



# THE WORTHING SOCIETY

President : D.Robert Elleray, ALA, FRSA, FLS

## NEWSLETTER

### AUTUMN/WINTER 2014

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Tony Malone  
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**NEWSLETTER COMPILER:**

Sandra Malone



**Victim of neglect – Pat Baring’s Lamppost**

#### MESSAGE FROM YOUR MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY

Thank you to all our members who have renewed this year. We have enclosed a “reminder” form for those of you who have yet to do so. We look forward to hearing from you.

Thank you once again to Mrs Field, Mr and Mrs Musgrove, Ms Sullivan and M Gorman for their very kind donations. Always appreciated.

As many of you who attend our quarterly meetings know, we are very busy signing you in, taking memberships, selling tickets for trips and of course selling coffees.

We do not always have enough committee members on hand to assist us, so are appealing to you. Would you be willing to help us out at these quarterly meetings? We are hoping to have an “Army of Committee Supporters”, who we can call on to help. We will not expect you to help out at every meeting, just as and when. If you can help, please either email or telephone me : Susan Miller (01903 219884)

Thank you everyone for your continued support.

*Susan Miller*

## **IMPORTANT DIARY NOTE .....**

**At our Quarterly meeting on 23 September 2014 at Worthing Library Lecture Theatre, Paul Holden, Editor of the Worthing Journal, will be speaking about Worthing and the Great War.**

### **A27 ACTION – SOME HOPE**

That old sweet refrain - "Something must be done about the A27". Improvements are being considered for the corridor at Worthing/Arundel/Chichester. Evaluated schemes are being prepared and will be submitted to Government for consideration. There is a limited pot of money available for major road schemes so Worthing will be pitching against others.

I was a member of the A27 Co-ordinating Committee in the late 70's, representing the Worthing Civic Society and, to my surprise, Transport 2000. The final report was typed up at my home before duplicating and binding. No, I do not still have a copy.

Similar options were discussed.

- Dual existing route, purchasing and demolishing homes along the way, with a flyover at the A24 junction. Houses were purchased then sold back, some never quite recovered from the planning blight.
- By-pass north of the town using some of the South Downs National Park, then going through a vastly expensive tunnel north of High Salvington.
- By-pass north of the Downs.

Traffic surveys showed most rush-hour traffic was local and cost benefits would be achieved by relief for HGV and through traffic. Eventually, with the parlous state of the country's finances, nothing was done. Environmental issues carry even more weight now that the South Downs National Park is established.

I am not a habitual betting man but my money is on the old refrain "The destruction is not worth the pain". Nothing will be done for Worthing.

*David Sumner*

**CHAIRMAN**

### **LAST OF SUMMER WINE AND CHEESE**

When members met for the annual 'open house' Wine and Cheese at the Beach House apartment of Barry and Mascha Richards on Sunday, 20 July 2014, it was for the last time. While familiar faces enjoyed the fayre and conversation in the comfortable sitting room or sea view in the warm sunshine on the balcony, Mascha told me she was calling time on the event. She must begin to ease up.

Mascha hosted the Worthing Society Christmas Buffet in 1997, then in 1998 started the 'open house' summer Wine and Cheese. She has also hosted two Wine Tasting evenings and two Cream Teas. These events have raised hundreds of pounds for Society funds, helping us afford blue plaques, talks, campaigns and keeping subscriptions low. Mascha also laid on wonderful lunches when members of the Executive Committee met with representatives of English Heritage.

She gave me a glimpse of silver lining when hinting she may hold a mid-summer Strawberry Cream Tea next year. There is hope.

Meanwhile, Mascha remains a very active Officer and Member of the Executive Committee whose support I value very much. We are ever grateful that Barry and Mascha allow us to hold most of our Committee meetings in their home.

***Thank you Mascha from everyone.***

## LISTING AND CONSERVATION SUB-COMMITTEE REPORT

### (Our 'watchdog' for anything affecting Worthing's Listed/Local Interest Buildings)

Chairman - Tony Malone  
Committee - Natalie Cropper  
- Susan Belton

#### **Buildings At Risk**

For this edition I want to concentrate on one of our major responsibilities – Buildings At Risk. Many, if not all, lie within Conservation Areas.

In the previous Newsletter I named several such Listed or Local Interest buildings: the Gospel Hall; Castle Goring and 83 Marine Parade and described their condition. Those cases still remain 'live' but our regular discussions with the Council's Heritage and Conservation Architect touch on many more.

Just to give a flavour of our current cases, our latest agenda addressed the old Ship Inn, standing empty in South Street and showing a disturbing lack of maintenance; the ornate street lamp in Farncombe Road, famously Listed through the efforts of our founder Pat Baring (see *Chairman's article on these two items*); the historic old Lifeboat house (dating from 1874) on Marine Parade in need of some 'TLC' (see *photo below*); 5 High Street, standing derelict and boarded-up in this 'Eastern Gateway' to Worthing....and so it goes on.



**Victim of Neglect – The Gospel Hall**



**Victim of Neglect – 5 High Street**



**Victim of Neglect – Old Lifeboat House**

Attempting to resolve concerns over such buildings can be a slow and often unrewarding exercise. It is very frustrating that the Council often seem unable to take significant or timely action on many of the cases that we highlight. Various factors come into play – shortage of staff resources within the Council; shortage of funds in the Council's coffers and sometimes Planning legislation that 'lacks teeth' or is difficult to enforce.

Recently however, a slight ray of hope has (perhaps) appeared on the horizon in the form of a project being steered by English Heritage. Pilot studies, in which our Society participated, were undertaken during 2013 in a number of Boroughs across the country, including Worthing.

The aim of this follow-up to the 2013 Pilot project is to recruit and train volunteers to 'survey' the condition of Grade II buildings in their locality using a template and guidance provided by English Heritage. The surveys will be recorded using an online tool aimed at collecting and maintaining nationally-consistent data on Grade II Listed buildings. Local authorities will then be able to use the findings ***"to help those buildings most at risk of being lost"***. This is the point in the proposals when I started to feel uncomfortable (see the words that I have put in bold italics).

At the request of our Executive Committee, I was tasked to draft a letter to English Heritage to advise them that we did not have sufficient manpower to participate in this Phase 2 of the project and that we also had concerns about the possibility of volunteers being confronted by householders wanting to know why they were standing outside their properties, making notes and probably taking photographs of the building. Notwithstanding these concerns we are, of course, still interested in the outcome of this project and so I have asked English Heritage to explain exactly how they will use the data gathered and where the funding will come from for the rescue of the buildings in question. It certainly doesn't seem to exist currently. If and when I receive a response, I will ask our webmaster if he can post the results on our website ( [www.worthingsociety.org.uk](http://www.worthingsociety.org.uk) ).

*Tony Malone*

**Vice Chairman of The Worthing Society  
Chairman of Listing and Conservation Sub Committee**

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## **CHAIRMAN'S ROUND UP.....**

### **Montague Place and Montague Street**

We remain watchful about this still extant planning application to build small shops and flats against the east "Woolworth" wall. It threatens the conservation area and has local law implications. If WSCC Highways withdraw its objection to a stopping up of the highway, developer Gracemount may be able to convert its title to the subsoil to absolute freehold of an area covering about two-thirds of Montague Place. A **land grab** of what has been a public open space. Gracemount would seek to remove the 1794 covenant and easements, if the application was successful at either local level or on appeal. The surface of Montague Place would then be the responsibility of the developer. Our Ted Kennard has prepared a comprehensive document enabling us to seek legal advice.

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## **Gateway from seafront to the town's main shopping area**

The treatment of Montague Place is intertwined with the now WSCC-led scheme to upgrade Montague Street, Montague Place, Bath Place, Portland Road and Liverpool Terrace. The philosophy is to make Montague Place the gateway from the seafront to the town's main shopping area, enhanced with new paving and planting. The Rotunda will go. It will be closed to all traffic except managed delivery vehicles. Design proposals for consultation will be available by the New Year. The whole phased scheme will cost in the region of £5million. The absence of an easy drop-off point and parking will be an issue for some. WSCC need to maintain their interest in the whole of Montague Place and oppose any 'stopping up' order or WSCC's scheme will be scuppered.

## **Teville Gate and Union Place**

These two brownfield sites still blight the town. The seemingly unviable Teville Gate scheme would have catastrophic insoluble traffic implications and there are no satisfactory proposals to cover the old Police Station site in Union Place. Both were under the same developer's banner.

## **Aquarena Site**

The concept design from Roffey has caused an outcry. Apparently, there was little discussion with the planners. Now the South Coast Design Panel, an independent body of professionals, will be called in to discuss proposals. English Heritage has an interest too.

## **25/26 West Parade and 4 Grand Avenue**

Another Roffey site where the initial concept caused a flurry of criticism about mass and height. We wait to see a more detailed plan and to be assured the existing building line will be maintained. No.4 Grand Avenue would be a loss.

## **Rampion Wind Farm**

This scheme for 175 wind turbines off shore has gained Government approval. Construction is due to start in 2016. It will be visible from Worthing.

## **Goring Strategic Gaps**

The valuable green open spaces are under long-term threat from house builders. We will register concern and be ready when the Local Plan comes up for review. Housing need assessments will be carried out, but the effect of ribbon development on the struggling infrastructure is obvious, even now.

## **Mrs Baring's Lamppost**

This listed symbol to the dogged fight Pat Baring put up against needless destruction of Worthing's heritage is in need of repair. We have been nagging the Council for a year. Surely they can find a tradesman to do the job! (*see photo on front page*)

## Commit to Culture

We will be at the “Culture: Here and Now” event at the Pier Pavilion on 27 September 2014, 11am – 2pm. Organised by our beacon of culture Amanda O’Reilly it will help to progress this aspirational idea. Heritage Assets are a cultural offer.

### The Ship Inn - August 2014

#### The Ship Inn

Years of neglect of the front of the old Ship pub in South Street have resulted in a slight injury to a pedestrian recently when the canopy over the entrance crashed onto the pavement. Along with the canopy, the rails and the ship’s lanterns have also gone together with the corner motifs and the water hoppers. It is now plain to see that the corner motifs have rotted away, leaving warning signs that worse was to come. The building is on the Local Interest List and is in a Conservation Area.

**Yet another victim of neglect ....**



#### The Ship Inn

**As it was with canopy, rails and lanterns**

## **STREET FASHIONS**

On return from a sunny week in Copenhagen, my daughter gave me a 150 page brochure from Illums Bolighus, a major lifestyle store with eight branches in Scandinavia selling homeware, clothes and furniture. It reminded me again that good design is not elitist but is for anyone to aspire to and enjoy. Designers were credited ahead of manufacturers which is why they flourish. With her husband, she hired bicycles in a city of bicycles and couldn't help noticing how beautiful and well-dressed most people were. The home street scene was a sad contrast. Such a pity. I believe it's down to education. I could tell a story about this, but no space!

**DAS**

## **DESIGN YOUR UTOPIA**

Play at being an architect with Lego Architectural Studio, all white or transparent blocks. Kit comes with a 266 page booklet to inspire your creativity. Design without fear of building regulations, health and safety and planners. Aspire and inspire.

**DAS**

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## **NEW BLUE PLAQUE TRAIL LEAFLET**

### **Gladys Morgan – Worthing Society Heritage Leaflet No.6**

Gladys Morgan lived in Salisbury Road and was an entertainer from the days of twice-a-night variety. Fame came in middle-age on radio, early TV and the London Palladium. Burgeoning radio work made her decide Worthing was a convenient place to live and the family moved to a flat at 30 Salisbury Road in 1958. It was here that she died aged 85 in 1983.

Daughter, Joan Laurie, was part of the family act and a solo signer and comedienne. Aged 90, she still lives in the lovely flat. Joan has instant recall and tells wonderful stories of times in the entertainment business. Before the Blue Plaque was unveiled in December 2012, Joan was on sparkling form in an interview for Radio Sussex. Asked what her Mother would have thought of the plaque, she quipped "She would be so pleased. In fact, she'd probably move from this flat to the flat opposite so she could look at the plaque every day".

The Society is indebted to Geoff Bowden of the British Music Hall Society for sponsoring the plaque and the leaflet and writing the copy. A report of the unveiling in Newsletter March 2013 is available to view on our website.

## **TO FINISH OFF.....**

### **See Forthcoming Events.....**

Please do spread the word to family and friends about Paul Holden's forthcoming talk on Worthing and the Great War being held on Tuesday, 23 September 2014 in the Library's Lecture Theatre.

Also, tickets are still available for the coach outing to Nonsuch Mansion and Park (a.m.) and Whitehall and Lumley Chapel, Cheam (p.m.) on Tuesday, 7 October 2014.

Please note that Members and their families/friends are always welcome to any of our forthcoming events. Why not encourage them to join the Worthing Society. Increased membership really does give us a stronger voice in local issues.

## **FORTHCOMING EVENTS**

**Tuesday 23rd September at 7:30pm** - **QUARTERLY MEETING** in the Worthing Library Lecture Theatre when Paul Holden will be speaking about - **‘Worthing and the Great War’**.

**Tuesday 7th October** - **COACH OUTING TO Nonsuch Mansion & Park** in the morning and an afternoon visit to **Whitehall and Lumley Chapel, Cheam** (including afternoon tea & cake) **Tickets: £27.50**

**For tickets: Telephone Mascha Richards 01903-214519 or send a cheque made payable to The Worthing Society enclosing an S.A.E. to Mrs. Richards, 2 Beach House, Brighton Road, Worthing, West Sussex BN11 2EJ**

**Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> November at 7:30pm** - **QUARTERLY MEETING** in the Worthing Library Lecture Theatre when Dr. Janet Pennington will be speaking about **‘Wiston House & Estate – A Thousand Years of History’**

At this meeting mince pies and mulled fruit punch or coffee will be served. **Cost £1.00 per person**. Also, a pre-Christmas raffle will take place. Donations of raffle prizes will be very much appreciated on the night.

**Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> December** – **Coach outing** to the Royal Albert Hall for John Rutter’s Christmas Celebration Concert with the RPO. **Fully booked – all tickets sold**

**Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> February 2015 at 7:30pm** - **QUARTERLY MEETING** in the Worthing Library Lecture Theatre when Geoffrey Mead will be speaking about **‘Scattered Squalor and Downland Housing..Inter-war Sussex Housing’**.

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**Please remember that prior to quarterly meetings Committee Members will be available from 7p.m. to talk to members wishing to discuss matters of interest or concern.**

**Visitors / Guests are welcome to attend the lectures – fee £3.00**

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**Don’t forget to look at our website for the latest news**

**[www.worthingsociety.org.uk](http://www.worthingsociety.org.uk)**

**and if you wish to email the Executive Committee, our email address is**

**[worthingsociety@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:worthingsociety@yahoo.co.uk)**