

ARCADIA

Spring 2016



The newsletter of Ryde District Heritage Centre

Registered Charity Number 1153947

Issue 25

Some words from our chairman

At the end of my report last year (presented in my absence by Gioia and Ron), I stated that "2015 is going to be another great year for the Society".

Well, it may not have been that great overall, but it was certainly memorable. The obvious highlights were first the announcement, and then the presentation by the Lord Lieutenant, of the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service, along with the attendance in-between of Diana and Tony at one of Her Majesty's garden parties.

The lowlights were, of course, the sudden and unexpected deaths of Tony and Martin, just a few days apart. As with Gloria the previous year, the sense of loss has, at times, been almost overwhelming. The noisy trotting down the stairs and general bustle of Tony, or the smile of Martin coming into view, with his more measured tread, are just two of the things we all miss when on duty in the basement.

However, things keep moving on, and the expansion into the remaining two Rotunda rooms is now virtually complete. The renovation of the Ice Well and Radio rooms are proving slightly more problematic: Vectis Military Historical Association members worked on the rear fire escape stairs, and Tony spent the last few months of his life with Jerry and Michael plaster-boarding walls and ceilings. Unfortunately the Ice Well area is very damp, and there are still copious amounts of water coming in. My thanks to Jerry and Michael for all their mainly unseen dirty work battling against the elements - they are slowly winning!

Of course, apart from rushing around, Tony also looked after the money. Fortunately, following an appeal to members, Joseph stepped forward and offered to help. Being thrown in at the deep end, with no knowledge of the way we worked, hasn't fazed Joseph - he's slowly whipping us into line with his requirements and suggestions.

Elsewhere with the Society and in the Centre, the usual carries on: displays are being moved or added to, things are being archived for future events, newsletters are being produced, talks are being listened to, membership is fluctuating gently, grants are being applied for, the photoboard is being photographed, the website's being visited, presentations are being given to outside groups, artefacts are being bought, loaned or donated, and visitors are comparatively rare - it's been a very poor autumn and winter so far.

With the forthcoming rent increase of 11½ % - over £800 - we need more visitors, and to this end we are booking a couple of adverts in two tourist publications: Wightlink's Wightlife magazine, and the IW Chamber of Commerce's Official Guide. This is costing a fair amount, but a substantial grant from Ryde Town Council has helped; if the ads are successful, we should have a good year. If not, we'll have to think again.

Continued overleaf



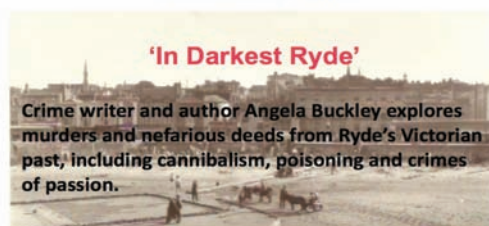
Historic Ryde Society

'Giving Ryde's past to the Future'

Patron: Lady Lucinda Lambton
President: Gioia Minghella-Giddens



**Yelf's Hotel - Wednesday May 18, 7 for 7.30 -
in aid of
The Ice Well Fund!**



Angela Buckley is the author of *The Real Sherlock Holmes: The Hidden Story of Jerome Caminada (Pen & Sword)*. Her work has featured in national magazines and newspapers, and on BBC radio and television. Angela is a member of the Crime Writers' Association.

Angela's new book, *Amelia Dyer and the Baby Farm Murders*, is out soon.
www.angelabuckleywriter.com

**Tickets - @£4 for HRS members and £5 for non-members -
Splash - 616257 - Ryde District Heritage Centre - 717435**

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The Donald McGill museum has been a bit of a bone of contention, but it certainly helps with visitor numbers.

On the morning of the AGM I answered the Centre's phone to a chap from Portsmouth, checking that the McGill Museum was open. Half an hour later, thanks to the Hovercraft, he was sorting through the postcards. He bought three, and then returned home, leaving us collectively £7.50 better off - not a lot, but it shows the value of widening our offer to people.

Finally, at the Queen's Award do, I was misquoted by the County Press; I said, "Without volunteers, society as we know it would collapse." The CP printed "Without volunteers, the society would collapse." Of course, we were both right - this Society has a great bunch of volunteers, and without them HRS, and the Heritage Centre, would be no more.

A big thank you to all the helpers, especially David, my right hand man. His calm unflappableness counters my hecticness, and his speech bubbles on photos are works of art!

Change to Charity status, and the new Arcade lease

The AGM has agreed with Joseph's recommendation that we change the Society's status into a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) forthwith.

The main advantages are that the Society, like a company, will have its own legal identity, being able to enter in to contracts and hold assets in its own name, and the personal liability of the members and trustees for the obligations and debts of the CIO will, apart from in exceptional circumstances, be limited.

Many members will be unaware that the lease was a great leap of faith by Diana, Tony and Wayne, when taken out five years ago; the three of them were liable for thousands of pounds of rent had the Centre failed.

The lease is due for renewal in April for another seven years, and Roy Cartwright, our landlord, is transferring it to the CIO. It will then cover the whole of the basement area accessible from within the Centre - that's yet another two rooms to decorate and fill up with displays!

Dinosaur Isle Kids Day



On the 7th February, Dinosaur Isle in Sandown organised a free admission event for parents and children and invited HRS to attend.

We could not compete with a fossil display so we provided items under the title 'Not only fossils come out of the ground'. We had a display of many items dug up or found by metal detectors, etc. that

the children were invited to pick up and examine.

It was attended by some 2500 people and it was nice to see parents who did not have to say 'Don't touch' !!

David Newman, Brian and Sandy Harris completed the team.



Ryde in World War One

On January 20th Richard Smout, Isle of Wight Heritage Service Archivist gave a fascinating talk to our members and volunteers about Ryde during World War One at Yelf's Hotel.



Diana Wood and Richard Smout.

Volunteers' Christmas Dinner

In December the volunteers held our annual Christmas dinner at the Appley Manor Hotel, which is a good chance for us all to meet and socialise, over a nice meal. We were joined by our President Gioia Minghella-Giddens. A good evening was had by all.



Christmas cheer at Appley Manor Hotel.

Currently on display at Ryde Heritage Centre...

A selection of new and old items you may have missed.



Fireman's Axe owned by 'The Great Randini' and donated by his son David Rann ('Randini' the renowned IOW entertainer).



Set of Scales from the old Swanmore Post Office.



The office clock from W.F. Brading & Son Coal Merchants in Ryde.

We have many more interesting items, each with a story to tell, waiting for you to come and take a further look.

The Ice Well Room is progressing slowly

Before we can start on the Ice Well, we need to get the Ice Well Room refurbished. The main problem is damp that comes in from the street level above the two alcoves shown, coupled with the fact that the Arcade is Grade II Listed which presents further limitations on the materials we can use to fix it.

Sterling work is being carried out by our volunteers and builders and a lot of the damp has been halted, but we have a way to go yet before we can render the walls and decorate the room, funding permitting. We would like to complete it this year.



Dates for the Diary

March 31st - Pub quiz - Yelf's hotel,
7pm - 9.30pm. £3 a head - raffle as usual.

April 28th - Pub quiz - Yelf's hotel,
7pm - 9.30pm. £3 a head - raffle as usual.

May 18th - Angela Buckley - writer and family historian - **Local stories of Mystery and Intrigue** - Yelf's hotel, 7pm - 9.30pm. £4 members, and £5 for non-members.

May 22nd - Collectors Fair - Masonic Hall, John Street, Ryde. 10am - 3.30pm. Free entry.

May 26th - Pub quiz - Yelf's hotel,
7pm - 9.30pm. £3 a head - raffle as usual.

Membership Update

Membership now runs on a rolling basis. Members receive free entry to Ryde District Heritage Centre, Donald McGill Postcard Museum; four talks, four newsletters and 10% discount on Hovertravel.

As of Spring 2016, HRS has 165 Individual and Family memberships.

Historic Ryde Society currently has over 650 followers on Twitter.

Historic Ryde Society Patron: Lady Lucinda Lambton President: Gioia Minghella-Giddens

HRS Board of Trustees: Spring 2016

Chair: Brian Harris, Treasurer: Joseph O'Driscoll, Secretary: David Newman
Members: Alan Brading, Gillian Drewett, John King, Peter Lawrence, Ron Watts
Peter is the Membership Co-ordinator.

Registered Charity No: 1153947

If you would like to contact anyone on the committee, please email admin@HistoricRydeSociety.com

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