



NEWSLETTER 148 October 1999

Welcoming the New Millenium

What should the Society do to welcome the new Millennium? Here are two suggestions.

Making History

The first suggestion is that we produce and publish a book about the history of our area. It would be researched and written by local people and would cover different aspects of life over the centuries.

For example, there could be a chapter on agriculture including the famous removal of the windmill which was dragged up onto the downs by a team of oxen. Other chapters could deal with early industry (brisk making), the building of the squares, small workshops in Castle and Stone Streets, social life in the large houses, and the tourist trade.

Each chapter would need a team of two or three people who would carry out research at the public library or the records office in Lewes, and talk to people who have known the area for a long time. Once the evidence had been collected, the team would write up their section of the book, and find suitable photographs or illustrations.

But where to start? Some expert help would be needed. Local historian, Geoff Mead is an old friend of the Society and has spoken to us a number of times. We have invited him to come and talk at our winter social evening on Wednesday 17 November at the Beach Hotel in Regency Square (&:30 for 8pm).

He will talk and show slides about the history of the area and give us some idea of how to go about researching it further. He has also offered to run a series of seminars for the research teams over the coming months, to help keep the project on target.

If you are interested in getting involved, or you would simply like another chance to experience Geoff Mead's infectious enthusiasm, then come to the social evening.

Awards for All

We are hoping that the costs involved in the local history project will be met by a Lottery Grant. "Awards for All" is a scheme which has been set up to support small local groups which want to mark the millennium in some way.

We will put in an application for a grant once the project is under way.

Millennium Breakfast

The second suggestion doesn't involve quite as much effort as researching local history. All you have to do is recover from your New Millennium party hangover in time to join your neighbours for breakfast at the Regency Restaurant at the bottom of Regency Square.

The breakfast will start at 10 am on Sunday 2nd January 2000. All members and their guests will be welcome. Full English breakfast will be available for about £3.75 or continental for about £3.25.

Please use the form to let us know if you would like to come so we can give the restaurant and idea of numbers. Don't send any money - pay on the day.

Who knows, if it's a success it could be the first of many neighbourhood breakfasts!

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■ To Roger Hinton, 39 Regency Square, Brighton BN1 2FJ ■

■ Yes, I would like to come to the Society's Millennium ■
■ breakfast at the Regency Restaurant on 2 January. ■

■ Number of full English breakfasts _____ ■

■ Number of continental breakfasts _____ ■

■ Name _____ ■

■ Please do not send any money - pay on the day. ■

Clarence Square Lorry Park ?

The sad state of Clarence Square was emphasised recently when a lorry was parked on the grass. The problems are numerous. The most serious is the lack of railings on the north side. We have already raised this with the Council, but to no avail.

The road surface is worn away in various places, exposing the original wooden sets underneath. Litter bins are needed near the seats on the green. We are going to raise all these issues again with the Council in the hope of getting some action.

The other sad thing about the Square is the state of the buildings on the north side. What were once pleasant town houses are now the backs of shops in Western Road and the former gardens are rubbish dumps.

We plan to write to the chief executives of the all the companies with shops backing onto the square, to ask them if they can do anything to make it look better.

Banners Banned

The health club in Castle Street installed a number of banners on the front of its building. But they failed to get planning permission. Neighbours complained that the banners were noisy and dangerous when it was windy. So a retrospective planning application was made and has now been refused. So the banners will have to come down.

Is it farewell to the Paddling Pool?

The latest issue of the West Pier Trust Newsletter suggests that the Council is planning to lease to the Trust the land currently occupied by the paddling pool and the pétanque piste (the former boating pond).

Buildings will be constructed on the land. They are described as "of single story above ground but with some height points above the level of the promenade (like Alfrescos) linked to the promenade and allowing pedestrian flow along the Lower Esplanade."

When will we be consulted about this major development? More details in the next issue.

Who Lived Here Before ?

Hove Civic Society are presenting a talk called "Researching the History of your House and the People who Lived there". It's on Thursday 21 October at 10:45am at the Cornerstone Community Centre in Palmeira Square. Everyone is welcome and admission is £1.

Stomp Away

The Stomp Dance Group have vacated premises behind properties on the north side of Russell Square, much to relief of local residents. The group had caused noise and blocked the access road with their vehicle.

However, residents are worried what might be there next. Society member Jim Harris has been in touch with planning officers who have promised to remind the estate agent what the current planning approvals are for the site.

Russell Mews Residents

Congratulations to the residents of Russell Mews on the establishments of their residents' association.

One clearly visible sign of their activities is the smart new gates at the entrance to the mews. These were funded jointly by the residents and their landlord, BUPA. The association is trying to enforce a rule which prevents estate agents from fixing signs to the front wall, or the new gates.

It has also discovered that BUPA owns the small cobbled corner in Russell square just outside the gates and is looking for suggestions about what might be done with it.

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Deliveries Keep Coming

Residents in Russell Square and Castle Street are still being disturbed by the regular flow of deliveries to the BUPA building. A notice at the Russell Square entrance tells delivery drivers to deliver via Castle Street or Regency Mews but this is frequently ignored.

Richard Bunting of Russell Mews Residents Association estimates that there are about half a dozen deliveries a day through the mews. Generally he thinks BUPA have been good neighbours but he wants to see acceptable delivery arrangements properly enforced.

Society member Enid Darby is unhappy about the sign directing drivers to Castle Street and has suggested that BUPA should establish an out of town delivery point and just have one delivery a day to the Russell Mews building.

Deliveries could be via Regency Mews but delivery vehicles often find it blocked by parked cars. It is an un-adopted road so parking regulations don't apply. BUPA's property department is investigating how properly regulated parking might be introduced.

Meanwhile the Society is asking the Council what planning conditions relate to the building concerning deliveries.

Make Sure You Get the News

Do you receive copies of the Council's "Brighton & Hove News" delivered through your letterbox? If not, or you know of streets in our area where it is not delivered please let us know as we may be able to rectify the situation.
Contact Brian Smith (tel 325175).

Promises....promises ????

Society Chairman Brian Smith reports on a recent public meeting local people to talk to the police and council officers about crime and public safety:

Those Society members who attended were soon overcome by the usual feelings of despair of any hope for improvement to the quality of life in the area.

Commenting on the perennial problem of rubbish dumped on our streets, Bill Heron of Environmental Services

suggested that things would get better when Sita take over from Ecovert. The new contract is costing the town a lot more and that additional cost will come from our Council Tax. Whether we will see any improvements and cleaner streets remains to be seen ... promises promises!

Illegal parking and the lack of enforcement does not appear to be high on the list of policing priorities, which are:

1. Community safety in neighbourhoods
2. Creation of a safe public environment
3. High volume crime (vehicle crime & domestic burglary)
4. Violence and harassment (domestic violence)
5. Violence and harassment (racial harassment)
6. Violence and harassment (homophobic crime)
7. Young people
8. Preventing reoffending (employment of ex offenders)
9. Substance misuse

Illegally parked cars could prevent emergency vehicles getting where they are needed; fire engines were recently delayed in getting to a fire at the Big Issue office in Preston Street. One could argue that parked cars blocking emergency vehicles come under category 1 above.

Committee member Paul Stanford raised concerns that when illegally parked vehicles were reported to the police there was often no one available to deal with the problem. If police did attend they frequently took no action, not even giving the offending vehicle a parking ticket.

Hope is at hand though as the Regency police deployment is about to rise from 8 constables and 1 sergeant to 12 constables and 2 sergeants.

Bill Heron said that consultation is still going on about the Council taking over responsibility for parking law enforcement. If this did happen the situation on our streets might improvemore promises??

Don't Miss the Society's Winter Social Evening

7:30 pm on Wednesday 17 November
at the Beach Hotel in Regency Square

with a talk on local history by Geoff Mead
All members and their guests welcome