

Margate Civic Society

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Registered Charity No. 257884



Spring 2007
Newsletter

Issue No. 346

"The love of our town leads us"

President: Mr Ralph Handscomb

Chairman: Mr Steve Vilette

The year 2007 is heading towards becoming known as Margate's 'year of consultation' and we are only a quarter of the way through the year! Already, we have had public consultations on the development of the Dreamland Amusement Park site; on what users of Dane Park would wish to see in order to achieve Green Flag status for the park; and on the architect's initial proposals for the Turner art gallery. Each one has the potential to make a huge difference to Margate – particularly the Turner art gallery in the much-needed regeneration of our town.

Public consultation on the future of the Dreamland site took place in the Queen's Hall, Winter Gardens on Wednesday, 7th February and Thursday, 8th February. Presentations were given by the Margate Town Centre Regeneration Co and there was full opportunity for members of the public to express their views on this future of this strategically important site in the heart of the town.

The public consultation arrangements for Dane Park were launched by Thanet District Council at Dane Park on Wednesday 14th February and continued to 31st March. There is a separate report on those arrangements contained elsewhere in this issue of the newsletter.

On the evening of Thursday 15th February, David Chipperfield Architects presented an insight into their initial designs for the on-shore Turner art gallery. The presentation was held at the Media Centre to a well attended meeting. The presentation was due to have been made by David Chipperfield himself but, unfortunately, ill-health prevented his attendance. In his place, Victoria Jessen-Pike – a Director of David Chipperfield Architects – gave a most impressive performance in explaining how their thinking had drawn them to a concept design based on a four-storey cube. The building will be some 3,000 square metres and will be raised some 1½ metres above the current ground level. It is likely to open in 2010. It was reassuring to learn from the presentation that the building will stand almost midway between the Lifeboat Station and the Droit House. Importantly, it will stand on virtually the same site as once stood Mrs Booth's house where Turner lodged for many years between 1827 and 1838. A public consultation of the architect's initial proposals for the shape of the building was held at the Winter Gardens on Friday, 16th February and Saturday, 17th February. There will be a further public meeting in the evening of 18th June at the Winter Gardens when David Chipperfield Architects will present their plans for the final shape of the building which will then go on display at Droit House from 22nd June through to September for public comment. Don't miss these events! □

James Brazier, Newsletter Editor

Margate Civic Society website launched

The Society well and truly moved into the 21st century when, in January of this year, the Society launched its very own website thanks to our member Mike Wilton. Mike is also a volunteer at Margate Museum and, last year, he successfully set up their website which has proved very popular. In both case, Mike gave his time and services in creating these websites entirely without charge. If you haven't yet visited the Society's website (www.margatecivicsociety.org.uk) you are recommended to do so and tell your friends and neighbours about it. Mike has done a superb job in creating our website which also features a number of links to other organisations and bodies having common interests. In addition, Mike has very kindly agreed to develop our website and, just as importantly, to maintain it for the foreseeable future. As we all know, the Society is run entirely by volunteers and we are extremely fortunate to have a range of talent amongst the membership who come forward to support the Society in such a positive manner. Visitors to the website can print off a membership-application form and, already, we have received a number of new members using that form. □

Welcome to new members

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

Christopher Bryen
Mrs Jill Edwards
Mrs P. Hall
Mr & Mrs Hammocks
Dave & Jane Kinnear
Mr Terry Meech
Mr & Mrs P. R. Miles
Liam Nabb & Louise Oldfield
Mr Stephen Short
Stephanie Walsh
Mr Tim & Miss Janet Williams

FINAL SUBSCRIPTIONS RENEWAL

REMINDER!

For those members who have not paid their subscriptions for the current year (October 2006 – October 2007), this newsletter will be the last that you will receive. If you are one of those members and you wish to continue your membership and receive the newsletter, you should pay your subscription either at our meeting on 5th April or by post using the form on the back of this newsletter. □

Pat Snow
Membership Secretary

Reports of our Meetings

The decision to include the reports of our 2006 meetings in the last Newsletter was welcomed by many members of the Society who are unable to attend our meetings held at The Walpole Bay Hotel. Consequently, it has been decided to include reports of our meetings in each issue of the Newsletter. As no meeting is held in January, this issue of the Newsletter contains reports of our meetings held in February and March.

Some seventy members enjoyed a most interesting evening at our February meeting when Samantha Collier JP gave a talk on 'Magistrates in the Community'. The talk was followed by two case studies in which the audience was invited to express their conclusions as to the appropriate sentences in each of the case studies illustrated. The speaker first outlined the history of magistrates from 1195, when the system of lay magistrates began in this country, and reminding everyone that the first women JPs were not appointed until 1920. The speaker is a local magistrate at Margate Court which forms part of the East Kent Bench. Perhaps surprisingly to many members, we learnt that the position of magistrate is entirely a voluntary one and that magistrates are not legally qualified although they are trained for their duties. We also learnt that over 95% of all cases coming before the courts are heard by magistrates' courts. The speaker told us that there are plans for an 'open day' to be held at Margate Court on a date – probably in March – when members of the public may call in to learn more about the service. Judging by the amount of interest of members in the two case studies presented to the audience and with the minimum age of 18 for magistrates and the compulsory retirement age of 70, there might well be a good number of potential magistrates following this most interesting insight into a service which is largely unknown to many members of our community. (*The 'open day' was actually held at Margate Court on Saturday, 17th March.*)

At our March meeting, Emma Boast and Ges Moody from the Trust for Thanet Archaeology gave a most interesting illustrated talk on the Archaeology of Thanet from pre-historic times to the Anglo-Saxon Period. Emma Boast, the Director of the Trust for Thanet Archaeology started her presentation with an explanation of the former importance to Thanet of the Wantsum Channel before it began to silt up in the Roman period. She then took us, in turn, through the Palaeolithic, Mesolithic and Neolithic periods leading us to the Bronze Age, the Iron Age, the Romano-British Period to reach the Anglo-Saxon Period. Particular attention was given to the many archaeological sites throughout Thanet that have been dug in relatively recent years and to the many artefacts which had been discovered during those investigations. She brought us right up to date with the digs last year at the site of the former bungalow named *Sea Tower* in Sussex Gardens at Westgate where Anglo-Saxon artefacts were discovered and on land close to the QEQM Hospital where an important Bronze Age burial site was uncovered. Emma Boast supplemented her presentation with a number of interesting slides of the stone pier at Margate Harbour drawing attention to a number of remaining features which revealed the major importance of the pier to the economic activity of the town right up to the late 1950s. □

The Westgate Heritage Centre

After the success of the *Wartime Memories* Exhibition of 2005 and the 2006 experiment to have a Heritage Centre in the space at the back of St Saviour's Church, the Westgate Heritage Centre Steering Group – eight people interested in local history – was formed to move forward the idea of a permanent Heritage Centre.

The need for such an amenity had long been realised as secondary material on Westgate is fairly sparse and well scattered and requests for information frequently come to me from people who our librarians have referred to me. Over 400 people visited the five exhibitions that were mounted last year, so we knew when we closed at the end of September that it would be worthwhile and the winter months have been used to prepare for 2007.

Already it has become a community project, as those visiting have often had stories to tell and material to lend. As well as a permanent display on the outline history of Westgate and Westbrook, there will be special displays on a particular aspect of that history in greater depth. There will be books and files of material about individual people, properties and areas, which can be consulted at leisure – we have seating and tables available. James Brazier is to lead a Westgate-related walk around Margate Cemetery on Sunday, 13th May meeting at the Cemetery Chapels at 2.30pm and I will lead walks around historic Westgate on Sunday, 10th June at 2.30pm and on Wednesday, 13th June at 7.00pm meeting at the Bridge Hotel for both walks. Details later.

The year 2007 is the centenary of the death of Charles Elmer Kempe, one of the leading stained-glass artists of the 19th century. St Saviour's Church has seven Kempe windows and from 1st June to 13th July there will be a special display about the donors of the windows – "the favourites of fortune with well-lined purses" – who lived at Westgate at that time. On Friday, 29th June there will be a related talk and dramatic reading.

A display, "Westgate Weddings", will start on 14th July. If you or anyone you know who was married in any of Westgate's churches, would like to contribute photographs or other memorabilia, please contact me. There will be a special service in the church on Sunday 22nd July to which those married at St Saviour's are especially invited with tea provided afterwards.

Do please come along and see what there is on offer! The Westgate Heritage Centre will be open from Saturday, 7th April to Saturday, 29th September 2007 – Wednesdays and Saturdays from 10.00 am to 12 noon; Fridays from 12 noon to 2.00 pm.

Dr Dawn Crouch
Curator, Westgate Heritage Centre



Nominations for Town Pride Awards 2007

This year, the Society received more nominations for Town Pride Awards than ever before. This 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. Amongst the nominations received for the Society's Town Pride Awards for 2007 are:



*Former First and Last Public House,
Ramsgate Road/High Street*



*the former Royal Sea Bathing Hospital,
Canterbury Road, Westbrook*



*New cottages
off Victoria Road*



New houses, Minnis Road, Birchington



New house, 99 Sea Road, Westgate-on-Sea



*Former Olby's, King Street – showing the
former Margate Ambulance Corps building now
incorporated in the adjoining development*



*Clifton Heights, Harold Road,
Cliftonville*



*Margate Operatic Society's premises
off Percy Road, Cliftonville*



*Highcliffe Hall, Eastern Esplanade,
Cliftonville*



*Extension at rear of 19 Egbert Road,
Westgate-on-Sea*

The results of the judging for the Society's 2007 Town Pride Awards will be announced at our meeting on 10th May 2007 when presentations of the Awards will be made to the winners. □

'I ♥ DANE PARK'

Members will be aware of Margate Civic Society's involvement in supporting Thanet District Council's endeavour to secure Green Flag status for Dane Park. Celebrations to mark the start of the 'I love Dane Park' consultation process started with the



holding of a range of events in Dane Park on 14th February (St Valentine's Day) which was followed on Saturday, 17th February with the holding of other events. They were all well attended by the public – particularly by children – and the celebrations were considered to have been a great success. As part of TDC's public consultation process to secure Green Flag status for Dane Park, the Council has produced a questionnaire seeking the public's views on Dane Park. Copies of this questionnaire have been freely available from the Council Offices and public libraries and they should have been completed and returned to the Council Offices by 31st March 2007. The survey will inform the Council of the views of Dane Park's users and help shape the future for Dane Park. This is an

important opportunity to tell the Council what you think about Dane Park.

If you didn't pick up a copy of the questionnaire, please do ask for one from the Council Offices and complete it and return it as soon as possible. Hopefully, the Council will not adhere rigidly to the deadline for submission of completed questionnaires. The questionnaire is a very simple one and should not take more than about two minutes to complete. It really will be a feather in Thanet's cap if TDC are successful in their endeavours to obtain Green Flag status for Dane Park as it will attract significant funding resources for development of Dane Park enabling TDC to restore and develop much of the park to its former glory. It will also assist the Council in seeking Green Flag status for other open spaces in Thanet such as Ellington Park at Ramsgate. □

And now, part of Dane Park's past...



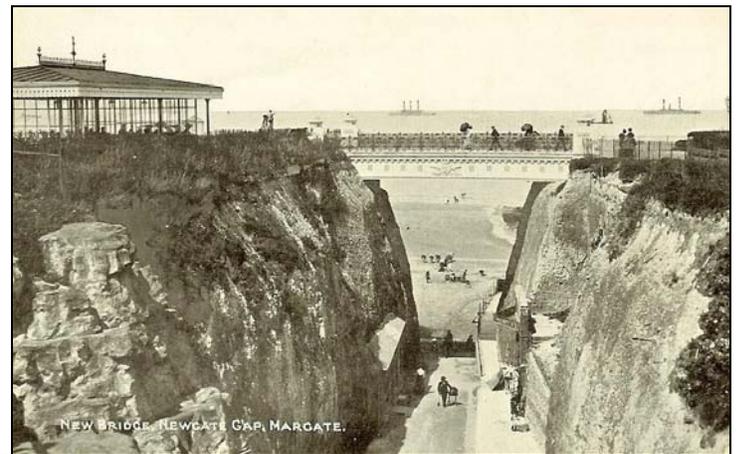
The above design is page 1 of the beautifully-produced souvenir booklet produced for the opening of Dane Park on Wednesday, 1st June 1898 by the Lord Mayor of London. A copy of this rare booklet was recently donated to Margate Museum by Keith Marshall whose wife's late father-in-law, Cecil Kay, was at one time Secretary of the Margate Pier & Harbour Company. Keith Marshall, who lives at Kingston-upon-Thames, also very generously donated to Margate Museum a number of other documents of much local interest going back as far as 1811. We are very fortunate in Margate to have a local museum and very lucky that so many items of local interest are still being donated to the museum by members of the public who want to give items of local interest to the town for the benefit of present and future generations wanting to know more of the town's rich heritage. □

The 150th Anniversary of Margate's Charter of Incorporation

It was on 29th July 1857 that Margate was granted a Charter of Incorporation and thus became a Borough with the full title of 'The Mayor, Aldermen and Burgesses of the Borough of Margate' which became, over time, referred to locally as the Corporation. Before 1857, Margate was a limb of Dover and came under the jurisdiction of that town with the Mayor of Dover appointing a deputy to look after the affairs of Margate.

The conferring of Borough status on the town was not only a great honour but a matter of importance which is, with the passing of time, now difficult for us to grasp. For the first time, Margate appointed its own Mayor and the town's status was much enhanced by its increase in powers.

On the 50th anniversary of the town being granted Borough status, the Corporation marked its golden jubilee with the replacement of the footbridge over Newgate Gap. The 'old' and the 'new' bridges are shown in the two charming postcard views below:



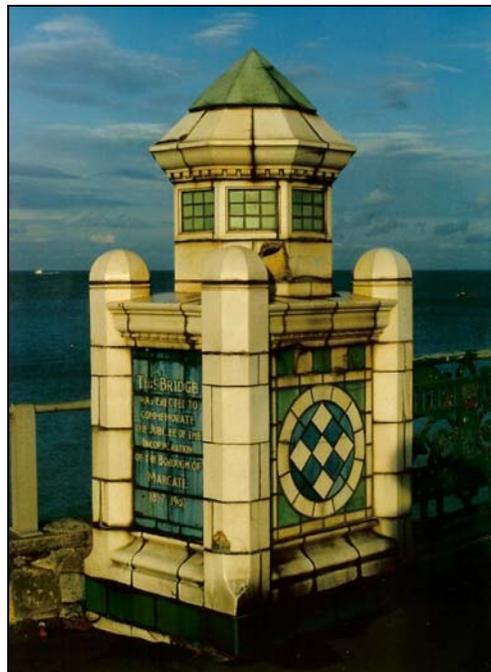
A delightful composition showing holidaymakers enjoying a stroll in the sunshine along the promenade with bathing-machines and a rowing-boat in the sea. Note the extensive use of parasols by the ladies and the wearing of boaters by the men. It is probable that this was a posed photograph. Postcard circa 1905

The 'new' bridge at Newgate Gap. The town's coat of arms can just be seen on the span across the gapway. The bathing machines can no longer be seen and the rowing-boat in the earlier postcard view has been replaced by what appear to be two battleships and a Thames barge. The earlier parasols appear to have been replaced by umbrellas but the new public shelter is being used by a large number of people to keep out of the sun! Postcard circa 1907

There were pillars at each of the four corners of the 'new' bridge. Each of the pillars was covered in Doulton Pottery tiles as can be seen in the three photographs below taken around 20 years ago:



Close-up of one of the panels on the 'new' bridge



These pillars were about seven feet high. The glazed Doulton tiles were coloured blue-green and contained in a cream coloured framework



Names intended for posterity!

Sadly, the 'new' bridge became unsafe and was itself replaced in 2003 (photographs of the replacement bridge are contained elsewhere in the newsletter). The writer has been unable to locate the whereabouts of the original Doulton tiles.

Fifty years – and two world wars – after the erection of the 'new' bridge at Newgate Gap, the Corporation marked the centenary of the granting of its Charter of Incorporation in a number of different ways in 1957. Readers are reminded that the old Borough of Margate's boundary, as surveyed in 1872, stretched from Westbrook Gardens (east side only) in the west to Newgate Gap in the east and to approximately half-way along St Peter's Road in the south (i.e. approximately half-way between Victoria Road and the mini-roundabout at the top of College Road today). One wonders whether the erection of the 'new' bridge at Newgate Gap was deliberately chosen by the Corporation to mark the Golden Jubilee of the Charter because Newgate Gap had been part of the Borough's original boundary in 1857. At that time, the Borough's coastline would have been around two miles in length.

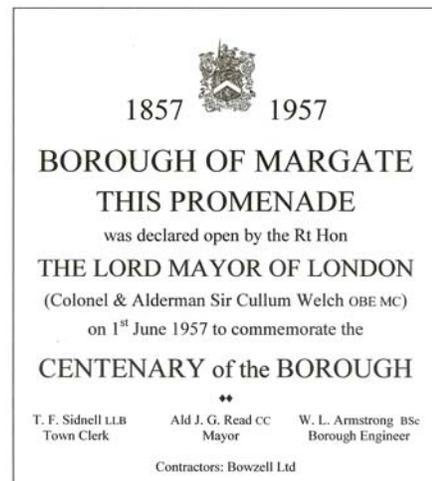
As the town grew in the second half of the nineteenth century, the Borough's boundary was extended by the Borough Extension Act 1877 and, in 1935, the boundary was further extended westward to include the resorts of Westgate-on-Sea and Birchington doubling Margate's coastline to a length of nearly ten miles. Indeed, the 1935 extension increased the area from nearly 3,000 acres to about 6,400 acres. It was therefore most appropriate that the Corporation should decide to mark the Centenary of the Incorporation of the town as a Borough by the erection of a promenade linking up the old promenades at St Mildred's Bay and West Bay. The aerial photograph below shows that stretch of promenade shortly after its completion: the newness of the work can be seen by the lighter shade of the promenade:



Photograph courtesy of Margate Museum

Aerial photograph of Westgate showing the new promenade linking St Mildred's Bay and West Bay – circa 1957

Today, there is a commemorative stone plaque marking the occasion of the opening of that promenade by the Lord Mayor of London on 1st June 1957. The stone is located near the western side of the entrance to Westgate Pavilion but much of the wording is now indistinct. Sadly, the town crest in bronze has been damaged. A recent photograph of the plaque and a transcription of its wording are shown below:



The Corporation also marked the centenary in other ways. In 1957, the Public Library was housed in the former Cottage Hospital in Victoria Road. In those pre-1974 days, the library service was administered by the Corporation and the town had its own Borough Librarian and full complement of staff. In 1957, George Clarke was the Borough Librarian (and Curator – to give him the full job title) and he wrote a series of articles on the history of Margate which were originally published in The Isle of Thanet Gazette. These articles were then published by the Corporation in a booklet as part of the centenary celebrations of the granting of the Charter of Incorporation. Sales of this booklet *Historic Margate* exceeded expectations and it was reprinted on a number of occasions throughout the 1960s and well into the 1970s. Copies of the booklet are often found in second-hand bookshops.

The promenade at Westgate is now 50 years old and has withstood a number of severe storms – particularly that in 1978 when the Margate Jetty was destroyed – and forms an essential part of the town’s sea-defences. The booklet *Historic Margate* is George Clarke’s legacy to the town and there might be other Charter commemorative objects unknown to the writer apart from an item of ephemera which the writer has kept amongst his papers for the last 50 years shown below:

It is a paper pin-badge which, presumably, was given to holidaymakers and others to mark the Charter centenary. It was printed in blue on a white background. It shows the change in bathing costumes between 1857 and 1957. Interestingly, the lady’s costume is one-piece rather than the two-piece (bikini) costume which, by 1957, was becoming popular. Changing-tents on the sands were rarely seen by as late as 1957 but there is no doubt that Margate was very much still trading on its holiday-resort image. Little did the townfolk know that all that was soon to change and that holiday-makers would soon be flying off to Spain and other Mediterranean resorts where the sun was more likely to shine than at home in England.



In 1974, when local government was re-organised, the former Margate Corporation became an integral part of Thanet District Council and the Councillors for the Margate Wards automatically became Margate Charter Trustees. Indeed, the purpose of the Margate Charter Trustees is just that – to act as Trustees for the 1857 Charter of Incorporation. No more: no less. So, 50 years after the town’s last Charter celebrations, what is either the Margate Charter Trustees or Thanet District

Council going to do to mark the 150th anniversary of the Charter? From enquiries made, it would seem that the thoughts of most of our local councillors are on the forthcoming elections to be held in May this year rather on events which might take place after those elections. The writer does hope that the opportunity will be taken by our elected representatives to mark the anniversary in a way fitting to the occasion but don’t hold your breath!

One suggestion for a suitable project to mark the 150th anniversary would be to link the western end of the promenade at West Bay with the existing promenade at Epple Bay. This is a relatively short stretch (perhaps just two or three hundred



yards – see photograph) and would result not only in the completion of the town’s sea defences stretching from Palm Bay in the east right up to Reculver in the west. OK, it is too late for Thanet District Council to include such a scheme in this year’s capital works programme but a retrospective plaque commemorating the 150th anniversary could always be put up. Another suggestion would be to reinstate the time-ball on Margate’s Clock Tower. What do members think?

Photograph courtesy of Margate Museum

The short stretch of coastline between Westgate and Birchington that is currently without a promenade – circa 1957

Our neighbouring town, Ramsgate, was granted its Charter of Incorporation in 1884 and celebrated its 50th anniversary in 1934 with large-scale a pageant held in Ellington Park. In 1984, it marked its centenary with a commemorative tea-plate featuring the town crest. Broadstairs and St Peter’s never was granted Borough status and remained an Urban District Council right up to the 1974 re-organisation of local government. Despite having an impressive Town Hall, Westgate-on-Sea only achieved parish status in 1894 which it continued to hold until 1935 when it reluctantly became part of the Borough of Margate as already referred to above. □



Yet more on Newgate Gap Bridge



The view looking eastwards across Newgate Gap Bridge with the unsightly graffiti on the existing commemorative plaque on the right-hand pillar



A general view of Newgate Gap Bridge showing the ornamental ironwork



A close-up of the now vandalised commemorative plaque showing the unsightly graffiti (Note that the name of the bridge as shown on this plaque has been shortened from Newgate Gap Bridge to Newgate Bridge – perhaps this is yet another example of budget reductions by TDC)



A computer-enhanced image showing what the plaque could look like with a small pot of paint.

I was interested to see from my Council Tax bill for 2007-08 that the amount due for 'Margate Charter Trustee' is followed by wording on the bill which reads: 'The above Parish/Charter Trustee precept supports total spending of £89,234.00 for Margate Charter Trustee'. Without commenting on the amount of the precept, it would seem that such expenditure is supporting the expenditure of just one Charter Trustee. What I want to know is: which one is it who is spending this amount and what happened to all the other Margate Councillors who used to act as Charter Trustees. Have their services been dispensed with in the never-ending pursuit of budget reductions? Whoever the lone Charter Trustee is, perhaps he/she could afford to buy a small tin of paint to paint over the graffiti which so spoils the sign on Newgate Gap Bridge. It would only cost a pound or two at the most to remove this dreadful sight and help restore a measure of pride in our lovely town in this 150th anniversary year of receiving its Charter of Incorporation. □

'Onlooker'

Talks on Coastal Architecture organised by Turner Contemporary

Mention was made in the last newsletter of Turner Contemporary's latest *Designed for You* talks given at the Media Centre. We are already half-way through that programme with three talks remaining as set out in *What's on* (see inside back-page of this newsletter). The first of the six talks was on Isambard Kingdom Brunel and given by BBC *Coast* presenter Mark Horton, who was first-rate. That talk was followed by Fred Gray who spoke on 'Seaside Architecture and the Inter-War Cult of the Sun' with great knowledge and authority (his highly-acclaimed book *Designing the Seaside: Architecture, Society and Nature* is reviewed elsewhere in this newsletter). Don't miss the remaining talks in this series!

Margate Recreated

The visual arts organisation, Turner Contemporary, celebrates J. M. W. Turner's association with Margate and promotes the understanding and enjoyment of historical and contemporary art. Indeed, Turner Contemporary has arranged exhibitions at a number of venues over the last few years and will continue to do so, hopefully, for many years into the future particularly once the new gallery is finally built.

Members are encouraged to keep their eyes open for announcements of these exhibitions and to go and visit them. Of course, what appeals to one person might not appeal to another so do not be put off by an exhibition which has no attraction to you: it is very possible that another exhibition will provide you with much pleasure.

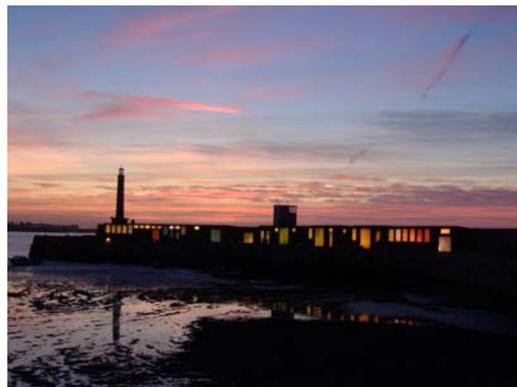
One exhibition which appealed to the writer was a project entitled *Margate Recreated* held recently (21st February to 3rd March) at Droit House. The project culminated in an exhibition of work by AS Level students from the Ursuline College, Westgate-on-Sea by pupils studying Art and Design at AS Level. The students had worked together to recreate buildings using mixed media and collage to represent the many layers and textures of development and decay that chronicle the history of the town. It was a most interesting and original concept for an exhibition in that each of the students was randomly assigned a building on the seafront between Arlington House and the Harbour. The recreated buildings were intended to be in scale so it was perhaps a little surprising that Arlington House was included! However, that challenge had been addressed and the result did not detract from the architectural appeal of the other buildings represented in the exhibition.

The students had been asked to make detailed drawings during two study visits to Margate and to then recreate their buildings using cardboard, paper, string and plastic. Photographs of the buildings were also used by the students as a reference. What the exhibition revealed was the array of different architectural styles along that relatively short stretch. Apart from the attractiveness of the collages produced, the project required the students to study the buildings from top to bottom and to pick out the dominant – and sometimes hidden – features of some of those buildings. Just how many of us do that as we walk along our main roads? The students benefited not only by their creativity but also by the need to have looked in detail at their assigned buildings.

At the opening of the exhibition on 21st February, Karen Eslea, Turner Contemporary's Audience Development Officer, expressed thanks to the students for their impressive works and drew attention to the benefit of involving students from local schools and colleges in the activities of Turner Contemporary.

This project was one of many developed to enable the community to explore Margate's past, present and future and was an excellent example of how pupils from local schools and colleges can benefit from having such a progressive arts organisation in our town. If you missed the *Margate Recreated* exhibition, you missed a treat! □

Art comes to Margate Harbour



Turner Contemporary have organised a number of interesting and very different exhibitions of contemporary art as part of their Arrivals series over recent years. These exhibitions focus on each of the new countries to join the European Union with the work of representative artists from those countries. One of the best of these exhibitions was undoubtedly the recent work by the Maltese artist Norbert Francis Attard in painting the doors and panels along Margate's historic stone pier. More than 50 colours were used in the work which introduced a very welcome dash of colour to the pier. The work was illuminated by spotlighting on Saturday, 10th March from dusk to quite late that evening and it was most spectacular. The lighting ebbed and flowed which added much nautical interest to the paintwork. The above photograph, being in monochrome, does not do justice either to the beauty of the paintwork or the magnificent Turneresque sunset which occurred that evening. This exhibition demonstrated how a drab building can be brought to life with a few coats of paint under the guidance of someone with an eye for colour. Well done Turner Contemporary for securing the artist's services for this eye-catching exhibition. But let us hope that the artwork will not attract the ubiquitous vandals with a penchant for displaying graffiti on any plain surface which seems to be everywhere throughout Thanet nowadays. □

War Memorials restored by TDC

Thanet District Council has recently completed the restoration of two of Margate First World War Memorials and very good they look too. If ever you are passing these memorials, do have a look at the restoration work and remember what the memorials represent. Well done TDC.



*The Bournier Memorial Fountain,
Lewis Crescent, Cliftonville*



*All Saints Church War Memorial,
Westbrook*



Book Reviews

The Isle of Thanet Illustrated Visitors' Guide: What to See and How to See it - 1901 84pp sb £5.99

Reprint published 2006 by Michael's Bookshop (copies are available from Margate Museum; from Michael's Bookshop, 72 King Street, Ramsgate; and from Albion Bookshop branches in Northdown Road and at Broadstairs)

This is another reprint from Michael's Bookshop but, in the reviewer's opinion one of the best so far that Michael Child has reprinted. It contains some superb line drawings which have reproduced very well indeed. The guide also contains a number of display advertisements which, apart from being informative, are also very artistic.

This book is a 'must have' for anyone interested in Thanet at the end of Queen Victoria's reign and Michael Child deserves congratulations for reprinting this guide at such an affordable price. At £5.99, this book is highly recommended.

Designing the Seaside: Architecture, Society and Nature by Fred Gray hb 336pp, 440 illustrations of which 406 in colour £29 (published 2006 by Reaktion Books Ltd) ISBN 1-86189-274-1

Now this is a book for the real enthusiast who has affection for the seaside and all that goes (went?) with it. The author, Fred Gray, is Professor in Continuing Education at the University of Sussex and, as one might expect from such an academic, the book is a masterpiece. It covers the history and development of the seaside in this country and abroad. The author has researched the whole spectrum of the seaside with particular emphasis on seaside architecture from the minutiae of ornate ironwork, such as that featured on much of the street furniture, to the many pavilions, swimming pools and lidos constructed during the inter-war years. This book also covers the changing taste in holidays. Margate receives its share of attention in the book and we are reminded of the sad loss to the town over the last thirty years of the Marine Sands Bathing Station, the Lido Bathing Pool and the Jetty. Although it is a relatively expensive book, it is extremely well illustrated and represents good value. It comes thoroughly recommended to those who appreciate the wealth of seaside architecture still to be found.

The English Seaside by Peter Williams sb 176pp (published 2006 by English Heritage) £9.99 ISBN 1-905624-02-6

The author is an architectural photographer as is evident from the superb quality of the photographs in this book: there are some 500 of them and they are all colour. Although there is less text in this book than in Fred Gray's book (reviewed above), the photographs make this an ideal book for the casual reader wanting to see examples of the range of seaside architecture and of life at the seaside. Indeed, the attractive photographs are bound to stimulate interest in these aspects of the seaside and

encourage readers to look out for them when visiting our resorts. English Heritage deserves congratulations for publishing this book and Peter Williams deserves full credit for his photographs. This book is excellent value for money and copies of the book are available from Margate Museum.

The publication of these two books demonstrates the recent dramatic growth of interest in the seaside. Although it is unlikely that visitor numbers will ever return to the pre-1960s level, there is evidence that more and more people wish to live near the coast. These two books will undoubtedly result in an even greater number of people wanting to live in seaside towns such as ours!

Pocket Images: North Thanet Coast by Alan Kay sb 128pp £5.99 (published 2006 by Nonsuch Publishing) ISBN 1-84588-302-0

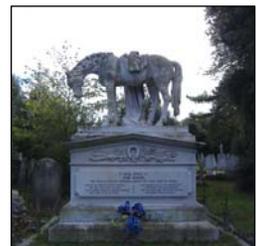
This fully illustrated book containing nearly 200 photographs was first published in a larger format in 1994. It was republished last year and dedicated to the memory of the author who sadly passed away suddenly in July 2006, aged 86. Alan Kay needs no introduction to members of the Civic Society as he was a founder member and was the Society's President for many years. This is a super little book designed to be carried in one's pocket. Most of the illustrations are from early postcards which Alan Kay had collected over many years and which he so generously donated to Margate Museum along with the bulk of his archive of local material shortly before moving to Sussex to live near his son.

If you didn't get a copy of this book when it was first published in 1994, you really ought to add a copy to your book shelves. Give yourself a treat! This reprint is highly recommended at £5.99.

Copies of the book are available from Margate Museum as well as all good bookshops. □

'Lord' John Sanger

Oh dear! It seems that my claim in the last newsletter that the John Sanger buried in Margate Cemetery is not 'Lord' John Sanger, as claimed in the highly recommended booklet recently produced by the Friends of Margate Cemetery, has ruffled local-historian John T. Williams' feathers! Your reviewer received three letters from him in two days in which he claimed to be correct in his assertion that the grave in Margate Cemetery (see accompanying photograph of the Grade II listed building Mazeppa circus horse) is that of 'Lord' John Sanger. As anyone who has researched anything to do with the Sanger circuses, nothing is ever what it seems! Your reviewer maintains that the grave in Margate Cemetery is not that of 'Lord' John Sanger but of his father (John Sanger, brother of 'Lord' George Sanger) and John T. Williams maintains that it is the grave of 'Lord' John Sanger. We have agreed to disagree but does anyone else want to join in the argument in an endeavour to resolve this ongoing disagreement? □



What's on

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

- 5th April 'All the Rage: Fashion of the 1920s and 1930s' by Mrs Lee Ault
10th May Town Pride Awards followed by 'Old and New Pictures of Margate' by Hannah Scott
Note: Meetings will resume in October 2007: details of meetings from October will be published in the next newsletter

Other organisations:

Turner Contemporary (talks all start at 6.00pm at the Margate Media Centre, King 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.

- 24th April 'Peculiarities of Building by the Coast' by Hanif Kara, Adams Kara Taylor
29th May 'Tate St Ives Extension' by Jamie Fobert
26th June 'From Bathing Machines to Beach Huts' by Kathryn Ferry

Isle of Thanet Historical Society (talks all start at 7.30pm at the Roman Catholic Church Hall, Minnis Road, Birchington)

- 16th April 'War Memorials in Kent and East Sussex' by Peter Ewart

Thanet Branch of the Kent Family History Society (meetings start at 7.30pm for 8.00pm at Birchington Village Centre)

- 18th April 'A Benedictine Monk of Bygone Days' by Geoff Hutchinson
16th May AGM
20th June 'Marriage & Courtship in the 1800s' by Tom Doig

Friends of Quex (meetings start at 7.30pm in The Powell-Cotton Museum, Quex Park, Birchington)

- 25th April Antiques Valuation Day 11.00am to 4.30pm, Quex Park
17th May 'Missing Links and Past Revelations' by Christopher Date and Hazel Basford, Senior Archivists at Quex
21st June Summer Solstice BBQ

Isle of Thanet Geographical Association (meetings start at 7.30pm at Park Hall, Pierremont Gardens, Broadstairs)

- 16th April 'Wildlife in Pegwell' by Eileen Randall
14th May 'Moonlighting Inns' by John Graham
11th June 'On the Trail' by Mrs Anne Cattoor

Useful telephone numbers:

Organisation	Phone No.	Contact name/Notes
Margate Museum, The Old Town Hall, Market Place	231213	Bob Bradley, Curator
Margate Public Library – Local Studies Collection	223626	Tuesdays 2.00pm to 6.00pm, Fridays 2.00pm to 6.00pm and the first Saturday each month
Westgate Heritage Centre	832617	Dr Dawn Crouch, Curator
Birchington Heritage Trust Museum, Birchington Library	846502	Monday mornings only, 9.30 to 12.00
Birchington Parish Archivist	842988	Jennie Burgess
Margate Historical Society	227574	Mick Twyman, Secretary
Isle of Thanet Historical Society	835587	Barry Hopper, Chairman
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 the Theatre Royal Margate	293397	David Rankin, 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



Founded in 1968, the Margate Civic Society is a registered charity and is registered with the Civic Trust. 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 2006/07:

- President:** Mr Ralph Handscomb
14 Eastern Esplanade, Cliftonville, Margate CT9 3AB (Tel: 293169)
- Chairman:** Mr Steve Villette
29 The Ridgeway, Cliftonville, Margate CT9 2TL (Tel: 221250)
- 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 Phil Johnson MBE
14 Sherwood Court, Dent-de-Lion Road, Westgate-on-Sea CT8 8NU (Tel: 831469)
- Membership Secretary:** Mrs Pat Snow
34 Royal Esplanade, Westbrook, Margate CT9 5EG (Tel: 221838)
- 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 Garry Cowans, Flat 3, 21 Gordon Road, Cliftonville, Margate (Tel: 221938)
Mrs Margaret Main, 32 Gordon Road, Cliftonville, Margate CT9 2DN
Mrs Daphne Rowley, "Spring Cottage", 11 Pembroke Avenue, Westbrook, Margate
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 Form

I enclose the sum of £

Name:

Address:

Tel:

Subscription rates for 2006/07:

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

and send it to the Membership Secretary (Mrs Pat Snow), 34 Royal Esplanade, Westbrook, Margate CT9 5EG