

BOGNOR REGIS LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY



NEWSLETTER NO. 66

MARCH 2012

The Society was founded in January 1979 by the late Mr.K.R. Crum to bring together those interested in the history of Bognor Regis and district and to encourage the research and recording of its past and present. In 1984 the Society established a Museum in the town, firstly at Park Lodge, Hotham Park, then in 1997 at 69, High Street and now at the former Berkeley Arms in West Street. Web site; www.bognormuseum.org.uk

Hon. Chairman	Mr Cliff Mewett 72, Addison Way, Bognor Regis, PO22 9HZ
Hon. Vice Chair	Mr Chris Burstow 7, Devonshire Road, Bognor Regis, PO21 2SX
Hon. Sec.	Mrs Angela Gillespie 11, Brook Close, Bognor Regis, PO21 5PN
Museum Curator	Mr David Jennings 9, Nuffield Close, Bognor Regis, PO21 5RA
Treasurer	Mrs Gwen Twaites 26, Rife Way, Felpham, PO22 7BP

Subscriptions are due annually on 1st November and allow free admission to meetings and two free newsletters per year.

Fees are;

Single	£9.00
Couples	£12.00
Associates members	£12.00

Fees should be sent to the membership secretary Mrs Kay Fall at 17, Sandy Road, Pagham, PO21 4SP.

The Stewards rota for the museum is organised by Elaine Cox and she is in need of some more volunteers please. Tel. 01243 867847 If any member has questions, suggestions, or ideas please send in writing to the secretary so it can be discussed at committee meetings'

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Minutes of the 33rd Annual General Meeting held on 9th January 2012 at The Hub with approx. 50 members in attendance.

Apologies for absence were received from Mr & Mrs Came, Mrs K Dicks.

Minutes

Minutes of the previous meeting, published in Newsletter no. 64, were accepted as a true and accurate record. (Proposer: Mrs J Barnes, Seconder: Mrs S Smith). There were no matters arising.

Chairman's Report

The Chairman Kay Fall began her report by calling for a show of appreciation for all the hard work carried out by the Museum Curator, David Jennings, in turning the building into a Museum of which the whole town can be proud, and asking him to accept Honorary Membership of the Society as a token of members' appreciation. He continues to require the help of volunteers and names can be offered at the end of the meeting. She then announced the resignation from the Committee of one outstanding member, Eve May, who has been on the Committee almost since the society started, and has held almost every office in that time. She is already an Honorary Member and was presented with a floral basket as a token of appreciation. She has promised her continued support. The Chairman continued by outlining the various events at which she represented the Society, and the outside exhibitions attended by members, usually the same small group of volunteers. She asked for help in distributing new Museum leaflets when they have been printed, five thousand having been distributed last season.

Kay proceeded to announce her own resignation from the post of Chairman, but was happy to say that a nomination had been

received for a replacement, and also for Vice Chairman to replace Eve May, and volunteers to fill the posts of Programme Secretary, (Howard Dicks), and Newsletter Editor, (Sheila Smith). She paid tribute to Michael and Margaret Gowler, who have edited the newsletter very successfully for several years, but now feel it is time to step back and allow new blood to take over.

Membership of BRLHS stands at 85 with 9 Honorary members, but some overdue subscriptions are still outstanding, and it is hoped that last year's level of 122 will be attained or even surpassed. Attendance at meetings has declined, but this may be partly due to problems with the venue, now we hope resolved. During the year some members expressed concern over the running of the Society, and were duly invited to put these concerns directly to the Committee, after which a news sheet was sent out to all members addressing these items. Members are reminded that they are entitled to read the minutes of committee meetings, copies of which can be obtained from the Secretary.

Finally Kay thanked the Committee for their support and added that special thanks are due to some non-committee members, particularly Sheila Smith and Elaine Cox, who have worked tirelessly in the background, proving that you do not have to be on a Committee to put your heart and soul into the Society.

Secretary's Report

The Secretary, Angela Gillespie, began by paying tribute to Kay at the end of her term as Chairman and presented her with a potted plant as a token of thanks for her hard work.

She reported an interesting range of talks, including one on the Great War by member Cliff Mewett who is researching a book on the subject and we look forward to its publication later this year. Our October talk by County Archaeologist John Mills was particularly interesting when he gave an insight into archaeological digs around Bognor, especially at North Bersted

prior to development, where particularly interesting things have been found. The visit by Screen Archive South east was also very enjoyable, when we were shown the earliest clips of Sussex resorts, including Bognor Regis. The Christmas Lunch at Reminisce was very successful and we were well looked after by the staff, for which we thank them.

All members are invited to attend the annual Wreath Laying service to commemorate the laying of the foundation stone of the resort on Wednesday 18th January at 10.30am at the grave of Sir Richard Hotham in South Bersted churchyard. This year we have been invited by the Friends of South Bersted to join them for refreshments in the Church afterwards and to hear something about their activities.

Angela then paid tribute to Kay Fall's hard work as Chairman, much of it going unnoticed, and to Eve May, whose great knowledge of people and events in the town will fortunately still be available to us, and who will continue to keep an eye on members who are sick or in hospital.

Finally she thanked members for supporting meetings and predicted another successful year with some interesting talks already programmed.

Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer Gwen Twaites, began by thanking Mr. Dougal Maconachie for carrying out the Examination and presenting him with a small gift in appreciation

Referring to copies of the accounts which had been circulated she pointed out that income showed sums in respect of this year's subscriptions already received and money prepaid for the Christmas lunch. Arrangements can now be made for subscriptions to be paid by standing order if members wish.

The Museum accounts should not be viewed as typical as they include expenses in respect of our former premises at 69 High Street for which we were responsible until 31st March 2011. The bank loan incurred set up and legal fees and repayments began in

December 2010 although no rents were received from the flats until April 2011. Many 'one off' expenses had been incurred during the setting up of new displays during the first season, so that future years should show better figures. Advertising costs have increased considerably, essential following the move, and telephone bills include internet charges, which we did not have previously. However, in spite of this there is a surplus of income over expenditure. As soon as possible a maintenance fund will be set up to allow for major refurbishment expense. Members' loans have been repaid and the Bank Loan which is over ten years can be repaid earlier without additional cost if funds allow.

The accounts were accepted with thanks to the Treasure (Proposer: J Barnes, Seconder: A Lockett

Museum curator's report

Curator David Jennings reported the Grand Opening of the new Museum in West Street on 2nd April 2011, attended by the Mayor, Councillor Sandra Daniells, Councillor Don Ayling on behalf of Arun D C and our local MP, Nick Gibb and a large number of members of the society and Museum. The opening ceremony was graciously led by our principal Benefactor Mrs Jenny Jones. No commemorative displays could be produced this year but we were grateful to Sue Kidd for supplying a display to celebrate the 175th anniversary of the Royal Norfolk Hotel, and many of our old boards were put to good use.

95 Object Entry Forms have been completed this year representing some 115 individual donated items, and many more photographs and documents have been added to the collection over the year. Groups of children from several local schools have been welcomed and have benefited from use of the Research Room and toilet facilities. Feedback from other visiting groups has been excellent, evidence of which is in our Visitors' Book which contains many very complimentary comments. We are no longer receiving 'chance' visitors due to our location and visitor

numbers are down by 4000 to 6431. We hope to improve this situation as our new location becomes better known.

Disappointingly Arun DC has refused to support the Museum in anyway financially, in spite of benefiting substantially from our decision to vacate their premises at 69 High Street. BR Town Council, however continue to award us a substantial grant, along with several Parish Councils, who allocate smaller amounts.

Thanks go to the few who continue to help behind the scenes to ensure the smooth running of the Museum particularly Eve May, Elaine Cox, Kay Fall, Gwen Twaites and Maurice Bone and special thanks to Sheila Smith who has worked hard to bring the Document Archive up to date and proceeded to volunteer for the mammoth task of re-scanning and re-organising the Photo Archive Thanks also to all stewards who are the public face of the Museum.

Advertisements have already been placed for the 2012 season in various local publications. Since we closed at the end of October new mock shop windows have been built, the general consensus being that this style of display was missed by many. The Chichester display units proved not to be a practical option, and their use would have changed the character of the Museum entirely. The layout of the Museum is therefore very different from that in October last. Familiarisation sessions are to be held in March for stewards to reorientate themselves in the new displays. He finished his report by looking forward to an enjoyable 2012 season.

Election of committee and officers

The Chairman and Committee stood down and the Secretary took the chair temporarily for the election of the Chairman, Mrs Kay Fall resigned as Chairman and one nomination had been received (Proposer: D Gray Seconder: D Fitter) **Cliff Mewett** was duly elected. He thanked the outgoing Chairman and members and said

he would work towards improving the membership numbers as there are many people interested in local history who are not members of BRLHS.

Mrs Eve May resigned as Vice Chairman and one nomination had been received (Proposer: M Bone, Seconder: D Gray) **Chris Burstow** was duly elected.

Mrs A Gillespie was re-elected Secretary (Proposer: K Fall, Seconder: C Burstow).

Mrs G Twaites was re-elected Treasurer (Proposer: A Gillespie, Seconder: E Cox).

Mr David Jennings was re-elected Curator (Proposer: K Fall, Seconder: S Smith).

Mr Ken Hawkins has resigned for family reasons and is unable to stand for re-election.

The following were willing to stand for re-election to the Committee;

Mrs Kay Fall who will continue to act as Membership Secretary (Proposer: S Smith, Seconder: A Gillespie)

Mrs A Luckett (Proposer: C Mewitt, Seconder: C Burstow).

Mrs J Barnes (Proposer: E Cox, Seconder: C Burstow).

Greg Burt has been co-opted to the committee and offered to continue as Publicity Officer. (Proposer: J Passingham, Seconder: J Barnes).

Further nominations received:

Mr Howard Dicks who has already taken over as Programme Secretary (Proposer: C Burstow, Seconder: E Cox).

Mrs Helen Bowles (Proposer: A Luckett, Seconder: C Burstow).

These members were duly elected to the Committee.

Mr Dougal Maconochie agreed to continue as Examiner of Accounts. (Proposer: J Barnes, Seconder: K Fall).

Any other business

The possibility of a Museum sub-committee or management Committee was brought up and names of interested parties taken by J Barnes, including those interested in taking over a particular display on a subject of interest to them.

Barry Jones asked if his suggestion of advertising flags outside the Museum had been considered. Greg Burt confirmed that additional sign writing had been negotiated for MUSEUM to be put on the façade and two wall returns.

Greg Burt reminded members that the Regis Centre has offered a room for meetings, having helped us out on a previous occasion when we found the Hub locked and unavailable. Unfortunately the room offered was considered too small and the alternative is not always available.

Sylvia Endacott pointed out that many Societies are holding meetings on Saturday afternoons, as people are often reluctant to be out on cold winter evenings. The Committee have considered daytime meetings but feel that weekdays would be unacceptable as working members could not attend and we are keen to attract younger people.

Barry Jones asked for information about the quotations received for adapting the rear building to house the bathing machine, and suggested that a completely new building could be built from scratch for less cost on the car park. David Jennings doubted if it would be cheaper and felt that it would mean the loss of two car spaces. Now that the 3 quotations have been received a grant application would be made.

In answer to a query concerning any problems with the flats above the Museum David Jennings said they were in the hands of AC Lettings, and had been successfully let as soon as they were available and all three tenancies have just been renewed for a further period.

Sylvia Endacott asked if any reason had been given for Arun DC's refusal to give any financial assistance, and Jenny Jones answered

that they were no longer taking applications for grants from any organisation.

The AGM closed at 8.15pm after which David Jennings showed a selection of slides giving the history of entertainment in the town, bringing back memories for many of evenings at the theatre or cinema.

Past Chairman's Chatters, The Finale

As you will now be aware, I have given up as chairman, so you will be relieved to know that I will not be nagging you all into doing jobs for the Society/Museum. I am still on the committee as they threatened to lock the door at the AGM so that I could not escape. Seriously though, I wish out new chairman Cliff all the best and I hope that he can achieve all that he wants for the Society. I am also pleased to welcome 3 other new committee members Helen, Howard and Chris.

I was very sorry to receive the news that Eve was retiring, she has always been a valid member of the committee taking on many roles including sorting out the rota for the Museum stewards, but after all these years she felt it was time for a well-deserved rest. She will, of course, still be there for us in an advisory capacity.

Also Margaret and Michael Gowler have given up editing the newsletter, and our thanks for their hard work over the past five years, pushing you all for articles, snippets etc. You will now have Sheila after you all, our thanks to her for taking on this task, editing not nagging is what I mean. (Editor's note; I'm quite good at the nagging, not so sure about the editing)

I will still do a little nagging myself as I am still membership secretary and those of you that have not yet paid their subscription there will be a reminder with this newsletter. Remember subs were due for renewal last November.

David has worked tirelessly over the winter to re-organise the Museum which re opens on 31st March. The opening ceremony, to which you are all invited, is usually at noon and we open to the public at 1.00pm.

I have enjoyed my time as your chairman although it did involve a lot of hard work and in my final year I did try delegating some of the jobs, so Cliff be careful you do not take on too much.

Let's see the Society and Museum go from strength to strength which we can only do with support from ALL our members.
Kay Fall

Introducing our new Chairman

I am pleased to take this opportunity to introduce myself as your Chairman for the coming year, but would like first of all to sincerely thank outgoing Chairman Kay Fall for her hard work and dedication to the Society over the past few years, particularly her involvement in the setting up of our new Museum. We have not lost Kay altogether and I am pleased to say that she is continuing on the committee as the membership secretary.

For my part I joined the Society about seven years ago, although I have lived in Bognor Regis for twenty five years and have always had a great interest in Sussex history. Hastings is my home town and in 1987 my family and I were transferred to Bognor on promotion during my 23 years working for the Prudential. Prior to that I worked for the Post Office and returned to that organisation after taking early retirement from the Pru. All of my working life has involved me in travelling around Sussex, from Rye in the east to Chichester in the west and I soon developed an interest in the history of the County. As well as working I was serving in the Royal Air Force Volunteer Reserve, being commissioned in 1978. Marion and I have been married for thirty eight years and we have a shared interest owning classic cars and motor-cycles. Our two daughters are now following successful careers of their own

and having recently retired I am now able to devote more time to local history and the Society.

The coming year will be a challenging one for our Society, promoting the Museum to increase our footfall is a priority and to increase our membership. There are many people who are interested in local history, I'm sure we all know some and these are the people we need to attract. To meet this challenge you have elected a strong committee, who I know are keen to take the Society forward and you can help, simply by bringing a friend to one of our talks, they will be most welcome and hopefully we will sign them up.

I look forward to meeting you all during the coming year.

Cliff Mewett

Creating a Buzz



‘A small sensation was caused in Station Road by the cabmen’s shelter on Thursday morning about 11.30, when the thoroughfare was alive with busy bees, which had swarmed from a hive in Linden Road. For some time the traffic was a little “nervous” and caused a detour by some people through the station yard. Mr. Cagier, of South Bersted, attempted to catch the bees, but eventually they left their actual retreat under the shelter, and hived themselves in the garden of Miss Phillips, of Linden Road, from whence they had originally come’

From the Bognor Observer Wednesday 13th July 1921.

R E Simpson – In Memory

Stewards at the museum will know that radio buffs and interested public, young and old, continue to enjoy the Ron Simpson



wireless collection in our new West Street premises, expertly displayed by Don Fowdry. Moved by the story of Ron and his radios he wanted to ensure their preservation. Many will say that Ron's most lasting legacy was to bequeath the Museum Collection to the Society in perpetuity. Above all else Ron cared passionately about his radios. They had helped sustain him through difficult and unhappy periods of his life. The area given to him at The Lodge, Hotham Park, was a

great delight, his baby, and the first time some of his collection could be displayed to the public. After the move to 69 High Street and the official opening in 1997 some will recall that a few months later Ron held an official opening of his wireless museum with invited radio enthusiasts. Ron's radios were on the road and on the map. It was his dream to find suitable premises at a reasonable rent for a radio museum but none were found and then ill health prevented him from fulfilling his dream.

While the Society received some of Ron's collection much was destroyed along with his stamp collection showing little respect for his lifelong interests. We are not certain who took this decision. Arising from this it seemed as though a small memorial was needed for his grave which remained unmarked. With Derek Frampton's help a wooden cross was made and a plaque mounted upon it. As Derek commented 'it was the last thing we could do for him'. On occasions when tending his grave in the peace of Chalcraft Lane cemetery I wonder if Ron can 'tune in' to the companionship and friendship he found in the museum with his radio collection. **Anon.**

Opening the Pier Pavilion

By Ron Iden

This event took place on the evening of Monday 9th July 1900, after the visit of the Duke and Duchess of York (later King George V and Queen Mary) to open the Victorian Convalescent Home and the Princess Mary Memorial Home, on the seafront between Clarence Road and Albert Road (demolished 1980, now Berkeley Court flats).

Chichester Observer, Wednesday 11th July 1900

‘In order that the new Pavilion on the Pier should commemorate the Royal Visit, the opening ceremony of the new building was arranged to take place in the evening, and was celebrated by holding a special concert. The Pavilion and the alterations to the pier have been effected at a cost of something like £850. The pavilion which will accommodate 500 persons, is of octagonal shape, with three windows on either side of the entrance and the stage facing the shore. A great feature in the building is the lantern light which is 24 feet square, supported upon four prettily decorated columns. The lantern not only gives abundant light for the hall but provides the means for efficient ventilation. For lovers of the fragrant weed smoking lounges are provided on each side of the building, from which a splendid view of the English Channel is obtainable. Shelter from the prevailing wind can therefore always be found on one side or the other. The acoustic properties of the hall have been studied and in this direction Mr Bridges has scored a signal success. The interior is decorated in white and blue, and the exterior is of a light green colour picked out with a darker green. Although not crowded, there was a good audience present, nearly 350 persons paying for admission, (the takings being over £20) on Monday evening, when the Pavilion was formally declared open by Mr. H. Lovett, J.P., Chairman of the Bognor Urban District Council. He was supported by Mr. H.L. Staffurth (Clerk), the Rev. W.D. Yoward and Messrs A. Gergory,

W. Grice, A.T. Long, Tate, H.N.Travers and J Hughes (members of the Council) and Mr. Oswald A. Bridges (surveyor). Included in the audience were Mr. Waechter, the donor of the Memorial Home, Mr Sawyer, a member of the Home Committee, Mr. L.H. Dixon, Mr. E.L. Best, Mrs Beaumont, Rev. S.H. Nobbs-Rawdon, Mr. Gatehouse, Mr A. Goodall, Rev. James Taylor, Mr A. Seymour and Mr T. Tregear &c. The proceedings commenced with the orchestra playing “God Save the Queen.”



Roller skating in the early 1900s, soon after the Pavilion was built.

The Chairman of the Council then addressed the assembly in a very lengthy speech observing that he considered that to have been the greatest day Bognor had ever had. It had been a day which would long be remembered by all Bognorians. From a little fishing place, Bognor had risen to the position of receiving in its midst the future King and Queen of England (applause). They looked upon it as a great honour and he, (Mr Lovett) appreciated the position in which he had been placed of acknowledging the honour that had been bestowed upon the town that day. Speaking of the Pavilion, Mr Lovett went on to say that so determined were the ratepayers to have a Pavilion for the benefit of the visitors that the Council had gone with the work independently of whether or not they would receive the Local Government Board loan (hear, hear). The rate payers had said they would have a Pavilion for the

visitors to go to in wet and windy weather, and a place where the residents themselves might spend many a pleasant hour, and this Pavilion they had now got. He noticed in the audience the gentleman (Mr Waechter) who had done a great deal towards bringing the Royal visitors to their town – the first Royal visit, although the Queen as a young Princess once upon a time resided in the town – and their thanks were due to that gentleman for the honour that had been conferred upon them (applause). He could only say that the reception which had been given to the Duke and Duchess would shew the gentleman referred to that they, as a town, had done their duty as far as they were able. Bognor was a small town, but its people were progressive, and they intended to make everything as comfortable as possible for the visitors. What had taken place that day, he ventured to think, had not only had the result of bringing many visitors to the town, but he thought it would also have the result of bringing to the town many substantial residents. Again alluding to the Pavilion, Mr Lovett said it was a handsome building and one which nobody need have any fear of being dangerous in a storm or anything else. Great credit was due to the Surveyor for having erected it in so short a period, and he was only too proud to be able to declare it open to the public, in commemoration of the auspicious occasion of the visit of their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of York. (applause) The Chairman and his colleagues then left the platform, and the concert was proceeded with, the programme being contributed to by Mr. Walter Beaumont (tenor), Miss Thorp (soprano), Mr. Griffith Humphreys (from the Egyptian Hall), Mr Gordon Craig (dramatic reciter) and the Pier Orchestra, under the direction of Mr H.E. Angless. Arrangements had been made for the illumination of the Pier with Chinese lanterns, but a breeze which sprung up prevented these being lighted. It should be mentioned the substructure of the Pavilion has been reconstructed by Mr. Frederick Grace, of Eastbourne, who advised the Council on this matter early in February, but the work was not commenced until the middle of May. The Pavilion itself has been designed by

Mr. Oswald A. Bridges and has been erected under his personal supervision. The Council are to be congratulated upon the great improvement and especially the Pier committee for making the arrangements.

A Ghostly Experience in Pagham

By P Karn-Smith

One Monday afternoon about 2pm, while driving down Pagham Road towards Church Farm, I was surprised to see a haywain coming from the opposite direction, almost overflowing with people who were laughing and seemed to be having a really good time. They were dressed, I would guess, in clothing of the late nineteenth or early twentieth century. Just before I turned left the haywain turned right into Sea Lane. I remember thinking I must have another look at this but as I turned left into Sea Lane the haywain had completely disappeared. It occurred to me then that I had heard no sound from the horses or the people. Everything had been silent.

I wondered whether anyone has had a similar experience or has heard of anything relating to this story.



Editor's note; whilst on the subject does anyone know the story of the ghost that supposedly haunts the Berkeley Arms?

Antiques Roadshow

By Jane Barnes

Members may be aware that the BBC's Antiques Roadshow visited the Weald and Downland Open Air Museum in the autumn. Our wonderful curator suggested we took some items from our Museum artefacts and suggested some blue and white



tiles which had come from the Victorian Convalescent Home for Surrey Women which stood on the Eastern Esplanade, then known as Marine Drive. He pointed out that he would not be able to attend himself as he would be away but if anyone would like to volunteer.....

Thus it was that on a windy morning in early September Kay Fall, Sheila Smith and myself met up in Pagham to travel together to Singleton. Kay had decided that, as we should be seeing a Ceramics expert, it would be a good idea to bring his/her attention to our own local potters, and had therefore selected a piece of Masters' pottery and an example of Eric Mellon's work.

By 10.30am we had joined the queue at the Museum to register our items and to be assigned to an expert. The queue we soon discovered, snaked its way from the bottom field car park entrance, used on 'event' days, to the Market Place at the centre of

the Museum, and two and a half hours later we eventually reached our destination, the Registration Desk. Thirty seconds later, with our small registration slip in hand we were on our way to our next queue, for Ceramics, always the longest we were told. Another two and a half hours went by before we were ushered to the table of one of the experts.

Actually this experience was not nearly as bad as it sounds. (Editor's note; Oh yes it was!). Although it was cool and breezy it did not rain, and eventually there was even some watery sunshine. There were drinks and food stalls set up along the route of the first queue, and as there were three of us we were able to take it in turns to take a walk around the premises, watch some filming and eat our picnic lunches, and of course there were plenty of people to talk to in the queues. I spent some time watching Andy McConnell, one of the experts in Glassware, who was very entertaining, speaking as much to the circle of public surrounding his table as to the owner of the actual item he was examining. He explained the system by which an item is first selected for filming, and then given a time slot for the actual cameraman, sometimes several hours later. He also pointed out that experts have to look for the picturesque, which would make a good camera shot, as well as items of particular value or historical interest. He had selected a glass Sun plaque for filming, because it was so decorative, although not of any particular interest as an antique. I also narrowly escaped spoiling one of Fiona Bruce's shots when I came up behind her unexpectedly just as the cameras were starting to roll. The cameraman insisted on reshooting anyway for some reason, but I don't think it was my fault. I also saw a gentleman get a very pleasant surprise when his print was valued. That also had to be reshot, but he was told not to worry about simulating his reaction, as that bit was already 'in the can'.

But what of our tiles and pottery? Our expert was Fergus Gambon, one of the current regulars, and a man of great charm. He thought the blue and white tiles were 19c copies of 18c Delft tiles, the earlier ones always being much smaller, only 3 or 4 inches square

and considerably more valuable, whereas ours are about 5 or 6 inches and worth about £5 each. He was interested to hear that there was a convalescent home for Surrey women in Bognor. Why bother to send them to Bognor he wondered, and we were able to explain that this was a common occurrence due to the belief of the health giving properties of its sea air.

The home was opened in July 1900 by the Duke and Duchess of York, having started in temporary accommodation in 1897 to celebrate Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee, following a meeting convened by the Lord Lieutenant of Surrey and attended by the Mayors of Godalming, Guildford, Kingston upon Thames, Reigate and Richmond. In the second half of the 19c, as the importance of hygiene to health was gradually recognised, glazed tiles were used extensively in public buildings to ease the cleaning of them. Originally produced in the Delft region of Holland, they were imported in large quantities until the English potteries learnt the techniques of manufacture and began to produce them here.

When shown the Masters pottery jug Mr Gambon admitted that he had never seen anything quite like it, but said it was very competently made and that its value was almost impossible to estimate, being what a buyer was prepared to spend, maybe £30 per item, but possibly up to £100 with its local interest and provenance. Frederick



Masters was a Master Potter trained at the Belle Vue Pottery in Rye who retired to Bognor in 1931 and continued to work from his studio in Lyon Street. His work is typical Sussex rustic style, the jug we took to the Roadshow being decorated with hops.

Likewise, Eric Mellon's pottery was unknown to him, but as he is still active his items can be valued against new items currently for sale. His style is modern and often incorporates views of nude figures. Mr Gambon thanked us for taking these items and pointed out to his colleague that he was receiving a lesson from us on this occasion.

So our museum has not uncovered untold riches, but we had an enjoyable day, and although we all took care to keep away from the cameras you never know, you might get a peek of one of us when it is shown on TV this spring. Look out for it in the next few weeks.

Other People's Museums, part 1

By Jane Barnes

This notice was seen in Carisbrooke Castle Museum on the Isle of Wight.

PLEASE

NO SMOKING

(by order of the Government)

NO FLASH PHOTOGRAPHY

(by order of the Curator)

NO FOOD, DRINK OR STICKY SWEETS

(by order of the Cleaner)

NO DOGS

(by order of Tiddles the Cat)

Wreath Laying



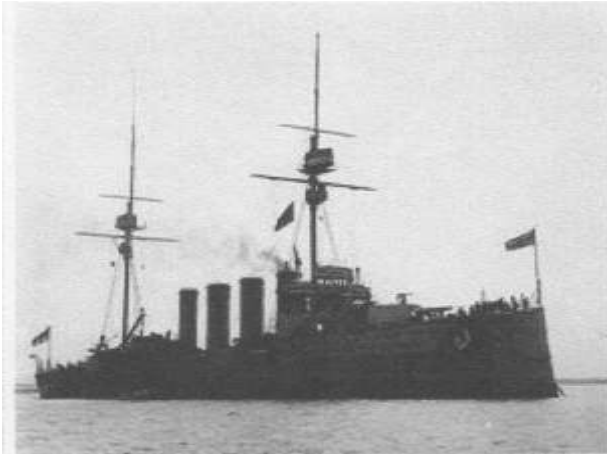
The annual ceremony commemorating the day, 225 years ago, that Sir Richard Hotham laid the foundation stone of his first building which he named Bognor Lodge (demolished in 1938), took place on Wednesday 18th January. It was attended by around 30 people, including our Town Mayor, Jim Brooks. Arun District Council did not respond to our invitation to send a representative. Councillor Brooks called for a full size bronze statue of Sir Richard to be given pride of place in the town centre and for the ‘sun sculpture’ to be moved ‘to more suitable surroundings’. He said he would support any fund raising initiative to make this happen.

Two pupils from South Bersted School, Iona Airzee and Malachi Grant laid floral tributes, made from foliage gathered in Hotham Park, on the grave. The Rev. Tim Crouch and the Friends of South Bersted Church very kindly invited us into the church afterwards for some refreshments and to learn more about the plans of the newly formed Friends.

Bognor at War 1

By Cliff Mewett

HMS Black Prince (pictured below) was a Duke of Edinburgh



Class Armoured Cruiser which was launched in 1904. At the outbreak of World War One three Bognor sailors were serving aboard her, Petty Officer Stoker Henry Hellyer, Able Seaman Albert

Newbury, who lived at 11 Scott Street and Leading Seaman Walter Simmonds who lived at 2 Scott Street. Her early war service saw her stationed in the Mediterranean before moving into the Red Sea to protect troop convoys from India and to deal with any German merchant ships of which she captured two. Returning to home waters she was attached to the Grand Fleet.

In 1916 the long anticipated battle between the Grand Fleet and the German High Seas Fleet took place in the North Sea with HMS Black Prince forming part of the First Cruiser Squadron. During the course of the engagement HMS Black Prince, in company with HMS Defence and HMS Warrior came under attack, HMS Defence was sunk and HMS Warrior disabled. During this action HMS Black Prince had a rough time and became detached and out of touch from the Grand Fleet which had taken a different course. Now alone she headed for a line of Battleships which were dimly visible in the far distance and as she approached them received a German recognition flash, she had unwittingly headed for a line of larger more powerful German ships. Hopelessly outnumbered and outgunned HMS Black Prince

tried to escape by turning sharply but was now totally exposed by the brilliant searchlights of four German warships that battered her from stem to stern, disabling her guns before she could fire a shot. Now totally out of control HMS Black Prince drifted past the German ships who continued to pour fire on her until with a tremendous explosion she blew up with all hands.

As well as the three Bognor sailors others from Chichester, Littlehampton and Arundel were also aboard her and they are all commemorated on the Portsmouth Naval Memorial at Southsea.

The above were not the only local casualties in the Battle of Jutland, Petty Officer Harry Allen, Petty Officer Leonard Bailey, both lost their lives on HMS Invincible, Stokers Francis Farley and Joseph Parslow perished on HMS Queen Mary and Able Seaman Edward Wade went down with HMS Shark. June 1916 was certainly a black month for many Bognor families.

Bognor at War 2

Submitted by Kay Fall

Bognor Regis Observer December 9th
1939

Thirty two persons, including motorists and cyclists were summoned at the Bognor Regis Police Court on Thursday in respect of lighting offences.

Fines were imposed on the following defendants for having cars without lights: Charles Frederick Fidoe, 10s; Frederick Walter Ames of Havelock Road Bognor Regis 10s; and Morris Benjamin of Nyewood Lane 5s.

Cyclist riding without lights were fined as follow: Anne Rosemary Allen 5s, Pamela Morgan of Marshall Ave, 15s Vivien Jennet of Felpham 15s; William Hector Beale of Felpham 10s; John Cyril Shepherd of Dorset Road 7s 6d; Doreen Sands of Bognor 15s; James Hall of Green court Drive North Bersted 5s; John Miller of West oats Gardens 10s; Charles William Homer of New Barn Lane 5s; William Thomas Coins of Bognor 5s; Douglas George



Corduroy of Chichester Road 10s; William Wilson of Nye wood Lane 5s; Patrick Connelly of Town Cross Avenue 5s; Frank Creighton of Fletcher's Lane Felpham 7s 6d; Michael Cater of Kyoto Court 7s 6d; Roy Penn of Tangmere 10s, William John Sands of Bognor 10s; and James Alfred Blake of Hoe Lane Flansham 7s 6d. Herbert Lough and Ivy Cooksey were fined 5s each for two persons being carried on a bicycle.

I wonder how many people are fined today.

Editor's note: Although this was during the 'blackout' which had



been imposed on 1st September 1939, two days before war was declared, there were so many people being killed in road accidents that by December the regulations had been modified to require vehicles to show specially adapted lights. Pedestrians were allowed

to carry a small torch providing they didn't point it skywards.

The king's surgeon, Wilfred Trotter, wrote an article for the British Medical Journal where he pointed out that by "frightening the nation into blackout regulations, the Luftwaffe was able to kill 600 British citizens a month without ever taking to the air, at a cost to itself of exactly nothing."

The Green Thing

Submitted by Maurice Bone

Editor's note; The original was obviously written for an American audience and I have 'anglicized' it.

In the queue at the shop the cashier told the older woman that she should bring her own grocery bag because plastic bags weren't good for the environment. The woman apologised and explained; 'We didn't have the green thing back in my day'.

The cashier replied 'That's our problem; the former generation did not care enough to save our environment.'



He was right, that generation didn't have the green thing in their day. Back then they returned their milk bottles, lemonade bottles and beer bottles to the store. They were washed, sterilized and refilled so that the same bottle could be used over and over again. So they really were recycled.

But they didn't have the green thing back in that customer's day.

In her day they walked upstairs because they didn't have lifts and escalators. They walked to the grocery store and didn't climb into a 300 horsepower machine to go a couple of hundred yards.

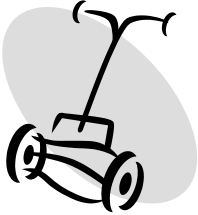
But she was right they didn't have the green thing in her day.

Back then they washed the baby's nappies because they didn't have the throwaway kind. They dried the clothes on a line not an energy gobbling three kilowatt machine. Wind and solar energy really did dry the clothes. Kids got hand me downs clothes from their brothers and sisters, not always brand new clothing.

But she was right they didn't have the green thing back in her day.

Back then they had one TV or radio in the house, not a TV in every room. And the TV had a small screen the size of a handkerchief, not a screen the size of Sussex.

In the kitchen they blended and stirred by hand because they didn't have electric machines to do everything for you. When they posted a fragile item it was wrapped in old newspapers to protect it, not Styrofoam or plastic bubble wrap.



Back then they didn't fire up an engine and burn petrol just to cut the lawn. They used a push mower that ran on human power. They exercised by working so they didn't need to go to a health club to run on electric treadmills.

But she's right they didn't have the green thing back then.



They refilled their writing pens with ink instead of buying a new pen and they replaced the razor blades in a razor instead of throwing away the whole razor just because the blade became dull.

But they didn't have the green thing back then.

Back then people took the bus and kids rode their bikes to school or walked instead of turning their mums into a 24 hour taxi service. They had one electrical outlet in a room, not an entire bank of sockets to power a dozen appliances. And they didn't need a computerized gadget to receive a signal beamed from a satellite 2000 miles out in space in order to find the nearest pizza place.

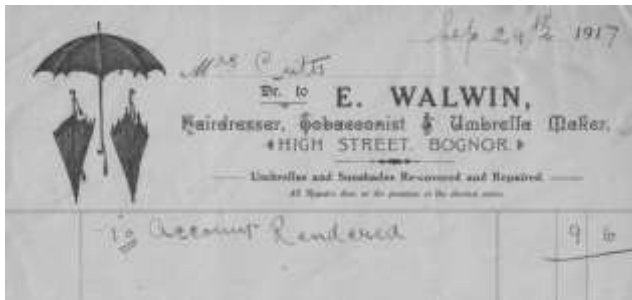
But isn't it sad that the current generation laments how wasteful the old folks were just because they didn't have the green thing back then!

Other People's Museums – part 2

By Jane Barnes

The Sedgwick Museum of Earth Sciences is one of the museums of the University of Cambridge. It holds many specimens of rocks and fossils sent back to England by Charles Darwin during his voyage on the 'Beagle' as he had studied at Cambridge under Adam Sedgwick. It also contains an impressive array of fossil specimens from different parts of England including many from Sussex; full size reconstructions of dinosaurs and the largest spider ever known, reconstructed from a fossil in Argentina. In Bay 7 is a whole shelf of Bognor Rock (not the confectionary type!) complete with specimens of *Rotularia Bognoriensis*.

From our archives – part 1



Letter heading from 1917, Hairdresser, Tobacconist and Umbrella Maker seems an odd assortment of trades.

An Elegant Watering Place

Extract from a booklet of the same name by your editor which is on sale in the Museum.

You perhaps do not recognise this description of Bognor but in a 1794 travel guide it was described as a ‘fashionable and elegant watering place’ and its houses were praised as being of such elegance that they would not ‘disgrace the Metropolis.’

Although Sir Richard did not achieve his ambition of enticing George III to Bognor, he built Dome House for just this purpose, his son the Prince Regent, later George IV did spend a few days there visiting his mistress Countess of Jersey who was holidaying there. George IV’s daughter, Princess Charlotte spent three summer holidays there.

Queen Victoria holidayed here as a child and in later life referred to ‘dear little Bognor’. At least she was more complimentary than her grandson George V who after convalescing here was alleged to have been very rude indeed!

In the early days of Hotham’s empire the aristocracy did come in large numbers, some just to visit, others to stay. The cast list for the 1795 season included; Duke of Devonshire, Duchess of Rutland, Lord Spencer, the Earl and Countess of Pembroke, Lord Lucan, Lord Dunwar, Lady Grantham, daughter of the Earl Hardwicke and Lady Uxbridge whose husband was later to lead a famous Life Guards charge at the battle of Waterloo.

Lady Hester Newdigate, visiting Bognor with friends, was so impressed that she took a house for the season. She wrote a series of letters to her husband which gives us a flavour of Bognor at the time. ‘We were quite delighted with the place. Sir Richard Hotham to whom it belongs has built 30 or 40 neat convenient

houses of different sizes for the reception of Company, all pleasantly situated and with full view of the sea. A convenient hot sea bath is also just made and the Great World has taste enough to prefer it to all others upon this coast. Whilst we sat down to dinner, there passed the Duchesses of Devonshire and Rutland, Lady E Foster, Dowager Lady Sefton etc and we saw the names and titles of at least 20 more of the very supreme set.’

Among aristocratic residents were the Earl of Arran, the Earl and Countess of Mayo and Claude Bowes Lyon, Earl of Strathmore, the Queen’s maternal great grandfather.

An advertisement for Bognor Rocks, as it was then called, in the Sussex Weekly Advertiser dated 19th May 1792 states;

To be Lett

Seven handsome houses, built last summer, on a moderate scale, on a plan of convenience and comfort, the whole completely furnished, in a style of elegant neatness; with gardens to each, laid out in walks and planted with shrubs. The situation is truly desirable, being within a quarter of a mile from the sea, from which there is an extensive and grand view of the Main ocean, and the Isle of Wight; the eye is at the same time presented with picturesque views of a rich and fertile inland country, commanding views of the Surrey and Sussex hills, with distinct views of Chichester, Stanstead, Goodwood, Slindon and Arundel



This probably refers to Hothamton Place, sometimes known as Hothamton Row which had a frontage of 169 feet and stood adjacent to East Row; both buildings overlooked Hothamton Field later to be called Waterloo Square. Completed around 1789 they were to be let as furnished accommodation for visitors. Hothamton Place comprised seven residences; the centre portion had eight bedrooms while others contained three or four bedrooms each. All had drawing, dining and breakfast rooms with quarters for domestic staff in the basement. The building was described in newspaper advertisements of the time as ‘genteel dwellings with a south aspect commanding an uninterrupted sea view and delightful inland prospects’.

After Hotham’s death his properties were sold to pay his debts and in 1800 the building, together with 6 acres of land, was purchased by Mr Hurst for £4400. It was acquired about 1870 by the Merchant Taylors Company of London for use as a convalescent home for women. It was sold in 1921, along with Waterloo Square, to Bognor Urban District Council and was the first of Hotham’s buildings to be demolished in 1935.

From our archives – part 2



Can anybody throw any light on this picture? It has been suggested that the windsock at the top of the obelisk may indicate an air show. The registration on one of the vehicles indicates that it was registered in London in the 1920s. There appears to be a haystack on the right and what might just possibly be a Tamarisk hedge in the distance. I suspect this may not be Bognor at all.



Anyone recognise where this restaurant or dining room was?

Other People's Museums – part 3

By Jane Barnes

Osbourne House, on the Isle of Wight, was one of Queen Victoria's favourite holiday homes, where she and Prince Albert made a happy atmosphere for their growing family beside the seaside. The family had their own bathing machine on the shore, which ran out into the water on stone rails. This can still be seen today.

The introductory exhibition at the entrance shows a typical scene on a beach where bathing machines are being used. It shows BOGNOR beach to the west of the pier, complete with Jenkin's bathing machines.





Jenkin's restored bathing machine which will be displayed at the Museum. It necessitates the raising of the roof of one of our outbuildings but hopefully this will be done in time for

the 2013 season.

Sea Bathing

From the West Sussex gazette, 10th May 1855



To the Editor – sir, As I was much pleased with your remarks on the indelicacy of Sea Bathing at Bognor last year, I hope you will extend them to Brighton and Worthing, where they are quite as much needed. At the same time I must say that I do not think the plan adopted at Bognor (making the gentlemen wear drawers) meets the case. What is wanted is an awning to each bathing machine as in the Isle of Wight and at

Dover. They afford shelter to the gentlemen getting in and out of machines, and under them ladies can bathe without exposure. I am sure the adaption would be of great benefit to the watering places on this coast, as many ladies avoid Sussex in the summer because they cannot bathe with decency.

I am, Sir, your obedient servant, M.A.C. Brighton

A Hint to Visitors

Chichester Observer 5th August 1914



Where a happy half hour can be spent BOGNOR'S WEAVING INDUSTRY

No visitor to Bognor should leave the town without first paying a visit to the premises of Bognor Hand-Weaving Industry, which are situated in the High Street next to the Council Offices.

For some time past there has been growing interest in the revival of the old forms of handicrafts, more especially with regard to hand-loom weaving and the desire for beautiful as well as useful things is rapidly spreading, there is an increasing demand for fabrics of an artistic nature.

The Bognor Hand-Weaving Industry is established to make and supply hand-woven materials of beauty, excellence and originality of design, and to restore to their time-honoured places the loom, wheel and needle.

The principal of the industry is Miss May Glanville, who extends a hearty invitation to visitors to view the looms working. There is no obligation whatever to buy.

It would be rather difficult to imagine anything more interesting to amuse the children for half an hour than to spend the time at Miss Glanville's establishment, where so many beautiful things are made. The premises are open daily.

Lessons can also be given at the following rates:-

Weaving, three hours daily, £2.10s per month

Spinning, two hours daily, £1.1s for six lessons

Miss Glanville attended the Children's Welfare Exhibition that was held at Olympia in April and her work was much admired.

Ladies may be interested to read the following extract from the price list, though it should be understood there is no obligation whatever on visitors to buy:-

Dress lengths from 15s; children's frocks from 7s.6d; studio aprons 8s; blouse lengths 5s; sideboard cloths, toilet covers, tray cloths and covers of all descriptions at 3s.6d; bags 2s; children's bibs 3s; afternoon tea cloths 4s.



Derby House (left) and Valhalla

Submitted by Ron Iden who notes that the 1915 Bognor directory records the Bognor hand-weaving industry at No. 70 High Street, one of three houses (nos. 66 and 68 were the Council Offices, previously the Jubilee School for girls) demolished in 1928 and replaced by the bus station in 1934. The weavers then moved to Derby House on the corner of Lyon Street and High Street which was itself demolished in 1939.

BBRRRRRRRR !!

From the West Sussex Gazette 22nd February 1855.

BOGNOR – The severe weather.

For many years past we believe this coast has not presented such an unusual appearance as it did on Saturday last, and several days following. Large sheets of ice floated on the ocean, which, at low water, gave it the appearance of a frozen lake. Not a ripple disturbed the surface; sea birds here and there floated upon frozen water, while various wild fowl, in flocks, passed over. On the small craft and boats afloat could be seen, from the shore, crusts of ice adhering to their hull, previously washed by the briny waves. Large blocks of ice covered the sands, which, after each receding tide, was literally frozen several inches in thickness. The beach, covered in frozen foam or spray, appeared as hillocks of snow, and in places as strongly cemented as a concrete wall.



Picture is from the winter of 1962/63

The Newsletter

The Society is grateful to all who have contributed articles, news, comments and historical information for the newsletters over the years. I hope the range of interests will continue to expand and our publication will encourage and develop research into the past and present of our 'patch' which covers from Elmer in the east to Pagham in the west and including Bersted.

I am not quite sure how but apparently I volunteered to edit the newsletter following the retirement of Michael and Margaret who will be a hard act to follow

Contributions should be sent to me;

Mrs Sheila Smith

Thistledeew

Lagoon Road

Pagham PO21 4TJ

Tel. 01243 262646

or by e mail at 'sheila@barnie.myzen.co.uk'

e mail contributions will be especially welcome as it means that I do not have to re type the copy. However please do not be put off; I will gratefully accept typed or handwritten items.

Deadlines for contributions are end of January and July.

As I am also the Society's archivist I will also be pleased to receive any pictures, documents, memorabilia, newspaper cuttings etc. of historical interest, either of local places or people. If they are items you do not wish to part with they can be scanned into the computer and returned to you.

Reg. Charity Number 286590

Printed by Graham Press, London Road, Bognor Regis

Meetings are held at 7.30pm at The Hub Community Centre, 73 Queensway Bognor Regis on the second Monday of each month. The April meeting is on the 3rd Monday because the 2nd Monday is Easter.

Programme secretary Mr Howard Dicks, 29, Overdown Road, Felpham, PO22 9LF

Date	Subject	Speaker
12 th March	William Blake's Felpham	Jane Barnes
16 th April 3 rd Monday	William Hayley: The Felpham Years	Diana Barsham
14 th May	Myths, Legends & Tales of the River Arun	Cliff Mewett
11 th June	Social Evening, come along and see an interesting variety of pictures, artefacts and documents whilst enjoying a cup of tea.	
July & August we do not meet		
10 th Sept.	Arundel: 1000-2000	Rosemary Hagedorn
8 th October	One Man's Dream: Butlins and other books	Sylvia Endacott
12 th Nov.	The Victorian Christmas	The Dividing Line
December	Christmas Lunch, date to be advised	

There is ample free parking space in the nearby Hothamton Car Park. Visitors are welcome; admission £1.00.

Circumstances may unavoidably change the programme.