



Margate Civic Society

**SUMMER 2022 NEWSLETTER
ISSUE NO. 407**

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

CHAIR'S REPORT

Dear Members

How are you all?

I hope you are all now making plans for the summer as the much-needed warmer weather beckons. It is the perfect time to catch up with family and friends, even if travelling is becoming increasingly difficult.

The horrendous situation in the Ukraine continues and one can only hope and pray that peace will eventually come to their homeland. So many lives have been lost, which is a tragic waste but the humanity shown to these people is commendable.

An enjoyable distraction was the Platinum festivities celebrating Queen Elizabeth II's 70-year reign, which is a remarkable feat. It was wonderful to see the various community events that were held across the UK and also to watch the televised 4-days of activities. A remarkable woman who has dedicated her life to the people, setting an example even in times of dissent.

My mother was an ardent Royalist and would have loved to have watched the procession and concert with me - we often watched Royal documentaries together, focussing on the less known facts/indiscretions, which she found absolutely fascinating! Always young at heart, one of the last concerts Mum watched was actually a performance by Queen (the rock band) which she also enjoyed, even at the age of 92 and a half - bless her!

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 ill health issues at this time, caring for a loved one or has been recently bereaved.

Membership: Welcome Back to Ross & Nickie Holding who have now re-joined. We look forward to seeing you later in the year when our meetings commence.

Lecture Evenings: As you are aware, I endeavour to organise a diverse programme of lectures, with something hopefully appealing to all Members' tastes.

Those who have attended, have enjoyed themselves immensely but I am saddened to note that attendance figures have been somewhat down this year, which is a shame. Several Members have health issues which obviously impacts on their attendance but I am hopeful that the worries of Covid are now being overcome and individuals will feel safe to attend small events such as ours. Due to spiralling costs, we have had to make some changes and we are now relocating to our 'new home'

at the Holy Trinity Church Hall in Cliftonville. This hall is a popular choice, with excellent facilities, enabling us to sell refreshments at reasonable prices which adds to the enjoyment of the evening. There is also greater parking provision, user-friendly access and heating, which obviously will be welcome during the winter months. 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 and meet your fellow Members, whilst also showing your support.

You will see on page 11 that I have amended details for the remainder of this year and also now completed the 2023 Programme.

My grateful thanks to Jane Bishop and her family for supporting us over so many years but understandably, following the disruption and angst of lockdown, they too have to consider their longevity. We will, of course, continue to stay in touch with Jane and hopefully arrange to have an afternoon tea or cream tea on the veranda or in the dining room in the future.

Blue Plaque Projects: You will recall that we agreed to continue with our Blue Plaque Scheme and the sub-group consisting of Mike Thompson (Lead), Mike Wilton and myself (with support from Geoff Orton) have been working on this, celebrating 3 artists who had a connection with Margate in the past namely:- Louis Wain, Walter Sickert and local artist Christopher Alexander. This has been progressing well and you will see in Mike Thompson's report, that the first plaque, celebrating Louis Wain, has already been installed in Westgate. Work is in progress regarding those for Walter Sickert and Christopher Alexander, which has become rather time-consuming and complicated, involving considerable work for Mike Thompson regarding planning permission and endless administration. Hopefully we will be able to give you some further news in a few months, enabling us to include the details in the autumn newsletter.

Newsletter: It is hard to believe that this is actually the eighth quarterly newsletter edition for which Sally has been Editor with the Editorial Team: Mike Wilton, Mike Thompson and myself. 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 Summer Issue which includes a review by Aileen Christodoulou. Aileen is very supportive of the Historical Walks and is keen to get involved.

As always, we would welcome your feedback regarding this issue - it is always good to hear from you!

Historical Walks: Vice-President, Robin Colyer has now commenced his programme of walks, the first two of which were well received. Unfortunately, the one scheduled for June had to be cancelled (due to Robin contracting Covid) so in view of this, the next one has been changed to a Cliftonville walk. The remaining schedule is as follows:-

Sat 23 July: Cliftonville Walk - 'The Development of a Victorian Seaside Suburb'

Sat 27 August: 'West of the Brooks Walk - The development of the Westbrook and Hartsdown Park areas (including All Saints Church)'.

Sat 17 September: (Heritage Open Day) Cliftonville Walk - 'The Development of a Victorian Seaside Suburb'

Sat 22 October: Margate Walk: 'The Old Town - From Fishing Village to Resort'.

Future booking will be essential via text or call to Robin's Mobile: 07878 537 448. He will collect donations for our Society. These talks will be promoted by social media and various online tourism sites in addition via our newsletter and website.

Why not consider joining Robin on one of these walks? They are very enjoyable and informative. In addition to this they are excellent value with a nominal donation requested of £3.00 minimum per person.

Town Pride Awards 2022: 12 May

This year's event was rather challenging in many ways: having recently lost my mother, the limited number of recipients in attendance and also the number of attendees, which was rather disappointing, as this evening is generally very well supported. However, in spite of this, the proceedings went well and everyone enjoyed the evening. Details of this can be seen after my Chair's Report.

Local Events:

Representing the Society, accompanied by my husband Ray, Glenys and Richard Clements, I attended the Margate Chartered Trustees' AGM and Ceremony of Mayor-Making, which was held on 16 May at Cecil Square Baptist Church. Union Church, Union Crescent, Margate.



The new Margate Mayor – Cllr Heather Keen

The newly elected Town Mayor for Margate is Cllr Heather Keen, (Cliftonville West Ward) who is Shadow Cabinet Member for Community Safety and Youth Engagement, expressed her desire to work closer with local organisations and groups. Cllr Keen is actively pursuing the formation of a Town Council for Margate.

Cllr Rob Yates (Margate Central Ward) was appointed Deputy Town Mayor. We look forward to engaging with them over the coming year, when hopefully they can attend one of our events. Our congratulations to them both!

The Margate School: are creating a community garden by clearing a piece of derelict land at the back of their School, off Margate's High Street, that has been a dumping ground and place of anti-social behaviour for over a decade. This is also a health hazard and in the past would have been a Town Shame.

Their aim is to benefit the School's community, the neighbourhood, local schools and community groups. It will be a place for respite/contemplation; experiencing nature in an urban environment; art through sculptural objects; social community events; educational purposes, e.g. growing herbs, fruit and vegetables. They will explore seasonal eating with the users of Our Kitchen (also in the High Street); research and experiment with plant-based extracts to create natural fabric dyes or sustainable photography. They will also offer workshops, continue to develop their Eco conference series and develop sustainability based courses and qualifications.

They are still seeking support, so would be grateful if you could place a small pledge to assist and help to spread the word. All help would be greatly appreciated.

Details are here at <https://www.spacehive.com/margate-high-street-community-garden>

Hot off the Press! The Margate School has now been informed that they have received a £14,244.00 pledge from KCC, which is fantastic news! Margate Town Team also made a donation of £100.00, as did several of the Members. Congratulations to Uwe and his team.

What they will deliver. They will clear the site of rubbish resulting from fly-tipping and vandalism, erect fencing/gates and create a perma-culture orientated community garden plan. They will also preserve and prune existing trees and vegetation, remove those deemed dangerous, install electrics, water supply and a compostable toilet. Plans include creating a social area and sculpture area, building a working shed and installing a bicycle shelter. They will additionally plant fruit bearing shrubs, herbs, some vegetable. They also plan to employ a co-ordinator.

The following are some activities in which you may wish to participate over the summer:-

Cliftonville Farmers' Market: Please note these popular markets (which take place on the last Sunday of each month from 1000-1300 hrs) are always held on the Walpole Green, Palm Bay Avenue, Cliftonville (which is located behind the Walpole Bay Hotel). Markets are organised by the Manager, June Chadband and the Cliftonville Residents' Association.

Concerts: The Oval Bandstand & Lawns Eastern Esplanade, Cliftonville, Margate, Kent

Oval Summer Sundays FREE LIVE MUSIC. The popular season of free summer concerts is back for 2022. The Summer Sundays programme continues until September.



GRASS is also bringing the Cliftonville community together to enjoy the unique atmosphere of an outdoor cinema with friends and family, the next film, 'Thelma and Louise' is being held on 2 July from 19:30-23:00. Members may also be interested in the other films being shown: 'The Lost Boys' on 6 August and 'Singin' in the Rain', celebrating 70 years of this iconic film, being shown on 3 September. For further details and how to purchase tickets see their website: www.ovalbandstand.co.uk

Acknowledgements: As always, my thanks to Committee Members: Harry Scobie, Mike Wilton, Mike Thompson, Sally Whitworth, Kate Wilson and Andrew Chard, in addition to the Auxiliary Committee: Anny Squire, Heather Wilton, Diane Addison, Ray Pople, Glenys and Richard Clements and Aileen Christodoulou, for their ongoing support.

Please note we are now recessing for the summer and the next meeting (which includes our AGM) will be held on Thursday, 6 October when the very popular speaker, Steve Hookins will be entertaining us with the topic "Battle Royale 1066"

Wishing you all a wonderful summer!

With my very best wishes

Pamela

Presentation of the Society's 2022 Town Pride Awards

The results of this year's Town Pride Awards (which was the 39th event) were announced at the meeting of the Margate Civic Society held at the prestigious Walpole Bay Hotel, Fifth Avenue, Cliftonville, Margate on Thursday, 12 May.

A total of twelve were nominated for the 2022 Town Pride Awards, as having enhanced the built environment. The calibre of nominations received indicates a growing awareness amongst the Society's members of the major contribution that both renovation of often run-down properties and the erection of well-designed new properties, make to the overall attractiveness of our town.

Of the twelve nominations judged for the 2022 Town Pride Awards, two were deferred to next year, as had yet to be completed.

This year, the judging Panel decided to award one Town Pride Plaque and Certificate and to award four Town Pride 'Highly Commended' Certificates as follows:-

The Society's 2022 Town Pride Plaque & Certificate was awarded to:-

20 Palm Bay Avenue, Cliftonville (In recognition of innovative, sensitive and eye-catching design, making a major contribution to the regeneration of Cliftonville)

Following the demolition of the existing unique pink dwelling: the erection of a 3-storey building containing 9 self-contained flats with associated parking and amenity space was undertaken by UTC Properties Ltd.

This is a truly stunning new development in the classic Art Deco style featuring high quality design and construction. Quality materials have been used throughout and the curved window and balcony detail finished in black, complements perfectly the white finished render. The stepped parapet and render detailing, capture the period beautifully. A wonderful addition to the variety of architecture to be found along our seafront.

A commendable project using exceptionally high-quality materials that is a fabulous impressive development!



20 Palm Bay Avenue, Cliftonville



Pamela Pople (Chair) and Harry Scobie (Vice-Chair) accepting the Plaque and certificate for 20 Palm Bay, Cliftonville (in the absence of Jamie Chapman, CEO of UTC Properties Ltd)

Town Pride ‘Highly Commended’ Certificates for 2022 awarded to:-

Westcliff House, 37 Sea Road, Westgate-on-Sea (In recognition of sensitive and innovative design, making an important contribution to the regeneration of the area)

This building was built in circa 1940, with the front elevation then added in the 1950's. Formerly occupied by the Royal School for the Deaf, when the school closed down, this building was sadly left vacant for some time and then fell into a serious state of disrepair. This is a landmark building on the Westgate seafront that has been sympathetically extended with the addition of an upper floor at roof level and a beautifully-designed complementary matching side extension. Repairs to the fabric of the building and all new fenestration have truly transformed this iconic structure and rescued it from a very uncertain future. A highly commendable project - our congratulations to all involved!

Unfortunately, in spite of making contact, there was no-one available who could attend in order to receive this award, so I requested that a 'speech' be sent prior to our meeting that could be read on behalf of Neil Shepherd (founder and Managing Director of **33London Ltd**) and we agreed that alternative arrangements will be made on a mutually-convenient date for the presentation of their plaque. Neil was very proud of this award and exceedingly grateful, sending his thanks to the Society and profound apologies



Above (left to right) Westcliff House and Springfield

'Springfield', Hengist Road, Westgate-on-Sea

Formerly a residential care home, supporting 25 older people, that officially closed down in 2015, this property was left unoccupied for 4 years, during which time it was sadly vandalised, until a planning application was submitted for change of use to a 5-bed detached dwelling with associated parking, following the part demolition of the existing property.

This beautiful detached property has been superbly restored and retains a wealth of period features. Timber sash windows have been refurbished and retained, as have the decorative barge boards prominent to the gable ends. The side elevation features the original lancet windows which have been completely refurbished. All roof slopes have been carefully re-slatted maintaining the building's originality and quality to once again make such a positive contribution to the street scene.

Absolutely stunning and an excellent project!

(In recognition of innovative, sensitive and eye-catching design, making a major contribution to the regeneration of our area)



(Above left to right) Claire and Sam Berry (Owners) receiving their Commendation award and Pamela with Sam Berry

'Wilderness-to-Wonderland', Westbrook

Located on the path from the bottom of Westbrook Gardens down to the promenade: This is a wonderful example of a successful project conceived by an individual for the benefit of the community. Funds were raised last year via Crowdfunding and holding quizzes and raffles and local volunteers and traders have joined forces to clear an area of wasteland and plant it with a variety of flowers and shrubs. It has truly transformed this former untidy and unkempt area and shows just what can be achieved when determination and willingness combine with a single aim.

Our Society has supported this project from the onset and will continue to do so. This project is creating a feel-good factor, enhancing the local environs. The 2nd Phase this year will be engaging volunteers to join them in looking after Margate, promoting diversity, mental health and Civic Pride. This will involve working on the gardens around the T S Eliot Shelter where they plan to restore and maintain the gardens, inspired by plants mentioned in Eliot's poems.

A fantastic well-executed community project which is extremely worthy.

Unfortunately, the Chairman, Rory Waitt, was unable to attend that evening but I was delighted that Michael Clark, who is the Deputy Chairman and Member: Iris Johnston were in attendance to accept this award **(in recognition of an outstanding volunteer-led Greening Project, promoting Civic Pride)** for **'Wilderness to Wonderland'**.



Wild flowers



Members of 'Wilderness-to-Wonderland'



2nd Phase of the project



Iris Johnston (Member) and Michael Clark, Deputy Chair receiving their Commendation award for 'Wilderness to Wonderland'

Following the presentation of their Highly Commended award at this year's Town Pride Awards, I received the following message from the Chairman: Rory Waitt:-

'Big thank you to Margate Civic Society for the award and ongoing support Wilderness to Wonderland continue to grow in numbers and purpose'.

106 Norfolk Road, Cliftonville

This newly-constructed detached residential property has utilised traditional yellow and red stock bricks in a style designed to fit in very well with the neighbouring properties and local street scene. Notable features include the traditional style two storey front bay with sash style windows and the slate clad roof with visible leadwork. An attractive, solid built dwelling, showing attention to detail. Well done!

Unfortunately, in spite of several attempts, I was unable to contact the owners of this property so no-one was in attendance this evening to receive the 'Highly Commended certificate **(in recognition of good and sensitive design, making a major contribution to the regeneration of our area)**.



106 Norfolk Road, Cliftonville

The following Press Release was sent to the local media:

"I should like to thank everyone who has been involved, contributing to making such a special occasion. This year is particularly poignant, as is the first Town Pride Awards' event that we have held since 2019 and the ideal opportunity to celebrate the positive impact that projects have made in the local area, rather than reflecting on the negative.

Croft Cast Signs were again commissioned to create the bespoke durable blue plaque depicting the Margate Clock Tower, which has become a symbol of our Society. I am delighted once again that we received nominations of such a high calibre, resulting in one Town Pride winner this year and 4 'Highly Commended', each of which was diverse, reflecting the exceptional high standard of new projects that have been undertaken in the areas of Cliftonville, Margate, Westbrook and Westgate-on-Sea, which will contribute greatly in raising ethos and a sense of pride in our community."

Pamela Pople
Chair

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



(from left to right) Michael Clark and partner, Iris Johnston, Claire and Sam Berry



Kate Wilson minding the raffle prizes!



Ray Pople and Diana Carter



Diane Addison guarding the merchandise!



Lynda and Harry Smith

(Photographs of the evening's proceedings are courtesy of Sally Whitworth)

LECTURE PROGRAMME 2022

Please note that all future meetings will now be held at the Holy Trinity Church Hall, Cliftonville, starting at a slightly later time. Refreshments and merchandise will be on sale at all meetings.

6 October

Guests: £4.50 nominal fee

Topic: **Annual General Meeting (Renewal of Subs due) followed by "Battle Royale 1066"**- to help commemorate the 954th anniversary of the Battle of Hastings and possibly the most famous date in English history. Meet the main characters involved and the series of events that brought them together, whilst Steve Hookins tries to make sense of a battle that everyone has heard of but one that so little is known about. Let Steve talk about what he thinks happened, why, where, when and who was involved. Featuring an all start cast, it's a story of Medieval power, politics and pushy parents.

Please note prior to the raffle, there will be a collection for **Cancer Research UK**.

Speaker: Steve Hookins (After-dinner speaker, historical presentations).

Time: 1945 hrs (to be seated by 1935 hrs)

3 November

Guests: £3.00 Nominal fee

Topic: **"Margate, a Cornishman and a Bi-Plane"**

Speaker: Bob Varnham (MCS Member and local historian)

Time: 1945 hrs (to be seated by 1935 hrs)

8 December

Christmas Soiree

Guests: £6.50 nominal fee

Topic: **"The Goose is Getting Fat! The History of Christmas Traditions"** followed by music, refreshments, Festive Hamper Draw and Christmas Raffle.

Speaker: Imogen Corrigan (Lecturer on Anglo-Saxon & Medieval History of Art)

Time: 1945 hrs (to be seated by 1935 hrs)

Please note that refreshments and merchandise will be on sale throughout the evening at future meetings.

LECTURE PROGRAMME 2023

January No Meeting

February No Meeting

2 March

Guests: £3.50 nominal fee

Topic: **"Local News Media Today and the Growth of Independent Publishers"**

Speaker: **Kathy Bailes** (The Isle of Thanet News) Kent Press and Broadcast Awards - Kent Commitment to the community 2020, Kent news website of the year 2018 and Kent Digital Journalist of the year 2017. **Time:** 1945 hrs (to be seated by 1935 hrs)

6 April

Guests: £3.50 nominal fee

Topic: **“Riding The Wall of Death”** - The Wall of Death was a major fairground attraction of the 1930's. What was it and where did it come from? How did a Margate lad get to travel in Europe? Explore a little known facet of life!

Speaker: **Felicity Stafford** (VP, MCS & Margate Museum Trustee). **Time:** 1945 hrs (to be seated by 1935 hrs)

18 May

(tbc)

Guests: £4.50 nominal fee

Topic: **TOWN PRIDE AWARDS** (followed by refreshments and raffle)

Time: 1945 hrs (to be seated by 1935 hrs)

8 June

Guests: £4.50 nominal fee

Topic: **“The Hanbury Gardens on the Italian Riviera Part II - 1908 to today”** a film and a talk.

Speaker: **Hugh Raggett** (a retired, professional Emmy-award film-maker) continues with his film telling the story of Sir Thomas Hanbury's renowned garden near Menton and what happens to a famous garden after its creator has died. Miraculously the garden is still open today, thanks partly to the intervention of the RHS in the 1980's, and the story covers the history of the Hanbury family and the garden over 100 turbulent years. **Time:** 1945 hrs (to be seated by 1935 hrs)

6 July

Guests: £3.50 nominal fee

Topic: **“The Changing Fortunes of the Cinque Ports”**

Speaker: **James Dickinson** (Historian). **Time:** 1945 hrs (to be seated by 1935 hrs)

August **No meeting**

7 September

Guests: £3.50 nominal fee

Topic: **“Suffragettes and Suffragists”**

Speaker: Melanie Gibson-Barton. **Time:** 1945 hrs (to be seated by 1935 hrs)

5 October (Renewal of Subs Due)

Guests: £4.50 nominal fee

Topic: **Annual General Meeting, followed by:-**

‘Waterloo, The Bits Abba Got Wrong - looking at the Battle of Waterloo’

Please note prior to refreshments and our raffle, there will be a collection for Cancer Research UK.

Speaker: **Steve Hookins** (After-dinner speaker, historical presentations). **Time:** 1945 hrs (to be seated by 1935 hrs)

November **No meeting**

December **No meeting**

NEW BLUE PLAQUE IN WESTGATE-ON-SEA



Above (left to right) Mike Thompson (Committee Member) presents the plaque to the home-owner, the plaque in position and the wording on the plaque

Margate Civic Society is pleased to announce that a blue plaque dedicated to Louis Wain, the Victorian artist who became famous for his drawings of cats depicted in humanised form, is now on display at 29 Westgate Bay Avenue in Westgate, where he once resided.

The Society was approached by the house owner asking if it would be interested in a joint venture to produce and display a suitable plaque. Agreement was quickly reached and the Society commissioned its regular Town Pride plaque manufacturer to produce one suitable for the occasion.

Louis Wain was born in London in 1860 and by the time he was in his twenties he had developed into a successful commercial artist. In 1882 his mother hired Emily Richardson as governess to her youngest daughter. Although ten years Louis senior, Emily and Louis fell in love and were married in 1884. Emily had a cat, Peter, which she adored and Louis had spent many hours with Emily drawing Peter. She suggested that he submit the drawings to the owner of the Illustrated London News, Sir William Ingram, and in 1886 Sir William suggested for the Christmas edition, a double page spread of a cats Christmas party which Louis duly produced. The artwork included 150 cats in a variety of poses and activities. As we would say today, it went viral! The Louis Wain cat had arrived.

Tragically, just three years after their marriage, Emily died of cancer and Louis became very withdrawn. Sir William took pity on Louis, his mother and five sisters and being the owner of several properties in Westgate-on-Sea, offered the family one of them, in Adrian Square. Louis subsequently occupied 7 Collingwood Terrace, later to be renumbered as 23 Westgate Bay Avenue, and finally 10 Collingwood Terrace - now renumbered as 29 Westgate Bay Avenue - where they lived from 1906 to 1916, until their return to London.

His years in Westgate became his most productive and Louis should have been wealthy by now but he was a poor businessman and failed to protect his work by copyright. As debts mounted and the creditors closed in, Louis and the family moved back to London. By 1925, with deteriorating mental health, Louis was certified insane with schizophrenia and confined to an asylum in Middlesex. Upon hearing of his plight, several notable people including a certain H G Wells made an appeal to raise funds for his on-going care and he was transferred to the Bethlem Royal Hospital in Southwark where he spent the next five years in a much more caring environment.

In his happy moments, Louis would continue to draw his beloved cats and no doubt dream about them and his happy memories of walks along the promenade at Westgate. He died in Napsbury Hospital on 4 June 1939 aged 78.

Interestingly and co-incidentally, a film entitled 'The Electrical Life of Louis Wain' was released earlier in the year starring Benedict Cumberbatch and Claire Foy. It is a truly delightful film with some great acting from the two leads. I am indebted to Nick Evans, author of 'Mayfair by the Sea' - the story of Westgate and published by Bygone Publishing for much of the detail in this article.

Mike Thompson

MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

Firstly, may I welcome two new members to the Society (actually past members who have re-joined): Ross and Nickie Holding.

Following many years holding our monthly meetings at the Walpole Bay Hotel and Museum, your committee has decided to hold all future meetings at the Holy Trinity Church Hall in Cliftonville. This is purely for economic reasons; the Walpole Bay Hotel quite understandably had to increase prices and we have to try and reduce costs as much as we can after a couple of years of declining membership and lack of fund-raising opportunities. There is the added benefit that we can offer members refreshments at meetings. We took the decision reluctantly because the Walpole Bay, under the ownership of Jane Bishop, has been very good to us for many years but as trustees of the Society, we have to do what is best for it. We recommend members support the Walpole Bay Hotel as much as possible, not least by treating themselves to one of their delicious cream teas.

We have been concerned about the decline in members attending the monthly meetings; only 19 at the April meeting and 33 at the Town Pride Award meeting in May. We hope that holding meetings in summer rather than winter from next year onwards may encourage more to turn out. Pamela Pople works hard to book appealing guest speakers – just have a look at the ones booked for the next twelve months. Such a wide variety, something for everyone, so, if you are able to attend, please do. We guarantee a warm welcome and an interesting evening.

We're looking at starting our coach trips again. Those of you who've been on them will know that we try to arrange friendly, good-value days-out to interesting places and we think we've been successful, particularly with our trips to France and Belgium. It's a bit of a gamble for us as the price you pay is based on our selling a particular number of seats, which covers the coach hire cost. If we sell more, the Society benefits; if we sell fewer then we lose money.

At present, we're giving thought to a trip to a garden, perhaps in Kent or Essex, in mid-September. It would be very helpful, to minimise our risk, if you could let me or any committee member know if you would be interested in joining such a trip – you won't be committing yourself, of course. Not only members are welcome on the trips, but relatives and friends also. If this is a success, we'll look at a Continental trip in May next year, perhaps to the Ostend at Anchor maritime festival we intended going to in 2020.

Kind regards,

Mike Wilton
Membership Secretary

OF CATS & CABBAGES & THINGS by Geoff Orton

Firstly, the Cats. The Margate School was pleased to host the FESTIVAL OF CATS Art Exhibition which attracted some 160 entries and whose preview was honoured by Mayor Mick Tomlinson in one of his final parochial appearances. A 'Louis Wain Wall' was devised including a mock Blue Plaque for Westgate-on-Sea's favourite adopted son and Margate Civic Society sponsored a pastiche from Jessica, one of Sandra Hampton's ART4ALL gifted pupils from the sadly defunct RNID School. We have some way yet to rival the Ypres Cat Festival but expect a further sally in a couple of years' time – if Bristol has gorillas and Congleton bears just may be Margate could produce some glass-fibre cats (as well as donkeys....)



Jessica receives the Margate Civic Society donation - her 'Dancing Cats on Beach' can be seen behind the handshake

Now, the cabbages – well maybe not exactly them, but work progresses on the Community Garden behind The Margate School (formerly the old Woolworths) which appears not to have been cultivated since about 1926, when the building was erected. All part of fulfilling the 'environmental commitment' of The Margate School's Ruskinian motto 'Art, Society, Nature' and a constructive contribution towards engaging the deprived and depressed in enjoying the benefits of growing things. A memorial to the late Anthony Heywood, who was a Margate School tutor and an environmental sculptor, is to be installed in the near future. All helps to bring life back to the High Street.

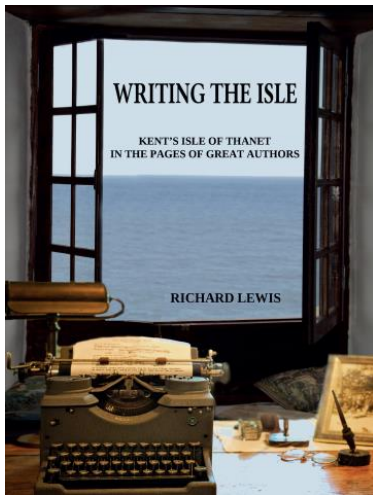
The Margate School has recently staged a public lecture on Sustainability by Jules Pretty – an internationally renowned Professor of such. The School held its Second Eco Expo which included a tribute to Rachel Carson of Silent Spring fame as well as updates on TDC eco-plans, the Coastal Project and Thanet Urban Forest plus an illuminating presentation of Monkton Nature Reserve's rather splendid orchid ensemble – all accompanied by an exhibition of landscape work from accomplished local artist Lisa Hawkins.

Our friends at the Margate Rotary Club have just finished their 13th Annual Thanet Young Artists Exhibition at The Margate School, featuring 35 schools and 600 entries and always enormously popular. It is really encouraging to see such enthusiasm and augurs well for the Isle's future given that business is increasingly appreciative of 'creativity' in employment. The TMS Junior Tech Club too fosters the application of imaginative thinking (last Saturday mornings in the month – FREE to users, courtesy of a Kent Community Foundation grant),

The pandemic is hopefully now history and The Margate School is looking forward to graduating its second crop of MA students (and an exhibition of their work), resuming closer contacts with the

Rouen/Le Havre School of Art & Design and developing further electives and stand-alone components for its postgraduate course. The pilot Certificate in Visual Communications has been successful and will input into Margate's very first Design Festival in late summer which has been attracting sponsorships from local firms.

A BOOK REVIEW OF 'WRITING THE ISLE' by Geoff Orton



Local cultural historian Richard Lewis follows up his earlier 'Creative Coast' with a well-researched exploration of our numerous literary associations including the famous and the unfairly forgotten literary residents of Thanet.

Among his assiduous excavations and delvings, Richard has unearthed Baroness 'Scarlet Pimpernel' Orczy who lived at Cleve Court, Acol, where she based her Cromwellian romance *The Nest of the Sparrowhawk* with the dastardly guardian Sir Marmaduke de Chavasse – *'The forests of Thanet echoed with songs of linnets and whitethroats ... Thanet is a strange country to me. It seemed weird and unkind – the woods are dark and lonely, that persistent sound of the sea fills me with a strange kind of dread.'*

Richard has produced another 'plum pudding' with much to delight – attractively illustrated and presented and available at The Margate Bookshop (next to the Bull's Head - Francesca's delightful emporium of old and new for the inveterate browser.) Enjoy!

UPDATE FROM THE MARGATE MUSEUM TRUST by Felicity Stafford

One of this Summer's 'Artefact of the Month' is the fascinating Royal Sea Bathing Hospital doll collection, on display at the Margate Museum.

The dolls were made in Germany in the early 1930's. Their bodies are ball jointed and have glass eyes and human hair wigs. The purpose of these dolls was to illustrate to students some methods of treatment concerning bone and joint tuberculosis which were in use at the time. This unique collection was started by Dr Basil Armstrong, who was the medical superintendent of the Hospital, and cost the princely sum of 5 shillings (25p) each. In 1930 the staff became involved with the doll collection. The beds, callipers and splints were made by Mr Fred Christian of the Splint Making Department, the nursing staff made the dolls' clothes and all the bedding. Dr Armstrong applied the plasters to all the dolls.



The Royal Sea Bathing Hospital's Dolls

Until it closed in 1996 the Royal Sea Bathing Hospital was one of the oldest orthopaedic hospitals in the world. The original hospital was built at a cost of £1,766 10s 9d and furnished at a cost of £265 7s 7d. It was finally ready for the admission of thirty patients in the spring of 1796. Many of

the wards were open to the air. The hospital even had its own bathing machine as salt-water sea bathing was part of the cure. Each patient was recommended by a subscribing governor and had first to be examined, either at the court room of the London Workhouse or St George's Hospital. Patients were then ferried down to Margate by the Margate "Hoy", which was a sailing ship. The original fare for the journey was four shillings (now 20p).

During 2022 Margate Museum is featuring an Artefact of the Month each month, which highlights one of the many exhibits housed in the Museum. There is also a Summer Exhibition, in the Magistrate's Court at Margate Museum, featuring some of the royal links with Margate - from William III using it as a staging post through to more modern visits from the Prince of Wales (Edward VII) and Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother.

On the 29th July there will also be a pop- up exhibition celebrating the Incorporation of the Town of Margate as a Borough (29 July 1857)

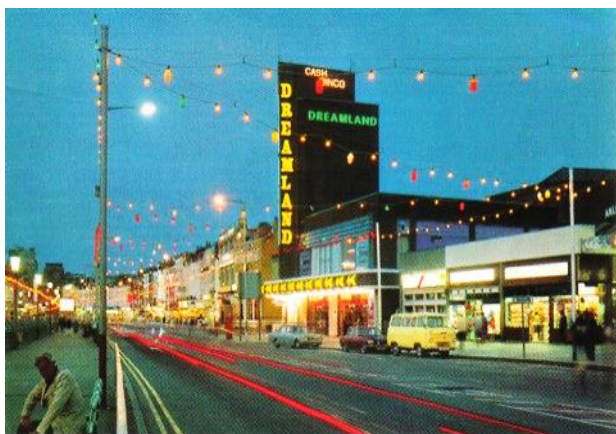
Opening Times and Prices: Saturday/Sunday/Bank Holidays from 11 am to 3 pm. Last entry 2.15 pm. Adults £2. Concession - £1.50. Accompanied (up to 16) children free.

WALKING THROUGH TIME by A J P Christodoulou

Joined Robin Colyer's Maritime Margate Walking Tour at Droit House. Captivated by his vast cultural and personal "connection" with the town where his own great grandparents settled around the time that T. S. Eliot was writing his epic poem, 'The Waste Land' at the Nayland Rock Shelter.

He began at the Harbour Arm, pointing out the curve of the Bay, touched on the significance of the reinforced seawall and mentioned the drama of the 1950's floods which forced locals from their homes and businesses in the Old Town. He also alluded to the destruction of the Sun Deck and pier in the heavy storms of 1978 when Margate Sands were covered in debris.

Our journey through time gave a nod to the tiny fishing hamlet "Meregate" that once squatted beneath what is now Royal York Mansions due to the patronage of a certain Regency Prince who enjoyed frequently the Pleasure Gardens, aka Tivoli. We passed what was once the Majestic pub overlooking the 2014 Steps opposite the Harbour where we were thrilled to spot a line fishing boat flanked by a squall of seagulls. We saw Turner-esque artist Anthony Giles leading a group of painters through the "basics" and Anita Rani of Country File mingling among the crowds as we headed towards the iconic Clock Tower which marks Queen Victoria's Jubilee. It once stood as a "Beacon" of Maritime innovation for sailors at sea, the Time Ball signifying the "safest time" to head for port.



Above – Dreamland Cinema circa 1960

In front of Dreamland Cinema we shared stories from 1950's, 1960's, 1970's and 1980's Day Trips to the Fairground, while our Guide touched on the importance of Sanger's Circus who would "rehearse" on Margate Sands as a PR stunt. Caught up in the excitement of Sam Mendes directing his cast with Hollywood credentials that eclipsed the lights donated to our town. Noise from scooters racing on the beach behind us we passed the Kent pub on the corner and progressed through Marine Gardens leaving residues of Michael Caine's 'Last Orders' in the distance.

Passing the RNLI Anchor scored in the grass, signifying the generous donation of our first lifeboat

and the heavy loss of lives over the centuries, we paused to hear more about the Coxswain monument by the Nayland Rock Hotel, before imagining elephants marching up the hill during the reign of Queen Victoria who adored the “magic” of the Big Top.

Turning left onto Margate High Street we looked at the striking architecture above some of the empty shops, eg Marks and Spencer, and at what was once Burton’s Menswear where several of us had perfected our Strictly “moves” circa 1970s, 1980s.

Lower down the High Street, facing the Turner we searched out the buildings where the “gentry” would have hired their bathing stations (where people accessed bathing machines) while enjoying uninterrupted views of Margate Sands from the stretch of buildings that ends with where the Cottage Pub stands today. Minutes later we were turning right into the Old Market Place passing The Bull’s Head where comedian Eric Morecambe married (held his wedding reception, they were married at St Paul’s) his bride, Miss Margate and where Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip went walkabout on 11.11.2011 on their visit to “open” the Turner Contemporary Art Gallery.

Dates for Robin Colyer’s other walks are available on our FB page, at Visit Margate, Tourist Office. Booking preferred! Donations welcome (£3.00 suggested minimum). **Next walk:** Saturday 23rd July 2022, 2pm, Droit House

PLATINIUM JUBILEE STREET PARTY by Mike Thompson

Diane and I were wondering if there would be any appetite within our road (fortunately a cul-de-sac) for a Platinum Jubilee Street Party to celebrate the truly unique event of a reigning monarch reaching such an incredible milestone. A quick trip up one side of the road and down the other found overwhelming support and enthusiasm for the idea and many offers of help with arranging it.

A WhatsApp group was set up and meetings convened. Tasks were allocated and matters moved forwards. We decided on an official road closure and this was dealt with courteously and quickly by the County Council and in due course an official sign was delivered to us for use on the day.

We decided on using bamboo canes up each side of the road together with street lights, trees and telegraph poles where appropriate to support bunting strung from side to side across the length of the road and this was put up early on the day with only one delivery van needing to come up the road and just clearing the bunting! The road was actually closed from 2pm to 6pm, all vehicles were cleared from the road and the house owners set up their own tables and chairs outside their houses all down the centre of the road and each house provided its own food and drink.



We had a great selection of music from the 1950's to the present day put together and played through a PA system arranged by one of our residents. There were competitions and face painting for the children.

Individual families invited grandparents, grandchildren, friends and relatives. It was a truly great afternoon, the whole road came together and everybody thoroughly enjoyed themselves. We were all talking about it for days afterwards and I was really delighted that the whole road came together as one. Truly a day never to be forgotten by all who attended.

A POSTCARD FROM MARGATE

Postcards sent by happy holiday-makers on their summer holidays over the years



Margate Civic Society

www.margatecivicsociety.org.uk



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 2021/22:

President: Mr Ralph Handscomb

Chair: Mrs Pamela Pople, Hurston Cottage, Sloe Lane, Westwood, Margate CT9 4DX

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Minutes Secretary: Ms Kate Wilson

Committee member: Mr Andrew Chard

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Enrolment/Renewal Form

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

Name.....

Address.....

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

Subscription rates for 2021/22

	Individual	Joint	Junior (under 18)	Corporate
Paper Newsletter*	£13	£17	£5	
Email Newsletter#	£10	£14	£2	£20

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.