



ARCADIA

Winter 2016-17



The newsletter of

Ryde District Heritage Centre

Registered Charity Number 1153947

Issue 28

An Honour for Eddie

Not only did Eddie Minghella turn on the Ryde Christmas lights on the evening of December 3rd, but he also made history when Ryde Mayor Cllr Henry Adams presented him with a scroll honouring him as a free-man of the town of Ryde in recognition of his public service - the first time this has been awarded for over 100 years!



Eddie receives the scroll from Mayor Cllr Henry Adams.

Left: A delighted Eddie with carol singers in Minghella Square at the ceremony.

Christmas Raffle Draw

The Christmas Raffle draw was held in Minghella Square on New Years Eve at 12 Noon announced by Steve the Ryde Town Crier. The 1st. prize was won by Colin ~ ticket number 00183, 2nd. prize won by Carole ~ ticket number 00004, and 3rd. prize won by Matt ~ ticket number 00113. The winners have been notified, and our thanks to all those who participated and to Gillian for her organisation.



Brian Harris and Steve the Town Crier

Left: Marius and Molly giving Brian some support.

Walsall's Ambassador pays a visit



On the 15th November we had a visit from Mark Dabbs, who describes himself as the running ambassador for Walsall, and is meeting all the mayors he can around the country. He was met by our mayor Henry Adams at the centre and local books were exchanged.

Churchill's Last Wartime Secret

On November 16th Adrian Searle gave a fascinating talk about Churchill's last wartime secret to an appreciative audience at Yelf's Hotel.



Local History talk at Seaview Yacht Club

On November 26th Brian, David and Peter gave a slide show and talk on Seaview's development, local transport shops and pier. The evening began with an entertaining talk from Will Caws, whose family founded Seaview, about his formative years to an audience of around 100 people. After our talk we were treated to a wonderful three course dinner and made very welcome. The yacht club has an interesting history and there were lots of old photographs on display for us to look at as well.

*Right: Will Caws
Below: Some of the audience*



Balfour's Bembridge



John Matthews gave us a fascinating talk on the 12th January about Jabez Balfour who had ambitious plans to redevelop Bembridge to rival Ryde as a seaside resort using money from small investors in his building society.

The plan failed and he lost all their savings and went to prison, but still returned to the island afterwards but remains possibly Britain's greatest financial fraudster.

Our next talk will be on March 8th when islander **Jo Cooper** will be talking about her childhood memories of growing up on the Isle of Wight between the 1950s and 1960s. This will be at Yelf's Hotel, Union Street, Ryde 7pm for 7.30 - 9pm, £4 for members and £5 for non-members.

Currently on display at Ryde Heritage Centre...



Swimming costumes c. 1920, the one on the right has "ASA Regulation Costume" on its label.



School desk from the 1940s, possibly earlier, on loan from IOW Council.



Used on early Island Railway carriages in the winter - the cylinder was filled with boiling water and covered with a rug for passengers to warm their feet.

Youngsters from Ryde School Visit

We had a most enjoyable visit on Wednesday 1st February by youngsters from Ryde School organised by Toni Simons.

About twenty students and four teachers split into four groups each with one of our volunteers and enjoyed a guided tour of the Heritage Centre.

One of the more exciting exhibits for the children was our display of items that have been dug up locally which shows a wide range of objects, not only fossils that have been recovered. The students were able to pick up and examine the objects - a "hands on" experience which gave them a lot more interest and hopefully they may go on to discover some of their own in the future.



Did you know?

The now closed Beds of Ryde shop near the bottom of Union Street has an interesting feature - if you peek through the windows and look at the room at the back of the shop - the ceiling/floor above is supported by two lengths of railway line. I believe that they have L&SWR (London & South Western Railway) moulded on them, which would make them from the 1870s to the 1920s. They have been painted white but are clearly visible.



If any members have knowledge of other quirky Ryde building facts, please let us know.

The Eagle Hotel, Ryde High Street

Most locals know that the Arcadia building on the Esplanade was once an Eagle Hotel as you can still see the Eagle lettering behind the Arcadia sign.

However, there was a second Eagle Hotel in the High Street where the Doctor Who and RSPCA shops now stand. You can see the Eagle statue on the facade at the top of the building and it has kept the distinctive bay windows on the first floor. The gate on the left is still there as well.



Ice Well Room no more...

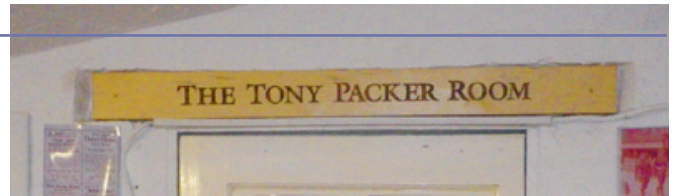
The Ice Well Room is now The Tony Packer Room in honour of one of our founders who died in 2015. Many thanks to Mike Claridge for making the sign.



More thanks are also due to Tony Packer (jnr) and Linda Russon for organising our Quiz Nights at Yelfs Hotel on the last Thursday of every month, they help us to raise valuable funds to keep the Heritage Centre open.

Many thanks also to the volunteers who help out at the Collectors Fairs, and bake cakes, man the canteen and the front desk.

And a big thank you to Allan Packer who has provided us with a plexiglass screen for the Ice Well, making it safe for visitors.



The Tony Packer Room is progressing well with more thanks to Jerry and Mike for all their hard work. We still need to plaster the ceiling and sort out the electrics and wiring when funding allows. The next stage will be the passage between the pavement and the Ice Well itself which has serious water ingress from the outside and provides us with a huge challenge. We're up for it!



Where is this?



We have a few pictures that we are not sure about their location, we don't recognise the church next to the Ironmongers - so it is not Ryde; and what is the event in the next photo and where is the big building in the background? If you have any ideas then please let us know.

ISLE OF MEMORIES



SNAPSHOTS OF A CHILDHOOD ON THE ISLE OF WIGHT IN THE 1950S AND 1960S

JO COOPER



Day

Volunteers needed to help run the Heritage Centre on Sat 20th and Sun 21st May when there will be a Hop On Hop Off vintage bus service and Heritage Tour in conjunction with the Bus Museum. More details to be announced when we have them.

Fundraising thought

A big thank you to all our members and those who have donated to our funds - would you consider leaving us something in your will? Rather than the tax man...

Dates for the Diary

February 23rd - Pub quiz - Yelf's Hotel, 7pm for 7.30 - 9.00pm. £3 a head - raffle as usual.

March 8th - Talk by Jo Cooper on **Growing up in Ryde in the 1950s and 60s** - Yelf's Hotel, 7pm for 7.30 - 9.00pm. £4 for members, and £5 for non-members.

March 21st - Annual General Meeting [AGM] Yelf's Hotel, 7pm for 7.30 - 9.00pm.

March 25th - Collectors' Fair - Masonic Hall, John Street, Ryde. 10am - 3.30pm. Free entry.

March 30th - Pub quiz - Yelf's Hotel, 7pm for 7.30 - 9.00pm. £3 a head - raffle as usual.

April 12th - Talk by Ken Hicks on **An Island Legacy [Brannon]** - Yelf's Hotel, 7pm for 7.30 - 9.00pm. £4 for members, and £5 for non-members.

April 27th - Pub quiz - Yelf's Hotel, 7pm for 7.30 - 9.00pm. £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, 20% discount on talks (a minimum of four a year - six this year), up to four newsletters and 10% discount on Hovertravel.

As of February 2017, HRS has 155 Individual and Family memberships.

We are open all year Monday to Saturday 11am - 4pm, and Sundays in July and August.

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

HRS Board of Trustees: February 2017

Vice President: Ron Watts, Chairman: Brian Harris, Vice Chairman: Derek Tomlinson
Treasurer: Joseph O'Driscoll, Secretary: David Newman, Membership/Editor: Peter Lawrence
Trustees: Alan Brading, Gillian Drewett and John King.

Registered Charity No: 1153947

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

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