

For a better Broadstairs



JUNE 2023

BROADSTAIRS SOCIETY WAS FORMED IN 1964 to do everything possible to keep the look and feel of the Broadstairs we know and love. Join us and help keep that heritage intact for generations to come.

DID YOU KNOW ?

There are 130 listed buildings in Broadstairs and St Peter's. English Heritage has a website that contains all the listed buildings. However, should you look at them not many have photographs.

So, a group of Broadstairs Society members got together and are photographing all the listed buildings we have here with the justifications for their listing. The finished work will be published on the Broadstairs and St. Peter's Heritage Foundation website (currently under construction) for everyone to see and copies sent to the District and Town Council's and the English Heritage. This is just one of our projects to help document and preserve our heritage

For six weeks in August and September 1859 Charles Dickens' friend and literary collaborator Wilkie Collins rented a house in Broadstairs.

It was there, in Church Hill Cottage, that he penned the opening chapters of *The Woman in White*, one of the first Victorian sensation novels.

But it wasn't only the plot that contained a mystery. There was another riddle surrounding the book that had confounded Collins' devotees for generations: where exactly was Church Hill Cottage? To all appearances it had disappeared.

But after years of research – digging through old census returns, maps and house deeds and poring over the correspondence between Collins and Dickens – Broadstairs journalist Ken Nickoll has rediscovered the house. It lies, half-hidden from view, down a trackway at the bottom of The Vale.

Last month [May] a blue plaque was unveiled by the current owner Pauline Landen who had no idea her home, now called Woodside Cottage, was of such literary importance.

A spokesman for the Wilkie Collins Society said: "The discovery is a most important one in the history not just of Wilkie Collins but of 19th-century literary scholarship. The identification of the building where its opening chapters were written is of the greatest importance."

(Article, photos by Ken Nickoll)

A NEW BLUE PLAQUE



Competition time -Win a bottle of fizz.

How many blue plaques in Broadstairs?

First person to send the correct answer via Facebook (The Broadstairs Society) wins

HOT POTATO PLANNING

Normally this section will include the planning applications that effect us as a community. Another role Broadstairs Society undertakes is reviewing all planning applications to ensure Broadstairs heritage is considered and that they fit with the neighbourhood plan.

But as there's recently been a local council election we've decided to include those results, since these are the people now elected to help us work towards a better Broadstairs on all fronts including planning!

The results of the local elections on 5th May 2023

Beacon Ward

Joanne Bright	Labour Party	751	33%	Elected
Colin Kemp	Labour Party	519	23%	Elected
Charlie James Leys	Conservative Party	389	17%	Elected

St Peter's Ward

Mike Garner	Green Party	1140	24%	Elected
Kevin Pressland	Green Party	952	20%	Elected
James Hobson	Labour Party	717	15%	Elected

Kingsgate Ward

Alan Munns	Independent	373	51%	Elected
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Bradstow Ward

The three candidates were returned uncontested

Jill Bayford Conservative Party
 Steve Roberts Green Party
 George Rusiecki Conservative Party

Viking Ward

Roopa Farooki	Labour Party	967	13%	Elected
Kristian Bright	Labour Party	922	13%	Elected
Elvira Orhan	Labour Party	862	12%	Elected
John Nichols	Conservative Party	814	11%	Elected

So, there are six Labour Party members, 4 Conservative Party members, 3 Green Party members and one Independent member. Town Council life will most certainly change as the Labour Party have the most members. Let's wait and see how much of a change there will be.

BEST OF BROADSTAIRS

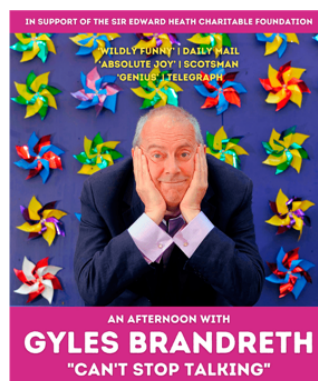
Enjoy the summer season, fireworks and more

Catch a performance or two at Sarah Thorne

First Fireworks display is July 19th -
 Hyperactive play @ the bandstand 8p. The followings displays feature music from The Dial on Wednesday July 26th and Top Guns on Wednesday August 2nd (Broadstairs Water Gala Day).

And then get your dancing clogs and tankards ready for Folk Week 11-18 August

The last fireworks display is 23rd August with the ever-popular Ozzie and the Ugliers.



SATURDAY 8 JULY 2023 | 3PM | £25
SARAH THORNE THEATRE
 FORDOUN ROAD, BROADSTAIRS, CT10 2BN
 0333 666 4466 | WWW.SARATHORNETHEATRE.CO.UK

Sarah Thorne Theatre
 Saturday 22nd July at 7:30pm
 Ticket Prices: £17 (in advance), £19 (on the door)
 Tickets available from TicketSource 0333 666 4466
 or via our website www.sarathornetheatre.co.uk (using the code)
 Doors open 7:00pm * Bar and refreshments available * www.sarathornetheatre.co.uk



A TRIP DOWN MEMORY LANE

BROADSTAIRS DURING CORONATION YEAR , not this years' but the previous one !

(Article by by Caitlin Davies)

'No sands so fair, No skies so blue, No air so free'. So began the 1953 Official Guide to Broadstairs, an 86-page brochure that extolled the virtues of the post-war British seaside in the year of Queen Elizabeth II's Coronation

Broadstairs offered everything for the discerning visitor the 1950s, in the days before foreign trips became more accessible and when most families holidayed at home. The town had delightful bays, invigorating waters, sport, entertainment, and a wide range of accommodation. For seekers of 'healthy happy holidays', Broadstairs was the place to be.

The coast provided excellent opportunities for sea bathing, 'which is so beneficial and produces such tonic effects'. Visitors could hire bathing tents, beach chalets, and deck chairs - Viking Bay alone had 2650 deck chairs and on warm weekends they were all in use.

The air in Broadstairs was 'comparable with the finest in the country', according to the official guide, and ideal for convalescence, particularly those suffering from anaemia, debility, and 'most chest complaints'. The air was so fine that members of Arsenal and Chelsea football clubs were frequent visitors 'for special training', and Broadstairs would reportedly become Arsenal's 'permanent holiday resort'.

Two years after the guide was produced, 'sunny Broadstairs' featured in a national newsreel of the most popular holiday destinations, alongside Brighton and Bournemouth. A mobile information centre then set off for a 2-week tour of 12 southern towns to advertise its coastal delights.

But June 1953 had started badly; London was filled with coronation visitors and seaside resorts were suffering. By the end of the month however, there were an estimated 10,000 visitors to Broadstairs - a huge number considering the population was only around 15,000. 'They poured, jabbering, down the High Street,' reported the *Daily Mirror*, 'like a jet from a fire hose.'

Most holiday makers came by train, around a 2-hour journey from Victoria or Cannon Street Station, while the Kentish Belle did daily round trips during the summer. Others came by motor coach from Victoria, or took an Eagle steamer from the Tower of London Pier to Margate and then caught a bus.

Broadstairs was sold as a family destination and 'the children's delight', from clean golden sands, to Punch and Judy shows, sandcastle competitions, donkey rides, and a slide and see saw in the memorial Recreation Ground. Families could rent prams and pushchairs from the Broadstairs Nursery Store, 'all disinfected before re-issue'.

For the adventurous, rowing and motorboats could be hired from the pier – where a stall served 400 teas a day. The town hosted an annual Sailing Regatta, Fishing Festival, and Water Sport, as well as a Horse Show and Gymkhana, Bowls Tournament, ‘Gold Tournament’, and the yearly Dickens Festival. Visitors could also enjoy golf, tennis, and horse riding.

Holidaymakers sought entertainment at The Pavilion, which had an orchestra during the summer, sampled fresh lobster sandwiches and jugs of Kentish ale at the Tartar Frigate Inn bar, and danced the night away at the Grand Ballroom on Westcliff Road.

When it came to accommodation, visitors to Broadstairs were spoilt for choice, with 105 hotels and guest houses, ranging from the Links Hotel in North Foreland and the ‘first class’ Royal Albion to more ‘homely’ boarding houses. Family hotels started at around £6 a week, while guest houses that offered ‘a gay and friendly atmosphere’ charged £4 a week. A further 53 establishments offered bed and breakfast.

Many advertised separate tables in the dining room, hot and cold running water in bedrooms, as well as gas or electric fires, and sprung mattresses. Residents at the Willmot Hotel overlooking Viking Bay could enjoy the hotel’s ‘steak bar’, while the Bel Air guest house on Dumpton Park Drive promised ‘No Irksome Restrictions’. Another offered ‘sitting in’ for children during the evenings, and one boasted of its continental cuisine.

The British bucket-and-spade brigade were delighted, the summer of 1953 was a resounding success. ‘Everything possible will be done to make your visit a happy one’, promised the official guide, ‘Truly, this Broadstairs is a healthy place!’

‘GOD SAVE THE KING’



GET INVOLVED

Our next meeting is 12th September, Pierremont Hall, Broadstairs @ 7.30pm, all are welcome

We will be nominating a building/community project for a Civic Award, we need your help to choose who deserves it. NOMINEES announced in September Newsletter, VOTES will be on Facebook, and our new website (currently being updated – new release in August)



The Broadstairs Society

www.broadstairsociety.org.uk