

NEWSLETTER 337 February 2020

40th AGM of the Society

**Tuesday 31 March at 7.30pm
Hilton Brighton Metropole**

The highlight of this anniversary meeting will be a 35-minute talk by Kevin Newman:

The Hotel Metropole, yesterday and today

Kevin is the author of several books on Brighton and Hove. He has made a special study of the Metropole Hotel over the last few years and was guest speaker at the hotel's 125th anniversary celebrations.

Kevin's talk will be followed by an open discussion:

The Hotel Metropole tomorrow

Committee member Mike Davis will chair a forum where members will be able to voice their opinions on what they would like to see replacing the Metropole Exhibition Halls.

ALL WELCOME MEMBERS AND NON-MEMBERS

Kevin's talk will be followed by wine and nibbles. The formal business of AGM of the Society will start at 9.00pm.

Some bouquets

Committee members of the Society are still receiving "bouquets" from members and friends who enjoyed either the BAI360 flight in December, the lovely lights on the Regency Square Christmas Tree ... or both.

Neither of these events would have happened without the support and generosity of Ian Hart at the BAI360 and Justin Salisbury of the Artist Residence Hotel. One again, a huge thanks to both of them.

Welcome to the Regency PCSOs

At a recent committee meeting, the committee were delighted to welcome Regency Seafront PCSOs, Rebecca Lovell and Katie Bothwell.

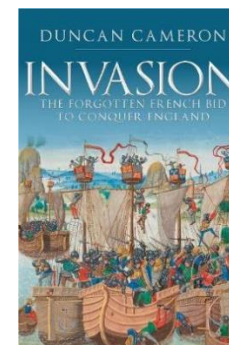
Their message was clear: "Talk to us when you see us, let us know what you are worried about in your area." The committee were able to tell Rebecca and Katie about the drug dealing, anti-social behaviour, shop-lifting etc which plague our area.

Police work is very much information lead these days, so if you see a crime taking place, do not hesitate to dial 999.

If you see the aftermath of a crime or are concerned that a crime might soon take place, try phoning 101. If you can't get through (a common experience) here is some good advice from Rebecca and Katie:

- Make a note of what you have seen (time, place etc) and report it later at a possibly less busy time of day. All information is valuable to the police
- If you have a computer, just drop a line to 101@sussex.pnn.police.uk
- Or go to the Sussex Police website and choose one of the many forms that you can fill in according to what you want to say: <https://www.sussex.police.uk/>

An invitation



Society member Duncan Cameron invites you to the launch of his new book: "INVASION! The forgotten French bid to conquer England".

Place: Waterstones, North Road, Brighton
Date: Wednesday 26 February 2020
Time: 7.30pm
Admission Price: £4.00

Dinner-time view

Casalingo is one of the longest established and one of the best restaurants in Preston Street. Next door to it, a great deal has recently been invested in a new restaurant.

What on earth persuaded the City Council to put, not one, but four old and tatty communal refuse bins right opposite these restaurants, the owners of which are doing their utmost to improve the appearance and status of the street?



Admittedly the owners could take action themselves over the graffiti, but perhaps they are wondering if it is worthwhile, now the bins are there.

December Quiz

How did the Regency Square Area Society raise its very first funds to set up in 1979?

A Jumble Sale held in the Ballroom of the Portland House Hotel

Theatre in Regency Square

Are there plans to put up a theatre tent in Regency Square during the 2020 Brighton Festival? This was the question that a group of Society committee members put to Ian Taylor, the Council's Events Manager at a meeting with him in November.

Ian explained that the City Council had temporarily lost several Festival venues due to the work on the Valley Garden Scheme. If the Council wishes to use Regency Square, Ian has promised to liaise with the Society in order to avoid some of the of the previous problems (Portaloos opposite residents' homes, a pay bar run by a non-local licensee etc) associated with the Roundabout Theatre tent a few year ago.

Planning

26-27 Clarence Square BH2019/00989 and 00991: On 11 October, the Society wrote to Liz Hobden, the Council's Head of Planning. The Society is objecting to the fact that the City Council obliged the developers of this property to put gaps in the heritage railings in front of these two houses. The letter made a formal complaint to the Planning Department.



The Committee was most disappointed that this complaint has been dismissed as irrelevant in an e-mail from the Customer Feedback Manager at the City Council.

The Committee is now seeking the support of local ward Councillor Tom Druitt who will be made aware of the misapplication of *HE6 - Conservation Policies* ie. the Council has treated this planning application as if the property was new-build whereas it should have been considered as an alteration to a historic building.

37-39 Clarence Square: BH2019/03016: Erection of an additional storey and conversion of first floor, part lower ground & ground floors to provide 4 one-bedroom flats, 2 two-bedroom flats and 1 three-bedroom flat including alterations to shopfront & revised fenestration to rear

Despite some reservations about the design expressed by the Conservation Advisory Group, the Society welcomes the upgrading of these properties. However, given the problems already experienced at No 28 Clarence Square, the Society has commented that heritage ironwork must be retained.

45 Preston Street (formerly The Chequers pub) BH2020/00076: Change of use of basement and ground floor licensed premises to part retail unit, and creation of residential unit.

The Society has no objection to change of use. However, the committee will be watchful in case any alteration is made to the bow windows at ground floor level. They may not be original to the building, but they do add variety and charm to the streetscape.

65 Western Road BH2019/03757 Part change of use & conversion of existing retail and retail space (KFC)) to form 3 self-contained flats. This includes the erection of a two-storey rear extension with access via Stone Street.

The property affected in 18 Stone Street is No. 18. The Society agrees with the comment made by the Heritage Department report: "the principal of the proposal is supported, however some details need finessing to lessen the impact on the character and appearance of the surrounding conservation area."

Hotel Metropole: The Society is leading a small group of interested local residents which has already met with representatives of First Base, the company that is advising the owners of the whole Metropole site. There are no specific plans for the site as yet, but there will be further meetings in 2020 ... and who knows, in 2021.

February Quiz

Until recently, the restaurant of the Hilton Metropole was named after the architect of the hotel?

Who was he?

Which building of his has vanished from Hove?

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