



NEWSLETTER 240

March 2009

Annual General Meeting

The Society's 30th AGM will be held at 7:30 pm on Wednesday 25th March in the Osborne Suite at the Hilton Metropole Hotel.

Our guest for the evening will be local councillor, Jason Kitkat. He will tell us about his work as a councillor and there will be an opportunity for members to put questions and comments to him.

After a break for refreshments we will hold the formal AGM as set out in the Agenda below.

Agenda

- 1 Minutes of the Previous AGM
- 2 Committee Report for the Year
- 3 Treasurer's Report & Annual Accounts
- 4 Subscription Rates for 2010
- 5 Election of Officers and Committee

Society Contacts:

Chairman: Roger Hinton,

✉ hinton@clara.net, ☎ 01273 321794;

Secretary: Rhidian Hughes,

✉ rhidian.hughes@ukonline.co.uk, ☎ 01273 710809;

Treasurer: Sue Paskins,

✉ paskins@brighton.fsbmail.co.uk, ☎ 01273 329934

Web site: www.regencybrighton.com

The Committee's Annual Report

Rubbish

Trade waste is now a serious problem. Some businesses are storing their bins on pavements, thus causing obstruction. We had a success with the former Esca Bar in Preston Street. We keep pressing Cityclean for more action, but not with great success.

Meanwhile, in spite of our efforts, communal bins are now a feature of our streets. They are not quite the same as those used in the pilot: they have no foot pedal and a smaller hole for the rubbish. This makes them harder to use, especially for those of less than average height; it also makes them noisy as the lid drops; alternatively it is left open, which may be a problem in warmer weather.

We were pleased that the Council agreed to our request for the replacement of three litter bins that had gone missing from Regency Square.

Heritage under the spotlight

The war memorial in Regency Square has been the cause of much concern following its refurbishment last year. The paint already seems to be peeling. No one seems sure if this is part of an intended weathering process, or just poor workmanship.

Meanwhile there is still an un-resolved issue outside the Regency Tavern. One of the listed bollards in the twitten has been moved slightly by contractors. There is a dispute between the Council's conservation and highways people about where it should be. The new position encourages bikes and even motorbikes through the twitten.

Graffiti Watch

It's not often that we are able to congratulate the Council on their approach to a problem. We can when it comes to graffiti. Local people, with Council encouragement and help, have taken

responsibility for painting out graffiti as soon as it appears.

Bike Stands

Smart new bike stands are appearing around the city, but none yet in Regency Square. Earlier in the year we had a meeting with the Council officer who deals with cycling. She said that bike stands would be installed at the top of the square. There's no sign of them yet, and no reply to our recent enquiry.

Metropole clean up - perhaps

Our requests for action are usually addressed to the Council but this year we have also approached one of our own members, the Metropole Hotel. We asked if they could improve the appearance of their property in St Margaret's Place. They said there was no money for re-painting, but they may be able to clean up the buildings a bit.

Spending Money

A few years ago the Society raised almost £10,000 for a Regency Square Improvement Fund. We then found it impossible to identify a suitable project.

Meanwhile the West Pier Trust announced plans for a development, which would have resulted in large buildings on the south side of Kings Road. We mounted the "Save Our Seafront Campaign" and used part of the Improvement Fund to meet the costs.

As a result we were left with an even smaller fund, which has been sitting in the bank ever since. So this year we have decided to start spending it. Our first project was to sponsor a volume of the James Gray photographic collection, containing pictures of our area. As a result you can now view all these wonderful, historic records on-line at <http://www.regencysociety-jamesgray.com/> .

Two new benches have recently been installed on the top green of Regency Square by the Council, at our request, to replace two that had been stolen.

We plan to use more of the Improvement Fund for a third new bench; this will be on the bottom green, replacing an existing bench which is in very poor condition but which the Council is not able to repair.

Gates that open

The gates on the north side of Russell Square have had broken hinges for some time, but now, thanks to pressure from the Society, they have been fixed.

Online and in the air

Our web site still continues to attract visitors from all over the world, including some who decide to join the Society. One of its main attractions is the coverage of peregrine falcons on the roof of Sussex Heights. Last summer, committee member Brian Smith, who looks after the web site, was involved in the rescue of one of the new chicks, which had fallen from its rooftop home and was safely returned.

Social Activities

We held two communal breakfasts during the year, one in May 2008, with just a few members present, and our usual New Year event at the start of 2009, which was well attended and much enjoyed by those who were there.

At the end of July a group of members went for a boat trip from the Marina.

In December, Society member, Suzanne Hinton gave us a talk about the history of the area, illustrated with pictures from the James Gray collection. This event was our first use of St Paul's church vestry in West Street; we may well use it again.

The Society now has a theatre group. It visits the Little Theatre in Clarence Gardens once a month and is open to all members. The group often meets for a drink before the show in one of the members' homes.

And finally thanks ...

.... to everyone who has worked for the Society during the year, especially those committee members who are now standing down, Rhidian Hughes (standing down as secretary), Ron Bakere, and Lucho Zuidema.

Thanks also to Mailboxes etc. in Western Road, who have been printing our newsletters free of charge for the past year. Their support is much appreciated. And to the Hilton Metropole Hotel for providing a room for the AGM.

We are also grateful to the local police for keeping us regularly briefed on their activities and concerns.

Elections

The following members are standing for election:

Chairman: Roger Hinton	(Regency Square)
Secretary: Lisa Williams	(Regency Square)
Treasurer: Sue Paskins	(Marlborough Street)
Committee members:	
Margaret Brisley	(Sussex Heights)
Ros Boulden	(Kings Road)
Diana Dunn	(Clarence Gdns.)
Rhidian Hughes	(Regency Square)
Tom Mackillop	(Russell Square)
Paul Michaelson	(Sussex Heights)
Brian Smith	(Regency Square)
Warden Swinfen	(Kings Road)

Any member of the Society can be nominated as an officer or committee member. If you would like to nominate someone, contact the Secretary ( rhidian.hughes@ukonline.co.uk  710809).

Have you paid your subscription?

Many thanks to those members who have already paid their subscription for the coming year.

If you have received a renewal form it means that your subscription is now due.

Annual Accounts

2008 / 09 Income and Expenditure

Income	£	Expenditure	£
Subscriptions	436	Postage, printing etc.	182
Donations	424	Insurance	250
Interest	57	Functions expenses	151
Functions	113	Website expenses	217
RSIF Transfer	1,000	Other expenses	114
		Donations	1,040
		Surplus for the year	<u>76</u>
	<u>2,030</u>		<u>2,030</u>

Balance Sheet

Funds at 1/3/08	2,448	Cash & bank	2,975
Add Surplus	<u>76</u>		
Funds at 28/2/09	2,524		
Advance subs.	173		
Advance donations	178		
Web sponsorship	<u>100</u>		
	<u>2,975</u>		<u>2,975</u>

Regency Square Improvement Fund (RSIF)

	£
Balance at 1/3/08	4,801
Add Interest	90
Add Donation	22
Less donation to the Regency Society	<u>(1,000)</u>
Balance at 28/2/09	<u>3,913</u>

Treasurer's Report

This has been a financially successful year for the Society. We received an income of £1,030 (£860 of this from members' subscriptions and donations); this resulted in a surplus for the year of £76. We made a donation of £1,000 to the Regency Society to contribute towards having photos of this area from the James Gray collection, made available on the internet. We also made small donations to St Paul's Church and the Brighton and Hove French Circle to thank them for their help during the year.

We go forward into the new year with a healthy bank balance of £2,975 in our ordinary account and £3,913 in the Regency Square Improvement Fund.

Sue Paskins, Honorary Treasurer