



NEWSLETTER 192
February 2004

Seafront Saved

It hardly seems right to be celebrating the news that the West Pier has probably reached the end of its long and often controversial life. But ironically, and sadly, it is a cause for celebration.

The reason is cost. Until last week it seemed that we were going to be forced to pay a price for re-building the Pier which many thought was too high, namely the destruction of our seafront. The Save our Seafront campaign argued that the enabling development proposed for either side of the Pier was unacceptable, even if it was the only way a re-built pier could be made financially viable.

Unfortunately our Council disagreed. They granted planning permission and were ready to allow St Modwen, the developers, to use land which the Council owns. English Heritage produced a long and often impenetrable report in which they argued in favour of re-building the Pier and advised the Lottery Fund to provide the money needed.

And so it seemed that the seafront's fate was sealed, until, at the last minute, St Modwen decided that the money originally offered by the Lottery was not enough and asked for several more millions.

Obviously this was a step too far. The Lottery Fund decided that the cost was now too high for them, especially since there was no guarantee that the price would not go up again before the project was complete. So they said "No" and effectively pulled the plug on the whole scheme.

It would be marvellous if the West Pier could be re-built. Many people have dedicated their time and money to a project which could have achieved this aim. Now, at last it is clear that they have failed. Sadly, we have to say "Thank goodness" because in the end the cost would have been too high.

What Next?

What about the ruin which is still at the end of Regency Square? English Heritage is now saying that it can be re-built without any enabling development. Why didn't they say this before? Let us know what you think should be done.

(☎ 321794 ✉ hinton@clara.net)

Committee Member Retires

We are sad to report that Traude Tappin has resigned from the Society committee. Traude first became a committee member in 1984. She has been extremely active and energetic in her work for the Society.

She was the driving force behind the Regency Square Improvement Fund, raising almost £10,000. This fund proved invaluable when the Society needed money to support the Save our Seafront campaign.

Recently Traude has found it difficult to get to meetings because of her work; so she has decided to resign. She will be much missed by her fellow committee members. We are delighted that she will

continue as a member of the Society.

Closing Clarence Square

We reported recently on the Council's proposal to close the Junction between Clarence Square and Western Road. A number of members have expressed views about the plan.

Some support the scheme because of the danger caused when drivers ignore the No Entry signs in Clarence Square or park nearby on double yellow lines. Others object that it will add to the difficulty of getting by car to Russell and Clarence Squares.

On balance the Society supports the proposal for safety reasons. We have written to our councillors to that effect. However, we have asked for a review of traffic management in Cannon Place and the seafront to improve access by car for local residents.

The Magic Lantern Lives On

Long before digital cameras, PowerPoint presentations and even 35 mm slides, there was the magic lantern. It was a very effective way of projecting images onto a screen so they could be enjoyed by large numbers of people.

Rene and Allan Marriott are magic lantern enthusiasts and they will be bringing one to our AGM next month. They will also bring some of the many slides in their own collection and others on loan from Brighton Museum.

The show will include some rarely seen views of this part of the town. It will also feature some of the novelty slides which were used to amuse audiences at the original lantern shows.

The AGM will be at 7:30 pm on Monday 22 March in the Chartwell Room at the Metropole Hotel.

Time to renew your subscription – details over the page!

Annual General Meeting.

7:30 pm Monday 22 March 2004
Chartwell Room, Metropole Hotel

Followed by refreshments and a magic lantern show with historic views of our area.

Committee Members Needed!

The Society's AGM will be held next month and we are hoping to be able to elect some new committee members to help run the Society.

If you are interested and would like to know more about what is involved, contact the chairman, Roger Hinton or any other member. You would also be welcome at our February meeting to see how we operate.

Farewell to the Post Office

The Post Office in Hampton Place will close on March 20th. This is a sad day for our area. The local post office has provided an important community service for many years. Even though lots of people still use it, the powers that be decided it is not worth retaining?

The manager, Mike Smith and his team have provided a friendly and efficient service to local people and will be much missed.

Once Hampton Place closes the nearest post offices will be in Ship Street and at 22 Western Road, Hove.

Use your own wall!

Some graffiti artists are actually very talented, and many don't seem to have any fear of heights. Most just like to leave their "tags" all over the place.

What they all have in common is a misguided belief that they are entitled to use other people's property to display their artistic efforts and to force the rest of us to look at it day after day.

It is interesting to note that although graffitiists love walls, they rarely attack the front of people's houses. And while they will happily daub all over trains they seem to shy away from people's cars. It is as if they have their own code about what is acceptable.

What they refuse to recognise is that most people don't want to see their efforts in public: real artists have exhibitions or publish books and don't force themselves onto every passer by (except for architects of course, but that's another story).

We seem to have been suffering a lot from graffiti recently in this area. Some houses in Russell Square have been particularly badly affected.

It seems clear that when graffiti is cleaned away quickly by property owners it reduces the risk of it re-occurring. When it is left it seems to attract more of the same.

We are making enquiries with our local enforcement officer to find out what can be done to clear up the worst cases and put an end to this blight.

The First 100 Years of the National Trust

An illustrated talk by Jane Laycock
for the Hove Civic Society

St Andrew's Church Hall
2:30pm Tuesday 17 February

Admission: £2 payable at the door

Society Contacts

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It's that time again!

Subscriptions are now due for the year starting 1 March 2004. Please help the Society by renewing now.

Don't forget that your last sub paid is always shown on your newsletter envelope: if "04/05" is shown then your sub for the coming year has already been paid.



To Andrew Walker, Treasurer, RSAS, 9 Chartwell Court, Russell Square, Brighton BN1 2EW

I would like to re-new my membership of the Regency Square Area Society for the year 2004/2005 in the category ticked below:

	£
Ordinary member	4.00
Family	4.50
Senior Citizen	3.50
Junior	2.00
Associate (non-resident)	3.50
Business (non-resident)	6.50

Basic subscription _____
Optional donation _____
Total enclosed _____

Name _____

Address _____

Payment by cash or cheque payable to Regency Square Area Society please. Members' details are stored on computer for administrative purposes only.