



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2016

MAY 7TH 10.30-12.30

At the English First school, 1-2 Sussex Square

Calling all members to come and make your views heard about the Marina development, Black Rock, communal bins, and all the other issues that concern us!
Applications also invited for the post of Events Organiser.....



Garden Party 2016: In honour of Derek Granger

Stoutly defying the dreadful weather and pre-Referendum mental exhaustion, the Garden Party went ahead on June 18th. At the set-up on June 17th the rain poured down in such torrents that we were all marooned for an hour or so under the few gazebos we'd managed to erect; but, praise be, the day itself was dry and even fairly warm. Numbers were as good as the year before and takings were even better, usefully swelling the funds for our next battle against the plans for Black Rock...

Huge thanks to Johnny Muxlow's Vintage Hot Five for their music, to Sharron Grimshaw and her team from the Mad Hatter for running the bar, to all the hard-working stallholders, and especially to Tania from our wonderful local deli, Marmalade, for enhancing our home-made productions with their fantastic cakes - all of which they donated.

Thanks too to all our guests who dressed up in 20s and 30s gear; many took infinite pains. The winners (who would have guessed it?) came from Hove... but are moving, and now fully signed up to KTS!

Our star guest was Derek Granger, now 95, the director of "Brideshead Revisited" and



a resident for 63 years in Chichester Terrace with his partner, Kenneth Partridge. Derek spent the afternoon surrounded by friends and well-wishers and, to our delight, made a speech! Here it is.

"Ladies and Gentlemen,

"Thank you, thank you so very much. I feel enormously honoured and flattered by all this lovely fuss being made over me - and just for being the oldest inhabitant in the village. But I also feel

quite a bit of a fraud. There is absolutely no merit whatever in living to an extremely great age. The only truly noticeable effects of it are the perennial struggle to put on one's socks and trousers, a tussle which seems to take longer and become more exhaustingly arduous with every passing year.

"But I am also particularly happy that this little celebration should also be in honour of Kenneth Partridge for as some of you may fondly remember he was not always totally averse to being the centre of attention. I know he would have loved it, especially after getting those amazing obituaries, including a full page in The Times, which all spoke of his huge zest for life and his occasional predilection for being outrageously outspoken.



Kemp Town Society

Garden Party 2016: In honour of Derek Granger continued from page 1



“Brighton played a big part in both our lives. I first came here, just after the war, in 1947, to work as a journalist on the local papers, The Argus and The Sussex Daily News, where I had a great time learning my craft and doing interviews with subjects as crazily various as

Mae West and Evelyn Waugh.

“My first experience of Brighton was living in digs with a presiding landlady, somewhere to the north of Western Road. Intending to make a genuine compliment I came down to breakfast on my first day and exclaimed to her: “How marvellous - there’s nothing I love more than burnt toast.” After that I was toast. Our relationship never recovered.

“It was in Brighton where I first met Kenneth. A raffish retired naval commander rang me up one day and asked if I could do him a favour. He’d asked a young South London boy down for the weekend, now realised he had a house full and could I possibly give the lad a bed for two nights. Kenneth arrived on my doorstep on a balmy summer evening in 1949 and stayed for sixty-six years. Soon afterwards we got a flat in Hove. In those days flats were seldom self-contained. Ours was a dilapidated set of rooms on the top of an old Edwardian house in Tisbury Road which we decorated with Matisse posters and dyed blue fishing net encrusted with mummified starfish. Thus began our long association with this fair city.

“In more recent times I have been proud to take part in our endless battles against heavy odds to keep this beautiful, historic town as architecturally intact as we possibly can and

I’m still amazed and grateful for the wealth of fine old buildings that the city managed to retain. But there were certainly some very dark days like the one in the Council Chamber a few years ago when the city council voted to revoke the height clause for buildings in the Marina. The hideous Stalag-like development which now rears up above the cliffs is a constant reminder that our battles are far from won. But I know the Society will remain ever vigilant and in the spirit of the great David Morris who founded the Society and got the whole thing going, it will continue the good right.

“I would just like to finish by remembering a very dear friend and supporter. Patsy Perrousset, who was so close to many of us. A week ago, alas, Patsy left us for the great garden enclosures in the sky. She will be hugely missed by many and her unquenchable gift for friendship, the quality she possessed in abundance, is the one which we will long cherish and remember. I met her on a certain notorious

beach some thirty-five years ago. There was a wonderful line in one of those marvellously rude seaside postcards by the famous cartoonist Donald McGill and I’d always longed to try it out in a real life situation. So as Patsy was delicately putting her foot into the sea to test its temperature I gently advanced on her and asked: “Excuse me Madam, but if you’re going to drown those two puppies, may I have the one on the left, please.” It was the beginning of a long and wonderful friendship.”

Photos by Tim Godwin



LATEST DEVELOPMENT NEWS

Black Rock: A Dialogue Begins

Vaughan Rees and Simon Smith, on behalf of KTS, have met Nick Hibberd and Katharine Pearce, the two top city planners, and Andrew Dakin, of Standard Life, the developer, to register the deep interest of KTS in the Black Rock Development (aka, in Council-speak, “Waterfront East!”). Although still at a very early stage of planning, it is now evident that Black Rock will be the site for a 10,000 seat multi-purpose venue that will replace the present Brighton Centre.

We agree that the site is urgently in need of development and has been for some years. The conference centre is not in itself a bad idea, but our main concern is the effect it would have on transport infrastructure and planning—as well as its potential visual impact on the Estate.

The planners say they are acutely conscious of the potential impact on the setting of the Estate in general and on Arundel Terrace in particular. Consultants have been engaged (paid for by the developer - so we must be on our guard) to produce a ‘consultation strategy’, but even at this stage we have been given an absolute assurance that, in addition to Historic England etc, KTS as an identified ‘stakeholder with a specific interest’ would play a key role in the Black Rock consultative process. A further report on the present position, and next steps, is being produced

at our request by Katharine Pearce, and this will be circulated to all members as soon as we have it.

The Black Rock development will, for the foreseeable future, be of the utmost concern to KTS and we will need to be ever alert and stand ready to engage - effectively - with the Council at every opportunity.

Madeira Terrace proposals: We all lament the closure of the Terraces and the Max Miller walk. We therefore support and welcome the Lockwood Project, which proposes to fully restore or replace the ironwork on the Terraces and, as a second stage, build glass-fronted units within the arches to be rented out, helping to bring in money for the upkeep of the Terraces. At the end of June the Council submitted a bid for £4m to the Coastal Communities Fund to kick-start the works. We wait with baited breath!

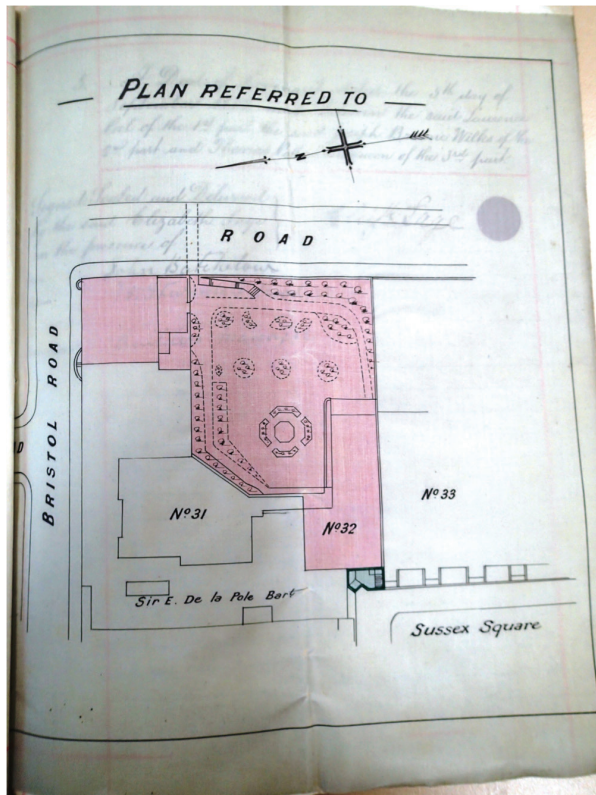
Brighton Hospital update: It now seems that heavy lorries will not start running over the Tunnel until next year, probably in February. However, these same lorries (28 tons loaded max now) laden with demolished stuff will be rumbling along Eastern Road through Sussex Square -maybe before the end of the year.

Vaughan Rees, Simon Smith and Jill Sewell

Who's Been Living in My House ?



During the Brighton Festival this year, the Secret Garden was open to the public each weekend (see next article). While visiting it I met Pat Dauncey, a garden historian who had been commissioned to research the Garden. She very generously shared her extensive research with me.



She had discovered a map featuring the tunnel from the Secret Garden under Bristol Place to the garden behind 32 Sussex Square, which owned the entire property until 1900 when it was split into two lots at auction. She had also found maps of other tunnels under Bristol Place linking several houses with their large gardens. These were used both as 'pleasure gardens' and as kitchen gardens growing fruit and vegetables for the residents. The one belonging to No 32 shows large heated greenhouses at its easternmost corner.

Later in the summer I was lucky enough to be sent copies of several Edwin Lutyens architectural plans and drawings for 39 and 40 Sussex Square, the interiors of which he redesigned for Lady Victoria Sackville West. I was also sent some 60 photographs



taken inside the property this year. The garden and the tunnel to it are also featured in these plans. I am extremely grateful to Councillor Robert Nemeth who sent me all this information.

The last and by no means least piece to be added to this Bristol Place jigsaw is a photograph, kindly supplied by the Roedean School Archives, showing pupils playing tennis in the gardens belonging to Nos 35, 36 and 37 Sussex Square in 1896. The gas works can clearly be seen in the background.

"From No 36 the Lawrences' pupils trooped through gas-lit tunnels to the great gymnasium erected by the previous tenant for the boys, which was furnished with a platform at one end and amply accommodated the school assembly, concerts and dramatic performances' (ref: Roedean School 1885-1955, by Dorothy E. De Zouche)

These are all majestic 'finds' and I have several more, relating to different houses, to investigate. The full stories and photographs of the tunnels can be seen in the relevant House Histories on the website www.kemptonstatehistories.com and in the Article section on the Estate page.

WBLMH was also featured in a Sunday Times article about the countrywide interest in house research. It was well illustrated, including a photo of some of the members who have contributed to the site.

Vanessa Minns

Kemp Town Society

THE SECRET GARDEN



During the Brighton Festival in May many of us were delighted to discover, for the first time, the Secret Garden in Bristol Gardens. This enchanting space, neglected for years and almost sold off at one point by Brighton Council, has now been saved by a trust set up by Gavin Henderson CBE, a Kemp Town resident and former Director of the Brighton Festival, and wonderfully planted by an expert garden designer, Nick Dwyer. During the Festival it was used to great effect to display sculptures by Hamish Black. The trustees hope it may be used regularly as a sculpture garden for contemporary artists. More occasionally it may make a venue for small open-air concerts and theatre productions, to which it is ideally suited, once the garden buildings have been fully restored.

The garden originally belonged to 32 Sussex Square. Several of the grand houses in the square had extensive gardens, each accessed by a tunnel leading from the house (see WBLMH, on p. 3); the Secret Garden is now the only one that remains. It was originally purchased by Anthony Dale, the founder of the Regency Society, and was looked after by Anthony and later by his widow Yvonne, who left it to the Council to be kept and cared



for as a haven for the community. After the Council threw up its hands and the Regency Society too did not feel it could take it on, the Dales' will was posthumously changed, and the Anthony Dale Trust was set up by Gavin to preserve the garden into the future. How lucky we are to have not only the splendid Enclosures, but also this beautiful meditative space at the heart of the estate.

Anyone interested in contributing or getting involved should contact the trustees via the website: www.secretgardenkemptown.co.uk

Photos by Lianne Jarret

ANNOUNCEMENT AND EVENTS



Saturday September 10th at 2pm:

"Thomas Kemp and His Grand Design", a guided walk round the Estate, led by Simon Smith. Meet at the junction of Chichester Terrace and Lewes Crescent.

We are thinking of holding a Twelfth-Night (or thereabouts!) party in early January, with a speaker, to balance the Garden Party held in the summer. Please let us know if you are interested in principle (in attending or, especially, in helping), and we will take the idea forward.

An events organiser is still urgently needed. If you could organise a lunch or an outing to Chichester Theatre or to Glyndebourne, please contact Joan Griffiths at joan@mgassocs.com, or Ann Wroe at annwroe@economist.com

The deadline for copy for the next newsletter is early December; copy to Ann Wroe please at the e-mail above.