Old Hastings Preservation Society

Registered Charity Number 221623 Company Registration 611762

Newsletter Summer 2009

Change of AGM Date
This is now Friday 10th July at 7.30 to be followed by a presentation on "History from Postcards" by Dennis Collins and Anne Scott - an introduction to one of our Old Town exhibitions and we hope an going research and education project. If you have any old postcards which have interesting messages on the back and are willing to let us copy them we would be pleased to hear from you. Apologies for the change of date and any inconvenience it may have caused, there was just not enough time to get the papers out for the original date ensuring due notice for those which are delivered by hand.

Volunteers
We have had some excellent exhibitions and events at the History House and thanks to those involved in the organisation and who give of their time - Dennis Collins of course, David Clover and the Jack-in-the-Green team not forgetting or great team of volunteers - particularly Kay, Sharyn and Jill who have worked so hard to keep open.
We are pleased to offer two dates for a drop in **Volunteer's Evening** [with refreshments] so if you have offered or would like to offer to help open Hastings History House you will be welcome to come to any of these. **Thursdays 4th June and 23rd July 5 -7pm**. We have people who say I would offer but I need some training and these dates will be your chance to take part in that. We realised that the dates offered may not be convenient so please phone Jill, Anne or Dennis if this is the case to book a special session.
If you would like to help with deliveries, can offer a talk, could help with refreshments we would be glad to hear from you. We particularly need someone to take responsibility for refreshments at talks and events [not that you would need to be there for all of them!]. Veronica Fraser did a great job in this role for many years, which was much appreciated but she has now given this up, she is irreplaceable, but if you feel you can help please get in touch.
You will find a volunteers rota attached, please sign up where you can help and return it to Hastings History House.

Old Town Walks
The Old Town Walks programme runs on Tuesday from May to mid-September, with extra walks Thursday walks in Old Town Week and Hastings Week. Walks start at the top of the West Hill lift at 2.30 pm and descend gently downhill. There is no charge for the walks, but donations are welcomed.
We are working to increase the number of specially tailored walks for group visits. The Walks Team welcome enquiries from such groups & associations and any OHPS member who knows of such a body wishing to have a dedicated Walk should contact Ray Barrett on 01424 420555. Thanks to all our guides.
As part of the Stade Education project a team of volunteers are now offering Stade Orientation walks which start from The Old Town Hall Museum.There is a charge of £2 for adults and £1 for children and the proceeds will be divided between the participating groups in the project - Fishermen's Museum, Shipwreck Heritage Centre and Fishermen's Protection Society. See events diary for dates.

Exhibitions
From now till Old Town Week the displays at the History House include Unseen Hastings, the Bourne Clearances and the Fishermen's Church, as well as a good selection of books for sale. Open Thursdays 11-1 and weekends 11-4. From Old Town Week the exhibition will be History from Postcards and during the week an exhibition by HAARG on "Domestic Development -Prehistoric to Romans". From 5th September to 4th October David Clover's Leslie Badham's West Side Story -All Saints Street will be back on display if you missed it last time round.

Book Sales
Our second hand book sales have become a vital part of our fundraising so please continue your support. The dates planned are: Saturday 13th June and Saturday 19th September 11-4. Please let us have your good quality unwanted books - contact Ian 812662, Dennis 447643 or Anne 427718 for collection if needed.

HISTORIC HASTINGS

LOTTERY FUNDED

Hastings History House

21 Courthouse Street, Hastings,
East Sussex. TN34 3AU

Planning
The CoM discussed the Jerwood plans for the Stade in great depth but there was no clear consensus of opinion – for or against- so no formal representation was made from the Society. We did however object to the demolition of Tom's Cabin which was part of the wider plans for café and community space. We have also made some comments on the design of the community space which as yet have not been answered but we are assured that groups will be invited into the more detailed planning process of this building its uses, management etc.and we anticipate being invited to that forum.
The other major planning concern is the fact that permission has been given by HBC for the demolition of all the remaining major Victorian villas that once lined the Ridge. Having applauded the Conservation Area the Council created round Ore Place Farm to see them then agree to the loss of the other buildings that once formed part of the growth of the wealthier area of what was in effect the new Ore in the late 19th century is very disappointing. There are historical literary connections with many of these buildings which will be lost. Holmhurst St Mary has been converted successfully and so could Hurst Court, Ledsham Court [Hastings Cottage] Osborne House, the former St Helens Rectory at the Ridge and Lennox House. The greed of the developers and government pressure to create more dwellings can cause great harm to the historic character of a town if those responsible for planning allow. It is this historic character that encourages long term prosperity over short term apparent gain.

Outings
We had a great day in Faversham thanks to the trip organised so ably by Jill Bradley - many thanks Jill for your meticulous planning. If you have not been to Faversham I urge you to try and find time to go - it has a wealth of historic buildings, an amazing museum and heritage centre with a great bookshop and neighbouring second hand bookshop, a huge church with a classical nave, a unique medieval painted column and possibly the grave of King Stephen. Not to mention the beer. One of England's gems.
You will find a flyer for our next outing to Kew on 5th September, there is so much on offer to do there as you can see from Jill's information, so I hope you can join us.

Reminisce recording - we have been working with Jon Hildreth and Tara Reddy from the WRVS heritage project and the Memory Bank and you will see we have activities in Old Town week and an evening on 12th September with a group of Old Town friends who have collected together their memories. In Old Town Week this is blended with our History from Postcards project - the common denominator is this is the history of ordinary people and ordinary life. Some lives are a little less ordinary and that is exciting, times are changing so rapidly that "how we live" quickly becomes history and needs recording. As part of the WRVS project we have been offered training sessions as facilitators to record oral history. If you would like more information on this and the dates when fixed please let Anne know [427718]

St Mary-in-the-Castle
We are delighted that Barbara Rogers has recommenced guided tours of this unique building for a small charge. The proposals for a youth managed arts and cultural facility in the building are being watched with interest. I attended a presentation by Hastings Trust and Lord Andrew Mawson trustee of the My Place fund which has promised the funding for the Hastings Trust plans which have to be completed by September, so time is short. There was a strong feeling expressed at the presentation both from SMIC Friends and Extrax [an exisitng Young Peoples centre] that this was not the right place for this project. But it was clear that within the budget and timescale this was the only option. White Rock Baths being too expensive and the Brassey not yet being vacated by the Library. I personally think the accommodation will be difficult to organise, but not impossible, if additional premises in the arcade and below can be purchased. It is undeniable that young people need somewhere and St Mary's needs a future, but it is the usual Hastings compromise, like Jerwood, we want the funds and the outcome but it would be better somewhere else. Sites like the Baths and the Observer building desperately need this sort of regeneration, as will the Brassey Institute, not to mention the pier.

Newsletters
We hope to be able to issue 3 of these a year and would welcome contributions from members. You can drop these into the History House or email to ohps@ohps.org.uk or annescott56@aol.com. I am delighted that Jill has written a review of Jack-in-the-Green weekend below.

Jack-in-the-Green Exhibition at the History House
What a marvellous exhibition!!
On Friday 24 April Julia, Mick, Marti and other members of the Jack-in-the-Green Committee (JITGC) brought in fascinating bags and boxes full of masks, photos, greenery, ribbons, costumes etc. followed the next day by disembodied giants and a stunning glass roundel of the Green Man in a hanging frame. We were all very excited to be having the exhibition for a second year.
The official opening was Saturday 2 May for a week, but thanks to the tremendous help we had from our dedicated volunteers and JITGC, were able to open early on Sunday 26 April. We sold various merchandise - t-shirts, badges, pins, car stickers - I've never seen t-shirts sell so quickly! We'd almost sold out on the opening day.
I hope you all found an opportunity to visit the exhibition, it was really stunning especially with the three giants (Hannah, the Smith and an unnamed one), DVD of the 2003 event, and everything beautifully decorated with greenery and ribbons.

Julia's idea of making up our own Jack by writing comments or putting a drawing on leaf shapes to be stuck on a wall-mounted template was very popular, and we especially encouraged children to complete them. On the 2nd we had a surprise visit from Keith Leech and the Mad Jack Morris. We had 1,350 visitors to the exhibition, and a lot of very positive feedback. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed it and we look forward to even more next year.

On behalf of the History House regulars (Dennis, Anne, Sue and myself) I would like to say a huge thank you to all our volunteers who helped make this such a success, in particular Kay, who gave a lot of hours and valuable help manning the front desk, Sharyn, Steven and others who gave their time and assistance. Thanks also to Mick

Jill Bradley Volunteers Co-ordinator OHPS Committee

Hastings and Rother Family History Society

We have just had another successful family History Day at the History House and there is another one is planned in Old Town Week. Help and advice with your family history queries and also a wonde4ful range of publications, CDs and DVDs [particularly transport related] will be on sale.

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OUTING TO KEW SATURDAY 5 SEPTEMBER 2009

Earlier this year Mike Wilsdon gave us a fascinating talk on his various museums in Kew. We asked if you'd be interested in seeing the site of the bake house and his current museum the "Kew Curiosity Cabinet" (or a coach ride to Kew to follow your own programme). There has been enough response for an outing to be organised for Saturday 5 September.

We will leave from The Cutter at 8.30 a.m., arriving in Kew by 11 a.m, and plan to visit Mike's museum at 12 noon. For those wanting coffee or lunch Mike recommends the Pagoda Café which serves good food at reasonable prices, or of course you may prefer to bring sandwiches. We will leave Kew at 5 p.m.

Cost is £17 per person (coach and driver's tip).

If you wish to organise your own programme, here are a few ideas:

Kew Gardens (250th anniversary this summer) www.kew.org
National Archives (New to Kew sessions free 11.30 a.m. daily) www.nationalarchives.gov.uk
Kew Bridge Steam Museum www.kbsm.org
Musical Museum www.musicalmuseum.co.uk

If you are interested, please complete and return the form below to Jill Bradley, OHPS Committee Member, c/o the Hastings History House, 21 Courthouse Street, Old Town, Hastings, East Sussex TN34 3AU. Cheques should be made payable to the Old Hastings Preservation Society.

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Name ……

Address ……

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Tel. ……

Cheque enclosed for £