

# Margate Civic Society

(Founded 1968)  
Registered Charity No. 257884

Summer 2006  
Newsletter

Issue No. 343

*"The love of our town leads us"*

President: Mr Ralph Handscomb

Chairman: Mr Steve Villette

This issue of the newsletter completes the first year of the new-look newsletter which was introduced last October. Although it has increased in size from its initial 8-page format to its current 12-page format, lack of space has precluded the inclusion of a contribution from Margate Museum in this issue. However, it is hoped that 'Margate Museum Corner' will return in the next issue (Autumn) with a feature article on Margate's Art Deco cinema buildings of which only one (Dreamland Cinema) sadly now remains. If you remember the Astoria Cinema in Northdown Road or the Regal Cinema in Cecil Square, this will be an article not to miss.

This issue of the newsletter contains a most interesting article from Mrs Queenie Johnson who has been a member of the Society for many years. Her 3-page article on Lockwood's of Westgate tells the most fascinating story of Lockwood's unique contribution to the history and development of Westgate-on-Sea. The article also draws attention to the sad plight of Lockwood's former builders' yard and offices which are now Grade II listed. What do members of our Society think should happen to Lockwood's yard and offices? Do write to me and let me know. It would be good to see the correspondence column reappear in the newsletter. Your editor had hoped that Jim Porter's article on Arlington House in the last issue of the newsletter asking whether that building was an icon or an eyesore would have prompted some response; but it didn't. Not even one comment was received from members. Perhaps that question was simply rhetorical! However, the question of what to do with Lockwood's yard and offices is different in that Lockwood's is falling into disrepair and becoming an eyesore in a part of Westgate which has seen much development in the last couple of years with new homes built (Read Court) and many more in the course of construction (in Canterbury Road and Quex Road). My thanks to Queenie Johnson for her article – which I know members will find most interesting – and for sharing with us so many of her old photographs, particularly those of Lockwood's staff.

One of the early articles in the new-look newsletter was on the 'BH' boundary markers in Westbrook and Westgate. As a follow-up to that article, this issue of the newsletter contains the first of a new series on heritage features which is presented in the form of a quiz with the answers contained on a later page. There are no prizes but readers might derive satisfaction from looking out for similar features on their daily perambulations around the town. It is quite surprising how many can be found.

**James Brazier**  
Newsletter Editor



*One of the 24 fine decorative lighting columns which can be found along the seafront stretching from the Harbour to the Nayland Rock. The restoration of these lighting columns was completed in 2000 with financial assistance from the Heritage Lottery Fund. Contrary to the belief of many, the entwined fish are sturgeons and not dolphins. Prior to the start of the restoration work, a 'spare' sturgeon was located in a council store and meticulously copied. It is such attention to detail that has resulted in such a pleasing result. Some of the decorative iron railings were also replaced during the restoration work. These lighting columns and railings really are a credit to the town. The original lighting columns are believed to have been erected in the 1880s*



*The entwined sturgeons on Margate's seafront lighting columns are very similar in design to those on the lampposts on the Thames Embankment as can be seen in this illustration. The Thames Embankment was opened in July 1870*

## *Welcome to new members*

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

Mrs Anita Takla  
Mr & Mrs G. Bennett  
Gordon & Valerie Gloor

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# Presentation of Town Pride Awards 2006

The results of the judging of the nominations for this year's Town Pride Awards were announced by our Secretary, Tony Snow, at the Society's meeting held at The Walpole Bay Hotel on 11<sup>th</sup> May.

Photographs of each of the properties which had been nominated by members for the prestigious awards were featured in the last issue of our Newsletter along with photographs of properties proposed for Town Shame Nominations.

Before announcing this year's winners of the Town Pride Awards, Tony spoke briefly on the properties nominated for Town Shaming including (i) Illano, the former clothing factory in King Street; (ii) Fort Road Hotel; and (iii) the building on the corner of Cliff Terrace opposite the Lido. By the time this Newsletter is published, it is hoped that the Illano building will have been demolished and the site cleared of the litter which had accumulated over a number of years. Let us hope that the other two buildings awarded the metaphorical wooden spoon this year will not be named for shaming in 2007.

The first Town Pride Award went to Fairfield Mansions, Fifth Avenue and our President, Ralph Handscomb, presented a Town Pride Award plaque and a framed certificate to the owners, Mr & Mrs Gudynas.



*Fairfield Mansions now restored*



*Vincent & Sandra Gudynas with Tony Snow*

The second Town Pride Award went to Walpole Heights and our President presented a Town Pride Award plaque and a framed certificate to the owner, Mr Austin Gabriel.



*Walpole Heights now restored*



*Austin Gabriel with Ralph Handscomb and Tony Snow*

A Town Pride Commendation certificate went to 4-5 Lombard Street/25 Hawley Street in Margate Old Town and our President presented the certificate to the owner, Tim Williams.



*4-5 Lombard Street/25 Hawley Street now restored*



*Tim Williams with Ralph Handscomb and Tony Snow*

# Heritage Features Quiz No. 1

Do you know which buildings in Margate (including Cliftonville) have these most attractive features showing when the buildings were erected? To assist readers, the nine buildings are listed at the bottom of the page in random order. Can you correctly match the numbered photographs with the named buildings?

The answers to this quiz are shown elsewhere in this Newsletter



1. 1857 (shown in 'diamond' at top)



2. 1876



3. 1879



4. 1892



5. 1892



6. 1896



7. 1896



8. 1900



9. 1931

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

Former Margate Ambulance Corps building, Fort Road

Tom Thumb Theatre, Eastern Esplanade

220-228 Northdown Road, Cliftonville

Hartsdown House, Hartsdown Park

43 High Street, Margate

Dwelling, Albion Road, Cliftonville

Electricity Station, Albion Road, Cliftonville

Entrance Lodge, Margate Cemetery

41 Sweyn Road, Cliftonville

The next issue of the Newsletter will contain a quiz on heritage features on buildings in Westgate-on-Sea

# Memories of A. G. Lockwood & Co (Builders and Contractors), Westgate-on-Sea

by Queenie Johnson



*Mrs Queenie Johnson outside Lockwood's offices after closure of the firm in 2002. The large notice in the window invited tenders for the purchase of the site by 4<sup>th</sup> April 2002. Sadly, the property still awaits a buyer over four years later. It would seem that its Grade II listing has effectively blighted the property raising questions as to whether the property ought now to be considered for de-listing as it is currently an empty shell which is falling into disrepair and becoming unsightly.*

*Lockwood's builders' yard and offices at The Grove, Westgate is a Grade II listed building. This article has kindly been written especially for our Newsletter by Queenie Johnson who worked at the firm's offices from 1944-1955, then part-time from 1984 to the firm's closure in 2002. Her account of the firm's major role in the early development of Westgate with its many fine buildings together with her reminiscences of the working conditions at Lockwood's make an important contribution to the relatively short history of the once-fashionable resort of Westgate.*

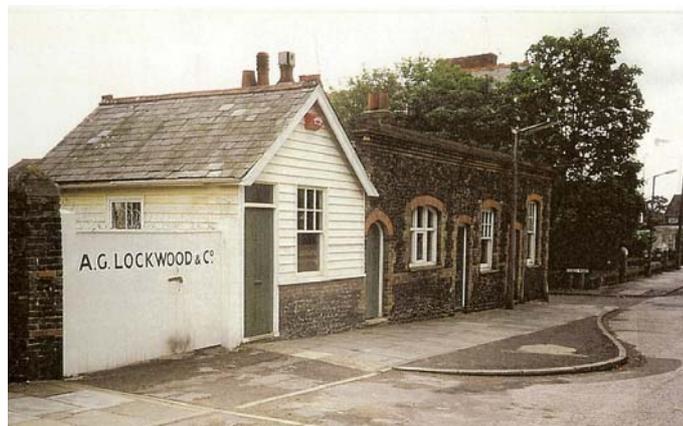
The story of the firm is very much the story of Westgate-on-Sea, as so much of "old" Westgate was built by them.

Alfred Lockwood, who established the firm in 1872, was born in 1814 at Woodbridge, Suffolk. He was a builder and architect who had served his apprenticeship in Chester, then worked in Essex and London before coming to Westgate. He died in 1881 and is buried in Margate Cemetery, although his headstone is now illegible. He was succeeded in the business by his son, Alfred Goodwin Lockwood, who was an architect. Arthur Read subsequently joined the firm as a builder, was made a partner in 1896 and became sole proprietor in 1922. The firm ceased trading on 28<sup>th</sup> March 2002, following the death of Mr Read's son, Mr Ivor Read.

On the firm's closure, a search of various drawers, cupboards and even the roof space revealed a treasure trove of old records, the majority of which had not seen the light of day for decades. Most of the materials were deposited in the East Kent Archives at Whitfield including the architectural drawings by the Lockwoods which once hung in the offices. Other papers were deposited in the Local Studies Collection at Margate Library.

From the beginning, only the best tradesmen were employed and the standard of work was high. In the early days, not many workmen could afford to buy a bicycle and so walked to work. When the Queen's Highcliffe Hotel was under construction, some of the men used to walk to the tram depot on the Canterbury Road at Westbrook and board the first tram which left at 5 a.m. After alighting at Margate Harbour, the next call was to the Fountain Inn in Fort Road for a coffee-and-rum which cost tuppence (2d), and then they walked to the site. On contracts outside Thanet it was not unusual for workmen to sleep rough on the job, walking home for the weekend and then walking back again. Even if public transport was available, they could not afford to use it and no money was available for travelling/board-and-lodging expenses.

A variety of property was built ranging from detached residences on Sea Road, to more modest villas and the row of shops in Station Road, designed by William Henry Lockwood, brother of Alfred Goodwin Lockwood. Cottages for the workmen were also built, the first being Chester Road, then Essex Road. The Working Men's Club was built at the corner of Chester Road and Canterbury Road on land donated by Edmund Davis, the building then being leased to the Committee which had been formed to run it.



*The entrance to Lockwood's yard and door to general office*



*View of general office from the yard: note bell at apex of roof*

The firm's general office was the first of the offices to be built and can be seen in the earliest known photograph dated 1894, which seems to have been taken immediately prior to the firm's outing or "Bean Feast", an annual event up to the start of the First World War. There are other photos of outings, unfortunately not dated with the exception of 1907 to Folkestone and featuring char-a-bancs. The other offices were added piecemeal, the one next to the general office being that of Mr Arthur Read, and then that of Mr Ivor Read, the very end one on the corner of Essex Road being self-contained with its own entrance. This was at one time the Rates Office, when Westgate was still a private estate. Neither the outside nor the inside of the offices changed over the years, all had interior walls and ceilings of tongued-and-grooved timber, stained a very dark colour with brown linoleum on the floors. Coal fires provided the heating with perhaps a small electric-fire but in the 1980s, we progressed to the modern age with the installation of electric storage-heaters, the coal fires being kept as back-up in really cold weather. The offices were originally lit by gas and some of these fittings were still in situ on closure. By today's standards, these would have been considered primitive working conditions but at the time we thought nothing of it. We sat on high stools at sloping desks, it was all very old-fashioned, quaint, and very much Charles Dickens and one really expected to find quill-pens in use! We still used the very large leather-edged ledgers. The only concessions to modernity over the decades were the telephone (the original number was Westgate 4Y), a typewriter and latterly – shock horror – a fax machine which, although we tucked it away as best we could, still looked out of place.



Row of shops in Station Road, with canopies over, built by Lockwood's in the early 1880s

In its time, the yard and workshops were right up to date with fittings and equipment. They were built on two levels, ground and lower, with a slope from the main gate to the yard. The original workshop is the detached building behind the old petrol-pump at the end of the slope. On the Essex Road frontage can be seen the doors of the loading bays where heavy goods were delivered. In those days, Westgate had its own railway goods-yard at the eastern end of Station Road. The yard slowly evolved

with workshops for plumbers, painters, carpenters, paint-shop and glass-store. The wood machine-shop was probably added at the end of the First World War. It was fitted with a gas engine to run the machinery which was belt driven via under-floor ducts, and powered a circular saw, planer, spindle, band saw, tenoning machine, morticing machine and an emery grinder. The wood machinist was Bill Titcomb who, unusually, for a machinist had all his fingers intact. This gas engine was sold to an enthusiast for restoration and is now believed to be in a Manchester museum. The steam- or road-roller was kept at Hundreds Farm and was in use until the 1950s when it was sold to a collector who restored it. It was an Aveling & Porter of Rochester, registration number AL9463.



Interior view of general office: note sloping desks and brass fittings

I wonder if anyone remembers the bell which hung from the apex of the roof of the general office and was rung at 8 a.m., 12 noon, 1 p.m. and 5.30 p.m. This started in the days when clocks and watches were few and was meant to get the workmen to work, and was a tradition that was kept up to the 1950s, not because it was then needed, but simply because it was a tradition.



Handcart used by Lockwood's workmen up to 1960s

I first worked in the office in 1944, it was still war-time and at strategic points around the yard were buckets of sand, water and stirrup-pumps to counter any incendiary-bombs. The room under the general office was designated as the Fire Watch Room, fitted with two bunk beds and there was a staff rota covering night duty. Mr Charles Pierce, photographer, of Cuthbert Road, was the Senior

Fireguard Officer and responsible overall. Only one journal survives, listing those on duty and times of alerts, from January 1942 to August 1943. The building-trade was a reserved occupation and staff could not be called up but could volunteer.



Photograph of Lockwood's staff in front of the general office taken by Westgate photographer Cousins prior to their 1894 staff outing or "Bean Feast"



Undated photograph of Lockwood's staff outing circa 1895. The horses and carriages were hired from Jacksons Stables



Lockwood's workmen on site at the extension that was added to The Bungalow (later Rowena Court) for Sir William Ingram circa 1895

War-time brought all sorts of restrictions, materials were in short supply and permits were needed for so many items. As the war progressed, even glass supplies ran low and Pilkingtons produced second-quality sheets of glass known as "R" glass, which looked slightly wavy. The restrictions didn't end with the war and at one time it

seemed to be all form filling. It was a very busy time with estimates, bills of quantities, etc., for repairing bomb damage and for dilapidations to property requisitioned by the Army during the war. This gradually tailed off and then came the arrival of the DIY stores. This was followed by a slow exodus of tradesmen who discovered that they were better off financially by working as self-employed. Gradually, the firm became jobbing builders and at the end employed just three men, mostly engaged on repairs and maintenance of Mr Read's property.



Superb photograph of Lockwood's staff taken prior to their 1907 outing to Folkestone. Mr Arthur Read is seated in the right-hand char-a-banc wearing a Panama hat. The little girl on the extreme right is Mr Read's daughter, Olive. The photograph was taken in The Grove with the old level-crossing in the background. The char-a-bancs and drivers were hired from London & South Coast Motor Service Ltd

<b>A. G. Lockwood &amp; Co., Annual Outing, July 11th, 1914.</b>			
Leave the Grove Yard	..	..	8.0 a.m.
Arrive Dover via Tilmanstone	..	..	10.15 "
LUNCH			
Depart	..	..	11.0 "
Arrive Folkestone	..	..	11.45 "
Depart	..	..	12.15 p.m.
Arrive Denton	..	..	1.15 "
DINNER			
Depart Denton	..	..	3.30 "
Arrive Wye	..	..	5.0 "
Depart	..	..	5.15 "
Arrive Chilham	..	..	6.0 "
TEA			
Depart	..	..	7.30 "
Arrive Canterbury	..	..	8.0 "
Depart	..	..	9.0 "
Arrive Sarre	..	..	9.30 "
Depart	..	..	10.0 "
Arrive home about	..	..	10.30 "

A copy of the original printed itinerary card issue to Lockwood's staff for their 1914 "Bean Feast". No doubt there was a need for liquid refreshment at each of the many stops during the day: it was just as well that the following day was a Sunday! A little over three weeks later, the country was at war with Germany and the outing would have become a distant memory

After the closure, the first damage perpetrated by vandals was the breaking down of all the doors to stores and workshops in the yard, followed by all the windows being broken. Attention then turned to the office and over a period of weeks, every window was broken. Everything is now boarded up and it is a sad, sorry and inglorious end to 130 years of trading. □

# HERITAGE OPEN DAY

Saturday, 9<sup>th</sup> September 2006

Margate Civic Society will be opening the Tudor House. Anybody willing to help please contact Tony Snow on 01843 221838

The Civic Society will also be giving conducted tours of St John's Church, Margate. Information available from Robin Colyer on 01304 812388. □

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## Magic! Event

The Magic! Event held at Cliftonville on Saturday, 20<sup>th</sup> May attracted large numbers of people and the Civic Society stand attracted a lot of interest thanks to the very professional lay-out of our stand by Margaret Main and Garry Cowans.

The Magic! Event featured exhibitions from a number of local community groups, council departments and partner organisations involved in a large area of Cliftonville West ward. The event showed the changes made in the area since Thanet District Council's declared it as a Renewal Area in May 2005 and celebrated a year of community and council action since that time. □

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## TOWN PRIDE 2006

Thanks to all who helped get the Town Pride event together. Particular thanks go to Jack Pilcher, James Brazier, David Barber and Mike Wilton. □

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## THE END OF AN ERA

We were all greatly saddened in early April to learn of the death of one of our most eminent members, Christopher Powell-Cotton, who joined the Margate Civic Society way back in 1970.

He was born at Quex in February 1918, the only son of Major & Mrs Powell-Cotton. Christopher Powell-Cotton was the absolute epitome of an English gentleman. All who were truly privileged to have known him will confirm that he was a most kindly, philanthropic, fair-minded and self-effacing man. A good example of his modesty being that he didn't believe in using letters after his name – MC, the Military Cross won for gallantry in action against the Japanese in Burma or JP, Justice of the Peace and Chairman of the Bench.

An intelligent, articulate man who was a master of using the well-chosen word, Christopher Powell-Cotton lived his life upholding the 'old-fashioned values' of decency, honour and duty – a fine example to us all. He will be greatly missed by all who knew him. □

The above contributions were submitted by Tony Snow

# DAAG

A number of residents of the Dane Hill area in Margate have recently formed a new community group with the intriguing name DAAG.

The area covered by DAAG is Anchor Hill, Dane Hill, Booth Place, Clifton Street, Dane Hill Row, Dane Hill Grove and Wellington Gardens.

One of the group's concerns is the preservation of the local open spaces on their area. Another is the extent of fly-tipping, particularly in the alley-ways.

Community groups such as DAAG foster community togetherness, achieve an improvement in the environmental appearance of the area and an enhancement of overall living conditions in their area.

Further information on DAAG is available from 82 Northdown Road, Cliftonville (Tel: 01843 282450). □

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## LATE NEWS

Your Committee has recently been giving consideration to the possibility of the Society having its own website in order to further promote the Society's activities and to foster greater interest in the area covered by the Society.

Elsewhere in this newsletter is a report that Margate Museum now has its own website which has been created by museum volunteer Mike Wilton. Discussions are at an early stage and, at the time of writing, the Society's Committee had not made a final decision as to whether the Civic Society should have its own website.

However, Mike Wilton has been approached and has very kindly offered to set up a website for the Society and to maintain it with assistance from Garry Cowans. Should we decide to proceed with the idea, the costs would be minimal. The Rotary Club of Thanet has recently made a generous donation of £150 to the Society following a special evening Old Town Walk and it is proposed to use this generous donation to meet the costs of setting up our own website and to meet associated ongoing maintenance costs for the foreseeable future.

We are indeed most fortunate that Mike Wilton and Garry Cowans are prepared to devote such time and energy to ensure the success of the website should that be agreed. Mike has made a superb job of setting up Margate Museum's website and we really are most fortunate in having him aboard on this project.

Readers should be assured that the website will not replace the newsletter which will continue in its present form for the foreseeable future. The website would supplement the newsletter and, hopefully, attract new members by having a facility to print off an application-for-membership form. It is very early days but this is an exciting project which has the potential to take the Society well and truly into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Developments in this important proposal will be reported to members at the Annual General Meeting of the Society to be held in October and in the Autumn issue of the newsletter. □

# Report on the Society's Old Town Walk in May

On Saturday afternoon, 13<sup>th</sup> May our Secretary, Tony Snow, led a group of eighteen on a gentle walk around Margate Old Town. We met, appropriately, on The Parade where Tony explained the historical importance of the harbour area in the development of Margate as a resort town. We were also told that the origins of sea bathing in this country could be traced back to Margate. Tony also told that, contrary to the belief of many, the bathing-machine was not invented at Margate (it was invented at Scarborough) but that the bathing-machine's modesty hood was invented by Benjamin Beale whose works were, at that time, in what is now known as Eaton Road. Tony then led the group to Duke Street where he pointed out what are thought to be the original fishermen's cottages at the rear of properties in The Parade before drawing our attention to the only mathematical tiles in Margate on a property believed to have originally been the town's Assembly Rooms. Immediately opposite that building is 3 Duke Street – one of the properties that had been nominated for a Town Pride award this year. It was good to see that the address 'No. 3 Duke Street' had been picked out in paint above the front door since the judging of the building for this year's awards. It is understood that the second- and third-floor exteriors will shortly be re-painted and, if so, this property will almost certainly be nominated for a Town Pride award next year. Throughout the tour, Tony drew attention to properties around the Old Town which had been improved in recent years.



*Part of the group at the Tudor House*

Tony then led the group to the Tudor House. For many, it was their first visit inside the Tudor House. Tony mentioned that the Tudor House would be open again on Heritage Day (Saturday, 9<sup>th</sup> September 2006) when Mick Twyman, a local expert on the building, has kindly agreed to lead a party around the Tudor House on that day explaining its history and its many architectural features.

We ended our walk in The Parade after visits to both Hawley Square and Cecil Square where many notables and members of the aristocracy once lived 'for the season'. The walk lasted two hours but what a wealth of local history was presented by Tony during that time. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed themselves and learnt much

about our town's history and development as one of the country's premier seaside resorts. Sadly, although many of the town's fine old buildings still remain, visitors to the town have greatly diminished. Let us all hope that the proposed Turner Contemporary Centre will regenerate the town in the coming years and restore it to much of its former glory.



*Part of the group in Hawley Square*

## Future Margate Civic Society walks this summer:

Tony Snow will be leading the following walks:

Saturday, 1 <sup>st</sup> July	Shell Grotto Walk
Saturday, 22 <sup>nd</sup> July	Old Town Walk
Saturday, 19 <sup>th</sup> August	Shell Grotto Walk
Saturday, 9 <sup>th</sup> September	Old Town Walk

*Donations welcomed – £1 per person for the Old Town Walk and £2.50 per person for the Shell Grotto Walk including entry fee to the Shell Grotto*

The Grotto Walk takes at least two hours and is at a moderate pace with some continuous walking but with regular stops for the guides to help you explore the stories behind the buildings and to enjoy the special panoramas which inspired the great artist J. M. W. Turner. There is also time for a break and refreshment at the Shell Grotto.

All walks begin at 2.30pm outside the Visitor Information Centre on The Parade opposite Margate Harbour

We would be delighted to have you join us on the walks and while booking is not strictly necessary, a telephone call would be much appreciated in order to assess the likely number of participants on each of the walks.

The guided walks are also available for groups at other times by prior arrangement.

**For further information or booking, please contact Tony Snow on 01843 221838. □**

# Report on the Society's Cemetery Walk

Twenty-eight members and guests were taken on a guided tour of Margate Cemetery by James Brazier, our Newsletter Editor, on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> May. The tour was a follow-up to James' talk to the Society last November when he showed photographic slides of many of the graves of war casualties in Margate Cemetery. The tour was also in recognition of this year being the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first burial in the cemetery. It was the first time that the Society had organised such a tour and, judging by comments made afterwards, it will not be the last. It is hoped that another walk will be held next year.

Some 30 graves were visited and, at each one, an account was given of the tragic circumstances which resulted in each one's demise. As this year is also the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Faversham Munitions Explosion on 2<sup>nd</sup> April 1916 when 108 lost their lives, grave visits included those of Thomas Randall and the Fedarb family plot. Both Thomas Randall and Albert Fedarb lost their lives in the explosion. The former was a 39-year-old St John Ambulance Brigade worker who lived at Westgate and one of two ambulance men killed in the explosion. Albert Fedarb was only 18 and lived at Park Place, Margate. He was one of 36 men who lost their life in the explosion and whose remains were never found. The family plot records Albert's loss of life in the explosion; it also records that his brother Richard was killed in action during the First World War. However, it doesn't record the loss of another brother, Thomas, who lost his life serving on a minesweeper in the Second World War. All three names are inscribed on Margate War Memorial. Another grave visited on the tour was that of two Phillpott brothers – Clarence and Richard – who both died of wounds received during the First World War. They are buried in the same grave and their Commonwealth War Graves Commission headstone bears an inscription recording that a third brother, David (who was awarded the Military Medal), also lost his life in that war. Another family: another three sons lost. Again, the names of the three Phillpott brothers are inscribed on Margate War Memorial – but it is not evident that they were brothers.



*Members of the tour party at the grave of the two Phillpott brothers (the CWGC headstone can be seen to the right of the tour leader wearing his Panama hat)*

But perhaps the grave that stirred most emotion on the tour was that of the Fruin family recording the accidental loss of their four children on 22<sup>nd</sup> December 1942. The eldest son, Ronald, had taken home from work an unexploded mortar bomb which he was attempting to take apart in the kitchen of the family home at Dane Hill Row when it exploded resulting in the tragic death of all four children (Ronald, aged 15; Iris, aged 11; David, aged 6; and Peter, aged 2). Their mother was out of the home at the time and their father was working in the Midlands. Because their loss of life was indirectly a consequence of war, their names are not recorded on Margate War Memorial. But the sadness and the tragic loss of young lives is still remembered by those who lived in Margate during the Second World War.



*Members of the tour party at the Fruin family plot containing the graves of their four children who were killed by curiosity*

Indeed, the tour was memorable not only for the information provided by the guide but for the additional comments made by many of those on the tour party when their memories were triggered by names and events from the past. Such memories provided a living link with a number of the Second World War casualties whose graves were visited that afternoon.

James also indicated the listed buildings (all grade II) in the cemetery: the gates, gate-piers and a section of the curved wall at the main entrance; the two chapels; the First World War CWGC Cross of Sacrifice; the circus horse on the grave of John Sanger; and the Surfboat-men's Memorial. The last two were listed only last year.

We ended our tour at the former Episcopal Chapel where Vera Jenkins (a long-time member of the Society and a prominent member of the Friends of Margate Cemetery Trust) very kindly provided tea and biscuits for everyone.

The Friends of Margate Cemetery Trust are planning to publish a booklet later this year marking the cemetery's 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary. Details will be shown in our Newsletter as soon as they are known.

If you haven't explored Margate Cemetery for yourself, it is a most interesting place to visit for much of Margate's history of the last 150 years is told in the inscriptions of many of the gravestones. □

## Margate Post Office Mystery Solved

Have you ever noticed the toe-recess in the west-facing wall of the Post Office in Cecil Square and wondered what its purpose was, or still is? Amongst the party on the Old Town Walk on 13<sup>th</sup> May was Julian Smith, a member of the Society, who before retirement, previously worked for many years at the Ministry of Works where he had responsibility for security of many government buildings around the country. As the party passed the Post Office building, Julian immediately recognised the purpose of the toe-recess.



The photograph above shows Julian Smith holding the grab-handle outside the Post Office in Cecil Square: the toe-recess can also be seen. Note also the small rectangular area of clear glass at the bottom of the otherwise frosted-glass panel. The night-duty policeman would insert one foot in the step and use the grab-handle to pull himself up in order to be able to look through the clear glass area to check that the safe had not been disturbed. Thanks to Julian, another mystery solved! □

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## Margate Museum now on the Web!

Margate Museum now has its own website and very good it is too even though it is not yet fully developed. The Museum also has a new e-mail address: both are shown below:

website: [www.margatemuseum.org.uk](http://www.margatemuseum.org.uk)

e-mail address [margatemuseum@btconnect.com](mailto:margatemuseum@btconnect.com)

The website has been set up by Mike Wilton, a volunteer at the Museum. Mike is also a member of the Civic Society and was one of the judges for the recent Town Pride Awards. Mike deserves a big thank you, especially for his sterling work in setting up such a good website for the Museum. This really is a good-news story for Margate and for those wanting to know more about the Museum. □

## Heritage Centre opens at Westgate

Dr Dawn Crouch, a member of the Civic Society, is in the process of setting up a heritage centre at the back of St Saviour's Church, Westgate which will inform people of Westgate-on-Sea's history as 'a London estate by the sea'. Dawn has already mounted exhibitions at the church on the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of the Second World War; on Westgate and Westbrook in the 1920s to celebrate the Queen's 80<sup>th</sup> birthday; and, more recently, on Westgate in the 1880s to celebrate the 120<sup>th</sup> anniversary of St Saviour's School. By the time this Newsletter is printed, Dawn hopes to have mounted a display on the 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Battle of the Somme in which a number of Westgate men lost their lives. The Somme exhibition, aimed at both residents and visitors, will be open three mornings (Tuesday, Friday & Saturday) a week for the remainder of the summer.

As part of the heritage centre, Dawn also plans to hold a series of open sessions to assist people in researching their family histories. This year (2006) is an experimental year but Dawn hopes that, by 2007, the heritage centre will be well established.

Westgate has a relatively short history but its former exclusivity has resulted in a town with many fine buildings that were once occupied by many notables and members of the gentry. Sadly, a number of those fine buildings have been demolished in recent years to make way for more flats but much of Westgate's charm and appeal still remains. Thanks to Dawn, more and more local residents are learning of Westgate's past and, as a result, are more appreciative of the town's remaining quality buildings and the need to retain them before more of Westgate's special character is destroyed and gone forever. Interest has already been shown in the heritage centre and an anonymous donor has given an additional display screen. This year's final exhibition (from mid-August) will be on 'Builders & Developers – how it all began'. □

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## Heritage Features Quiz No. 1

### Answers

1. *Entrance Lodge, Margate Cemetery*
2. *Hartsdown House, Hartsdown Park*
3. *43 High Street, Margate*
4. *41 Sweyn Road*
5. *220-228 Northdown Road*
6. *Former Margate Ambulance Corps building, Fort Road*
7. *Tom Thumb Theatre, Eastern Esplanade*
8. *Dwelling, Albion Road*
9. *Electricity Station, Albion Road*

How many did you get right? There will be another quiz in the next Newsletter featuring more of the many features which decorate some other buildings in our area. Try looking out for such features when you out shopping or enjoying a walk. Finding such features is rewarding in itself as each one helps tell a story about the building it decorates which would otherwise remain untold to the casual passer-by. □

## **What's on**

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

Thursday, 5<sup>th</sup> October 2006 Annual General Meeting followed with the talk:  
'The Future of Policing in Thanet' by Chief Superintendent West, Thanet Police

### **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.*

18<sup>th</sup> July 'Mythical Sea Creatures: Fact and Folklore' by Steven Savage  
22<sup>nd</sup> August 'Charles Darwin, Downe House and the Voyage of the Beagle' by Cyril Aydon  
15<sup>th</sup> September 'Fossils Through Time' by Dr Alisdair Bruce  
17<sup>th</sup> October 'Fakes, Forgeries and Scientific Hoaxes' by Lucia Burgio

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

18<sup>th</sup> September 'Buzz Bombs & Bicycles' by Martin Lloyd  
16<sup>th</sup> October 'And so we raised the Mary Rose' by Albert Granville, CBE, CLH

*Kent Family History Society [Thanet Branch](talks all start at 8.00pm at Birchington Village Centre):*

19<sup>th</sup> July 'Education and where to find records' by Dr Ian Coulson  
20<sup>th</sup> September 'Records of Royal Naval Ratings' by Paul Blake  
18<sup>th</sup> October 'Livery Companies and the City of London' by Cyril Baldwin

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

21<sup>st</sup> July Visit to St Mary's House and Gardens, Bamber, West Sussex  
21<sup>st</sup> September 'Bedrooms, Banquets & Balls' by John Vigars  
5<sup>th</sup> October Visit to The Royal British Legion's Poppy Factory, Richmond, Surrey

### **Useful telephone numbers:**

<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Phone No.</b>	<b>Contact name/Notes</b>
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
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

### **Special exhibition at Margate Museum**

The special exhibition at Margate Museum to commemorate the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of the Second World War entitled "Doing their Bit – The Home Front in East Kent" has been extended until the end of March 2007. If you haven't yet visited this special exhibition, don't miss it.





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 2005/06** – as elected at the Society's Annual General Meeting held on 6<sup>th</sup> October 2005:

**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 (Tel: 292089)

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

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**Enrolment Form**

I enclose the sum of £ .....

**Name:** .....

**Address:** .....

**Tel:** .....

**Subscription rates for 2005/06:**

	<b>Individual</b>	<b>Joint</b>	<b>Junior (under 18)</b>	<b>Corporate</b>
<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 (Mrs Pat Snow), 34 Royal Esplanade, Westbrook, Margate CT9 5EG