

Issue 4

July 2010

The first Historic Ryde Society Antique and Collectors' Fair took place on Sunday, July 4, 2010, at the Masonic Hall, John Street. This was also the first time the Masonic Hall had been opened to the public, which in itself may have attracted a few interested people, as Wayne was kind enough to give of his time to show people around the building. The photographs on the stairs and the beautiful stained glass windows were much admired! Although we had had a couple of late cancellations, nine stall-holders set up in the main hall, and all said how pleased they had been with their day. All expressed an interest in repeating the experience, and it is now hoped that another similar event may be planned for later in the year. This event is also in the diary for the Royal Victorian Ryde weekend, next July.



Terry and Erica man the Sales table at the bottom of the stairs. Some of the photographs can be seen on the wall at the rear.

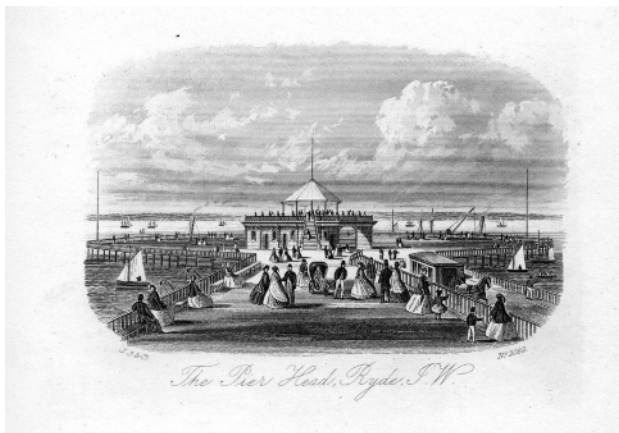
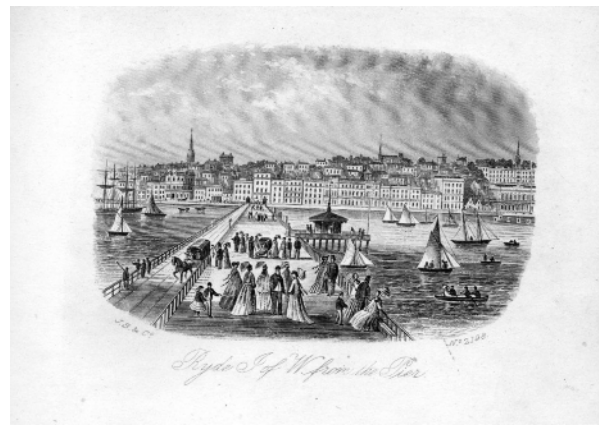
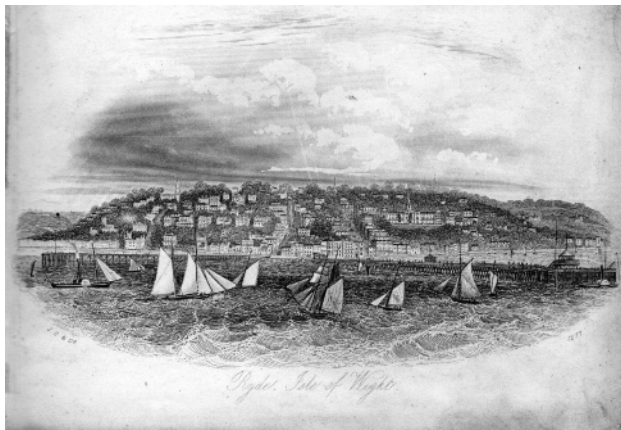


These windows were originally in the Congregational Church on the corner of George Street and Melville Street, on the site currently occupied by Richwoods Furniture Store. By the end of the day, nearly 200 people had come through the door! The takings for the day included card and book sales, raffle and the teas, coffees and home-made cakes supplied by Theresa and Erica. We would like to thank Theresa and Caroline for all their hard work in the kitchen. Erica's apple muffins even had a mention on Isle of Wight Radio!

All in all, we raised £506.06, which is a fantastic total for our first major event! There are some expenses to come out of this, but we will still have nearly £450 to add to the funds. We gained two new members on the day, and were delighted to be able to put a face to the name of several others, as people came and introduced themselves.

We had a new item to add to the Sales Table on Sunday - A Brief History of the Royal Victoria Arcade. We had a run of 100 printed, and are delighted to announce that 25 copies sold on the first day! A reprint is definitely in the offing! They sell for £3.50 per copy, and are available at Ryde Stamp Shop, Splash, or Collectors' Haven, in the arcade. We even managed to sell three copies at Ryde Town Council's meeting on Monday evening! You can also order them from the website. Second-class postage is 51p. The notelets are also still selling well. If you haven't seen them, they are postcard sized, and sell for £2.99 for a pack of six different views of 1860s Ryde. These are for sale at the above mentioned outlets. The images we have used for the notelets appear on the next page. They have come from a small book of fifty engravings of the Isle of Wight, found on the internet, and are dated from around the 1860s. They are printed on thick card and blank inside. Each pack contains all six views.

These are the images we have used for the notelets, which retail at £2.99 for a pack of six.

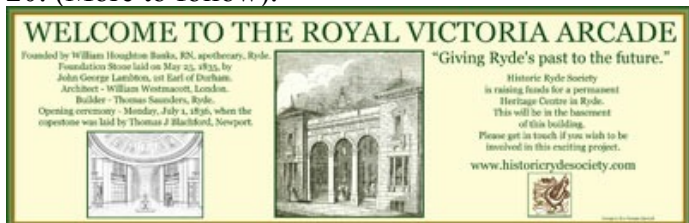


If you would like to order some of these cards, they are also available singly for 70p. In due course, the Shop page on the website will be live. For those of you who would like to order some of these cards, we do have postage details, and will be able to send them to you if you leave details on the Contact page. The book is also available, and will be posted second-class at a cost of 51 pence, so £4.01 for the book, all inclusive. Lynne has also given us some of the postcards she drew of the front of the Royal Victoria Arcade, which retail for 30p each.

On the evening of Monday, July 5, Tony and Diana went to Ryde Town Council's meeting, held in Garfield Road Methodist Church Hall. After the grant of £1000 earlier in the year, we needed to go and report to the Council and tell them how we had used the money. We were able to tell them that the money had been very useful in allowing us to print the cards and the books and pay for the architect to go into the basement and measure up. We also had Jeff's artistic impressions of the basement space available to pass around.

Tony explained that Mr Cartwright, the owner of the Arcade, has given us a very generous offer re rates and rental, which will not begin until the New Year. This means that we have a few months to work in the basement to get it up to a certain standard before we begin to pay rent. Unfortunately, the current renovations are behind schedule, and there is no guarantee when we will have access to the space.

We informed the Council that we are working closely with Lee Byrne, I W Heritage Officer, and English Heritage, who have asked us to be involved with the signage in the Arcade. Claire has designed a new banner to go above the gate at the front of the building, and we need to get quotes for the side panels. These will be of a similar design to the banner, using the same green, cream and gold colours, so that the frontage of the Arcade will present a corporate image. The picture below is the design for the banner above the gate. Once the centre in the basement is open, the right-hand side of the banner will change to possibly show opening times, entrance charges, etc. Lee and English Heritage are also closely involved with the plans to reinstate, or perhaps introduce for the first time, images in the panels in the ceiling of the rotunda area. This is a very exciting project, which we hope will be finished around the end of August. We hope the 12 artists will come and show us their work so far at the Members' Meeting on July 20. (More to follow).



The result of the Council meeting was a grant of £2000 to help with the arrangements for the Royal Victorian Ryde weekend, from July 1-3, 2011. This is wonderful news, as it means we can go ahead and make initial arrangements for the weekend! We will continue to hold fundraising events for the weekend as well as the basement plans, but this is a great start.

Our next meeting will be held on Tuesday, July 20, at 7pm, in the Masonic Hall, in John Street. As already mentioned, all 12 artists will be invited to attend this meeting to show what they have achieved so far. Some will be much further ahead with plans than others, and some may not have begun, but we hope to keep the momentum going and have these ready for Lee Byrne and English Heritage to see by the end of August. The plan is to scan the images and print them on vinyl. They will be given a border which will be added on the computer. They will then be stuck on to the panels on the ceiling, which means they could be easily removed if necessary.



The above image shows the months of May to September on the ceiling from an engraving owned by Roy Brinton, believed to date from the earliest time of the building - 1836 - 1840. As we were permitted to scan the image at high resolution, it is possible to see a lion in the middle panel, which is obviously Leo. The September panel, on the far right, shows a seated lady picking the fruits of the season.

The instalment of the images in the rotunda ceiling will bring another fundraising and publicity opportunity to the fore, so please put on your thinking caps and see whether you can suggest a celebrity we might be able to invite for the Grand Unveiling Ceremony.

The other very important part of the July meeting is that all Members will be given a full presentation of the plans for the July weekend next year. This will be a huge opportunity to promote Ryde to the world, as on the Saturday preceding, the Opening Ceremony of the World Island Games will be held in Ryde. The Isle of Wight Carnival Association has been awarded a grant of £94099 to bring the procession through Ryde, and it is estimated between 25000 and 30000 spectators will line the streets. It is vital that Ryde looks its best, as there will be athletes from 24 islands around the world, with associated media. The following weekend we plan numerous events around the town, which will need careful coordination and planning, and this is where we hope all members who have expressed an interest in being active in the group, will come forward. We will have a list of available tasks for people who would like to help.

There will also be opportunities for people to become involved with the plans for the basement and fundraising. Although we have been given a grant of £2000 by Ryde Town Council to assist with the weekend event, this will not be enough to cover the whole weekend, so fundraising will be an ongoing process. Isle of Wight Council, in association with Heritage Lottery will grant £3000 towards renovations in the basement, although to gain this, we also need to commit £1000 to the work. We already have this money in the bank, and, with more people joining all the time, we hope to build on this with events on a regular basis.

At the beginning of July, we had 11 Corporate Members, 14 Family Members and 30 Individual Members. If we assume that Corporate and Family Members comprise at least two people, this means we already have over 80 people from Ryde and beyond with an interest in a heritage centre for the town. We are also greatly encouraged by the fact that the Membership is drawn from a different section of the community than that of other heritage groups in Ryde. This means that if all groups were to work together for the common good of the town, we would form a substantial number. It is a hope that we will be able to form some kind of affiliation or close working partnership with other groups locally, and we would like to involve as many local groups as possible in the plans for next July. If you know of anyone who is involved with any local group which may have an interest, please invite them along to the meeting on the 20th, in the Masonic Hall, in order that they can learn what we hope to achieve.

We were able to tell Ryde Town Council that it is now a year since we had our first meeting about the celebrations for the 175th anniversary of the opening of the Royal Victoria Arcade. We have been keeping an account of volunteer hours committed to the project, and at the end of June, this totalled approximately 1500 hours. This is mainly contributed by the committee, but we also have the artists putting in a lot of hours and adding to the total. There are also other Members, such as Jerry and Magie, who are contributing freely of their time. We are very grateful for everyone's hard work and delighted to have such a committed team working with us. It is amazing to consider how far we have come in our first year, and everyone should be very pleased with the progress.

We are constantly trying to find new ways of raising funds for the project, and, once the images for the rotunda ceiling are completed, they will be used to produce new merchandise which will be available to buy. As they represent the twelve months of the year, they will readily open up several opportunities.



This is a detail of the early engraving, showing the months of July and August.



We are inviting local businesses to sponsor the panels in the rotunda ceiling, and already five businesses have agreed to donate the suggested £50. If you know of anyone else who may be interested in doing this, please get in touch. On the boards around the fountain area in the rotunda there will be information about each month, a brief biography of the artist and the name of the sponsors.

This is the second window from the Masonic Hall which once graced the Congregational Church on the corner of George Street and Melville Street.

EVENTS FOR THE DIARY

Tuesday July 20 - Masonic Hall 7pm

Full Members' Meeting with an open invitation to parties from other interested groups around the town, who may wish to be involved with the plans to promote Ryde over the weekend of Friday to Sunday, July 1 - 3, 2011.

(We plan to promote this weekend in conjunction with Havenstreet Steam Railway's 1940s weekend, and hope to link the two venues with the Southern Vectis vintage open-top bus.)

AUGUST - It is hoped that the images for the rotunda ceiling will be approved and ready to be installed at the end of August. You will all be kept informed.

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER - An Antique and Collectors' Fair is planned. Date to be confirmed.