well-preserved and striking adjoined 18<sup>th</sup> century buildings – Nos. 54 Hawley Square and 7 Cecil Street – were to be amongst the casualties there. No. 7 Cecil Street (then the former offices of insurance brokers A. Shaddick Ltd) had an unusual canted bay-window and No. 54 Hawley Square had a handsome Doric doorcase. In front of both premises was the original red-brick pavement.



Photo: John Villette

*The attractive front doorways to 54 Hawley Square (on left) and 7 Cecil Street (on right) with the canted bay-window – both properties were demolished by the former Margate Corporation in the late 1960s to make way for the new Council Offices and Public Library*

I had worked in Margate for a number of years and had been watching, with increasing concern, what was going on. It was the imminent demolition of No. 54 Hawley Square which stung me into action.

History having been my main interest since about the age of seven, I was a natural and immediate supporter of the conservation movement. From 1946 until 1956, I had lived in Faversham and was still visiting my parents and in-laws there. By chance, I got to know Arthur Percival of The Faversham Society, one of the first local amenity societies in the country. He didn't have to persuade me to become a member.

It was obvious that Margate was in dire need of a similar organization.

I wrote to the editor of *The Isle of Thanet Gazette* and, on 8<sup>th</sup> March 1968, they published the letter asking for interested people to join me in proposing conservation areas for the town and in putting forward constructive criticism of the local development plan.

Amongst the half-dozen or so who responded favourably was Dave Scurrall – a good catch. He was well known and respected by different generations as a woodwork teacher at the Margate School of Building in New Street (later to become part of Thanet Technical College), as a scout leader, a churchwarden at St John's and honorary secretary of the Isle of Thanet Archaeological & Historical Society. Others were Mike Thomas, a young Margatonian with a degree in town planning; his brother-in-law Richard Cornwell, a civil engineer; Henry Poupard, the proprietor of Henry's radio & TV dealers; and Mrs Winifred Pleuger, on behalf of her husband Dr Werner Pleuger, then on the brink of retirement but still working in Northern Ireland.

We immediately got down to business. Mike wrote a report, which we sent to Kent County Council, proposing a Hawley Square Conservation Area. It was about this time that John and Steve Villette joined us.

We perambulated the town and put forward suggestions for updating the Statutory List of Buildings of Architectural and Historic Interest.

By arrangement with the owner, Mr David Cobb, we organized the removal of the Cobb business, professional, public and family papers from scattered disorder in the brewery roof-spaces to the Archives Office in Maidstone. We had discovered the papers when he allowed several of us to make a close inspection of the site which, by then, had been sold to Whitbread.

Within a few months, we decided to go public as Margate's official civic society. On 28<sup>th</sup> November 1968, at a meeting attended by 30-40 people in Westgate Public Library, The Margate Society – as we then called ourselves – was formed.

The officers elected at that meeting were: President – Mr R. N. Towes, headmaster of Drapers School and chairman of Drapers Mill Trust; Chairman – Mr Alan Kay, geography master at Hartsdown School and secretary of Margate Football Club; Committee members – Mr David Scurrall, Mr Michael Thomas, Mrs Anne Hayter (Westgate), Mr J. Mann (Birchington), Mr Henry Poupard and Miss Marshall (Birchington).

I remained in close association with the Society, calling myself 'the secretary'.

There was no realistic chance of saving Nos. 54 Hawley Square and 7 Cecil Street which soon made way for the new council offices and library complex. Our intention in opposing the destruction of those two old buildings – certainly as far as I was concerned – was to expose the low priority given by Margate Corporation to the preservation of our scarce heritage and to prevent the destruction of other heritage buildings from being so easy for it to achieve in the future. □

**Roy Adsett**

# Reports of our Meetings

Around 80 members attended our February meeting. Our programmed speaker for the evening was, at short notice, unable to attend. Fortunately, at the last moment, we were able to find a replacement speaker for our meeting and, as a raconteur, what a find he turned out to be! Chris McCooley had very kindly agreed to fill the gap and he gave us a most entertaining and enjoyable talk entitled 'Kent Scandals – Sensational, Salacious and Sad'. Chris lives in west Kent and is now a writer, editor and bookseller after having been a teacher in Japan for ten years and studying for a time in California. Like all good raconteurs, his delivery was faultless, his timing was absolutely brilliant and his humour was much appreciated by the entire audience. The scandals about which he spoke ranged from the former practice of using children as young as seven to climb up chimneys in order to sweep them to the atrocious conditions of the itinerant hop-pickers in Kent. He ended his talk with the story of the 'King of the Saucy Seaside Postcard', Donald McGill, who designed over 10,000 comic postcards and yet, when he died, his estate was miniscule and he was buried in an unmarked grave at Blackheath. Chris told us that it was a scandal that Donald McGill had been prosecuted under the Obscene Publications Act and that Michael Winner had recently set up a fund to meet the cost of erecting a marker at Donald McGill's grave. In conclusion, Chris told us of some of McGill's postcard designs which had the entire audience laughing and sorry that the talk had reached its conclusion even though Chris had gone beyond his allotted time. Chris will most certainly be invited back to give us another one of his list of talks.

Around 60 members thoroughly enjoyed our March meeting when Russell Bowes gave his talk 'The Devil's Garden' which the speaker described as a place where Old Nick grows many plants associated with murder, lunacy and marital discord. The speaker – a trained horticulturist – soon had the audience 'rocking in the aisles' with his tales of forbidden fruits to forbidden flowers and of the many plants which have become criminalised over time. In addition to the story of the apple in the Garden of Eden, we were entertained with stories of the tomato (an aphrodisiac), mandrake roots (used in witchcraft), deadly nightshade (associated with lunacy and murder), basil (associated with madness) amongst many other plants. We also learnt about flowers associated with untimely death (including camellias and snowdrops) and the uselessness of wild oats before ending the evening with stories of witches brooms made from mountain ash. The speaker successfully achieved a high level of audience participation and everyone went home feeling that they had been both entertained and had also learnt much about the mythology of a wide range of plant-life. For many in the audience, gardening will never be quite the same again. □



## Westgate Heritage Centre re-opens 5<sup>th</sup> April 2008

The Westgate Heritage Centre in St Saviour's Church, Westgate Bay Avenue, opens for the 2008 season on Saturday, 5<sup>th</sup> April at 10.00am. In addition to the permanent exhibition *Time Line*, which tells the story of the history of Westgate and Westbrook from 1865 to the present day, there is to be a special exhibition to celebrate the Golden Anniversary of the Westgate & Westbrook Residents' Association –

*Focus on '58*. We hope to have a little celebration that morning when our guest of honour will be Marjorie Wiseman, whose husband was the very first chairman of the Association.

The inaugural meeting of the Westgate Residents' Association was held on 25<sup>th</sup> January 1958 in the Town Hall Buildings. It was not well attended. In the minutes of that meeting, it is recorded that: "It must be stressed that the weather was the worst experienced in these parts for ten years or more." However, a chairman, honorary secretary and honorary treasurer were elected; the election of a committee was held over until the next meeting when it was hoped that there would be more people present. I am hoping that we may be able to trace relatives of the other pioneer committee members – Mr Monty Levy, Mrs A. Dancer, Mr H. King, Mrs Targett, Mr Pulford, Major Bury, Mrs Stanford, Mrs Jones and Mrs Cant. Unfortunately, the minutes (I am grateful to Cllr Tom King for the loan of the first minute book) do not give first names nor, in some cases, initials. If any of those names resonate with a reader of this Newsletter, please get in touch with me.

What do YOU remember of 1958? What was happening in Westgate? What were the concerns of those first members of the Association? I can assure you that the town was very different from what it is today!

Each month during the summer season, there will be a special display about one decade of the fifty years in which the Association has been in existence: April – the 1950s; May – the 1960s; June – the 1970s; and so on until we reach today. You will see that enormous changes have taken place.

The Heritage Centre has expanded greatly since it opened in April 2007 and this year we have a new attraction – a special corner devoted to the story of St Saviour's School. We have files and folders of detailed material about specific aspects of the town's history, which is being added to all the time. The collection of photographs and memorabilia donated by the public is growing. A website is to be set up in the near future through the generosity of a local businessman – more news of that in the next Newsletter (space permitting) but the name has already been registered. It's all very exciting. Tea and coffee is available on Wednesday and Saturday mornings. Please come and visit us!

The Heritage Centre is open from 5<sup>th</sup> April to 27<sup>th</sup> September – Wednesdays and Saturdays from 10.00am to 12 noon and on Fridays from 12 noon to 2.00pm – and from 4<sup>th</sup> October to 7<sup>th</sup> March 2009 on the first Saturday of each month from 10.00am to 12.30pm. □

**Dr Dawn Crouch, Curator**

# NOMINATIONS FOR TOWN PRIDE AWARDS 2008

This year, the Society received fifteen nominations for Town Pride Awards. This high number of nominations is most encouraging as it demonstrates that more and more of our members are looking out for those new buildings and improvements to older buildings which are enhancing the appearance of our town. All of the properties nominated for this year's Town Pride Awards for 2008 are shown below:



*Extension to 19 Egbert Road,  
Westgate-on-Sea*



*Nelson Villas, Canterbury Road  
and Quex Road, Westgate-on-Sea*



*1-3 Lewis Crescent,  
Cliftonville*



*Former Holy Trinity Primary  
School, Trinity Square*



*Harbour Monkey,  
5 Market Street*



*Comics & Sci-Fi World,  
13 Market Place*



*11 Market Place*



*The Flower Lab,  
9 Market Street*



*Worldbar,  
4 & 5 Market Place*



*Former Wesleyan Chapel,  
Hawley Square*



*4 & 5 Lewis Crescent,  
Cliftonville*



*Emmanuel Church Sunday School,  
Addington Square*



*97 King Street*



*Express by Holiday Inn (former Prospect Inn), Minster  
[Unfortunately, this development is not eligible]*



*Martony Court, Dane Road*

The results of the judging for the Society's 2008 Town Pride Awards will be announced at our meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> May 2008 when presentations of the Awards will be made to the winners. □

# Lockwood's Engineering Heritage

It was with much pleasure and great interest that I read Mrs Queenie Johnson's working history of the Westgate firm A. G. Lockwood & Co (Builders and Contractors) in our Summer 2006 newsletter (No. 343). It was well



*Ivor Read's Napier Landalette*

known locally that the late Mr Ivor Read was a great motoring enthusiast who owned a number of delightful quality vintage cars. These include two 1908 Napier cars –

one a black Landalette type 23-45hp which previously belonged to his father, Mr Arthur Read – and the other an aluminium torpedo-bodied racer fitted with a straight-six cylinder 8,650cc engine which is believed to be one of the first cars to race at Brooklands sporting British racing-green. The racer was originally owned by one of Ivor Read's Cambridge chums who had lost his driving licence through speeding and who sold the car to Ivor Read for £35. This car was lovingly maintained by Ivor Read up to his passing in 2001. In the 1970s, I saw it being driven over the old level crossing in The Grove, Westgate, by Mr Read and turn into Station Road where it pulled into Cheshire's Garage (where Coastal Electrics's shop is now) to fill up with petrol. I just stood on the other side of the road and simply took in its beautiful flowing lines. Another of his cars was a magnificent 1925 Vauxhall Velox 30/98 open tourer in cream and green. This model was raced at Brooklands with some success in the 1920s and '30s and referred to as the Superexcellent. Some enthusiasts considered this model to be superior to the Rolls-Royce and other quality cars of that era. Mr Read used this car for his outings to the Westgate & Birchington Golf Club just to give it an airing. Sadly, on Mr Read's death these lovely cars were sold by Bonham's, the London auctioneers, in April 2002. One hopes that their new owners cherish them as Mr Read did. I well remember a short visit to the old firm's workshop where a fitter was undertaking repairs to an old engine-driven lawn-mower – it needed a re-bore and a new piston. Mr Read was called for and he said, immediately: "Carry out the repairs – we have to keep the old machinery going!"



*Ivor Read's Napier Racer*



*Ivor Read's 1925 Vauxhall Velox 30/98 outside Lockwood's yard, The Grove, Westgate-on-Sea*

to be superior to the Rolls-Royce and other quality cars of that era. Mr Read used this car for his outings to the Westgate & Birchington Golf Club just to give it an airing. Sadly, on Mr Read's death these lovely cars were sold by Bonham's, the London auctioneers, in April 2002. One hopes that their new owners cherish them as Mr Read did. I well remember a short visit to the old firm's workshop where a fitter was undertaking repairs to an old engine-driven lawn-mower – it needed a re-bore and a new piston. Mr Read was called for and he said, immediately: "Carry out the repairs – we have to keep the old machinery going!"

Lockwood's owned an 1891 Aveling & Porter steam-roller which was old when they purchased it. Details of this roller are given in the Road Locomotive Society's historic engine records and refer to it as Aveling No. 2941



*Lockwood's steam-roller*

which was later registered as AL 9463. It is not clear when Lockwood's purchased this steam-roller but it is believed to have been bought from the British Tarspraying Co of Newark, Lincs. The 'Old Girl', as she is

named today, was first registered to Lockwood's on 14<sup>th</sup> April 1927. She was sold in 1962 to Pegden Bros at Elham. These brothers are well known for starting steam rallies in east Kent in the late 1950s and early '60s. Today, this venerable Rochester-built steam-roller is undergoing major repairs at a boiler works in Aylesham and, when finished, will again sport the Invicta brass prancing horse on its front headstock – which I am sure many readers will remember with affection. Lockwood's must have thought highly of this steam-roller as they provided a building for it in the grounds of Hundreds Farm, Canterbury Road. This building had a chimney fitted into the roof to enable the engine to be steamed at the start of a day's work whilst under cover. This building still stands today albeit a little derelict. The steam-roller's present owner intends to bring it back to Westgate when fully restored and to do a tour of her old working places. Incidentally, there is a very nice cast-iron horse-gin at Hundreds Farm located opposite the old steam-roller's shed. This horse-gin has a circular walkway with stone setts so that the horse did not have to work in the mud. Whilst not perhaps unique, it is rare to find one in its original setting. These horse-gins could be used to drive a threshing box, an elevator or other farm machinery.

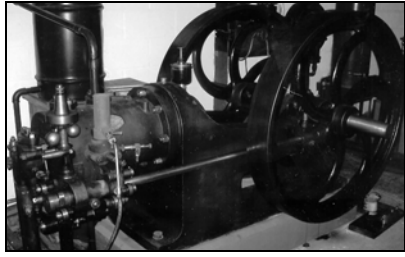


*The steam-roller's shed – still with chimney fitted into the roof – at Hundreds Farm, Westgate*



*The horse-gin at Hundreds Farm*

Several other most interesting British-manufactured engineering items connected with the old Lockwood's yard still exist. When the yard was being constructed, an extensive woodworking-shop was built. It was fitted out with much high-class woodworking machinery from various British makers which should be noted had very long working lives and were still in use when Lockwood's



*Lockwood's Gas Engine*

closed its doors. The machinery was fitted before electricity and the power for this workshop came from a gas engine. The world-famous National Gas Engine Co Ltd of Ashton-under-Lyne had quoted for the supply and fix of this gas engine in 1905. It was one of their N-type eleven horse-power gas engines (No. 37943) fitted with hot tube ignition with enough power to drive all the saws, planes, slotting machines and drills via under-floor shafting from the engine's pulley. A special brick-built engine room was constructed at the rear left of the workshop which backed on to Essex Road, handy for the gas supply to be connected. The engine had its own gas meter on the wall. This gas engine was sold to a collector in the north-east of the country who had it installed in the fireplace of his front room where he could run it to his delight. The collector moved house a number of times over the years and, each time, had it installed in his front room. When he moved house for the last time, he donated the gas engine to the Anson Engine Museum at Poynton, Cheshire. It is now run on a regular basis and sits just inside the museum entrance where it is known as 'the Westgate engine'. The museum's website is [www.enginemuseum.org.uk](http://www.enginemuseum.org.uk)

When Lockwood's finally closed and the auction held in September 2002, my friend and I paid a lunch-time visit to the yard. We were both amazed at the quantity of old furniture and machinery which had been collected and held in store for future uses. It seemed as though nothing of any value had been disposed of during the previous century of building work. We had a look around the woodworking shop and quickly scanned the old gas engine room – the concrete plinth was still there with the four holding-down bolts standing proud. The gas-meter position with the gas-meter brackets on the wall were covered in cobwebs and nearby, jammed on to a six-inch nail was a series of 'Drain the engine of water in the event of frost' cardboard notices from the well-known National Boiler & General Insurance whose offices were in Manchester 3. We then looked around the small outside buildings which surrounded the lower yard. Whilst my friend was admiring some nicely decorated Victorian toilet-pans, I was excited to glance upon a German hot-air engine by Henrici. I called to my friend to come and look, then I exclaimed that it was not only a hot-air engine but a complete Victorian miniature town-house gas works. Whilst I was becoming more and more interested in the unit and explaining its use to my friend he said: "Well Tim, there is no doubt that you would be one of the few

people who would actually know what it was!" I took that as a compliment.

This machine was fitted and used in its own engine-room in Lockwood's yard in The Grove, before the advent of electricity and provided gas lighting in the extensive workshops and offices. It is said that, when in full operating order, the gas it produced gave off a very bright white light at the overhead mantles. The fuel was petrol and, through a series of mechanisms, gas was piped to the gas lamps throughout their yard. The machine was made in about 1904 by The Machine Gas Co and was designed to accommodate 30 lights on the system. The company's offices were in London. By 1904, many thousands of such machines were manufactured by a number of engineering companies and exported to such places as rubber plantations, tea estates, colonial shops and Australian outback properties. This particular machine is now part of my collection of early British and American heritage machinery – and has yet to be restored to full working order. Though I will not be using petrol for running it – for safety's sake – as I am sure that if I did, I would end up in the Great Engine Room in the Sky having an early chat with my great hero, the late Fred Dibnah – bless him! □



*Lockwood's domestic gas works – awaiting full restoration*

**Tim Keenan**



*Another picture of the 'Old Girl' – as she is known today*

*(The writer of the above article would be most interested to learn if any readers have any photographs of the 'Old Girl' at work in and around Westgate. If you are able to help Tim in his request, please contact the Editor at the address shown on the back page. – Ed.)*

*Work underway at the Grade II listed Lockwood's builder's yard at the corner of The Grove and Essex Road, Westgate-on-Sea (Photographed January 2008)*



# Heritage Features Quiz No. 4

How many of these local Blue Plaques can you place? To assist readers, the twelve buildings are listed below in random order. The answers are shown elsewhere in this newsletter



George IV, Prince of Wales, 1762-1830



The Duke of Cumberland, 1745-1796



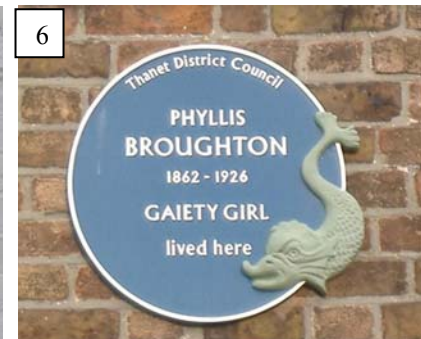
Francis 'King' Cobb, 1726-1802



Eric Morecambe, 1926-1984



Canon Richard Barham, 1788-1845



Phyllis Broughton, 1862-1926



J. M. W. Turner, 1775-1851



Prince Frederick 1763-1827



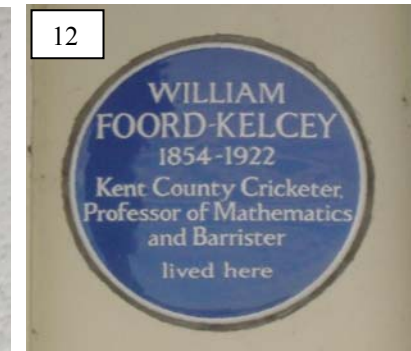
George Morland, 1763-1804



Dante G. Rossetti, 1828-1882



Hattie Jacques and John LeMesurier



William Foord-Kelcey, 1854-1922

## List of buildings (not in same order as shown above)

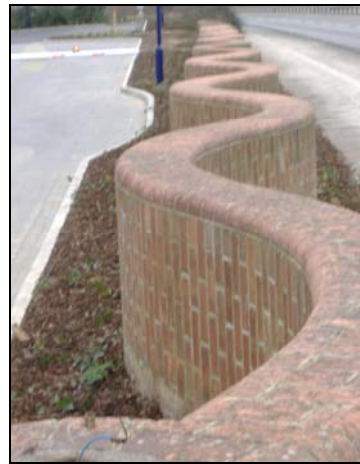
India House, Hawley Street  
7 Ethelbert Crescent, Cliftonville  
York Mansions, The Parade  
8 Love Lane

Corner of Hawley Street and Love Lane  
NatWest Bank, Cecil Square  
20 The Parade  
The Bull's Head Public House, 1 Market Street

25 Trinity Square  
Margate Public Library, Cecil Street  
2 Shakespeare Road, Birchington  
23 King Street



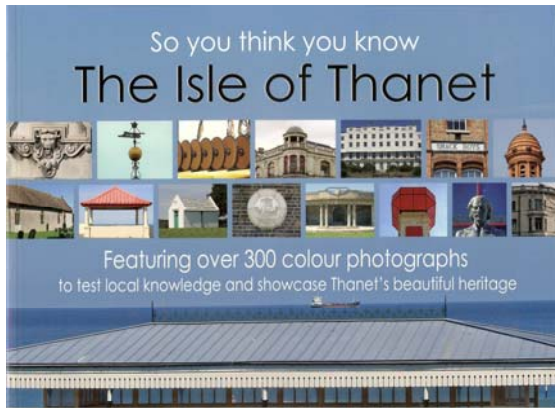
# EXPRESS BY HOLIDAY INN, KENT INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT



The recently Grade II-listed former Prospect Inn at the junction of Canterbury Road East and Tothill Street, Minster was formally opened by Cllr John Kirby, Chairman of Thanet District Council, on 24<sup>th</sup> January as a 105-bedroomed hotel incorporating all the latest features. As can be seen from the above photographs, the large extension has been built in a style similar to the original Art Deco brick-building. The Prospect was built shortly before the Second World War as a public house for the former Ramsgate brewers, Tomson & Wotton. Its architect was Oliver Hill who is acknowledged to have designed some of the country's best *Moderne* style buildings including the Midland Hotel at Morecambe and a number of houses at Frinton-on-Sea, Essex. The shape of the original building is most interesting in that it was modelled on the bridge and two wings of the Cunard ocean liner *Queen Elizabeth* which was then under construction at Clydebank. The design of The Prospect is said to feature a symbolic mast, three funnels and an observation turret. All three 'funnels' can be seen in the top photograph; the front two 'funnels' served as chimneys to the two coal fires which still exist in the dining room. During its life, the building underwent numerous modifications. In 1973, the former saloon bar that had been used by visiting *char-a-banc* parties was converted to a restaurant but, in recent years, the building was disused and looked forlorn and neglected. To see how this appealing building has been rescued from that sad state and how its classic style has been used as the basis of this new hotel is most pleasing. The restaurant and the bar are open to non-residents so why not make a visit and judge for yourself what an asset this building is to the area. But what a shame that the former Chez Laurie, which was also built in a similar style to The Prospect, was not similarly rescued before it was eventually demolished around twenty years ago. But the Chez Laurie was simply in the wrong place. Fortunately, The Prospect was in just the right place to serve Kent International Airport. Let's wish both the new hotel and the airport every success for the future. They both deserve it. □



# Book Review



*So you think you know the Isle of Thanet* by Stuart and Sarah Horner

96pp softback in A4 landscape format published 2007 by Birchington Roundabout at £15.99. Copies are available from various local outlets including Waterstone's at Westwood Cross

This is a guide book with a difference. The authors have selected over 300 of their photographs of buildings and of architectural features all within Thanet. Each picture is numbered and the actual locations are listed at the back of

the book. The photographs – all in colour – are superb and one would have to know Thanet exceptional well to be able to identify all of the pictures without the need to refer to any of the locations. The book draws the reader's attention to the wealth of outstanding architectural detail in so many of our buildings which can otherwise so easily be passed by unnoticed. The authors clearly have an eye for interesting details and their book should stimulate anyone interested in old buildings to getting out and about with their digital cameras to take their own photographs of both the buildings featured in the book and of the many other local buildings just waiting to be photographed. The reviewer's only criticism is that whilst the actual location of each building is shown at the back of the book, it does not go into any detail regarding the subjects of the photographs, but no doubt such additional information would have added considerably to the cost of the book. This is a delightful picture book published at a reasonable price that should appeal to both residents and visitors alike. □

*Reviews of local books are welcomed by the Editor for inclusion in future issues of the Newsletter*

## Answers to Heritage Features Quiz No. 4

No.	Blue Plaque	Location
1	George IV, Prince of Wales (1762-1830) met his bride here	Margate Public Library, Cecil Street
2	The Duke of Cumberland (1745-1796), brother of King George III, lived here	NatWest Bank, Cecil Square
3	Francis "King" Cobb (1726-1802) Banker & Brewer, "King of Margate", lived here	23 King Street
4	Eric Morecambe (1926-1984), Comic, held his wedding reception here	The Bull's Head Public House, 1 Market Place
5	Canon Richard Barham (1788-1845) Author of "The Ingoldsby Legends", lived here	20 The Parade
6	Phyllis Broughton (1862-1926) Gaiety Girl, lived here	India House, Hawley Street
7	J. M. W. Turner (1775-1851) Artist, attended Coleman's School on this site	Corner of Hawley Street and Love Lane
8	Prince Frederick (1763-1827) "The Grand Old Duke of York" lived here	York Mansions, The Parade, Margate
9	George Morland (1763-1804) Artist, lived here	8 Love Lane
10	Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828-1882) Painter Poet, lived & died near here	2 Shakespeare Road, Birchington
11	Hattie Jacques and John LeMesurier, Actors, lived here in the 1960s	25 Trinity Square, Margate
12	William Foord-Kelcey (1854-1922) Kent County Cricketer, Professor of Mathematics and Barrister, lived here	7 Ethelbert Crescent, Cliftonville

How many Blue Plaques could you place? Did you get them all? Do you know of any other Blue Plaques in our area apart from the one for Frank Richards (a pseudonym for Charles Hamilton) – author of the Billy Bunter books – who lived for many years at 131 Percy Avenue, Kingsgate? It will be seen from the quiz photographs that most of the Blue Plaques were put up by Thanet District Council. Now that Thanet District Council has acquired the former Marks & Spencer building in the High Street, it is understood that arrangements are in hand for the Council to put up a Blue Plaque on the back of that building for Walter Sickert (1860-1942) the artist, who lived at one time at 10 Cecil Square. It might even have been put up on the building by the time this Newsletter is published. Do look out for it when you are in Cecil Square. It should be noted that the putting up of all the Blue Plaques in Margate incorporating a 'fish' in their design was a Margate Civic Society initiative towards cultural tourism and was the result of great effort and much research by a number of our members. □

## **What's on**

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

- Thursday, 3<sup>rd</sup> April 'An Update on Dreamland' by Cllr Mick Tomlinson and Doug Brown, Thanet District Council's Major Development Planner (Dreamland)
- Thursday, 8<sup>th</sup> May 2008 Town Pride Awards followed by a talk 'The Slums of Fort Hill' by Nick Dermott, Thanet District Council's Heritage Developments Advisor

*Note: Meetings will resume in October 2008: details of meetings from October will be published in the next Newsletter*

**Turner Contemporary** (all talks start at 6.00pm unless stated otherwise). Please note that these talks will be given at the Turner Contemporary Project Space (the former Marks & Spencer building) 53-57 High Street. These talks, which are open to everyone and admission is free, are recommended. Places are limited, so please book early (Tel: 280261) to avoid disappointment. A range of exhibitions, talks and events has been arranged by Turner Contemporary: for a complete listing of those events, phone 01843 280261. There really is something for everyone in their wide-ranging programme.

- Tuesday, 15<sup>th</sup> April 'Role of the arts in the design and development of low-carbon sustainable communities' by Alistair Gould
- Thursday, 17<sup>th</sup> April Turner on the South-East Coast of England' by Eric Shanes (Note: This talk starts at 3.00pm)
- Tuesday, 6<sup>th</sup> May 'Thames Gateway Project: Contemporary Art and Landscape in Change' by Simon Callery
- Tuesday, 17<sup>th</sup> June Another talk in the current 'sustainability in art' series – this one by Rob Holdway

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

- Wednesday, 16<sup>th</sup> April 'Finding a Family: Adoption' by Tony Farnham
- Wednesday, 21<sup>st</sup> May Annual General Meeting
- Wednesday, 18<sup>th</sup> June 'The Changing Role of Women since 1700' by Dr John Ray

### **Friends of Quex** (talks all start at 7.30pm at Quex: doors open at 7.00pm)

- Thursday, 17<sup>th</sup> April An Open Evening – everyone welcome – with talk on five objects in the Museum

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## **Useful telephone numbers:**

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



# Margate Civic Society

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

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

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

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

## Committee for 2007/08:

**President:** Mr Ralph Handscomb

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

**Chairman:** Mrs Margaret Main

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

**Vice-Chairman:** Mr Harry Scobie

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

**Secretary:** Mr Tony Snow

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

**Treasurer:** Mrs Pat Snow

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

**Membership Secretary:** Mr Garry Cowans

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

**Newsletter Editor:** Mr James Brazier

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

### Other Committee Members:

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

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

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

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

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



## Enrolment/Renewal Form

I enclose the sum of £ .....

**Name:** .....

**Address:** .....

**Tel:** .....

### Subscription rates for 2007/08:

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

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