



Margate Civic Society

**AUTUMN 2023 NEWSLETTER
ISSUE NO. 412**

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

CHAIR'S REPORT

Dear Member

How are you all?

After rather unsettled 'summer' weather over the past two months, I trust you have been enjoying our recent 'sunshine blast' enabling you the opportunity to enjoy the outdoors and socialise with friends and family.

I hope that most of you are now all managing to stay well and safe and our best wishes go to anyone who is suffering from any health issues currently, caring for a loved one or has been recently bereaved. As sadly, some of our more senior Members are now unable to attend our meetings, due to poor health, I should, like to give a special mention to nonagenarian, Vera Jenkins who is now 95 years old. I spoke with Vera on the telephone a short while ago and my husband, Ray also visited, and she has asked us to send her best wishes to all Members. She told us how much she enjoyed reading her newsletters, so much so that she reads every single word!

Best wishes also are sent to two of our members: -

Geoff Orton - who has been unable to attend meetings for some months due to health concerns. We look forward to seeing you next year and are thinking of you Geoff!

Fred Piggott - who I know looks forward to hearing what is written in our newsletters, and I hope that Pam will be able to attend another one of our meetings in the not-too-distant future.

If you would like a mention in the Winter Edition, or would like another Member included, please do not hesitate to contact me.

In Memoriam: Since I have been Chair of our Society, one of the sadder aspects, especially over the past two years, is the realisation that many senior members are now becoming infirmed, and another has sadly passed away since the summer newsletter was published.

Ralph Handscomb: I was very saddened to hear of the passing of our President, who died on 3 August, shortly after enjoying celebrating his 94th birthday with his family.

Ralph took me under his wing when I became Chair 14 years ago and escorted me to meetings with other Societies and related events. He used to host our committee meetings in his home, opening a bottle of wine afterwards for those who wanted to stay for a drink. It often ended with just him and me and he even played his guitar serenading me on more than one occasion! Always with a twinkle in his eye - he thrived on company, drinking either a glass of whisky or Italian wine, the latter which he had delivered, just as my father did, who was his contemporary. His walls were adorned with artefacts and paintings, illustrating his life, sharing stories from his vivid past and he also enjoyed talking about his family, of whom he was very proud. For some time, Ralph had not been able to attend meetings, due to frailty, so we used to speak on the telephone and sometimes visit to enable him to catch up on all the Society news. He was my oldest friend whom I shall miss.

As Ralph requested a Pure Cremation, there was not a funeral for anyone to attend, with plans for a memorial gathering to be held in the future. In view of this I thought it appropriate, at our last meeting, to hold a 1-minute silence, after which there was an invitation for Members to share memories, followed by a toast to Ralph. I told his son, Jay and he agreed that his father would have approved! You will see in this edition, on our behalf, Mike Wilton has also written a moving tribute to Ralph, using information from his colourful life story that was serialised in past newsletters.

Margate Civic Society sends heartfelt condolences to all family and close friends who have been touched by sadness.

Blue Plaque Leaflets: It was agreed that our existing leaflet would be revised and updated in memory of Ralph. Some Members have already kindly made donations, so if you would like to contribute, please let us know, either by sending a donation by post or to give in person at the next meeting. Mike Wilton is kindly overseeing the design free-of-charge, and these will be sold at the cost of just £2.00 each. We do hope that you will support this small, worthwhile project which not only raises the profile of our Society and the famous people connected with our area but represents a project that was close to Ralph's heart.

Membership: You will see further on in your newsletter, that our Membership Secretary, Mike Wilton has explained the need to increase subscription fees this October, which is the first time we have done this for several years. I hope you will support us by renewing your annual Membership this year and thank those Life Members who have already made donations, which is very gratifying. By giving talks voluntarily, donating raffle prizes, purchasing raffle tickets, refreshments and merchandise, this enables us to make a small profit. All help is most appreciated, especially in these increasingly challenging times!

A big thank you to all members of the Committee and Auxiliary Committee for pulling together over the past few months and for their commitment in striving to sustain the Society.

Lecture Evenings: As you are aware, I always endeavour to organise a diverse programme of lectures, with something hopefully appealing to all Members' tastes, without breaking the budget! The summer meetings have proved very popular, with the lighter, brighter evenings, so this format is certainly the way forward. Our new venue continues to be a popular choice, with excellent facilities, enabling us to sell refreshments (including Diane's delicious home-made cake) at reasonable prices which adds to the enjoyment of the evening. There is also greater parking provision, with well-lit user-friendly access and heating, which obviously will be extremely welcome during the colder months. We are also grateful for the added assistance of the caretaker, who has now returned to work, following recuperation from an operation.

It is our intention that these meetings will continue to be inclusive, welcoming, comfortable, and friendly, so I sincerely hope that more of you will wish to come along to our final meeting next month and in 2024 to meet your fellow Members, whilst also showing your support.

The most recent meeting held on 7 September was excellent with the extremely professional, entertaining and popular speaker: Melanie Gibson-Barton BSc (Hons) who has been giving talks for several years to the National Trust, U3A, history groups, church groups, Women's Institutes, Soroptimists, and retirement social groups such as Rotary, CSMA, ARAs and PROBUS – 'live' and in Lockdowns via Zoom.us - and tells us she has the privilege of meeting new audiences to entertain and inform every day. Her range of currently seventeen talks can be viewed at www.toonstelling.com

I have been asked if I would consider booking Melanie again, which is something I will consider, subject to the cost. Members who attended said it was one of the best speakers I have booked! For those of you who did not come along, the following gives an insight: -

The Suffragettes and the Suffragists - Votes for Women: The term 'Suffragette' will always be associated with women's fight to win the vote, but Melanie's talk presented a much wider insight into the struggle that took over a century. The early, often overlooked, pioneers of women's rights were presented to show the difficult path to Britain's universal suffrage. Melanie discussed the numerous crossroads during the campaign and how each resulted in disappointment for women at the hands

of those men and women fearful of losing power. The difference between the Suffragettes and the Suffragists was explained, encouraging the audience members to consider which they would have had the courage to become, at a time when even wearing a badge would have resulted in verbal and even physical abuse. Melanie showed how the personalities of the key players shaped their campaigns and even how women's fashion forced change as the years went on.

The fully illustrated talk included local stories, chosen by Melanie for each presentation, to bring to life the women's fight for her audience members. Melanie's talk was originally commissioned by Leigh WI, near Tonbridge, to commemorate their 100th Birthday and Melanie's extensive research even uncovered that the Pankhurst family's forefathers came from Leigh and Penshurst, which ensured a surprise for all at the WI party!



Planning: Mike Thomspson, our Planning and Conservation Representative, continues to monitor and scrutinise planning applications, making representation when necessary. Should you have any concerns, please do not hesitate to contact him.

Blue Plaque Projects: The two Mikes (Wilton and Thompson) have continued to work diligently, which has been somewhat challenging at times. An update will be included in the next edition.

One:One Collection Visit: Following the success of our first visit, Mike Thompson has been liaising with Frank Martin to arrange another. Frank has just informed us that they have received planning consent for the car park and next phase of the works, so he has asked that Mike contacts him again in February. Something to look forward to in the spring!

Newsletter: Can you believe that this is the twelfth quarterly newsletter edition for which Sally has been Editor with the Editorial Team: Mike Wilton, Mike Thompson, and me. Under this new regime: editions have included contributions from several of our Members which have made very enjoyable reading. This has received a very positive response and we would, therefore, repeat our request that you please continue to give your support and remember that you are most welcome to contribute to forthcoming editions by forwarding articles, photographs, postcards, life stories, news of events, book reviews, poems, etc. I hope that you will enjoy reading your Autumn Edition.

We received very positive feedback from our summer edition, which covered details of this year's Town Pride Awards. As always, we would welcome your feedback regarding this issue - it is always good to hear from you!

Historical Walks: Vice-President, Robin Colyer's walks have continued to be very popular, enjoyable, and informative, whilst also raising funds. In addition to this they are excellent value for money, lasting approximately 90 minutes with a nominal donation requested of £5.00 minimum per person, which goes to our Society. Details of the final walk planned for this year are given below: -

Saturday 28 October: 'Cliftonville Walk' - discovering the history of a Victorian seaside suburb which was developed for more genteel holiday makers. This walk will start at **1400 hrs** at Droit House. Details are promoted via social media and various online tourism sites. Please don't forget that Robin is also willing to organise private walks, so should you have any enquiries: you can contact him on his mobile: **07878 537 448**.

Community News

The Margate School: I was thrilled to be invited to this year's Graduation (at Turner Contemporary) and Celebration (at The Margate School), which was held on Saturday, 9 September on the hottest day of the year. It was an exceedingly successful event, and I should like to congratulate Director, Uwe Derksen, and his Team together with the students. This annual event brings fantastic kudos both to Margate and to the 'School.' This special event marks the culmination of study for their European Fine Art Masters, Visual Communication and Sound Arts students.

The Art Society Nature DNSEP (The Diplôme National Supérieur d'Expression Plastique) provides a platform for students to engage in intensive studio practice, theoretical discourse, and critical thinking, cultivating a vibrant artistic community, pushing boundaries, and creating meaningful contemporary artworks that reflect the individual vision of the practitioner and engage the wider art world. This year it is accredited by ESADHaR (L'Ecole Supérieure d'Art et Design Le Havre-Rouen), going forward our partner is Esä, L'école supérieure d'art | Dunkerque-Tourcoing.

Design Society Nature is unique in its collaborative, exploratory and hands-on approach to design education, instilling independent thinking and creative confidence and developing critically minded designers who are socially and environmentally engaged. Sound Society Nature explores the listening practices, sound, music and communication, communities, and performance with regular public outputs. The students are exposed to a wide variety of practices as artistic, social, and ecological methodologies relating to sound through creation, listening and collaboration.

Arnold Schwartzman OBE RDI FRSA to receive the Honour of Freeman of Margate



*Arnold is the Patron of
The Margate School*

I was delighted to learn that Honorary Margate Civic Society Member, Arnold Schwartzman is to be conferred as an Honorary Freeman of Margate, by the Chartered Trustees of Margate, with the official ceremony due to take place on Friday 29 September, hosted by The Margate School, where he is the Patron. The title is an honour invested on an individual who is a person of distinction and has rendered eminent service to the town. "I'm still greatly in shock at the wonderful news which I deem to be more significant to me than all the other accolades that I have been honoured to receive over the years." Arnold Schwartzman OBE RDI FRSA.

Uwe Derksen, Director said "We are absolutely delighted that Arnold Schwartzman is to become an Honorary Freeman of Margate. Arnold is a long-standing supporter of The Margate School and we are looking forward to hosting the official presentation event this autumn." Uwe Derksen, Director, The Margate School

Guests will include Sir Ben Kingsley and Lady Daniela Kingsley and other guests from the arts, design, film, politics as well as members of Arnold's family and other friends. I am honoured to be invited to this prestigious event, which will be featured in the winter edition. Should you wish to find out more see www.themargateschool.com

Happy 22nd Birthday to Cliftonville Farmers' Market! Cliftonville Farmers' Market was established in 2001 by the Cliftonville Residents Association. It is run entirely by volunteers who give their time freely and it is self-funded. A reminder that these very successful markets are held on the **last Sunday of each month from 1000-1300 hrs**, on the Walpole Bay Lawns, behind the Walpole Bay Hotel, Fifth Avenue, Cliftonville, CT9 3HF. Admission is free.

As you will see in Mike Wilton's report further on in this newsletter: June Chadband, who is the Manager, kindly offered Margate Civic Society a complimentary stall at the August market which enabled Committee members to sell merchandise and promote our Society. Unfortunately, I was unable to participate that weekend, but I should like to thank Mike and Heather Wilton, Mike Thompson, Diane Addison, Kate Wilson, and Sally Whitworth for their efforts. It was so successful, that we are are hoping to do this again!

Wilderness-to-Wonderland: This successful community project is expanding and the founder, Rory Waitt has continued to be proactive sourcing funding to make this happen.

Welcome to Margate: Station approaches looking lovely.... Thanks to volunteers, sponsors, and you the public who encourage us with your support, positive comments and JustGiving gifts using the QR codes on the signs in the gardens.



GRASS Cliftonville CIC - Oval Bandstand & Lawns:

To see the latest news of what is planned see their website: www.theovalbandstand.co.uk or email them at info@theovalbandstand.co.uk.

Lecture Programme 2024: I have commenced working on this and most speakers have already been booked, full details of which will be included in your Winter newsletter.

Date of Next Meeting: Thursday, 5 October (which incorporates our AGM) commencing at **1930 hrs**. Attendees are requested to be seated by 1915 hrs. **Speaker: Steve Hookins** (After-dinner speaker, historical presentations) Topic: "We Didn't Start the Fire ...Explained!" This is based on the four-and-a-half-minute long song, released by Billy Joel in September 1989, listing 118 historical events, covering the first 40 years of his life. Prior to the raffle, as it custom on this evening, there will be a collection for Cancer Research UK. Please note this will be the last meeting until March 2024, so I hope you will be able to come along and give your support.

With My Best Wishes

Pamela

CLIFTONVILLE FARMERS' MARKET



Members of the committee staffed a stall at Cliftonville Farmers' Market on Sunday 27th August. The stall was kindly given to us by June Chadband, who manages the market and who is a member of the Society. During a busy three hours, we spoke to lots of people about what the Society does and its contribution to Cliftonville and Margate, as well as selling our books and notelets. All-in-all, a very useful and enjoyable morning, raising the profile of the Society and hopefully gaining new members.

Cliftonville Farmers Market is really worth a visit. It's beautifully organised by June and there is a very wide variety of stalls, selling all manner of delicious foods and drinks as well as craft items and plants. It's a tremendous asset to the community. The Farmers' Market is held on the last Sunday of each month from 10am to 1pm, on the Walpole Bay Lawns (behind the Walpole Bay Hotel, adjacent to Hodge's Gap).

BIRCHINGTON HERITAGE TRUST

The next talk will be on Thursday 28 September when the Heritage Trust welcomes Brian Faulkner and Tamara Rattigan from the Dreamland Heritage Trust. They will be telling the fascinating story of John Henry Iles and his role in creating "Dreamland" in Margate. The event is at The Centre, Alpha Road, Birchington.



Above: Photo credit Dreamland Heritage Trust

Doors open at 7pm for 7.30 pm. Free to members; guests are invited to make a donation. All proceeds support the museum in the Burley Gallery at Birchington Library, which is manned by volunteers on Mondays, Thursdays and Saturdays between 0930 and 1230 hours. Please visit their website for more details of future events –

www.birchingtonheritagecentre.org.uk

WESTGATE-ON-SEA HERITAGE CENTRE

The Westgate-on-Sea Heritage Centre's next monthly Saturday talk will be held on Saturday 14th October at Christchurch URC, Westgate Bay Avenue, Westgate-on-Sea.

"October 1973 – Water, water everywhere". John Naden and Gary Chandler, who were young Police Constables at the time, will share their experiences of that terrible and unforgettable night, when a large part of Canterbury Road area was underwater.



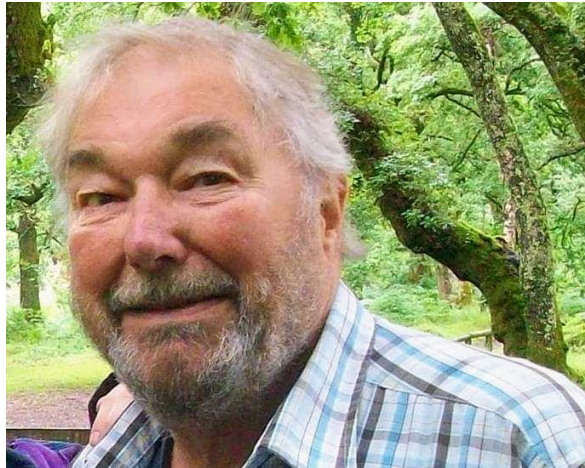
Doors open at 10 am and the talk starts at 10.30. All are welcome and non-members pay just £2 on the door.

Please visit the Heritage Centre website for more details of future events –

www.westgateheritagecentre.org.uk

RALPH HANDSCOMB

23rd July 1929 – 3rd August 2023



Ralph Handscomb, who has died at the age of 94, was Margate Civic Society's long-standing and highly regarded President. His life story, chronicled in recent editions of the Newsletter, was adventurous and wide-ranging, as the variety and quantity of artefacts and souvenirs in his home would attest.

Ralph was born in Muswell Hill, London, son of Percy and Norah and younger sibling of Rita and Douglas. Prior to World War II, his connection to Thanet was staying with his maternal grandparents, the Warboys, in Kingsgate, where he learnt to swim. During the war, he was firstly evacuated to Cambridge and then, in 1940, sent to Kent College in Canterbury. After one term, the school was evacuated to Truro in Cornwall, where Ralph stayed until the end of the war, when the school returned to Canterbury. He noted in his autobiography that celebrating the end of the war in Cornwall with glasses of cider was the first time he got a little drunk.

In 1946, Ralph left school and started work in London in a typically slightly exotic job as an apprentice Fur Buyer. However, in 1947 he received his call-up papers for National Service and reported as Private Handscomb to the Lancashire Regiment. Following initial training and a spell guarding Durham Castle in the notably cold winter of 1947, he was posted to the Royal Artillery at Woolwich Barracks. After a short period there, he volunteered for Airborne Forces. After parachute training, he was posted to 33rd Airborne Light Regiment of the Royal Artillery in Germany. His main occupation there was to be NCO in charge of the Officers Club, where Ralph had a fine time.

All good things come to an end and demob came in 1949, when Ralph returned to his fur-buying career in the City of London. For the next year or so, life was full of parties and fun, but work was dull and in October 1950, at the age of 21, Ralph signed up for three years in the British South African Police in Rhodesia. He arrived in Salisbury (now Harare, Zimbabwe) in March 1951 and underwent comprehensive training, mainly in horsemanship.

After three months' training, he was posted to Bulawayo where he carried out all manner of policing duties, including investigations of murders and thefts. His next posting was to Nymanhlovu, a rural district in Matebeleland, where he spent much of his time patrolling the district on horseback, sleeping under the stars for six weeks at a time and keeping a very watchful lookout for lions and snakes.

After four years' service and several other postings and adventures in Rhodesia, Ralph took his discharge from the police and returned home. He applied to the Crown Agents for posts with other colonial police forces. Whilst awaiting the result of his application, he had a typically active spell of leave, including clubbing in London, scuba diving in Dorset and swimming in Spain. Unfortunately Crown Agents turned down him down



Police Constable Handscomb

as his eyesight was not up to standard. A friend told him that the Diamond Trading Company, a subsidiary of DeBeers, was looking for people to go to Sierra Leone to buy diamonds. Ralph applied, was taken on and after six months training in London, he flew to Freetown in Sierra Leone, arriving in early 1956.

Ralph was, of course, in his element in Sierra Leone. He visited distant villages, often being flown in the company aircraft, buying diamonds. He was based at various locations in Sierra Leone, building rondavels, or traditional African huts, as bases and setting up radio links to maintain contact with Freetown.

In July 1958, Ralph took twelve weeks leave, returning to England and staying with his parents at their cottage in Hoaden, near Ash. Whilst there, he fell in love with a lady who he met at Sarre Court Country Club; this was Daphne, who was a dentist with a practice in Birchington and who Ralph would marry a year later.



Ralph and Daphne in 1958

In September 1958, Ralph returned to Sierra Leone but this time being rather miserable at leaving Daphne behind. He continued his life travelling around the country buying diamonds until July 1958, when he returned home on leave. On 5th September 1959, Ralph and Daphne were married in the Congregational Church at Ash. The following day, they flew from Lydd to Le Touquet on Silver City airline and spent a happy month driving around the Continent in Ralph's convertible Morris Minor.

Ralph and Daphne set up home in Sierra Leone, where Ralph continued his career as a diamond trader, including becoming Manager of the company's office in the town of Bo. In 1962, their son Jay was born. In 1965, because the political situation in Sierra Leone was becoming unstable, they decided to return to the UK

Daphne returned to dentistry in Birchington when her previous practice came back on the market. Ralph purchased a 28-acre farm at Upstreet, where they lived and worked for nineteen years, growing strawberries and asparagus and looking after cattle, ducks, geese, chickens and a rescue pony, before selling up and moving their family home to Cliftonville.

Ralph and Daphne were very happily married for almost 47 years before her death in 2006. Daphne was herself a committee member of the Society as well as taking on the roles of Minutes Secretary and raffle organiser. Ralph played a very active role in the community. Amongst other things, he was Treasurer of the newly formed Friends of the Theatre Royal and helped in the saving and re-opening of the theatre; Chairman of the Friends of the Marlowe theatre and was involved in the fight for the Odeon Cinema to be the new Marlowe theatre; Treasurer of the Canterbury Fringe, part of the Canterbury Festival; Chair of the Friends of Quex; and on the committees of the Theatre Royal, Margate and the Granville Theatre in Ramsgate.

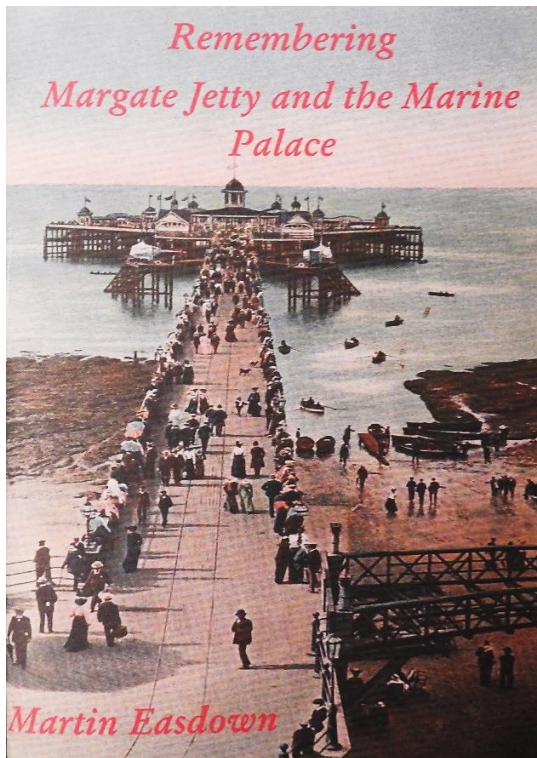
Both Ralph and Daphne joined Margate Civic Society in 1991. He joined the committee in November 1992 and took on the position of Acting Secretary. A year later this was made substantive, and he continued as Honorary Secretary of the Society until November 1996, when he stood down. In November 1998, Ralph became Chairman of the Society until he retired from that position in October 2002, although remaining a committee member. Finally, in October 2004, Ralph became President of the Society, a position he held until his death.

The Society, and all who knew Ralph, mourn the passing of a friendly, helpful, cultured man who carried out much good work for the community as a whole and for Margate Civic Society in particular. He will be much missed.

BOOK REVIEW by James Brazier

Remembering Margate Jetty and the Marine Palace by Martin Easdown

A5 size 80pp sb £4.99



This is the latest book published by Michaels Bookshop and, in the opinion of your reviewer, is one of the best books that Michaels Bookshop has published since it started publishing nearly 20 years ago after Ramsgate Library was burnt down in 2004 and its important collection of local books destroyed.

It was following that disastrous fire that Michael Child, a bookseller in Ramsgate, decided that the safest way to protect scarce copies of our local history books was to produce copies of local history books at affordable prices and also to publish new books written by local authors on different aspects of local history.

Indeed, Michaels Bookshop has, to date, published an amazing total of 224 books of local interest. If you haven't yet visited his bookshop at 72 King Street, Ramsgate you are recommended to do so.

His shop is open from 10am to 5pm on Monday, Wednesday, Friday and Saturday each week (it is closed on Bank Holidays).

This book is simply a 'must have' for anyone interested in the history of Margate Jetty and the Marine Palace. The author has put together an amazing array of illustrations (there are over 100 illustrations in the book) which show just how popular the Jetty was in the late-nineteenth century and in the first half of the twentieth century.

But the book is much more than a collection of illustrations. The author tells the story of how the Jetty developed from Jarvis's Landing Stage, a wooden structure that was built 200 years ago and demolished following storm damage in November 1851, to be replaced by a new Jetty – Margate's iron pier that was always known as the Jetty – built by Eugenius Birch and completed in 1857. The new Jetty was severely damaged in a gale in November 1877 and was extended the following year with the addition of a pavilion at the sea end of the Jetty.

Twenty years later, the Jetty suffered much damage in the Great Storm of 1897 when the Marine Palace (opened in 1885) was destroyed. The January 1978 storm completely washed away the main structure leaving the Jetty Extension isolated out to sea. Finally, the remains of the Jetty Extension were removed in 1998.

In this most interesting book, the author tells not only the story of the Jetty and the Marine Palace but also of the one-time proposed Kursaal (similar to those that were built at both Blackpool and at Southend-on-Sea). The book also tells the story of the Sun Deck (1926-1991): it is so sad that none of these structures remain. This little book shows just how important those structures were during Margate's heyday as one of the country's leading holiday resorts.

Michaels Bookshop deserves congratulations for publishing this book at such an affordable price. This well written and thoroughly researched little book is highly recommended.

James Brazier

A SHORT WESTBROOK WALK by Robin Colyer

Robin has written a second short walk especially for members of the Civic Society

Railway Station

Start the walk at Margate Railway Station. This area that we know as Westbrook was west of the brooks, the marshy land that is now the site of Dreamland. Until the causeway of Marine Terrace was constructed in 1809 there was no direct route between Westbrook and Cecil Square.

The London, Chatham & Dover Railway arrived in Margate in 1863 when the line was extended from Herne Bay and was the second railway company to reach the town. The water tower is part of the original station buildings. The present buildings were built by the Southern Railway in 1926 when they constructed a new loop line from Broadstairs to Ramsgate.

The station building is a monumental classical structure designed by a railway company architect, probably Edwin Fry. Ramsgate Station was designed by the same architect and built at the same time.



The old and new Margate Railway Station

Arlington House



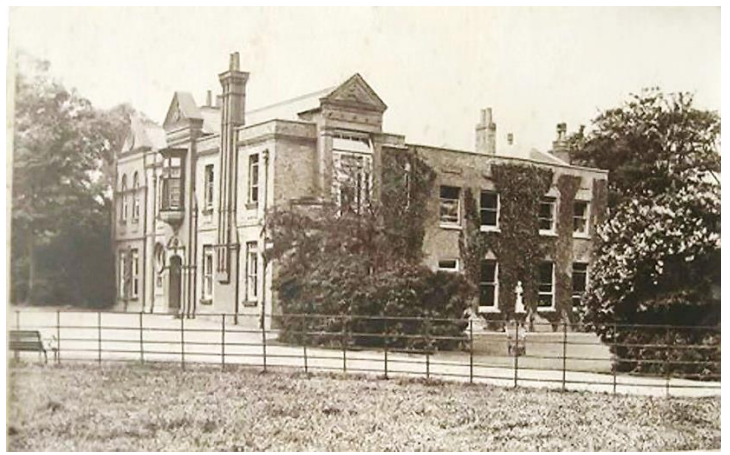
Arlington House under construction

Proceed out of the Station Yard and into All Saints Avenue and look up at Arlington House which was controversial when it was built in 1964 and has remained so ever since.

The site was owned by the Borough Council and they invited Bernard Sunley, a South London builder and developer, to build the town's first tower block. Sunley had grown his business building wartime aerodromes and later developed residential projects in the Caribbean. The building is a cast concrete tower and was constructed using demountable shuttering. Every floor has eight flats with sea views and there are 18 floors. The development included a car park and shops.

The terminus of the first railway company to serve the town was close by on the edge of the site. The South Eastern Railway arrived in Margate in 1846 and followed a route via Ashford and Canterbury. Margate Sands Station was closed in 1926 when the present station and loop line to Ramsgate were opened.

Hartsdown Park



(Left) An early photograph of Hartsdown House and (right) after the extension was added

Passing under the railway bridge past the Coastguard houses, you will reach Hartsdown Park. Hartsdown (originally Hertisdown) was the family seat of the Hatfeild family at the time the railways came to Margate. The house once had sea views and its land stretched down to the sea. The lands around Westbrook were once the property of James Taddy, a yeoman farmer. His daughter married into the Hatfeild family and Charles Taddy Hatfeild purchased the estate before the railways and so the family benefitted from the sale of land to the railway companies and the housing development in the area,

In 1926 Mrs Maud Hatfeild was the first women to be Mayor of Margate. Her son, Captain Charles Eric Hatfeild was a county cricketer for Kent and sadly was killed on active service in France in 1918. The estate was sold to the Borough of Margate and became a public park. Margate Football Club moved its ground into the park and was a "nursery club" for Arsenal in the 1930s.

Leaving the gateway into the park and continuing along All Saints Avenue, the land between the park and the church was once destined to be the site of impressive council offices. The plans were abandoned and housing was built instead.

All Saints Church, Westbrook



The church was built between 1892-94 on land donated by the Hatfeild family. St John's Church had established a mission in Westbrook but it was felt that time had come for the prosperous suburb to have its own church. Thomas Andrews, a local architect, designed a new church in gothic style. The tower was built later and in two separate phases.

The base of the tower was designed by E.S. Prior in 1897. He was a pupil of Norman Shaw, an eminent figure in Arts and Crafts movement. The upper part of the tower is the work of another distinguished church architect, W D Caroe. The former vicarage next to the church is a beautiful property in the style of a Cotswold farm house.

If you would like to join Robin on his Cliftonville walk on the 28th October, please contact him on 07878 537 448.

THE WESTBROOK LOGGIA (FORMERLY THE WESTBROOK BATHING PAVILION)



The Bathing Pavilion from the sands

Carrying on with the Westbrook connection, some very good news has recently been reported about the Westbrook Loggia (formerly the Westbrook Bathing Pavilion). Thanet District Council has agreed the sale of the building to the well-known artist, Tracey Emin. Renovation plans for the building will include a community bathers' club with café, hot showers, toilet facilities, sauna and winter club room on the ground floor. The first floor will provide a range of facilities including a large art studio, restaurant, and gym. The roof area will be transformed into a sunbathing area with refreshment facilities. Tracey Emin said: "I'm so happy and excited. Margate is going to have a bathers' club that we can use all year round. It will take a couple of years to get it renovated and up and running. I want to make it beautiful and grand again." It will be wonderful to see this building brought back to life after being derelict for so long.

The building was originally opened in 1914 and a report in the *East Kent Times* on the 22nd July 1914 read - 'More Improvements at Margate. Westbrook Bathing Pavilion Opened. In the words of the Mayor (Alderman W B Reeve) another chapter in the history of Margate as a seaside resort was commenced on Monday, when the new bathing pavilion at Westbrook was formally opened. This building, which has been in course of erection since the latter portion of last year, will undoubtedly prove one of the greatest attractions at the Westonville end of the town.

The new pavilion is a very imposing edifice and provides ample accommodation for a very large number of bathers of both sexes. The cubicles are fitted in a most lavish manner and access to the sea from them is obtained through two subterranean passages, which brings the bather directly on to the sands. In fact, at high tide the water will reach almost to the entrances. No pains have been spared to provide for the bathers' comforts, and water douches are at the disposal of everyone.

In addition to the portion of the building allocated to bathers, considerable space has been set aside as a tea room. The roof has been constructed in such a manner that it can be used as a balcony on which visitors may enjoy their refreshment in the open air. Indeed, in every respect, the pavilion is thoroughly up-to-date and reflects the greatest credit upon, Mr Jenner, a member of the Borough Engineer's staff, who has had the whole of the architectural arrangements under his care'. The report went on to say 'that the building had cost over £6,000 to erect'. After a speech, the Mayor formally declare the building open to the public and expressed the hope that it would be well patronised. The report continued that 'large numbers of visitors

afterwards inspected the Pavilion and many availed themselves of the opportunity of partaking of the dainty teas which were served in the tea rooms and on the balconies’.

Shortly after the opening of the Bathing Pavilion, war was declared and the building was used to provide meals for troops who were stationed in Margate during WW1.

Why was the area sometimes called Westonville? A local press report in 1923 said that “At Westbrook meanwhile, there was a heated argument going on about the name of the area”. It had first been named Westonville but was about to be called Westbrook. There were many letters received on both sides of the argument. Some thought “brook” sounded unhealthy, but others thought that it sounded relaxing and countrified. Some liked ‘ville’ so that the western end of Margate could equal the upmarket area of Cliftonville to the east. Others thought ‘ville’ was too Frenchified and sounded cheap. No-one seemed aware that the Council had already given the Bethlem and Bridewell Hospitals permission to call their estate ‘the Westbrook Estate, West Margate’. The row went on through 1923. On the 21st July 1923 it was reported that of the 429 residents from Margate West Station to Westonville Avenue, 290 were in favour of Westonville. Therefore, the Corporation should agree to the name. No sooner had this been reported than the owner of the St George Hotel, Margate, who claimed that his family had lived in Margate for two centuries, said that historically it should be Westbrook. Dr Rowe, the noted local antiquarian, was also in favour of Westbrook, but the argument did not end there and the debate lasted for some time after that. Eventually, of course, as the Hospitals had originally intended, Westbrook was adopted as the official name.

There are interesting postcards (such as the one below) from around from the Edwardian era, the 1920’s and 1930’s that have the name Westonville rather than Westbrook on them.



The postcard above shows many people bathing in the sea outside the Bathing Pavilion in late 1920s/early 1930s, the Westbrook concert pavilion is also visible on the promenade in the distance. (This building was damaged in the floods of 1953 and never rebuilt).

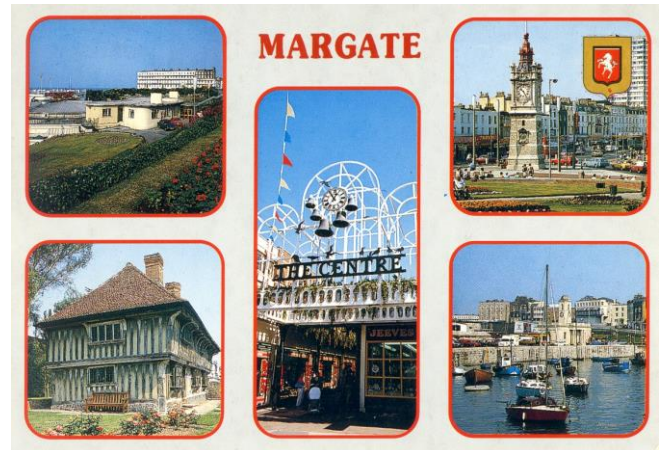
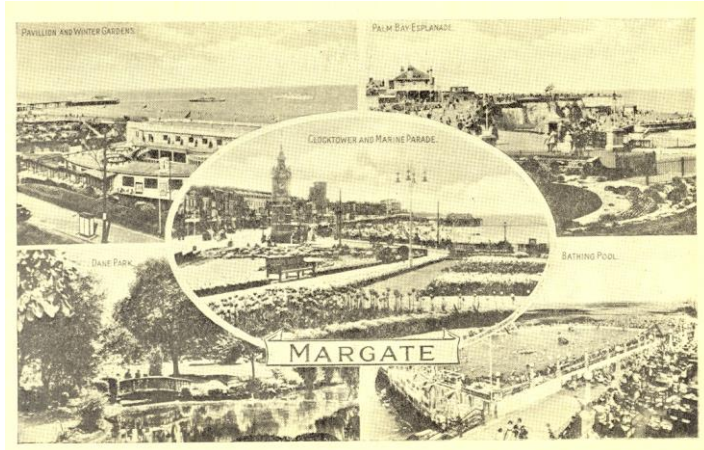
Sally Whitworth (with thanks to James Brazier for information provided about the Bathing Pavilion)

UPDATE FROM THE MARGATE MUSEUM TRUST

by Felicity Stafford

The major exhibition will be based on

THE WINTER GARDENS



The Exhibition will contain some of some of the Museum's collection of Posters advertising entertainments at the venue.

Stars who appeared at The Winter Gardens included: the famous ballerina - Anna Pavlova (1925); Julie Andrews (1950) and The Beatles (1963).

You can even sit on an original Winter Gardens' chair!

EXHIBITION - OPENING DATE TO BE CONFIRMED.

Margate Museum - Usual Opening Times and Prices:

Margate Museum is in The Market Place, Margate, CT9 1EN Telephone: 01843 231213

Margate Museum – Saturdays, Sundays and Bank Holidays from 11 am to 3 pm. Last entry at 2.15 pm. Adults - £2. Concessions £1.50. Accompanied children (up to 16) free.

If you have a love of Margate and some free time the Museum is always looking for **VOLUNTEERS.**

REPORT FROM THE TREASURER

As I indicated in the Summer edition of the Newsletter, the Society has not fully recovered from the hiatus caused by Covid. The amount we are receiving from subscription fees is half of what it was only a few years ago and increases in hire fees have meant that we can no longer offer our coach trips, which were popular and which were very good for fund-raising. On the other side of the coin, increases in inflation and the cost of living have meant that expenses, such as hall hire and guest speaker fees, have gone up considerably. So, less coming in and more going out – we all know what the result will be.

Because of this, the committee is reluctantly increasing the subscription fees with effect from 5th October, to cover the year 2023/24. This is subject to approval by a majority of members attending the AGM on 5th October. Without prejudging the issue, we believe that the new fees will be approved and they are shown on the back page of this Newsletter. The new fees, although quite an increase on the old ones, are in line with other civic societies, both local and national, and are the first increases for over five years.

A number of members have given generous donations to the Society. Please be assured that these donations are much appreciated.

We ask that life members who wish to receive printed Newsletters and who have not already paid to cover this year, donate at least £5 as a contribution towards print and delivery costs.

We very much hope that you will continue to support the Society.

WAYS TO PAY YOUR SUBSCRIPTION

By bank transfer

The Society banks with NatWest. Our sort code is 60-02-32, account number 99666928. Please email the Treasurer on treasurer@margatecivicsociety.org.uk to advise payment.

By PayPal

Use the email address treasurer@margatecivicsociety.org.uk and please email the Treasurer to advise payment.

By cheque

Please hand your cheque to any committee member or post it to the Treasurer at Mike Wilton, 30 Barrington Crescent, Birchington CT7 9DF. Please make your cheque payable to 'Margate Civic Society'.

By cash

Yes, we still take cash – please hand it to any committee member.

Finally, if you pay income tax you may be able to Gift Aid your subscription or donation, which means the Society can claim from HM Government 25p for every £1



Members enjoying the July 2023 talk – The Cinque Ports - given by James Dickinson



Founded in 1968, the Margate Civic Society is a registered charity (No.257884) and a founder member of Civic Voice. 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.

Committee for 2023/2024:

President:

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Tel: 01843 221689 e-mail: chair@margatecivicsociety.org.uk

Vice-Chair: Mr Harry Scobie

Secretary: Vacancy e-mail: secretary@margatecivicsociety.org.uk

Treasurer & Membership Secretary: Mr Mike Wilton, 30 Barrington Crescent, Birchington CT7 9DF
Tel: 07799 835819 e-mail: treasurer@margatecivicsociety.org.uk

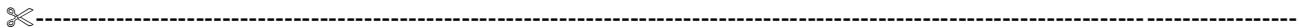
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Minutes Secretary: Ms Kate Wilson

All committee members are Trustees of the Society.

Please contact the Society by email at enquiries@margatecivicsociety.org.uk



Enrolment/Renewal Form

I enclose the sum of £..... (Cheques should be made payable to Margate Civic Society)

Name.....

Address.....

.....

Tel:..... Email.....

Subscription rates for 2023/24

	Individual	Joint	Junior (under 18)	Corporate
Paper Newsletter*	£20	£25	£6	
Email Newsletter#	£15	£21	£3	£30

Please send this form with your payment to the Treasurer, Mike Wilton, 30 Barrington Crescent, Birchington CT7 9DF. Please see our website for alternative methods of payment.

* A paper Newsletter means that a black-and-white printed copy will be delivered to you.

An Email Newsletter means that a full-colour copy will be emailed to you.