

NEWSLETTER 256
December 2010



Join us for a pre-Christmas drink ...

The Society committee will be meeting for a pre-Christmas drink at the Regency Tavern on Tuesday 21st December from 7pm. Please come and join us - silly hats and beards optional!

... and breakfast in the new year

Our regular new-year breakfast will be on Monday 3rd January at 10 am at the Regency Restaurant (south west corner of Regency Square). Everyone is welcome. Take a seat at the long table and order whatever you fancy from the menu.

Other People's Money

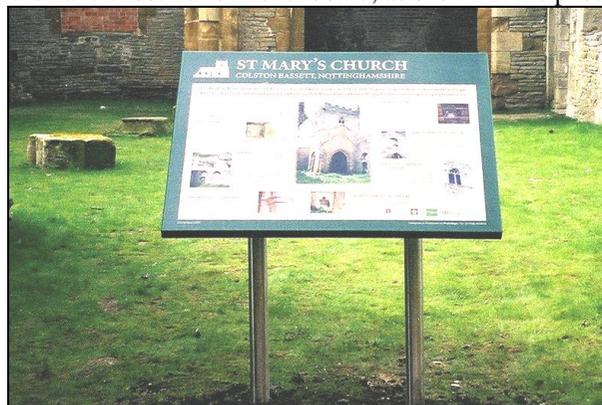
This is the title of the next production at the Little Theatre in Clarence Gardens. It's a play by Jerry Sterner about a ruthless, but charismatic asset stripper who tries to take over an old fashioned New England company. It gets interesting when a feisty, female lawyer comes to the company's defence. needless to say there's a romantic.

We're planning to see it on February 3rd. The show starts at 7:45pm. If you'd like to come, please send your name and telephone number plus £7.50 per ticket to Ros Boulden, Flat 8, Abbots, 129 Kings Road, Brighton BN1 2FA by 21st January at the latest.

Where's it going to be?

Plans are progressing for the heritage board in Regency Square. The grant money is now in the bank and we have had a meeting with the Council to discuss where it should be located.

We have chosen a low level board, as shown in the photo.



The advantage of this is that it's accessible for everyone to read and won't block views across the square.

The proposed location is at the top of Regency Square on the concrete area near the steps down to the car park. We plan to put it to the left of central the gate onto the top green.

This means that as you read it you will have a good view of of the gardens and most of the buildings around them.

These plans are, of course, subject to us getting planning permission for both the location and the style of board.

You can't win them all!

Unfortunately our grant application for help with the cost of our new web site was not successful. So we'll have to meet the full cost from existing funds. This means we'll probably be reporting a deficit at the next AGM.

That's not a serious problem since we have enough money in reserve and the work we're currently doing on the web site will be good for several years.

While we're talking about money ...

Our treasurer Sue Paskins will be stepping down at the AGM in March. So we are looking for a new person to look after the finances.

It's not a complicated job. The accounts are currently kept on a simple computer spreadsheet using Excel, but we could easily revert to good old pen and paper if preferred. We bank at the Nationwide in West Street.

If you are interested or have any suggestions please contact Roger Hinton (✉ hinton@clara.net ☎ 01273 321794).

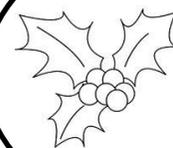
Signs of the times

Information is the key to everything. The news is full of wiki leaks and identity theft. We all want information: what's going on, who thinks what? And there are so many new ways of getting it – if you can find out about them.

So maybe that explains why there are about 160 different signs in Regency Square and on the beach opposite. Yes, one of our committee members has counted them! Is this information overload? We're going to try and tidy up a bit by getting rid of a few of these signs. Any suggestions?

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Happy Christmas
to all members
and friends
from the
Society committee!



The West Pier - could it be even worse?

Most local people are pretty fed up with what's happening at the West Pier site down on the seafront.

Some dislike the plan for the i360 observation tower. They think it will be ugly and spoil the neighbouring historic architecture. Some think it will attract more traffic and may even be dangerous in high winds!



Even those who like it are frustrated by the delay in starting construction work. Some even doubt if it will ever happen.

Pretty well everyone is unhappy with the current state of the root end of the pier. To the east we have a smart new tourist area with volleyball etc. To the west the bandstand has been restored. Meanwhile the seafront opposite Regency Square is derelict.

So, two of our committee members had a meeting with the West Pier Trust chairman and two of his colleagues in the Trust's Portakabin.

We asked if they could do something to improve the appearance of the site. They explained that the decking at the root end had to be closed off for safety reasons. They also said that the Trust has no money to undertake improvement works.

However, we were pleased to see that shortly after our meeting some weeds were cleared away from the north side of the site.

Glynn Jones, the Trust chairman said something else which was very interesting. He suggested that things could get much worse if the Trust ran out of money completely and had to be wound up.

The Trust is a charity and it owns the land on which the pier stood, including the part where the i360 will be built. Without the charity to protect it, this land may become available for commercial development which could result in something far less acceptable to local people.

Of course developers would need planning permission, but past evidence suggests that the Council welcomes large scale commercial development: they approved the i360 and before that they approved the appalling St Modwen scheme which would have resulted in large commercial buildings on the south side of Kings Road.

We are trying to find out exactly what the legal status of the land would be if the West Pier Trust no longer existed.

Dogs and footballs

Ball games are not allowed on any of the greens in Regency Square. Even so, people often kick a ball around on one or other of the lower greens.

This can cause problems for dog walkers; dogs are allowed on the lower greens provided their owners clear up after them.

Neither dogs nor ball games are allowed on the top green.

How do we make sense of all this? The top green is fenced and has a smaller area of grass. In the summer it's a great place for young children to run around and for adults to lie in the sun. So our view is that dogs and footballers should stay out, so the grass is kept clean and undamaged.

The lower greens are ideal for dogs provided they've been trained not to run into the road. They are also good for football, even if it is against the rules. So the question is: can the dogs and the footballers live together?

Footballers could limit themselves to one green and dog walkers could avoid popular football times. Could it work, or will the dog owners cry "foul" and the footballers say we're barking mad? Tell us what you think!

Dates for your diary:

21 December from 7pm - pre Christmas drinks with the Society committee in the Regency Tavern

3 January at 10 am - new year breakfast at the Regency Restaurant

3 February at 7:45 - "Other People's Money" at the Little Theatre (details over the page)

Let's get some more members

The Society has well over a hundred members at present but we are always keen to recruit more.

The more members we have the more we can claim to represent the local community, which is important when we are trying to persuade the Council to do something.

We are planning to distribute a new membership leaflet shortly and we will be including a copy with the next newsletter. So make it your New Year resolution: find a new member for the society in January!

Or even sooner? You can print a copy of the current membership leaflet from the web site (www.regencybrighton.com) or get a copy directly from the chairman.

Society Contacts:

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