



## HYTHE CIVIC SOCIETY

# NEWSLETTER

No 198 October 2017 - November 2017

### SOCIETY NEWS

#### HCS AUTUMN LUNCH

Saturday 7th. Oct. 2017 12.00 for 12.30pm  
Hythe Bowling Club - £20 per head  
Guest Speaker: Mr John Schoner – “Amusing  
Memories”  
There are a few places available:  
Please phone:  
Mary Hunter: 268423 or Betty Black: 230959  
(Further details, menu, etc in last NL)

#### HCS CHRISTMAS CARDS

The results of the competition to design an HCS Christmas card are in and we are delighted to report that we have two winners!

At the meeting of your committee in September, the entries by Janine Umbers and Jacqui Botwright, respectively, were deemed to be the best: both depict very different, but wonderful, views of Hythe. The cards will cost no more than 50 pence each and will be on sale at all the talks evenings between now and Christmas. They are also available for collection from Sally Chesters – Call: 01303 266118 or email [chestersns1@btinternet.com](mailto:chestersns1@btinternet.com)

#### CHRISTMAS SOCIAL EVENING

Tuesday 12th December @ 7pm  
Hythe Town Hall

#### **Please note change of venue!**

A chance for a relaxed get-together before the hustle and bustle of Christmas  
Mince pies and mulled wine/coffee  
**PLUS**

This year there will be a special seasonal talk  
**GEOFF HUTCHINSON**  
(one of our favourite speakers)  
takes a light hearted look at  
Christmas Folklore and Traditions  
in verse and song.  
There's no charge for this occasion  
Family and friends are welcome  
(especially potential new members)

#### WESTENHANGER CASTLE

From origins lost in the mists of time up to the present day, Westenhanger Castle has many stories to tell.

On Thursday 9th November, 2017 the Hythe Local History Group will present “The Curious History of Westenhanger Castle” an illustrated Presentation depicted through characters of the past associated with the Castle.

To journey back in time, come and spend an evening with the Hythe Local History Group at the Tin Tabernacle on Thursday 9th November 7.00pm for 7.30pm (with bar). Tickets are £3.00 each and will be available at Elysian Treasures, 105A High St., Hythe from 1st October and at the door on the night.

*HLHG would like to thank Mr Graham Forge, of Westenhanger Castle, who provided much of the research for this Presentation. Alethea Lester, Secretary.*

#### **Talks Programme - Corrigendum:**

Please note that our first speaker's name is Christoph Bull, not Christopher as is printed on your programme! We have no idea how this error got through our system but publish here our sincere apology to Christoph.

#### **Otterpool Garden Town**

On 12<sup>th</sup> October a meeting arranged by HCS heard more details of this development from the Leader of Shepway DC, Cllr. David Monk and two SDC Officers. We particularly wanted to understand how this major development – perhaps over 30,000 inhabitants by 2040 – would affect our town. Assurances were given that the detailed planning will ensure that health, education and transport facilities will be in situ from the earliest days, obviating any additional pressure on our already over-stretched resources and that the retail emphasis will compliment rather than compete with Hythe High Street. It is clear however that such a major development “on our doorstep” will have effects which will be hard to predict and your committee will seek further clarification of the situation as the plans are finalised. In the meantime we asked all members who attended to let us know what their opinions are so that we can settle a policy that fully takes these into account.

PLEASE DO SO –

by email to by letter to the Hon Secretary, address on back page, or by email to :  
[enquiries@hythecivicsociety.org](mailto:enquiries@hythecivicsociety.org) .

## Summer Outing

On Monday 24th July, 30 members set off for The Royal Hospital Chelsea. It was a grey, overcast day with rain forecast but the lack of sunshine was not going to dampen anyone's spirits!

We arrived and walked through the grounds to the cafe for lunch and were immediately impressed by the size of the actual site - immaculately kept spacious lawns and gardens and huge military style buildings. The mobility scooters, parked in regimental ranks outside all the main community rooms are obviously a necessity for some of the residents to get to many of the facilities.

After lunch we assembled in The Visitor Centre for a short film about the RHC and to meet our two tour guides who gave us a 30 minute talk about their life as a Chelsea Pensioner. Both were over eighty years old. They gave us the history, the facts and figures, they told us about some of their colleagues and spoke about their own personal story without any notes and standing the whole time! Their stories were truly inspiring (and slightly naughty at times).

They then escorted us on a tour of the Hospital including the beautiful Chapel and magnificent Great Hall, both of which were designed by Sir Christopher Wren, and the RHC Museum. We passed their tennis courts, a 'boules' pitch and a bowling green; they have a cricket team and there was a game of bowls in progress. Needless to say there's a pub called 'The Chelsea Pensioner'. They were a mine of information and there didn't seem to be a question that they couldn't answer.

We were told how the residents live a very full and active life and all hobbies and interests are encouraged. Some are quite talented artists and musicians and one of our guides, Brian Cumming, is a photographer and has his own studio.

The infirmary looks after pensioners when they are ill and they only ever have to leave the RHC if they become a danger to themselves or to other people.

We left feeling rather humbled, but proud of these elderly 'guys and gals' who spent and often risked their lives serving their country. It seemed entirely appropriate that they are able to live their retirement years being so well cared for in the same military atmosphere in which they have spent most of their adult life.

## OUR HYTHE

### Rev'd Desmond Sampson

Many members will be familiar with the friendly face of Desmond as he cycled around the town on various missions of duty, friendship and domestic need as well as with his beautiful walled garden in Albert Road which he regularly opened to the public for charitable ends. Sadly he is leaving Hythe to be nearer his family in Sandwich while his wife, Audrey, now remains in nursing care.

After wartime service in India and Burma, Desmond had no job to go back to but managed to find employment in Lyminge with a firm of Estate Managers, qualifying 'on the job' as FRICS. Later he decided to follow his father's footsteps as a C of E minister and in 1965 Canon Newman offered him the post of second Curate in the Parish of St

Leonard. He and the family moved into the tiny 'School House' adjoining St Leonard's School where they remained for five years until he became vicar of Alkham, which included Capel and Hougham. After seven years there they moved to Wingham, with its lovely Georgian vicarage with a large garden.

As the age of retirement approached, they prudently bought "Grey Walls" and, ear-to-the ground, Vicar Norman Woods heard that news and realised that here was a man who could play a useful role in the Parish. So began the last phase of this life of service: Norman asked Desmond to run St Michael's' (the "Tin Tabernacle") where he trained and practised its loyal and most able Choir. His warm relationships with people and his charity work, especially for Christian Aid, define him, and, right to the end of his time here, Desmond has been Chaplain to the local Branch of RAFA and the RBL. Somehow he has also found time to make his wine, swim 'most days' in the sea, run Garden Safaris and cycle round the town on Pastoral visits - the list goes on.

I am sure members will join us in sending him our very best wishes.

## TOWN AND AROUND

### The Hythe Dementia Forum

This new initiative started on 20th August 2015 when the Hythe Town Council agreed that Hythe should set up a Dementia Aware Forum. The aim was and still is to encourage the people of Hythe to become aware of those living in the community who have dementia and the needs of carers looking after them.

The Forum initially met every few months to gather medical knowledge from the many bodies involved with dementia. They also visited some local Care Homes and other Cinque Port Towns to find out what positive help was available.

The Forum now meets regularly on the third Tuesday of each month at 2pm at the Hythe Town Council Offices in Stade Street and anyone is welcome to attend those meetings.

Working closely with AgeUK Hythe & Lyminge and Hythe Library the Forum organised a Dementia Awareness Day in May 2017 at Oaklands to encourage people to learn more about dementia. The local MP along with the Hythe Mayor and some 180 local people attended. The Fire and Rescue Service trained 22 Dementia Friends on the day and Hythe Fire Station was in attendance. A number of stalls giving information about help that is available were also there to give support and music was played at the Bandstand.

They are currently working with many local businesses to help them become dementia friendly, they have promised full support. This involves enrolling their staff on Dementia Friends sessions, building relations with local Dementia support groups, or making areas in their premises more accessible without incurring any additional cost.

If you or your business would like to get involved in this important initiative please contact them by emailing [dementiaawarehythe@ageukhl.org.uk](mailto:dementiaawarehythe@ageukhl.org.uk) and a member of the group will get back to as soon as possible.

Alternatively, should you need to speak with someone please call Cleo Smith on 01303 269602 or Dudley Shipton on 01303 260291.

They are in the process of setting up their website and this will be going live very soon so please log on to [www.dementiaawarehythe.co.uk](http://www.dementiaawarehythe.co.uk) and find out all about them. You can also find them on Facebook.

## **SOCIAL HISTORY**

### **Another Hythe Warship**

Readers may know of the two Royal Naval vessels named for our town and their contribution to fighting two world wars: HMS Hythe which sank off Gallipoli in 1915 and the ship of the same name which was torpedoed by a German U-boat off Algeria in 1943. What you may not know is that another ship named Hythe not only played a vital part in the war effort in 1940, but survived intact.

Before the war, SS Hythe was a cross-channel cargo steamer, operating peacefully and uneventfully from Folkestone to Boulogne. She continued to do so during the early months of the Second World War, until, in May 1940 Hitler invaded Holland, Belgium and France, isolating Allied forces on the beaches at Dunkirk.

From a military base in the tunnels beneath Dover Castle, Vice-Admiral Bertram Ramsey instigated Operation Dynamo to evacuate as many as possible, and the rescue mission later called 'a miracle' by Winston Churchill started. At 0230 on 31 May, the SS Hythe, supplied only with an army map for inshore navigation, left Dover for Dunkirk, passing on the way a stream of 'little ships' returning crammed with exhausted troops.

By the time the vessel reached Dunkirk, the sea was too rough for the smaller boats to leave the beach and ferry men to her, so she sailed to the East Pier. By 1000 her cargo holds and fore-castle were full with nearly seven hundred men, British, French and Belgian. She had survived the bombs which the enemy rained down on the approach channel to the port, and was now unharmed by a shell burst under her starboard quarter, and managed to return safely to Dover.

Five days later, the vessel steamed to Southampton for further military service, which during the following four years saw her in the Channel Islands, Plymouth, Northern Ireland and Orkney. Finally, in June 1945 she was recalled to resume her service on the Folkestone-Calais route.

When eventually she was scrapped, sometime after 1950, the ship's bell was presented to Hythe Town Council, and is now displayed in the Council Chamber at the Town Hall.

*Source: Cross Channel Ships in World War II, John de S. Winsler, 1997.*

### **Hythe and the Duke of York**

The Grand Old Duke of York and his ten thousand men (almost certainly Prince Frederick, Duke of York and Albany (1763–1827) is meant by the mocking song – after his disastrous Campaign in Holland where there was not even a Hill on which to practise his Mountain Warfare tactics!) had two reasons to remember Hythe. To protect his troops

he had been removed from direct command and made Commander in Chief, and in this capacity he did his most useful work in promoting energetically the construction of the Royal Military Canal and the Martello Towers, cutting through the argument as to 'Which?' by decreeing 'Both!' Had that been all, he would be remembered here with honour, especially as he made several official visits to check on progress. But further research discovered a much more scandalous story. We reported this in NL112 in 2003, a distant time when 'research' entailed rather more effort than a quick visit to Wikipedia.

The Hythe part of this disreputable tale begins in November 1808 when the London Coach arrived at the Swan bearing Colonel Wardle MP and two other gentlemen, with a lady, Mrs Mary Ann Clarke. Wardle had already brought to light a Contracts scandal over the supply of greatcoats to the Army, now he hoped to discover mismanagement in the Contract for building the Martellos. The task of the two gentlemen over the next four days was to survey and measure them, while Wardle interrogated the Lady; with luck he might expose not only Pitt his political enemy, but the Duke himself, for the Lady was none other than the Duke's cast-off mistress – a lady scorned, and seeking revenge, or at least the payment of her promised pension. She told Wardle of the fine establishment the Duke had set up for her, where the talk 'had all been of making baronets and peers, and carving out districts for Generals'. She admitted she had accepted payment from the bribes of aspiring officers and contractors, and had opened their way into the Duke's office; the all-important question was whether he too had benefited?

Just as the Group returned from Hythe, a different case against the Duke was about to be heard: he was accused of using public money to pay off his (five) mistresses. The case was suddenly withdrawn – obviously an establishment stitch-up. So Wardle stepped in, indicted the Duke on a charge of corruption, and the hour of the chief witness had come: Mrs Clarke, witty, imprudent, devastating, took the stand. In the event the Prosecution failed to prove the case against the Duke, but the scandal was too great: he resigned as Commander-in-Chief. Two years later Mrs Clarke turned on Wardle: he had not paid her a promised pension either, but he had paid her hotel bill at the Swan, which looked suspiciously like bribing his chief witness. And he too kept a mistress, and was not the 'clean' hero he had been acclaimed. So in 1811 the Prince Regent exonerated his brother and reappointed him Commander-in-Chief, and he is actually credited with overseeing a much-needed re-organization of the British Army, establishing Sandhurst as a training school for officers, and introducing vital structural, administrative and recruiting reforms.

Fortunately the lady had another money-making resource – her indiscreet and revealing Memoirs. A government in a panic paid her £7,000 and a pension of £400 for life NOT to publish them. It is not difficult in the light of recent Royal disclosures to imagine what our modern media could have done with all this.

*By kind permission of Mike Umbers*

## Events in Hythe

### CIVIC SOCIETY

**Town Walks** - The ever-popular Guided take place from June to September starting at 10.30am outside the Town Hall, Parties of 10 or more may come at any time by arrangement. Please call (01303) 266118 for more details.

**Talks Evenings** - The Society arranges talks at fortnightly intervals on Tuesdays during the months of October to April at Hythe Bay C of E Primary School, Cinque Ports Ave. Doors open 7pm for 7.30pm. The next talks are:

<b>10th October</b>	<b>Christoph Bull MA Hons, MCLIP, ALA</b>	<b>The Good the Bad and the Ugly</b> <i>The amusing story of Kentish Public Libraries</i>
<b>24th October</b>	<b>Dr Ann Kneif</b>	<b>Lola Montez.... A 19th Century Adventuress</b>
<b>14th November</b>	<b>Anne Petrie</b>	<b>Writing the Story of Kent</b>
<b>28th November</b>	<b>Dr Juliette Pattinson</b>	<b>Carve Her Name with Pride</b> <i>Female secret agents in WWII</i>

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### FRIENDS OF ST LEONARD'S CHURCH – CONCERTS:

**Thursday 12 October, 12 noon: Anne Marshall (piano) & Niall O’Riordan (flute)**

**Works by Bach, Frühling, Gaubert [Tickets £6] (followed by light lunches in the church)**

**Saturday 21 October, 7.30pm: Nicholas King – organ recital**

**Bach – Toccata & Fugue in D minor, BWV565; Howells – Psalm Prelude, Set 2 No 2;**

**Reger – Sonata No 2 in D minor, Op 60; Archer – A Festival Toccata; Schumann – Two Fugues on B-A-C-H;**

**Joubert – Passacaglia [Tickets £12]**

**Saturday 28 October, 7.30pm: ‘Monteverdi 450’ – Helen Bailey, Amy McEnroe (sopranos), Fiona Mackay (mezzo-soprano), Ben Thapa (tenor), Jim Clements (baritone), Dale Wills (harpichord) plus string ensemble**

**Staged madrigals, scenes from operas, instrumental and choral pieces [Tickets £12]**

**Saturday 11 November, 7.30pm: Shepway Singers**

**Late Romantic composers: Finzi, Parry, Elgar, Stanford [Tickets £12]**

*Ticket price reductions are offered to **Friends of St Leonard’s Church** and free admission to those under 18.*

*For more information about the **Friends of St Leonard’s Church**, including how to become an Annual or Life Member and to be added to our email distribution list for advance information about concerts throughout the area, visit our website at [www.friendsofstleonardshythe.org.uk](http://www.friendsofstleonardshythe.org.uk), contact Brinley*

*Hughes on 01303 264470 or e-mail [brin.hughes@btinternet.com](mailto:brin.hughes@btinternet.com).*

**HYTHE COMMUNITY CINEMA: meets on the first Tuesday of the month from October to July at The Tin Tabernacle, Portland Road, Hythe CT21 6FL at 7.30pm (doors open at 7pm). Entry £5 on the door, or £3 for Hythe Cinema Card holders. (for more details: [www.hythecommunitycinema.co.uk](http://www.hythecommunitycinema.co.uk) or phone 01303 264914)**

**4TH OCTOBER 2016 - MONSOON WEDDING ( 2002) • India • 114 mins - Comedy drama • Rating: 15**

A stressed father, a bride-to-be with a secret, a smitten event planner, and relatives from around the world create much ado in the preparations for an arranged marriage. Winner of Golden Lion at the Venice Film Festival.

**1ST NOVEMBER 2016 - TAXI TEHRAN (2015) • Iran • 82 mins - Docudrama • Rating: 12**

Acclaimed film director Jafar Panahi, banned from making films by the Iranian government, poses as a taxi driver. Filming from inside his taxi, he makes a touching and at times humorous film about life’s challenges in Iran.

**Preceded by a presentation from film pilot Will Samuelson**

**6TH DECEMBER 2016 WHALE RIDER (2003) • New Zealand 101 mins - Drama • Rating: PG**

A contemporary story of love, rejection and triumph as a young Maori girl fights to fulfil a destiny her grandfather refuses to recognise. Winner of World Cinema award at Sundance Film Festival.

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Annual subscription for **HCS membership** is still only £8 per household.

We are on the Web: Website: [www.hythecivicsociety.org](http://www.hythecivicsociety.org) You can e-mail us at: [enquiries@hythecivicsociety.org](mailto:enquiries@hythecivicsociety.org)

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