

EVENTS

2012



windows into the past...

June 2012

by Sandgate Parish Council



J. TAYLOR

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Honouring man who saved countless lives

A MEMORIAL service and commemoration of the "champion of sailors" takes place next month, to mark the anniversary of his birth.

Dignitaries including Folkestone mayor Rodica Wheeler will attend a memorial service to Samuel Plimsoll at St Martin's Church in Horn Street, Cheriton, on Saturday, February 9. A wreath will also be laid on his grave in the churchyard.

In the 1870s, Mr Plimsoll devised a system to warn when a ship was overloaded with cargo or un-seaworthy. It became known as the Plimsoll Line and has been credited for saving the lives of thousands of sailors.

Former merchant seaman Steve Shaw said: "Samuel Plimsoll was incredibly important to sailors, he has probably helped save the lives of thousands over

the years.

"In his time, unscrupulous ship owners would overload the ships, which would capsize under the weight.

"The Plimsoll line meant ships were safer and he saved men, women and children because in those days everybody sailed on board, they didn't wait at home.

"In 2012, we celebrated the Queen's Jubilee, the Olympics and Charles Dickens' 200th birthday, but Plimsoll was rather overlooked."

A concert is also taking place on the same day in Plimsoll's honour at 7.30pm at the United Reformed Church, which he attended and laid one of the foundation stones.

Both events are free, although both will have a retiring collection for the RNLI and Kent Merchant Navy Association.



MEMORIAL: A service for maritime pioneer Samuel Plimsoll is to be held in Cheriton next month

HYTHE HERALD JAN, 17 2013

Folkestone Herald

Thursday, December 5, 2013

YOUR VIEWS

READER PICTURE



BROODING SKY: Denis Conti snapped this stunning Sandgate Sunset from his balcony this autumn



KENT GARDEN of ENGLAND



"Investing in your future"

being run by ordinary members of the public, funds are tight, people have been giving freely, but we can only rely on goodwill so long. Therefore any help we be gratefully received and We are in most need

not throw in a park-and-ride stop at Southern Way, since we don't need unnecessary long-term parking taking up precious space in the harbour area that local

evening events. St Peter's School is only about 700 metres from St Mary's. Why would anyone build a new school so close to existing and in a highly populated

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IN last week's set out the pla Hospital NHS' the reduction i its out-patient : outpatient unit health review' the article incl Spire St Savio Hythe as one affected. Spri Hospital is and, althe service

only drop-in council proposa meeting when my Hawking had bea propose Some having noise devel illne down I a will natu levels to the Establ ridge li

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22 September 2012

Tourism Department, Folkestone
Shepway District Council
Civic Centre
Castle Hill Avenue
Folkestone Kent
CT20 2QY

Dear Sir or Madam

Feedback from a tourist to the area

I am writing as I hope that my feedback might be helpful to your Council if you wish to improve the image of Folkestone as a tourist destination.

My husband and I have just returned from a very enjoyable week's holiday staying in Sandgate, a village justifiably proud of its separate identity. We were able to enjoy our visit even more because of the efforts of the locals to provide information of interest to visitors. We attended an evening meeting where old postcards of the area were available to see, and saw displays of local history at both the library and the headquarters of the Sandgate Society. We also did a Blue Plaque self-guided walk, and a couple of other self-guided walks to explore the village using leaflets compiled by the Society, and another published in the *Sandgate Journal*.

We also spent a fascinating day in Hythe. There we went on an excellent guided walk in the morning organised by the Hythe Civic Society. We also took an electric boat ride on the canal and a different self-guided walk later in the day. There were plenty of free leaflets about the area as well as a small free museum at the library.

But, oh dear, what a disappointing time we had in Folkestone. We did not feel there was much on offer other than the lovely Lower Leas Coastal Park (which we walked through to and from our holiday accommodation), a short ride on the quaint Leas Lift and an excellent cappuccino in Wetherspoon's sympathetically adapted old Baptist Church (*Samuel Peto*). On holiday we like to go on guided walks, or have a leaflet with a self-guided tour of a town with a recommended route to see all the attractions, as well as having written information about the attraction. We tried in vain to find

the Tourist Office which a web search had indicated was in Bouverie Place but despite asking several locals (including a Community Policeman) no one had heard of it. We tried the library for more information on walks but were directed to a tourist office by the harbour. However, we couldn't find it! All we found were two boards with a map of the area. So we then walked to Sandy Beach, but despite still being in September the toilets and other facilities were closed. We then headed back along Marine Parade through a very sad looking concrete expanse and decided to return to Sandgate.

There might be some attractions in the area (for example we were told a couple of days later that there were tours of the Grand Hotel), but how is a tourist to find them if there is no information. We have been left with the impression of a town lacking any civic pride or interest in promoting itself.

I realise that these are difficult economic times, but do hope that you find this is constructive criticism. I have copied to organisations in Sandgate and Hythe so that their residents and organisations get praise for their own considerable efforts to promote their area.

Yours faithfully

Sandra Tapping

c.c. email: Hythe Civic Society

email: Sandgate Journal and for the attention of Sandgate Society

THE STORY OF SANDGATE

First noted as a guard post in the thirteenth century, Sandgate's history really begins with the building of the castle in 1539 on the orders of Henry VIII. It formed part of a chain of defensive forts, together with Walmer, Deal and Sandown, constructed at a time of possible invasion by Spain. It had a keep, a gate-house and three towers connected by galleries, all enclosed within a stout wall. The complete building accounts in the British Museum recount that the workmen came from far and wide and were housed in tents. Stone was taken from the beach and the lately dismantled local priories, 147,000 bricks were used and the total cost was £5,544. It housed a captain and a garrison but was never attacked, save by the sea which has done much damage over the centuries. Queen Elizabeth visited it on a progress through Kent. Close by there was a Watch House which sheltered the excisemen in their age-long battle with the smugglers.

Jacob des Bouveries' estate map of 1697 showed an empty stretch of coast. In 1773 a boat-builder, Fabian Clayton Wilson, took leases of the beachy ground from Lord Radnor and put up some 30 cottages for his workmen, some still standing at the bottom of Sandgate Hill. The business flourished providing 7 28-gun frigates for the American Revolutionary War, launched from the beach, which was covered with timber and boats on the stocks. Other shipwrights followed and the trade continued for nearly 100 years, ending with the rowing boats made by Dick Graves in the old black boathouse (eastern end of the Riviera).

In 1794 during the war with France, the War Department bought 230 acres at Shorne Cliffe which was to become one of the foremost military establishments in the Kingdom. In 1803 there was a very real danger of invasion by Napoleon; 120,000 troops and 2,000 ships were rumoured to be massing in the Channel ports. The Royal Military Canal and the line of Martello towers were built, four on the heights above Sandgate. (The Castle also was adapted to this pattern) Every able bodied man and every boat was listed and evacuation plans made. General Sir John Moore commanded the Light Infantry Brigade at Shorncliffe, training the men in tactics of mobility and speed which were to be so useful in Spain. Stout officers were made to run up the hill to the camp. The General rented Sir John Shaw's house while his

mother and sister were in York Cottage (Castle Road). He went on to his command in Spain and a hero's death at Corunna. There is a memorial to him on the Esplanade. Napoleon's invasion plans were defeated by the Channel and the Camp land returned to pasture.

The village meanwhile was growing as a small and select resort attracting genteel visitors. Purday's Guide of 1823 enlarges on its advantages, the sheltered aspect, salubrious air, hot and cold sea water baths and numerous bathing machines. Thomas Purday started a business in 1799 which became the centre of the village's social life. It included a circulating library, fancy goods, a reading room and musical entertainment in the summer. Here the young John Gough used to read to customers. Son of the village schoolmistress and a former soldier, he later emigrated to America and became a well known temperance orator. He described the village in his autobiography, the daily coaches passing through on their way to London, the annual fair on the green featuring a pig-faced lady, donkey races and merry-go-rounds. There was also a darker side to village life - the smuggling gang with their coded signals at night and two murders on the beach. OWNERS.

William Wilberforce came for several summers and Mrs Siddons enjoyed the sea bathing. Brick villas used as lodging houses were being built and also a resident gentry class emerging. Two substantial mansions were erected - Bellevue by Lord Darnley of Cobham Hall in 1806 and Encombe by Henry Dawkins in 1821 at the other end of the village, both having beautiful gardens planted with choice shrubs. In 1814 the first school started, 1d. per week was charged. At first housed in Chapel Street then in rented rooms by the Castle, a permanent home was provided by charitable funds (later the Artillery Drill Hall, now the Sea Cadets HQ). There were also private schools for young ladies and gentlemen such as Castle Glen, Farleigh House and Conamur, (site of Zarena Court) a progressive girls' school, which educated in the kindergarten Jocelyn Brooke and Sir Hugh Casson.

*other notes. Wilberforce had lamented the lack of a church. In 1816 there was a Methodist chapel (site of White Court) and in 1822 Lord Darnley provided a handsome classical Chapel-of-Ease in his own grounds, designed by George Repton. The Congregational Chapel (1883) is now the Little Theatre (FHODS).

But there was no controlling authority and the village was not a healthy place, judging by the Rammell report produced in 1849 with the co-operation of the inhabitants. There was a small water company in Wilberforce Road, but many houses still used well water. The drains were appalling, many discharging on the beach, and 60 houses had no drains at all. There was no rubbish collection to deal with the 23 dung hills and 16 piggeries. The main road was the responsibility of the Turnpike trust which had a toll gate on Sandgate Hill till 1877, but the side roads were not made up and there was no street lighting. The 1840s were a time of reform and Sandgate was chosen as a model of what could be done. A Local Board of Health with nine members and powers to raise money and enact bylaws was elected. The minutes illustrate the process of reform - a new pure water supply from Honeywood Springs provided, water closets and drains installed and inspected, gas laid on, muddy yards paved and nuisances inspected. The Medical Officer of Health wrote an encouraging book "Sandgate as a Residence for Invalids" though unfortunately a year later the village suffered an outbreak of cholera causing 48 deaths. This was meticulously investigated and the new drains were found to be at fault, badly laid and jointed with clay. CAPL 22
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The Rev. Sebastian Gambier was the first Chairman of the Local Board. Church activities were important; penny readings, a lending library and clothing club. The Chapel had become too small and was replaced by St. Paul's in 1849, designed by S.S. Teulon. The same architect was used by Sir John Bligh who had inherited Bellevue from his father and rebuilt it as Enbrook Lodge, a comfortable country house which he left to his daughter, the Countess of Chichester. James Morris, a wealthy Governor of the Bank of England and noted local philanthropist had bought Encombe. There was a Dispensary for the poor and the Sandgate Working Men's Institute provided opportunities for further education.

In 1855 the Government was recruiting mercenaries to serve in the British German Legion for use in the Crimean War and 3,000 men were stationed at Shorncliffe in newly constructed wooden huts facing a wide parade ground. The villagers' welcome was warm at first, but cooled somewhat with frequent cases of theft, drunkenness and desertion. The men, who had been visited by Queen Victoria

and Prince Albert, were sent to the Crimea a few months before peace was declared. Their places were taken by British troops and the camp has been in use ever since. Later Royal visitors were the Kaiser, Colonel-in-Chief of the royal Dragoons and the Prince of Wales, the future Edward VII. **New buildings were put up in 1891.** The names of the regiments stationed there would be a roll call of the British Army and it **was invaluable in two world wars**, both for training and for troops waiting to embark for the Continent.

CAP
R

32 in 1771
6 now.

The presence of so many men of course affected village life. Wives were billeted and the troops would come down in the evenings to relax in Sandgate's many (pubs and beer-shops) **Rigden's "Bricklayers Arms"** was enlarged to become the popular **"Alhambra Music Hall"** with singers, dancers and performing dogs on the programme. It was later **Maltby's "Mansion of Mirth"** and then Sandgate's only cinema **"The Rex"** which closed in 1943. There was a house of refuge for prostitutes, the girls being mostly laundry workers from Cheriton. There were two places where the men could relax without the temptation of alcohol: **Miss Lucy Papillon's Soldiers' Institute and the John Gough Coffee Tavern, (the Masonic Hall)** opened by John Gough himself in 1879 on a visit from America amid scenes of tumultuous enthusiasm.

brackets

There was a volunteer Fire Brigade at least since 1859. This was reorganised in 1882 with ten men, two officers and a new fire engine, the latter to be kept in the Fire Station, the distinctive building in the high street, erected through the generosity of the **Misses Reilly**, nieces and heirs of James Morris. Young men could also join the Artillery Volunteers, housed in the old school with smart uniforms, regular rifle drill and reviews at Woolwich and Dover. They were commanded by Capt. (later Col.) Fynmore.

In the mid-nineteenth century, Sandgate's population increased from 1,200 to 2,000. It had become a lively shopping centre as the journey into Folkestone in the jolting **horse buses was uncomfortable and slow.** There was now a great range of food shops, military tailors and boot makers, three linen drapers, five milliners, two chemists, a bank and a newspaper. Miss Purday went bankrupt and her stock was sold at auction.

Sandgate should have had its own railway line according to plans made by the South Eastern Railway in the 1870s which hoped to cut ten minutes from the London to Paris journey by building a branch line from Hythe to the harbour. This would have entailed crossing the Broadway (High St.), knocking down the Castle and running trains along the coast via the gardens of Radnor Cliff. The line was made as far as Seabrook but the rest proved too expensive. The Castle was saved and became a museum of the South African War - and an air raid shelter in World War II. The South Eastern made a horse tramway from Hythe to the bottom of Sandgate Hill in 1891 and alighting passengers could take the new water-powered lift to the top of the Leas. In summer there was the "toast rack", an open carriage. In World War I the horses were called up and their places taken by frequently rebellious mules. Neither lift nor tram survived competition from the motor buses.

The old school had become overcrowded and a new building designed by Philip Hardwick, was given by James Morris on land provided by Lord Radnor. The neo-Gothic building, now living accommodation, by David Ocle, still stands opposite St. Paul's Church. After the 1870 Education Act which eventually led to schooling for all children, Sandgate School remained Church of England. For some years it had the best attendance record in England and a notable headmaster in Arnold Ulyett who was keenly interested in scientific education. May Day was celebrated with a may-pole, a May Queen dressed in white, and Friar Tuck. During World War II the school closed and Mr and Mrs Neale, the joint heads, accompanied the children to Wales. After their return the Kent County Council took over financial control. There was little room for new pupils when the golden Valley area was added and the school moved to new buildings in Coolinge Lane. CAP G

In 1894 the Local Board's functions were taken over by the Sandgate Urban District Council. By this time sanitary conditions were good and the death rate low. Folkestone now voted to extend its boundaries and annex Sandgate. The village resisted fiercely, instancing Folkestone's profligacy with a library and artisan's dwellings, but Sandgate itself was in financial trouble because of the cost of keeping up the sea wall, repeatedly damaged by floods. The wall supported the main road but the KCC refused to accept responsibility. Eventually after a long legal battle which went to the House of lords, Sandgate won and could recoup its costs, an important

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decision for other seaside towns. It stayed independent till 1934 when it was merged with the Folkestone Borough Council and is now part of Shepway.

cap
v

In 1891 there was a dramatic rescue of 27 sailors at Seabrook from the wrecked ship the "Benvenue" on its way to Australia, by the volunteer crew of the Sandgate lifeboat, which had been presented by Hannah Rothschild. The wreck was a danger to shipping till Trinity House decided to blow it up in spite of local protests. In 1893 the western end of Sandgate suffered a landslide after an abnormal amount of rain. 72 houses were destroyed or damaged, though there was no loss of life. This was a disaster for the village and loss of trade for the lodging houses. A national appeal raised £9,000 to be spent on repairs and a deep drainage scheme for the unstable area. The vicar, the Rev. Russell Wakefield, did much to support the community at this time.

In 1891 a convalescent home for slum children was opened, the Beach Rocks. The clergyman who started it, the Rev. James Jones was accused of fraud and died a broken man. The Government bought the building (site of Riviera Court) and turned it into a home for soldiers wounded in the South African War.

Sandgate became a centre of literary life when H.G. Wells came in 1898 to recover his health, first to 2 Beach Cottages then to Arnold House, Castle Road. He decided to build himself a home, Spade House, designed by C.F. Voysey and built by William Dunk. He stayed for ten years, became a Borough Magistrate and wrote some of his best books there such as "Kipps" and "Tono Bungay". "The Sea Lady" describes the impact of a mermaid's arrival on a respectable Sandgate family. "Little Wars" sets out the rules of an elaborate war game played all over the house and garden with his two young sons. With his wife Jane, Wells entertained many literary and political figures - Henry James, Shaw, Conrad, the Webbs, Ford Maddox Ford and local MP Sir Edward Sassoon. Other literary residents were Florence Warden and the flamboyant Mrs B.M. Croker, both popular novelists. Jocelyn Brooke (1908-1966) was a member of the Brooke family of local wine merchants. His three volumes of autobiography "The Orchid Trilogy", Proustian in flavour, describes his childhood in Radnor Cliff and botany excursions along the Lower Road, as well as life as an army private.

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The Chichester Hall was opened in 1914 by the famous actor-manager and local resident Sir Squire Bancroft as a community centre. Encombe was rebuilt in Spanish style for Mrs Mabel Philipson, a former Gaiety girl, by Basil Ionides. Enbrook also was pulled down, except for the characteristic Teulon entrance, and rebuilt for a Star and Garter Home to the design of Sir Edwin Cooper in 1924. It later served as a Police Training College. The panelled room above the Fire Station served as the Council Chamber and from 1934 to 1982 it became the public library.

In September 1914 Shorncliffe Camp took in 20,000 recruits destined to go to France. They were billeted all over the area and many had to sleep in tents, coming and going in quick succession. The Beach Rocks became the Bevan Nursing Home with an open air ward for septic wounds. Canadian accents were heard everywhere. 46 young men of Sandgate were killed including Lance/Cpl. Cotter who died in action and received the VC. One bomb fell on the site of the War Memorial in a raid that killed 60 in Folkestone.

World War II was very different. Though evacuees arrived during the deceptive peace of the phoney war, Sandgate became part of Britain's front line of defence when France fell. The beach was mined, there was barbed wire and machine gun posts in the cliffs. This, together with the Home Guard, were to turn back the might of Hitler's troops, so near across the Channel. It was rumoured that the 17th Infantry Division was to invade between Hythe and Sandgate to avoid the gun batteries at the harbour. Some three quarters of the population had left, shops and houses were deserted and the school closed. The Chichester Hall housed the ARP, Enbrook the Fire Service, and the Castle the Home Guard. There was damage from mines along the Esplanade, from bombs (Chichester Rd., Prospect Place, Coastguard Cottages) and shells (Star & Garter Home, school and church). Great relief was felt when the French coast was freed but then the V1s started, many being destroyed in the skies above Sandgate.

Life since the war, as everywhere, is very different. The old family houses are divided and blocks of flats stand along the sea front. The High Street is choked with traffic and the trade of the small shops has gone to the supermarket. Spade House is

an old people's home and Encombe is a vacant site with a housing development in the grounds.

However, Sandgate has great advantages. Antique dealers have occupied the vacant shops with a turnover of several million pounds annually. The insurance and travel firm Saga has purchased Enbrook and a striking new office development, designed by award-winning architects Michael Hopkins and Partners, accommodates a thousand employees bringing new life and new employment. Two conservation areas have been designated to protect the character of the village. The old Fire Station was bought by the Heritage Trust in 1983 and the Sandgate Society with its collection of archives occupies the ground floor. There are many voluntary activities - Scouts, Sea Cadets, the Rowing Club, FHODS and the Townswomen's Guild.

Residents and visitors alike still enjoy Sandgate's unique atmosphere, the mix of buildings old and new, the curve of the bay, the wooded backdrop and the shining sea.

1ST JUNE, 1993

BT
environment
week
May 22-31 1993

MR D SHAW
THE SANDGATE SOCIETY
FLAT C,
4 CHERRY GARDEN AVENUE
FOLKESTONE
KENT
CT19 5LB

Dear Mr Shaw,

At the end of a very successful BT Environment Week '93, we are writing to thank you for your contribution to the campaign. We hope you found it an enjoyable and fulfilling Week.

The magnificent response to the BT Environment Week '93 Awards scheme produced thousands of outstanding projects as the nation took up the challenge to 'Cheer Up Britain'. Indeed, the quality of entries was so high that our regional judges found it difficult to decide amongst them. We were only sorry that EVERY entry could not be a winner.

Whilst the Award winners were notified on 14th May, due to the sheer volume of entries we were unable to write to everyone at that time. However, we would be pleased if you would now accept the enclosed certificate as a 'thank you' to everyone who took part in your Week's activities.

It is as yet too early to talk about plans for next year, but your name has been entered on our database and you will automatically receive early information of any relevant campaigns organized by the Civic Trust.

We wish you the best of luck with future plans to brighten up your local environment.

Yours sincerely,

Jean Ashton



Organized by



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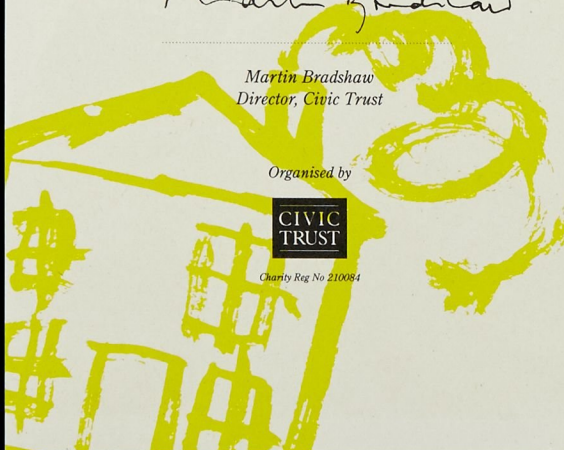
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The Sandgate Society

helped to

Cheer up Britain

Congratulations on your achievement!



Martin Bradshaw

Martin Bradshaw
Director, Civic Trust

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