



NEWSLETTER 254
September 2010

£2,200 Grant for History Display

Hundreds of people pass through Regency Square each day. Many are impressed by the architecture but know little or nothing about how it came to be here.

Thanks to a grant from the Sussex Community Foundation, the society is planning to provide some information about the history of the area in the form of a display board in the square.

Similar boards have been erected in Hove, for example in Palmeira Square. The historical information will be provided by society member, Suzanne Hinton. Officers from the City Council will be helping with the installation of the board.

A meeting is planned for later this month to decide exactly where the board will be located and to get the project moving. If you have any suggestions, please get in touch ([✉hinton@clara.net](mailto:hinton@clara.net) ☎ 01273 321794).

Many thanks to committee member, Rhidian Hughes who put together our successful grant application.

New Committee Member

We are pleased to welcome Nigel Rose as a new committee member. Nigel lives in Regency Square and has been co-opted to strengthen our currently small (but effective!) committee.

History on the Web

Did you know that Wikipedia, the free encyclopaedia, has a detailed article about Regency Square and its history?

It was written by Matt Davis, who describes himself as "a railway-ticket-collecting, beer-liking, Albion supporting, financial-services-sector-working bloke". Looking at the list of his other articles he seems to be a keen student of local and architectural history. You can find his article at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Regency_Square,_Brighton.

Regency Square in 1826

An auction house in Beccles (Suffolk), recently offered for sale a painting of Regency Square, apparently done in 1826, very shortly after the square was first built.

It is a view from the balcony of one of the houses at the top of the square, possibly the George IVth Hotel, looking across the gardens to the sea.

Of course, there is no pier to be seen. More surprising is the gap between the houses on the west side. This supports the view of many local historians that the houses were not all built at the same time.

The auctioneer sent details of the painting to hoteliers in the square. The guide price was £350-£500. It is believed to have fetched significantly more and that the buyer is a local person. If you know anything more about this picture or its owner, please get in touch.

The Ghosts and the Gods

Many thanks to committee member, Margaret Brisley for organising our recent and fascinating tour of the Theatre Royal. We were taken from below the stage to the very top balcony, with lots of stories about famous names from the theatre's past, some of whom, it is claimed, are still seen from time to time.

Ken Kennar

We are sad to report the death of T.A. Kennar, known locally as Ken.

Ken had lived in the same house in Russell Square since the time of the Second World War. He had been a member the Society since it was first set up and he served on the committee between 1987 and 1989.

He was well known in the area and was to be seen out and about most days. He was always pleased to stop for a chat about what was right or wrong with the world.

Last month one of Ken's neighbours, and road-sweeper John Lawrence both realised that they had not seen him for a while. The police were called on 28th August to gain entry to his house, where he was found to have died.



Ken first moved to Brighton to live with his aunt and uncle in Russell Square. This photograph, which he took around that time shows, his aunt with one of her two dogs. It also shows part of the buildings at the east end of the square, long before they were demolished for the building of Churchill Square.

M and M Tours

John Milton' Cottage and Hughenden Manor

Saturday 16th October

Full details from Roger Hinton

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Squatters in Toomey's

Squatters recently took over part of number 67 Preston Street, until recently the offices of Toomey's, a firm of ventilation engineers.

The new occupants were a far from friendly bunch and they made life quite unpleasant for the immediate neighbours. The police had to be called to several incidents, including broken windows in a neighbouring property.

Thankfully the intruders have now left. With help from Bobbi King, our local Police Community Support Officer, arrangements have been made for the property to be boarded up and the basement gate locked.

So it is now secure, but hardly a pretty sight.

Meanwhile Opposite

A graffiti artist recently attacked the wall just opposite the property which had been squatted. The word "artist" is hardly appropriate since the resulting scrawl showed no imagination or skill.

We have now painted it out using paint supplied by the Council as part of their anti-graffiti campaign.

Another One Bites the Dust

Mobile phones are extremely useful. However, their success has not been good news for the users of telephone boxes. There are less and less of them and those that remain are often poorly maintained.

We recently complained to BT about the poor state of the two boxes at the south end of Regency Square. They agreed to send someone to do some cleaning but they also said that the one nearest the Regency Restaurant is to be "discontinued".

Noise is a Funny Thing

Earlier in the summer there was a large skateboarding event on the area to the east of the old pier. The loud PA system disturbed people as far away as Clarence Square.

The Council's Events Officer has apologised for the disturbance to local residents. She has told us that up to 28 events a year can be licensed on this area. The only significant event scheduled between now and December is a beer festival. No PA system is likely to be used.

Environmental Health officers are involved in event planning to ensure that the Council's permitted noise levels are not exceeded.

One of our members points out that noise is a funny thing, as she discovered a couple of years ago: "When Rainbow cycles were on the top of the West Pier forecourt, they used to have a ghetto blaster which sounded really loud and I was trying to work. When I went across with a couple of cans of beer to ask them to turn it down (non-confrontational type!) it was actually at a perfectly acceptable level against the noise of the traffic."

We have passed these useful comments on to the Council officers concerned.

The Money's in the Bank

The planning approval for the long delayed i360 development is a complex document. One bit of it says that the developers must contribute £10,000 to help improve the underpass between the car park and the beach. This requirement applies even though the i360 itself is still nothing more than pie in the sky.

This money has now been received by the Council. We are hoping to hear shortly how they plan to use it. The underpass could certainly do with some cosmetic surgery.

Kemp Day in Kemp Town

Kempton is named after Thomas Reid Kemp. But who was he and why does he deserve a town named after him when most of us don't?

The Kempton Society's Day of Celebration of Kemp on 25 September should answer these questions. The programme for the day is:

11am - 1pm: A guided tour of the Kempton Estate
2-5pm The life and times of Thomas Kemp
7.45-9pm Musical Soiree
9-10.30pm Thomas Kemp's Supper Party

You can see more details at www.bremf.org.uk/kemp.

Knockout at the Holiday Inn

The Holiday Inn License application has been accepted. This was in spite of objections from the residents of Bedford Towers, neighbouring blocks of flats and from the society.

The Licensing Panel claims to understand the concerns of residents but they have decided to grant the new license. The view of Council officers is that the new license simply tidies up the existing license.

Boxing has been allowed at the hotel in the past and the new license limits it to five events per year. Neighbours have the right to ask for a review of the license if problems occur.

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