



IN LOVING MEMORY OF GILL WALES

Gill was extremely enthusiastic about history. It was a book about local history that brought us together in 2016. We started chatting about how long we had lived in Regency Square: Gill had clocked up many years by then.

Gill had recently retired. We were both looking for a project. Looking forward, wasn't 2018 going to be the bicentenary of the founding of Regency Square? What better project than to write a book to celebrate that bicentenary. So we did. Two heads being far better than one, we both felt that the finished production, "Regency Square, its history and its stories" published in 2018 by the Regency Square Area Society was a success.

So what next, we asked ourselves. Gill's love of old maps and engravings had led her to wonder in what way Brighton's early 19th century seafront and hinterland was so significantly different by the mid-20th century. This led us to embark on an investigation into what had vanished and why.

Work started in 2019 on what we hoped might be a new book. Covid promptly closed down any possibility of getting into the local archive but fortunately we both had access to a wide range of on-line documents and information.

Gradually a manuscript emerged. By September 2024, the text was written and the illustrations chosen. In October this year, Gill's health deteriorated rapidly. However, she had time to see almost the final proofs of "Lost Villas", she had approved the cover design and had seen the final index. Circumstances have decided that Gill will not be able to hold her book in her hands and turn its pages.

Gill was far more important to Regency Square and the local area than as a writer. She was a very "hands-on" person, throwing herself fully into whatever project she was working on at the time. She led the gardening team locally and she represented the Regency Squares

Communities group at the Open Spaces Forum. For Gill, with her love of the open air and of plants, gardening with her small band of volunteer gardeners and liaising with the council's Parks and Gardens was quite a passion. On the other hand, nobody gets excited about turning the compost in the community bins in Regency and Russell Squares or litter-picking.

Gill did both regularly, mainly alone. We will miss Gill greatly. We send our deepest sympathy to her husband, Mick, and to her brothers and sisters, nephews and nieces and all who knew and loved her.

All are invited to the launch of "Lost Georgian Villas of Brighton" which Gill co-authored. The event will be held in memory of Gill on 26 November at Fabrica in Ship Street from 6pm until 7pm.

- Suzanne Hinton



GILL WALES IN REGENCY SQUARE

