

The Sandgate Society

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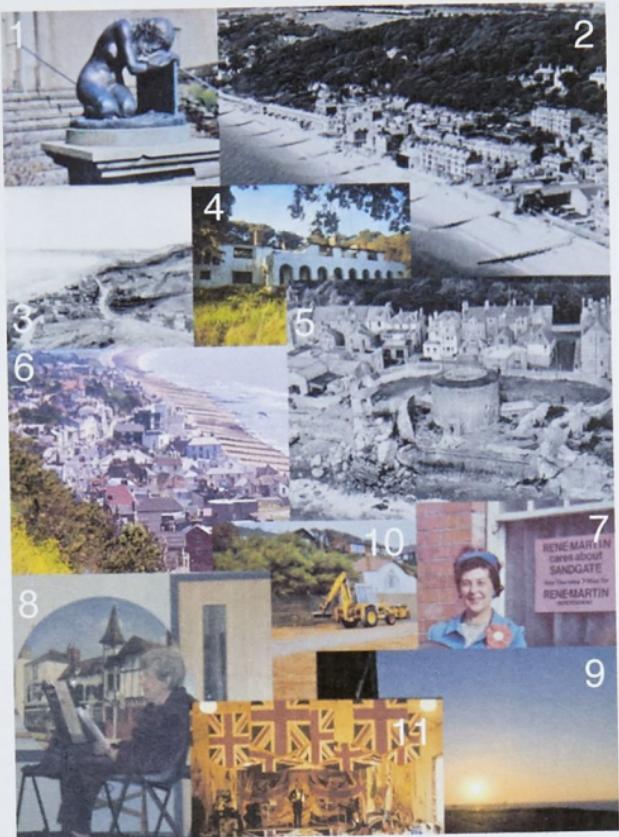
50th Anniversary Talk

50 Years On – Retrospect & Prospect

Wednesday 11th April 2012

Presenter: Linda René Martin
Founding Member





1. Sundial, Time Flys. Formerly close to Sandgate Parish Church
2. Sandgate 1949, Coastguard Terrace to west
3. Early view, westwards
4. Encombe House
5. Storm ravaged castle
6. Sandgate, birds eye view
7. Author on the campaign trail
8. Author at the talk
9. Sunrise
10. Clearing shingle from Esplanade below Encombe
11. Chichester Hall Queen's Silver Jubilee 1977

The Sandgate Society Greets you 50 years on



This statue once stood on a sundial by the steps to St Paul's Church, in memory of Kenelm Digby (1603-65). It suffered badly from vandalism and is now in safekeeping. A copy in resin will replace it when funds allow. Contributions welcome.

Forever Sandgate

Here, ceaseless Enbrook meets a timeless sea,
Near Castle, Church and Ilex tree
And Wilberforce and HG Wells
Live deep in village memory.
A VC, too, among the dead
Is writ on stone with pain and pride.
Progress, now, among us dwells
As Saga spells prosperity.

Martellos echo times gone by,
Pebbles murmur with the tide
Clear we hear the seagulls cry.
Dawn and sunset paint the sky –
But creeping concrete, loss of green
Eats into our well-loved scene
Hard as we defy.
Though wind and waves are rarely still
Sandgate survives and ever will.

The words are taken from the old clock in Chester Cathedral:

When I was a child I laughed and wept
Time crept
When as a youth I dreamed and talked
Time walked
When I became a full grown man
Time ran
And later as I older grew
Time flew
Soon I shall find while travelling on
Time gone
Will Christ have saved my soul by then
Amen?

What is Sandgate all about

Happy, we note the scene without
What is Sandgate all about?
Brick, ragstone, stucco as we pass
And avant-gardish steel and glass
Ship-lap sides and slated roof
'Gainst salty seawinds weatherproof
Sandgate a-whizz with bikes and jetskis
Pubs on tap with beer and whiskies
Sandgate folk and Bleriotis
Enjoy its haunts and curios
Coastal traffic speeds along
Sadly, horse and tram long gone
Oh deary me: but cheery me
When blessed with woods and sky and sea
Here's the Sandgate we love well
Sometimes Heaven, sometimes hell
Please forgive my doggerel

Linda René-Martin, Founding Member 1962
Coast Cottage, Sandgate

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January 2013

1962 Prepared for the 50th anniversary of the founding of the Sandgate Society 2012

Welcome all

Purely as a founding member in 1962 though never on the committee, I am happy and proud to recall as briefly as I can the special part the Sandgate Society has played in Sandgate life, since Ruby Greenwall founded it 50 years ago. It is a tall order. The keynote, tonight, is informality and later your comments and special memories will be most welcome.

First, I must admit, I am not the last of the founding members. There are three others with whom I am still in touch, but can't be with us tonight.

Firstly, Joan Bennette, Mrs Greenwall's niece; Mary Green, sister of the late Donald and Frank Cottage. She was the beloved, long-serving Librarian and knows the former Reading like a 2nd home. And then I'm still in touch with Peggy Ewer, wife of the late Dr Ewer, and a talented artist.



Here is Peggy's sketch of the Royal Kent Hotel, an ancient coaching inn. It was the heart and soul of Sandgate before the old Folkestone Council permitted it to be ripped out. As Peggy told me recently, its destruction enraged her.

Yes, it enraged many people. Too much was at threat from the Folkestone Borough philistines and others. Sandgate was ripe for the picking. It sparked Ruby Greenwall JP to found the Sandgate Preservation Society as first known. But for Ruby and all who rallied round, Sandgate would be a very different place today. Anthony Swaine, Conservation Architect and Arthur Gadd of Halletts the law

firm, gave their services. Determination, dedication and teamwork have played their part against formidable odds. In addition to the F-words-festivities, fireworks, flags and feastings, The Sandgate Society, in tandem with other recent organisations, still has a tough and influential role to play. New government regulations will make it harder still.

A look at the past is also a spur to the future. I used to say 'Sandgate is an amazing little place in a crisis. People rally round'. Indeed Sandgate could be a model for Cameron's Big Society. So I intend to rummage in the archives of my mind and focus on a few highlights to which so many stalwarts, both on committee and sideline, solicited and unsolicited, have contributed so much.

The keynote tonight is informality which means anyone can share with memories, or questions. But first I would like to recall some highlights and the people involved.

1. Noisy water sports, petition for a bye-law. 60's

Quiet weekends for beach lovers and the many were ruined by the noise and danger of speedboats and jet skis close inshore.

Ruby, in her usual practical way, organised a petition to present to the old Folkestone Council, and divided Sandgate up in several areas. My stint included the Coastguard, part of the Esplanade and the former Encombe estate before its development.

At that time, Encombe House was a coaching establishment for boys from Middle East families to enlarge their education. It was run with military discipline under the stern eye of a Col. H D Murphy, one of the Glubb Pasha brigade.

With trepidation, I wended my way up the Encombe driveway, petition paper in hand and knocked on the heavy oak door. Encombe House as we knew it was set in a natural amphitheatre and the noise was double that at sea level.

toil, and mainly at their own expense the Castle and grounds were open to the public for social and cultural events. It also served a splendid Sunday lunch and banquets under the culinary expertise of Graham their son.

Sadly, shamefully, certain committee members spread a rumour that the Grade I Listed and Scheduled Ancient Monument might become a casino and all that entailed. For some reason the Society also enquired of the Department of the Environment (28 February 1978) whether publicly funded works had been satisfactorily completed. Later Geoffrey Edmunds and Ann unravelled the downward spiral. But by then it was too late. The result was "Dreyfus in Sandgate".

Now, Barbara is living alone with her memories. At Peter's express wish, she wants no plaque or signage to their Herculean efforts. Nevertheless, they will go down in Sandgate history.
REMEMBER.

9. Village Sign

It was the Society, under the aegis of Geoffrey Edmunds, who were responsible for the village sign. Partly funded by a bequest of Mollie Hornsby.

10. PROSPECT

To Jonathan and Tony Greenwall I would say your mother was an



Linda with Margaret Turnill

inspiration and guide to us all, strictly non-political. Your home, for many years, was the hub of activity, ably manned by volunteer efforts

Times have moved on. Sandgate, as ever, is beset with old problems, earth movement, greed etc.

Beset with new challenges, as government regulations and directions are permitting inappropriate developments and changing the environmental scene throughout the UK. Planning and Consultation are keywords but often meaningless. Today, The Sandgate Society does not stand alone. While redoubling our efforts for the environment, our background and expertise is vital. We must work in tandem with other bodies who have come into being. The Parish Council, though political, has some clout. The Sandgate Community Trust with its vision and initiative and The Sandgate Heritage Trust Ltd maybe.

As Reg Turnill proposed at least ten years ago, fewer committees and some form of merger is desirable. Easier said than done. Opinions without action are not enough. Hard facts must prevail.

The Society archives totally re-organised, great displays, a source for visitors, hospitable Saturdays and monthly talks. At the same time environmental concerns must take priority. No matter who we are and what we are, young and old can all contribute one way or another. Please keep your eye on the ball. Every little counts. Vigilance is paramount.



Photograph by Melanie Chalk

I explained my mission as best I could and the Colonel answered with alacrity. Not only would he sign, but '*I'll get all my boys to sign too!*' As I know now, four could have been Saudi Arabian princes. Happily the society gained the vital bye-laws.

2. Conservation Areas and Trees 1970 on

Sandgate was at the mercy of the bulldozer and indiscriminate development. In 1967, however, the enlightened Civic Amenities Act made 'further provision for the protection and improvement of buildings of architectural or historic interest or of the character of areas of such interest, and for the preservation and planting of trees.'

Folkestone's proposals for Conservation Areas virtually ended where Sandgate began, except for a tiny area round the Castle. The Council was blind to our merits and deaf to our pleas.

I made a last ditch effort. In the absence of a joint survey, I set to work at weekends. A good friend in London, former Secretary to the Royal Fine Arts commission, gave it a once over. With Mrs Greenwall's blessing I submitted the survey *Sandgate a Village*, to Kent County Council (KCC) where the Deputy Planning Officer received me with great courtesy and perception. His expert eye took it all in, spotting much of value I had overlooked. His officers then visited the village, advised Folkestone Borough Council to reconsider and the result was that two large Conservation Areas were designated (recently extended) instead of none.

Shepway Council was then required to issue a *Local Plan 1975* as a guide to future policy and development. The Council were also responsible for surveying the trees which clothe the slopes and crests, identifying them and listing those worthy of preservation. Typically, this vital matter met with the usual bureaucratic block. No money, no staff.

The Sandgate Society weighed in. Under the expert leadership of Mr Syre, with help from Hilda Fisk a botanist, Frieda Bryant and others, they achieved the almost impossible. The ordnance survey map of

Sandgate was divided up into stints 'Many of us started off knowing very little about trees and finished up knowing an Ilex from a Mountain Ash, some of us, on the other hand, never will.'

At the same time as we mention trees we cannot forget the input of Dave Kesby, wildlife expert and the footpaths' best friend. Nor the superb work of Euan Williamson on footpath rights and de trunking the A259. To Euan, our President in waiting, we wish a good recovery (since the talk Euan has become President and his health has improved).

3. Earth Movement

Alex Todd was an ingenious and inventive man, who worked exceptionally hard to focus on the age-old earth movement at Encombe, where all unsuspecting he was among the settlers of the new Encombe Estate, in the 1960's. Our paths crossed at a time we were both researching the natural and man-made forces that were destabilising private and public property over a very wide area. While Folkestone Borough Council stubbornly turned their backs on a very serious situation.

With the Society's moral backing, Alex and I fought on for at least 6 years. Finally, the Aberfan disaster was a signal to Folkestone Council to take notice.

Halcrows were present at a public meeting to explain and advise on the age-old instability and undermining streams. Before burning down, the old Sandgate Laundry drew off 100,000 gallons a week. Where was it going I asked. John Muirwood, a senior partner in Halcrows said it was no more than a bathful of water per person a day! To which I replied 'that's all right if you remember to pull out the plug'. Uproarious laughter.

By chance, both Muirwood and I were catching the last train from Folkestone to London. He boarded my 2nd class carriage and how I longed to pick his brains, but of course, discretion forbid. He was working for the council. However, he did tell me that when the Abbey National took over Encombe House as a holiday home, he advised the Chairman he would not only need an umbrella (Abbey logo), but galoshes as well.

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Muirhead

all who battled with him, and won.

This is the Encombe conflagration, a lovely mansion already doomed by instability. Vandalism or arson was suspected but couldn't be proved. Forget land-slippage, springs and underground streams, the lure of Encombe never ends.

Some years later, in 1988, a very unwelcome phoenix was planned to rise from the ashes. A Council officer who steered the application through to acceptance, resigned 3 weeks beforehand to set up in the former Lloyds bank as consultant to S. E. Land Developments. However, on the basis of my 8 page report assisted by Jack Gill, councillors decided on a site meeting. Permission refused. Now a large and conspicuous development 3 units, 6 storeys, felling of trees has been approved after two appeals and is currently on hold.

7. Marina Battle

Geoffrey Edmunds and Ann were relative newcomers to Sandgate. In 1992 he was awarded a prestigious honour as an Honorary Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Transport, one of 9 recipients in the world. His knowhow and grasp served the Society well during 9 years as chairman 1988 to 1997, and then President. In battles with officialdom, he mostly won.

In particular I must recall the David/Goliath Marina battle on our borders. Spearheaded by Bernard Binns of the Seabrook Association, the Sandgate Society gave it their moral support while Geoffrey and I carried a heavy load together with other interested bodies. The forces were stacked against us; notably Shepway Council in concert with the developers, a series of local and public inquiries and the betrayal by English Heritage in the shape of Lord Montagu of Beaulieu who had given Scheduled Monument Consent to truncate the Royal Military Canal at short notice before the start of a lengthy Public Enquiry. It culminated in limited approval by Nicholas Ridley, Department of the Environment, subject to a Private Bill. This was to construct an outer harbour and lock-gate to the Canal.

You got me into all this, said Geoffrey, and left me to write a 28 clause petition, under his scrutiny of course! A gruelling 13 days over a 6 week period ensued before a House of Commons Select Committee, in Parliament; 2 labour and 2 conservative. Jack Gill was there, a civil engineer, to demolish Shepway officials and other expert witnesses.

Geoffrey was absent the last day. Over lunch I prepared an 'acceptance of defeat' speech and had it at the ready. Instead the verdict came. Bill defeated by three votes to one. A gnashing of teeth by QC and developers.



Princes Parade SAVED – AT LEAST FOR THE TIME BEING.

8. Chichester Hall

Geoffrey was also instrumental in saving the Chichester Hall from Shepway clutches when the Council was intent on selling it off in 1990. A Trust was quickly formed to take over the neglected building and ensure its community use.

It was slow going. Now new Trustees have taken over, repaired it, and are turning it into the success we enjoy today.

The restoration of our ancient Castle (1539) is another story and does not reflect well on the Sandgate Society. Dr's Peter and Barbara McGregor were required to restore the sea battered remains of this Henry VIII bastion. In 1978, after 14 years of



Todd also kept a rain gauge. Heavy rainfall coinciding with spring tides and beach erosion, he discovered, would trigger earth movement and broken pipes. He could, almost always, predict it. His calculations were of great interest to Professor J. N. Hutchinson whose survey for the Ministry of Technology *'The Coastal Landslides of Kent' 1965* should be noted.

Todd kept a camper van, ingeniously fitted and stocked for holidays or for a quick exodus if another landslide struck. It served in other ways.

4.



Candidate for Council 1970

In 1970, Mrs Greenwall and her committee decided Sandgate needed an independent voice on the then Folkestone Council who persistently ignored or neglected our needs, our amenities and welfare.

Folkestone's 'forgotten colony' you could say. The choice of candidate fell on me and reluctantly (I was working full-time in London) I pitched in, with Chairman Dennis Vorley as my agent and no party organisation behind us, we were babes in the wood. The campaign deserves a separate talk. But Todd's camper van took to the roads, with



posters and a loud hailer borrowed from the Boat Club. It was a close run thing. The ruling party won by a small majority but it was a shake-up, a signal - take notice of Sandgate.

In 1977 Todd devised the village decorations for the Royal Silver Jubilee. Sandgate came third in the Illustrated London News prize for the best dressed village in the UK.

The storm path from Brewer's Hill crossing the Encombe driveway before descending to the village was another success. Todd's Toddle it was called, and safely by-passed the Esplanade when exposed to storm and flood.

Later Todd resigned from The Sandgate Society - some eccentric difference of opinion and a not too diplomatic visit from the chairman. By then I was remarried to dear Jack, a Long Island physician. We retired in 1981 to the Sandgate Cottage and to fresh battles.

5. Society HQ 1977 and 1983/4

Another great highlight in the annals of the then 300 strong society came in 1977 when enterprising Mrs Greenwall rented from KCC the empty engine room in the Old Fire Station. For 15 years, Mrs Greenwall's sitting room was the hub of the society, and its committee meetings. Now it could hang out a sign, carry out official duties, become something of a community and information centre and a focus for village life. With the help of donations in money and kind, members set out to make it shipshape and welcoming.

By 1983, however, the Society was faced with eviction. KCC who owned the building since re-organisation of Local Government in 1974 decided to close the Public Library on the upper floor and put the whole building, including rear bottle store, on the open market to the highest bidder.

Feelings ran high. Local and district councillors proved unable to intervene and save it for the community. KCC was adamant. An Emergency General Meeting was called to consider ways and means.

Chairman Vorley announced that he had it on good authority that a possible buyer was ready to let the society continue to rent. He could not reveal his source. Lurking in the background I said in that case we would be at the mercy of every wind that blew. Then Mrs Greenwall (if I remember) proposed a deputation to KCC to plead our cause. It fell on me to co-opt Lola Lachlan, Commander Colvile and Mollie Hornsby. Other interested parties were present, on their own account.

To cut a long story short, the Society was given 6 months to

Preservation society has a new home

FOR 11 years, Mrs. Barbara Weller's Society was also homeless. Then last year the Sandgate Society, which had been formed to save the old fire station, took over the premises. Now the Society has a permanent home. The building, which dates from 1870, has been converted into a community centre. It includes a hall, a shop, a library and a small exhibition room. The Society is also involved in the regeneration of the area around the fire station. It has helped to restore the old clock tower and is working on other projects. The Society's chairman, Alan Fisk, says: "We are very pleased to have found a permanent home for our Society. We hope to continue our work of preserving the history of Sandgate and its people." The Society's new home is located in the former fire station on the corner of High Street and Station Road. The building is Grade II listed and has been restored to its original condition. The Society's new home is located in the former fire station on the corner of High Street and Station Road. The building is Grade II listed and has been restored to its original condition.

Ex-fire station taken



Rented from KCC 1977

raise the money (£18,100) or lose the Old Fire Station forever.

Campaign launched



Freehold purchased from KCC 1983

counsel of Arthur Ruderman as Treasurer, and Lola Lachlan, the Sandgate Heritage Trust Ltd was formed with charitable status. We had less than 6 months to fund the takeover. With widespread support and individual generosity (three people dug deep in their pockets) and that of the Sandgate Society and others, it succeeded.

The almost impossible can be done. Today the Engine Room is

The Society was not set up to buy or maintain property so a steering committee was formed to set up a limited company and undertake the mammoth task. It was uphill work but finally with me as Chairman (and maid of all work) and business-like Alan Fisk as Company Secretary, with the steady influence and wise

hospitable, vibrant with displays and activity. Archives invaluable.

6. Old School and Cedar Tree 1976



school, Sandgate's cherished landmark. This too came under threat after KCC had built the new Primary School in Coolinge Lane. Lord Radnor's agents wanted to demolish and reclaim the deeded land for redevelopment. The Society was faced with a new crisis. A grade II listing was obtained, endless reports and arguments followed before the Bristol Inspectorate advised retention subject to new development on the old playground. The school itself was converted into housing units (by Roger Joyce I believe) under the aegis of David O'Clee. It still provides a notable landmark at the entrance to the village. David once said it was the only good thing he had done in his life. We are eternally grateful to

Many of you may remember this magnificent cedar tree next to the 1866 school building, itself the sole gift of James Morris of Encombe who had no children of his own. The cedar suffered badly in the 1987 hurricane. It still had life, but the ruthless tree surgeons finished it off and nothing ever replaced it.

The cedar formed a perfect setting together with the old



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50th anniversary year

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A Fiftieth Fanfare

2012 - A Diamond Jubilee for Her Majesty and the London Olympic games, and for the village a year of fanfare, flourish and flags in the sea breeze as the Sandgate Society (originally the Sandgate Preservation Society) marks its founding 50 years ago. From Mrs. Greenwall's sitting room (Augrim House now the Hub Cycle Shop) to the HQ in the Fire Engine Station in 1977, the Society has become a force for good in village life both in environmental and social terms.

Ruby Greenwall J.P. was the main spring during a time of crisis. The Royal Kent Hotel, a Georgian coaching inn with its pillared portico, was at the mercy of the bulldozer. With planning consent, the heart and soul of Sandgate was about to be ripped out and this threat led to the foundation of the Society. However a late bid from Trust Houses to acquire and redevelop while retaining the facade did not avail.

The practical, forthright and far seeing Ruby Greenwall was determined to give the quiet village a much needed loud and clear voice. No longer signposted, our area was Folkestone's forgotten colony since the 1934 takeover, and was clearly seen as ripe for redevelopment. Many residents rallied to the cause and expertise was quickly mustered. Notable personalities included Anthony Swaine FR.I.B.A. who became the Hon. Architectural and conservation advisor; Arthur Gadd of Halletts took on the role of legal advisor (later he was Pres. Kent Lawyers Federation.). The secretary was the wise, calm and indefatigable Lola Lachlan.

Through much turbulence the strictly non-political society has made its mark. It has won two large conservation areas, six tree preservation areas and secured listed buildings. It remains alive to Sandgate's fascinating history, watchful of its unique environment 'twixt land and sea, its contemporary needs and its ever more uncertain future. The Society remains well appreciated as a focus for village life.

Highlights, sidelights and memories will emerge this year through a programme of events, feasting included.

Highlights and Achievements

1962 onwards - Insistence on coast protection and vigilance about earth movement caused by Encombe Estate development,

1965 - The Sandgate Exhibition in Chichester Hall, opened by David Tomlinson, attracted over 1000 visitors.

1972 - Wins two large conservation areas after opposition from Folkestone Borough Council

1972 - Six tree preservation areas granted. Jubilee celebrations, organised by Alex Todd.

1977 - The Society rents the old Fire Engine Station from KCC

1980 - The Society becomes registered charity 280497

1990 - Petitioners at House of Commons Select Committee (in support of Seabrook Association Chairman, Bernard Binns) helped to save Princess Avenue and Royal Military Canal from damaging Marina and Housing plans. The Private Bill was turned down.

1992 - Agreement with M.O.D. For Escarpment Right of Way.
1993 - Design and erection (20 Feb) of Village Sign (a part legacy from Mollie Hornsby)

2000 - During a House of Lords debate about government aid for seaside resorts, Lord Moynihan declared, "In the village of Sandgate, where I live, the outstanding work of the Sandgate Society has been based on vigilance, expertise and consultation." (Extract from Hansard)

With a keen and growing membership, the Sandgate Society goes forward vibrant with new initiatives in close liaison with the recent Parish Council (2004) and especially the Sandgate Community Trust.

Linda René-Martin, Founding member and President.

Unstable Times

These recent pictures reveal the dangers of building development in the village. The Society's concerns about land stability of the escarpment when considering several planning applications were confirmed when a landslip occurred at the land adjoining 5 Radnor Cliff. In the late hours of Wednesday 4th the landslip burst a water main and torrents of water cascaded into Radnor Cliff Crescent rendering it impassable.

The entire site was excavated a year ago by a developer and works were halted after several local residents expressed concerns about instability of the land. Shepway District Council advised us that a private Building Control contractor had been employed by the developer. There have been assurances that the stability of the land had been addressed. The landslip proved otherwise. It was a direct result of poor structural preparation and a lack of supervision.

The Sandgate Society will join with the Parish Council and other community groups to address these very serious issues regarding developments on the Sandgate escarpments



The Lola Lachlan Award

On Friday 4 November, Jill Partridge and Liz Joyce, representing the Sandgate Society, attended an assembly at Sandgate Primary School to award book tokens to the three prize winners of the Lola Lachlan Award.

This annual competition for all children of 11 years and younger in the parish of Sandgate was instituted some years ago by Mrs Lachlan, the wife of a local G.P. (viz. Lachlan Way in Sandgate). This summer the Sandgate Society contacted Sandgate Primary School and Years Five and Six were asked to write a short story describing the world 50 years hence in the form of a diary entry for their grandchildren.

The results were highly imaginative and entertaining and featured robots, space travel, electric cars and strange foods as well as more recognisable elements of contemporary human existence. The three prize winners, selected by Dan File, Community Development Leader and teacher at the School, the teachers of Years Five and Six and Liz Joyce, formerly a lecturer in English, were Ruby Gordon, Tom Condie and Bonnie-Lou Maxwell. These winners each received a Waterstone's book token for their inventiveness and neat joined up handwriting.

The Sandgate Society representatives were then taken on a tour of the School by five members of Year Six, Hannah McMahon, Shannon Green, Max Turbutt, Nat Parmenter and Finlay O'Grady were excellent ambassadors for the School and proved to be engaging and amusing youngsters who were obviously proud of their School and their head teacher.

Liz Joyce told the School that the competition will be run next year too and the judges looked forward to reading more entries of the same high standard.

Here are the three winning entries - with spelling and grammar as written.

Bonnie-Lou Maxwell - age 8 Sandgate Primary School

Dear diary,

I slowly got into my sparkly, shiny silver time travelling ship, wondering if the terrific gerney was going to be enjoyable! Happily, I zoomed through the amazing futer, I was extreamely exsited! At last I had landed in year 2050 in London. Cheerfully I wandered through the joyful, elated blistering streets, suddenly I saw a slimy, horrible, green... ALIEN! "What was on its back?" I exclaimed.

Minutes later a man with a black jumper on came along and climbed up big ben. I was in shock! Suddenly a flying car crashed into big ben and knocked it over! I couldn't believe my eyes!

It smashed lots of houses, I rapidly ran away as fast as I could.

As I ran I saw lots of multi couled people. Meanwhile it started to snow, however weirdly the snow was Red.

"What was going to happen next?" I thought. "Was it going to start raining bubblegum?" I sighed. Without warning, it started to rain bubblegum! I wondered if it was my imagination, but it wasn't! What was happening? Although it was raining bubble gums I found a bag in my pocket and used that to catch some for later. Anoyingly it worn't raining bubblegum, it was a truck that had fallen over! I felt very frustrated however it was weird. Happily I walked along and saw a cute, pink, fluffy poodle and heard birds cheeping beautifully.

Next I got a swimming costume on and was about in but I saw an enormous, huge, fat hippo lieing peacefully. "I guess hippos live in swimming pools now!" I laughed. So sadly I had to go home in my awesome and amazing time machine. Finally I got home, I was glad to back, but a bit miserable!

From Ruby F. Gordon

Paralysed with fear, my family of eight sat silent, terrified to make even the smallest noise. Spread out in my cage of a bedroom that had been a prison for weeks, closed off from the rest of the world. We were forbidden to have windows, as the intense brightness of the sunlight would burn our faces like candle wax. We were in darkness.

Trapped by our own creations, I lay dreading the day that they would find us! It all started when Dr Philip Jones, an inventor, was at work with his most mind bogling creation in history. An electrical gadget that would be equipped and more adaptable to OUR needs. However he took it too far. Personality. Fifty years ago no one would have believed it possible. But it's here, now and happening.

Dr Philip Jones had come to think that the machines would become more advanced, this was our fate, and now we have to fix it. The people had hot wired their essence into the machinery, it was innocent. It was what they were designed for, so it would be more suited to that individual. Suddenly something went wrong. Dr Philip Jones had given them a soul, a mind of their own!

To this day machines everywhere have turned against all of humanity. Well, once you have a mind, a soul and a fully operating body you are then considered alive? Aren't you?

From Tom Condie

Dear Diary,

Its year 2050. Lots of extravagant weird changes have happened since 2011. The gadget development is at its peak. One of many gadgets is the bin dis integrator. Its role is to cut down on the landfill. When you insert something in it, like a bit of rubbish, it fires up like a Ferrari 430's big meaty V8 turbo powered engine and disintegrates the litter.

Despite the fact that it is very dangerous and lethal to waste, it can be completely harmless to human body parts. Global warming is very high. As a result of this, even in Britain, it is the same temperature as Spain in 2011 (30c). As a matter of fact more companies have come together to make an ingredient to prevent people getting sun burnt.

The new electric cars help stop pollution. There's lots of whizzing silent cars gliding across the newly laid warm, sticky tarmac. I can feel the sun beaming on the back of my neck and the seeming like ending skyscrapers towering over me like a cat does to a rodent waiting to pounce. The cost of products are very expensive and a lot of people can't afford anything but basic foods. It seems more and more people are scratching a living trying to get by as the economic depression has got worse since the year 2008, as house prices began to plummet. They are now homeless like the rest of them from the past begging for money, all weak and feeble.

Why does the world have to change?

Why can't we just stay as we are?

Why do I have to go along with the changes?

Why?...Why?...Why?

THE FUTURE IS COMING!

Uncorking the Festive Spirit

What a splendid evening this turned out to be. The annual Christmas Dinner is without a doubt one of the highlights of the year and as usual a packed Chichester Hall was full of festive fun. A capacity attendance added to the high spirits. The entertainment was first class. Reg and Margaret's topical quiz tested the memory with some tantalising questions about the year's news events. A flamenco dance performance produced intoxicating images of Iberia at its most traditional. And of course the catering was simply first class. Happily a lively rendition of Partridges in a Pear Tree offered welcome physical



exercise to help shed a few calories. Our thanks to the organisers for such an entertaining evening. Most of all though our members and guests brought with them a cheerful determination to enjoy Christmas in Sandgate.



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Marking Sandgate's Past

Sandgate's newest historical Blue Plaque was unveiled on Friday 4th November. It's the eighth in the village and commemorates the life of Dame Sheila Sherlock, the world renowned physician. Her plaque can be seen on the side of an antique shop at 99 Sandgate High Street which is the nearest spot to Dame Sheila's former home in the now demolished Devonshire Terrace.

At the ceremony were her daughter's family (pictured) and members of the Sandgate Society. Sheila Sherlock was born in Dublin early years in family moved to she attended the School for Girls. for college she g r e a t to the idea e n t e r i n g medicine, but hard work and she excelled s u b j e c t the liver. Her candid answer as to why she chose this subject, "because no one else was doing any serious research." It's hard to believe that up to the 1940s little was known about hepatology and liver disease and it is through Dame Sheila's expertise that the condition is now an established speciality. Throughout her distinguished career she wrote over 600 medical and scientific articles, and pioneered much understanding of this debilitating disease. She was honoured as a Dame in 1978 and later became a Fellow of the Royal Society. She died at the age of 83 in 2001 and seven years later, on the 90th anniversary of her birth, the liver unit at the Royal Free Hospital was renamed in her honour.

The next plaque to be unveiled in the village will celebrate the life of writer and botanist Jocelyn Brooke. Born at 22 Radnor Cliff in 1908, he spent his first 17 years in the village. His fascination with flowers was so intense that by the age of 4 he could recite the Latin names of numerous native plants. Rare orchids became his lifelong passion and he spent an eternity searching the Kent chalk down for rare species. At the age of 15 he teamed up with a school friend to plan an illustrated book about British orchids. Brooke was also an avid reader of writers such as Aldous Huxley. An article in Brooke's Bedales School magazine was the beginning of a prolific period in his creative life. His wartime work in the Royal Army Medical Corps provided much material for the book that really launched his career. "The Military Orchid", published in 1948, overlays his passionate study of plants onto a delicious insight into the myriad variations of being human. More critically acclaimed books over the next seven years established him as a serious and sensitive writer. His roots in Kent were captured again in the 1955 novel, "The Dog Of Clambercrown", set around Stelling Minnis. A darker view of his increasing depression surfaced in an unpublished book, "Furious and Deadly – An Experiment in Exorcism". From the mid 50s he was living at the tiny Ivy Cottage in Bishopsbourne where he died alone in October 1966.

* A local history leaflet about Brooke's life, written by Jonathan Hunt and published in 2002, is on sale at Sandgate Library.



Business News

In among the High Street gloom is one new shining beacon – The Sewing Space at 104 Sandgate High Street. Opened in November, it's the brainchild of Angie Anderson, a former primary school teacher. Originally from Illinois, but now enjoying a healthy lifestyle in the village, Angie aims to encourage youngsters and adults to explore sewing and craft skills. There are numerous day and evening classes to enjoy. Just call 254300, or learn more from the bright web site, TheSewingSpace.co.uk. Also soon to open is a bathroom and shower design company, just by the traffic lights.

Elsewhere on the High Street, the business news is less optimistic, with many shops remaining vacant. The Sandgate Trading Co. with its attractive nautical theme closed at the end of January – while another major operation is considering a move to Folkestone. We understand that an owner of numerous retail premises is happy to consider rental offers on vacant shops. We certainly need attractive and interesting businesses to bring back a buzz to the once thriving centre of our village.

Alison Dutton
Salon Proprietor

Ali Baba's
Ali Baba's Hair Designs
80 Sandgate High Street
Sandgate
Kent CT20 3BX

TEL: 01303 211210

Expertise filed at the old Fire Station

It was a pleasure to meet a former Sandgate Society archivist, Susan Stanley. She was having an extended holiday in the UK and was meeting up with many old friends. Susan was with the society through the nineties when she was ably assisted by Bobbie Allen. Living at No 7 Martello Terrace, she enjoyed life here at the centre of the village, with splendid views of the ever changing sea and sky. Her previous experience in the Department of Manuscripts at the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich made her a natural choice to take on the Sandgate archives. She recalled one conservation campaign, unsuccessful sadly, to save the Sea Cadets Hut. Viewing Sandgate after an absence of many years, she felt saddened that so many traditional businesses had been forced to close – but on a brighter note she sensed optimism in the High Street with the arrival of a number of new entrepreneurs and the recent addition of Post Office facilities in the Village Shop. We hope Susan had a happy vacation here and send our good wishes to her at home in Montreal.

From the Archive Team

We are very pleased to have recently been handed two very welcome items for our archives. The first is a collection of rare Sandgate photographs and postcards kindly passed to us by Mr Fred Moore. Secondly thanks to Mr Dave Kesby for all the Coastguard records and log books from the Sandgate Coastguard Station, many dating back to the 1920s. These had been held by the East Kent Archive Dept at Whitfield but were about to be transferred to Maidstone. Dave kindly contacted us to let us know that although he had originally given the records on a permanent loan basis, he would like them to be given to the Sandgate Society. Needless to say they will keep the Archive Team busy for several weeks to come. Thank you very much to both Fred and Dave for thinking of the archives here at the Old Fire Station where they have been most gratefully received.

Roger Joyce Associates
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A Good Turnout in Sandgate

Damian Collins, MP for Folkestone & Hythe, delivered his maiden speech to the Sandgate Society on Wednesday 11th January. This was an eagerly anticipated event and a capacity audience of members and guests gathered to hear his talk, "My First 18 Months in the House of Commons". His engaging manner made it a pleasure to learn about the varied life of an MP.

He soon revealed his passion for our area – fighting for retention of Dungeness Power station, balancing the merits of an enlarged Lydd airport and unlocking the potential of a regenerated Folkestone. He also described the immense challenges facing the UK, Europe and the world in the 21st century. There were many revealing insights into an MP's work behind the scenes. Damian is a member of the Arts, Media and Sports committee and related the importance of being able to question top media barons like Rupert Murdoch. He also expressed surprise at the size of the House of Commons, which television cameras tend to magnify, but in reality is only slightly larger than Chichester Hall.

His key aim as a local MP is to act as a champion of the area and had already raised many pressing issues from SE Kent. He also works closely with fellow Kent MP's seeking solutions to county wide employment, investment, heritage and economic difficulties.

After his largely unscripted talk, he willingly answered open questions from the hall and these ranged from the future of Europe to Shepway's parking strategy. He answered these in an enthusiastic, eloquent manner and he also expressed great commitment and passion for the seat he represents. Regardless of individual political persuasions in the audience, Damian Collins MP certainly ended the evening with many new friends.

Forthcoming Talks starting at 7.30pm, Chichester Hall

Wednesday February 8th – 'The Dregs of the People Remain' by Imogen Corrigan

The Black Death and its Aftermath

It is possible to see a shift in artistic tastes following the plague years which began in the mid C14th. This is understandable considering that we now know that certainly 50% and perhaps 60% of the population of Europe and beyond perished in the first wave and that the disease recurred over the next 130 years.

There is a distinct increase in interest in the macabre, but also in explorations of what will happen in the next life; some of it surprisingly optimistic and amusing. We see more interest in ex-pagan images and specific demands for spiritual protection and so what might be seen as a dust-to-dust mentality also becomes one of no tragedy, no triumph.

Wednesday March 14th - Annual General Meeting – All Invited

>>>> 50th Appeal <<<<

In August the Society will celebrate its first half century. Formed by a small group that was concerned about over development in the village, the organisation remains a formidable force against inappropriate planning matters. To enjoy the social side, pop along to the Saturday coffee morning. It's always an amiable start to the weekend – refreshments are served from 10 until 1. We are planning to produce a publication reflecting Sandgate over the years and especially since 1962. If you have any observations, memories of events or historical topics you'd like included in the publication, please do let us know.

"Lord & Lady" - Strands from the world of hairdressing

David and Maureen Barnes, owners of the hairdressing salon in Wilberforce Road, recently celebrated forty years in business. Without a doubt they have some interesting stories to tell. Their working life has been set in both the UK and Spain where recently they've found a new hacienda to continue their love affair with Iberia.

Their hairdressing roots are in West Yorkshire where the Pennine wind can easily offer residents a Ken Dodd look – clearly a promising place to heat up those curling tongues. Maureen began her career at the top by working in a Leeds salon that was patronised by stars visiting Yorkshire Television. In another claim to fame, she also designed many of DJ Jimmy Savile's astonishing trims. Maureen then set up her first salon at the age of 22 in 1971 – just at the start of decimalisation. A Spanish holiday at the time cost £40 per week.

Three years later, Dave and Maureen and their first youngster, Rachel, set off to the Costas for a full time Spanish adventure. However Franco's grip on the country meant that work permits were impossible to obtain, so in 1976 the family returned to Leeds to open their second salon. The seventies ended with the birth of Caroline – and the purchase of another salon.

Never a family to dwell too long in one spot, they headed back in the late eighties to Fuengirola on the Costa Del Sol but eventually the 1994 recession in Spain meant another plane trip from Malaga to an equally gloomy UK. On the advice of friends in Spain they looked at premises in Sandgate and started their new adventure at their present Wilberforce Road premises.

The '90s in Sandgate saw another retail transition as the remaining High Street shops and antique showrooms slowly closed to be replaced by an explosion of hair salons.

The couple's first few years meant working long hours to build up a regular clientele, but now customers travel from all over south Kent for a cut and style at "Lord & Lady".

Village life in the last seventeen years has been pretty eventful. "We've had a hurricane, earthquake, attempted murder, drug busts and hold ups – and we thought the Costa Del Sol was dangerous!"

"For us we've seen our daughters grow up to be successful and independent, while Sandgate has turned out to be a fairly trendy seaside village with plenty of places to eat, drink - and have a good hair-cut. By November last year we'd been in business forty years, having seen eight Prime Ministers, three recessions – and we still retain the same Queen".

Membership

As members will already be aware, we are trying to encourage as many as possible to pay their subscriptions at the beginning of every year in line with other societies. We are pleased to say that many members have already changed their Standing Orders to pay in January each year which is helps us greatly. Others have come into the Old Fire Station to pay their subscriptions.

Of course we realise it's such a busy time after Christmas, but if you have not already done so we would really appreciate it if you can pay your 2012 subscriptions as soon as you are able. It would be such a help with the accounts.

We would like to take this opportunity to welcome all our new members who have recently joined the Sandgate Society and thank existing members for their continued support.

Saturday coffee mornings at the Old Fire Station as popular as ever and please remember to pop the dates of the Sandgate Society Talks in the Chichester Memorial Hall into your diaries.

Toni Miles & Sandie Barker

50th ANNIVERSARY OF THE SANDGATE SOCIETY

FIFTY YEARS HAVE GONE BY SINCE 1962
WHEN A SMALL GROUP OF PEOPLE ALL WITH THE SAME VIEW
TO LOOK AFTER SANDGATE'S HERITAGE, TO HELP & CONSERVE
THE VILLAGE & ITS BUILDINGS, ITS CHARACTOR TO PRESERVE
REASONS FOR THIS WERE HEARTFELT, & INDEED WELL MEANT
BROUGHT ABOUT BY THE DEMOLITION OF 'THE ROYAL KENT' -
A FINE OLD GEORGIAN BUILDING, A FORMER COACHING INN
TO SEE ITS DESTRUCTION WAS INDEED AN AWFUL SIN
THIS SMALL GROUP OF PEOPLE DID HEARTILY PROCLAIM
NEVER TO ALLOW SUCH AS THIS TO HAPPEN IN SANDGATE AGAIN
SO THUS THE SANDGATE SOCIETY AS WE KNOW IT WAS BORN
WITH MEETINGS INITIALLY HELD IN RUBY GREENWALL'S HOME
THE OLD FIRE STATION WAS BOUGHT BY THE HERITAGE TRUST
THE REST IS HISTORY, IT BECAME OUR HEADQUARTERS & THUS
DURING COUNTLESS MEETINGS OVER THE PAST 50 YEARS
MANY AN UNSUITABLE DEVELOPMENT PLAN OFTEN APPEARS!
BUT ALONG WITH THE HASSELS AND HARD FOUGHT CAMPAIGNS
THERE'S BEEN ONE OR TWO LOSSES BUT MANY MORE GAINS!
THE LIST OF ACHIEVEMENTS CONTINUES TODAY
TO MENTION A FEW I'D JUST LIKE TO SAY - REMEMBER
THE FOOTPATHS, CLEAN BEACHES & BLUE PLACQUE TRAIL
IN MEMORY OF THE GROUP OF 1962 WE MUST NOT FAIL
IN OUR ENDEAVOURS TO CONTINUE AND TO CARE
FOR OUR VILLAGE OF SANDGATE, AND ALL WHO LIVE THERE.

JILL PARTRIDGE