



## HYTHE CIVIC SOCIETY

# NEWSLETTER

No 204 October – November 2018

### SOCIETY NEWS

#### CHRISTMAS SOCIAL EVENING – 11<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER

The Sports Pavilion, South Road, Hythe at 7 pm. No charge. Mulled wine/coffee, mince pies and a few carols to get you in the festive spirit. Bring your friends and neighbours – everyone is welcome.

#### DATES FOR YOUR DIARY – AUTUMN TALKS

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 Avenue, Hythe. Doors open at 7 pm for 7.30 pm.

#### **23<sup>rd</sup> October: The Crystal Palace – Andrew Ashton**

The history of the Crystal Palace and the Great Exhibition. The Crystal Palace was, for a while, the largest glass structure in the world. This talk looks at the fascinating, often incredible history of the Palace from its creation to its tragic end.

#### **13th November: The Cathars - Imogen Corregan FRSA**

Who or what were The Cathars? Why did the Church not just treat them as heretics but persecute them? The unhappy tale of an extraordinary sect.

#### **27<sup>th</sup> November: William Wilberforce & the Abolition of Slavery – Mrs Bronwyn Sadler**

How William Wilberforce MP and a group of like minded people set out to abolish slavery in the British Empire... thus leading the world.

#### **Plus**

A short talk on why the *Californian* did not go to the aid of the *Titanic*.

#### CIVIC SOCIETY - 75TH ANNIVERSARY

The Society will celebrate its 75th anniversary on 1st February 2020! The Chairman invites members to suggest ways in which the anniversary can be celebrated – perhaps an exhibition, a concert or a new publication. You are invited to submit your ideas by the end of October. Email [enquiries@hythecivicsociety.org](mailto:enquiries@hythecivicsociety.org).

#### GIFT AID

Gift Aid is a valuable source of income to the Society. If any member would like to check if they have already signed a declaration, please do not hesitate to contact the Treasurer, Alan Joyce.

#### CHRISTMAS CARDS

We are delighted to announce that Jacqui Botwright is the winner in the Christmas Card competition with her design: "I Saw Three Ships".



The cards, with an envelope, are

priced at 60p each. They will be on sale at Talk Evenings between the middle of October and Christmas and are also available from Sally Chesters – 01303 266118.

#### OUR HYTHE - HYTHE REMEMBERS

This November will mark the centenary of the Armistice which ended the slaughter of the First World War. Hythe Local History Group has been researching what happened in the town during the years 1914 to 1918 and the lives of the men and women of Hythe and Saltwood who died as a result of the war.

Everyone will know the civic memorials in The Grove at Hythe and on Saltwood Village Green but there are others scattered about, ten in all. We have researched the men recorded on these, and also those not commemorated, and several women as well. In all there are over two hundred. A biography of each of these has been prepared, many with photographs, and we will be asking the shops in Hythe and Saltwood to display these in their windows in the week before 11th November. Each will be accompanied by a poppy made by a local schoolchild.

We will also be holding an exhibition in Hythe Library, with maps of Hythe and Saltwood to show where each of the fallen lived. There will be information about how the war affected the town with, for example, rationing, blackout regulations, and military tribunals for the men who didn't think they should be called up. We will have displays about the Hythe Heroes Fund, the hospitals at Sandgate, Beachborough and Port Lympne, the Canadian soldiers and Belgian refugees and we have some extracts from letters sent home by soldiers. We will also look at how women's roles changed during the war.

If you have any family photos or stories from the Great War which you would be happy to share, we would love to hear from you. Just contact [hythehistory@outlook.com](mailto:hythehistory@outlook.com).

## **PLANNING MATTERS**

### **PRINCES PARADE UPDATE**

The decision to approve the Planning Application by a 5 to 4 majority vote was taken by FHDC Planning & Licensing Committee on 10<sup>th</sup> August 2018. The decision is subject to agreement of the treatment of surface water. The original proposal was to dispose of the surface water directly into the sea. A subsequent amendment was made to dispose of the surface water into the Royal Military Canal to which the Environment Agency objected. Discussions with the Environment Agency are ongoing so no formal decision had been issued by mid-September.

The Society's Executive Committee was disappointed by the decision made and has asked the Secretary of State to "call in" the Application to enable an objective and independent decision to be made. Your Committee notes that the legality of the decision making process is likely to be challenged by the Save Princes Parade Group and if individual Society members share that view, please refer to [www.saveprincesparade.org](http://www.saveprincesparade.org) which will give an update on the likelihood of a successful judicial review and how it will be funded.

### **MACKESON'S BREWERY - CONTINUED**

Despite peace at last (perhaps, indeed, because of it) trade still languished and Henry wrote in 1825: "... unfortunately at the beginning of the war we were induced from the number of troops and barracks to expend on our brewery many thousands more than we sho'd have done co'd we have foreseen the result of the peace...". Trade depression seems to have been general and in 1829 Clare Mackeson again wrote to Henry: "You do not stand alone in your opinion and fear of the times. Mr Kingsford (her brother-in-law) cannot help complaining that business at present requires the greatest judgement to know how to act...". Did she have any inkling of the crash to come? Only five months later Kingsford went bankrupt. Since she had lent him her money, she lost all her property. As for Henry, he kept his head above water – but only just.

The same year he made an investigation of his affairs and wrote to his nephew John: "I could but shudder at the result". The immediate cause of his fears was the advertised sale of The Bell. £900 had been offered for it but he thought that as a private building, it was not worth more than £300 or £350. "Nevertheless we ought perhaps to purchase it almost at any price for if London Porter should be sold we shall have a devil of a clamour with our publicans here and if Ash of Canterbury should buy it, it might possibly injure us quite as much. Marsh the chemist, to add to our troubles, has also had down some barrels of London Porter with the intention of selling it in small casks. I do not think he will do himself much good – at the same time he will do us some injury. In addition to this I dread every day to hear of a retail shop starting. These things combined make me at times think more seriously of selling our concern...".

Part of the trouble seems that after his brother's death, Henry valued things higher than he should have done and the property had gradually decreased since then. Even though he had paid off £5,000 of the brewery's encumbrances, there

would (he declared) be thousands less, if the concern were to be sold the next day, than the amount he had calculated eight years previously. "My struggles have" he concludes "at times been most severe and I feel that whilst I live they will never cease."

Other causes of Henry's situation were possibly that William perhaps never really pulled his weight in the business. Over and above this, however, history does show that a slump followed the end of the war against Napoleon. Thirdly, there seems to have been the competition of porter and of other breweries and retail outlets. Porter must have gained favour since in 1803 Henry had told Oakley his customers did not like it.

In October 1829, Henry's letters to his nephew John were even more despairing: "You may well dread to make enquiries as to the state of our business, which has been gradually getting worse and worse and God only knows to what we shall at last be reduced. I strive hard against it but 'tis ever uppermost in my thoughts and I wish I may not at last ... die broken hearted".

Judging from Peter Fisher's letter, however, Hythe ale was still in favour with an admiral of his acquaintance stationed at Deal and with Sir Edward Paget, Governor of the Royal Military College, Sandhurst. For the admiral, Fisher asked for five barrels for a large party. Sir Edward also wanted five barrels but as they were apparently to be shipped to a warm climate, Fisher asked that they should have an extra quantity of hops. He suggested sending them to Deal by water.

*To be continued ...*

### **HYTHE IN BLOOM**

We are proud and excited to announce that Hythe in Bloom won a Silver-Gilt Award.

Hythe in Bloom operates under the auspices of Hythe Civic Society, is run by volunteers and is responsible for the provision of floral displays in Prospect Road and High Street, Hythe.

This year, Hythe in Bloom entered the "Parishes in Bloom" category of South & South East in Bloom, the largest horticultural campaign in the region involving hundreds of communities each year. Participating communities create lasting improvements to their local environment for the benefit of those who live, work and visit there. "Parishes in Bloom" is a free to enter non-competitive category and is intended to be a "taster" or "feeder" into the main categories of South & South East in Bloom/Britain in Bloom.

This year is the first time for many years that Hythe has entered any category of the competition. The assessor visited Hythe in June to tour the town and to rate its achievement in the following areas: Community Involvement, Environmental Responsibility and Gardening/Horticulture/Conservation Achievement.

Very many thanks to the organisers and volunteers for their efforts. Congratulations to all involved!

## **THE SUMMER OUTING TO BLETCHLEY PARK**

*by Betty Black*



On 25<sup>th</sup> July, 47 Civic Society members and friends visited Bletchley Park, home of the WWII code breakers.

In 1938 the Government bought part of the Bletchley estate to house their secret code breaking and intelligence Cypher School and the work centred on just a small group of experts. As the importance of their work increased, more and more staff were recruited until in 1945 the workforce numbered around 10,000 and women outnumbered men by about 3 to 1.

All staff were sworn to secrecy about Bletchley and even when the story began to emerge in the 1970s many still remained silent about the part they had played there. Some never even discussed it with their husbands or wives.

We had all known something about the Enigma machine but to have the complexity of the challenges faced by the code breakers explained to us was mind blowing. The Enigma used the settings of rotors to scramble messages into unintelligible text with millions of combinations ... and the settings were changed at midnight! Having cracked the code for the day, the messages were invariably in a foreign language so an army of linguists was an essential part of the staff.

Bletchley houses the world's largest collection of Enigma machines and it's impossible to think of Bletchley without remembering the brilliant and tragic story of Alan Turing. It was his invention of the Bombe machine that made it possible to crack the codes on a daily basis and there is a beautiful sculpture of him in the Enigma Museum entirely made of horizontal layers of slate.

We had all known what Bletchley Park had been but to actually be there and soak up the history and atmosphere had been something really special. Our tickets are valid for a year and I know that some people are planning to make a return visit.



### **A LOCAL REMEMBERS**

In August another memento of war time Hythe surfaced and vanished, unrecognised and unacknowledged. Long-time HSC member, Joy Robertson, who lives in "Haytor" tells the story (with some characteristic glee at the developer's discomfiture).

During the war, Hythe seafront was defended against invasion with barbed wire, tank obstacles and mines at sea, the occupants of the adjacent houses were evacuated and troops took over their homes as guard posts, look-outs and accommodation. Two bungalows at the sea end of St Leonards Road, "Haytor" on the east side and "Lyndhurst" on the west, were commandeered by the Army for use as staging hospitals for sick and walking wounded service personnel. Both had to be provided with air raid shelters. This was no problem for "Haytor" which boasted (and still boasts) a large robust cellar, built deep into the shingle. "Lyndhurst" however had no cellar so a very large shelter of reinforced concrete was built in its garden. We have no record of either shelter being used for patients although presumably off duty troops also moved into them during air raids.

When hostilities ended, the owners of the bungalows returned. "Lyndhurst" was extended upwards and the added storey was timbered in Tudor style but the owner decided not to go to the expense and disruption of demolishing the ugly shelter in his garden. Instead, he disguised it by creating a beautifully planted rockery over it with a flight of stone steps to the top, flanked at the bottom by a pair of elegant stone dogs and crowned by a pretty summer house and pseudo dovecote, also timbered to match the parent house. Tourists have admired and photographed the result ever since, convinced that this charming relic must be of significant historic interest!

Then a few years ago "Lyndhurst" became vacant and was sold to a developer. In the modern uncaring way, the garden was divided into two – one part containing the house which (for once, surprisingly) was not demolished and replaced with flats. It remains a decorative building, if somewhat reduced in its setting. The other part was fenced off and approved as a site for a second property – "rockery" included. Very few locals knew of the air raid shelter below and it would appear that the developer was also blissfully ignorant since the first JCB which arrived to clear the site was quite inadequate for the demolition of a concrete mini hospital and had to be replaced by a vastly larger machine and gigantic concrete crusher.

A pile of mangled concrete now sits on the site awaiting transportation (more heavy lorries) and soon a modern residence will be raised. Sadly, five slender conifers also had to be felled to clear the site. They were burned in situ, engulfing the entire neighbourhood in thick smoke for two days – the funeral pyre of yet another unsung relic of "Frontline Hythe".

## FRIENDS OF ST LEONARD'S CHURCH CONCERTS

**Sunday, 14th October at 3.00pm: Icknield Trio – Anna Le Hair (piano), Arwen Newband (violin), Sarah Boxall (cello)** [Tickets £12]  
Haydn – *Piano Trio in C major, Hob XV:27*; Rebecca Clarke – *Piano Trio*; Mendelssohn – *Piano Trio No 1 in D minor, Op 49*.

**Sunday, 28th October at 3.00pm: Oliver Nelson (violin) & Vasilis Rakitzis (piano)** [Tickets £12]  
Constantinidis – *Petite Suite*; Debussy – *Sonata for Violin and Piano in G minor*; Grieg – *Sonata for Violin and Piano No 3 in C minor*.

**Saturday, 3rd November at 7.30pm: Shepway Singers – “The Golden Age of Polyphony”** [Tickets £12]  
Byrd – *Mass for four voices*; Victoria – *Missa O quam gloriosum*; plus other works by Byrd, Victoria, Tallis and Palestrina.

**Saturday, 10th November at 6.00pm:** [Tickets £12]  
**“Keep the Home Fires Burning: A Celebration of Song marking the Centenary of the End of The Great War”**  
Helen Bailey (soprano), Jim Clements (baritone), Maite Aguirre (piano).

**Saturday, 15th December at 7.30pm:** The last concert to be held in St Leonard's Church this year will be the traditional **“Carols for All”** featuring the Shepway Singers, Church Choirs and Hythe Girls Choir – followed by a retiring collection, mince pies and mulled wine.

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 7 pm). For more details contact [www.hythecommunitycinema.co.uk](http://www.hythecommunitycinema.co.uk) or phone 01303 264914.

## TIES

Hythe Town ties are now available from the Town Council at its office at Oaklands for £15 each. The tie is made from navy blue silk with a motif of the boat from the Town Crest. This is a tie for all Hythe residents – not just Town Councillors!

## SUBSCRIPTIONS

The annual subscription for HCS membership is only £10 per household. Applications to join can be made via our website: [www.hythecivicsociety.org](http://www.hythecivicsociety.org) where there are many interesting topics and links to other organisations and activities in the neighbourhood. You can e-mail us at [enquiries@hythecivicsociety.org](mailto:enquiries@hythecivicsociety.org).

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