



NEWSLETTER

May 2022

Dear members,

First of all, thanks to everyone who has helped to fund finishing touches for our Bandstand restoration project. The response has been overwhelming. Your support has been very much welcomed by our project team who are working even harder to finish the job on time. Painting has started and the Bandstand is already looking very different to the sorry state we found it in last winter.

There'll be an opportunity to take a closer look inside on Sunday June 5th when, in partnership with the Old Bathing Station, we're hosting a Fifties Family Funday from noon to 5pm. There'll be entertainment, games, competitions and more. Fifties food will be available from the Old Bathing Station. So, seek out those Fair Isle pullovers, stunning fifties frocks and period hats, to join the fun. We're even awarding prizes for the best costumes. A pebble art competition, an egg and spoon race and hopscotch will bring memories flooding back and we'll be joined by Bexhill Guides. See you there.

Away from the promenade, Bexhill Heritage continues its work to protect and enhance our town's historic buildings. In this context, it's hugely encouraging that our campaign to save Cemetery Lodge has been successful. Originally earmarked for demolition, this fine late 19th century building is to be restored and converted into two affordable homes. Your committee is delighted. Developers and planners are realising that heritage buildings can, with imagination and commitment, be given a new lease of life and continue their important contribution to our 'sense of place'. It's been a struggle to get our voice heard but we have prevailed.

However, there are always new battles ahead. One of these is likely to be the Town Hall 'Renaissance Project'. We're pleased to have been consulted over a first draft of designs to improve the Town Hall site. We applaud the plan to make much more of the Town Hall's heritage features but are concerned that two adjacent mansions may be demolished to make way for a modern office block. If this plan goes ahead, Bexhill will lose a valuable part of its townscape. We've met the design team and hope that their plans will be thoroughly reviewed in the light of our comments. We'll keep you posted.

Find out more about the committee's recent work at our Annual General Meeting in St Barnabas Church on Wednesday 15th June starting at 7pm. All members are very welcome.

Steve Johnson
Acting Chairman



The first lick of paint goes on the Bandstand.

We started physical work on the Bandstand in August 2021 with small flurries of inspection and discovery. Prior to this Steve and Tony embarked on many discussions with Rother and the then Conservation officer Tanya Szendeffy. An agreement was forged and work started in September. The work could be broken down into several elements. The floor, the roof, repair of the columns, new infill panels, new ventilating panels and a new ridge crest. Most important of all was a change of use from a Shelter to a Bandstand that was the original function of the building.

The most laborious task was the removal of one hundred and twenty years of paint. This took a great many hours as it is slow painstaking work and was achieved by over a dozen volunteers who gave of their time. The removal of the paint revealed the wood which was in surprisingly good



Andrew Blackman, Lord-Lieutenant for East Sussex visits the Bandstand.

condition. Most of the damage to the Bandstand was at floor level and mainly in the southwest corner. The fascia boards were damaged. There are eight and four have been remade and the rest repaired. There were several loose ceiling boards caused by rusted nails and also oddly the absence of any fixing. All of these are being addressed with a departure from traditional materials to the use of stainless steel screws to aid longevity in the hostile seaside environment.

Although the Bandstand is smaller than Shelter No.3 there has been much more work. It is a Grade II listed building and when

Architecture Spotlight



Bank Chambers, Town Hall Square, Buckhurst Road

Constructed in 1898 and designed by Zephaniah King FRIBA (1834-1906).

King had a practice in Victoria Street in London, and was originally from Norfolk where he had studied at the Norwich School of Art.

The building started as London & County Bank, more recently was the Citizens Advice Bureau and now used solely for apartments. The bank vaults can still be found in the basement (albeit empty!).

Keep in contact

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If you like what we are doing then please encourage your friends to join with us and strengthen our society.

Next Members' Meetings will be held at St. Barnabas Church, Sea Road at 7pm on the following dates:

 **Wednesday 15th June 2022 - AGM**

Rother District Council's new Conservation Officer, Simon Richard gives a talk on the importance of the Town Centre Conservation Area followed by a Q&A session.

 **Wednesday 5th October 2022**

Details TBC.

 **Wednesday 30th November 2022**

Details TBC.

it opens later this year, it will be a place for performers to showcase their talent. There is to be an online booking system and some bookings have already taken place.

By a twist of fate and with the sad loss of the bandstand on the De La Warr Pavilion terrace, this will be the return of Bexhill's first and now only bandstand.

You can keep up to date with the progress on our website: bexhillheritage.org.uk/repair-of-shelter-no-1-east-parade

Information Point



Take a visit to see Events Coordinator, John Swap to discuss BH work and other upcoming projects.

Where we are at the Bandstand it may be possible to take a look inside at the works to date (subject to work restrictions).

You can purchase Bexhill Flag / BH car stickers, badges, postcards and renew memberships.

Friday, 27th May, 9am - 12:30pm. Bandstand

Saturday, 4th June. Metropole Lawns – Bexhill 100

Sunday, 5th June, 12pm - 5pm. Bandstand – Fifties Family Funday

Committee Member Receives Freedom



Alexis Markwick was given the Honorary Freedom of Bexhill-on-Sea on Saturday, 14th May by Mayor Paul Plim.

At the Annual Meeting of the Town Council civic awards were presented to recognise people's efforts for the town. The council also has the power to elect Honorary Freemen. The first such award was made to Alexis.

Alexis is Bexhill Heritage's IT Officer and Historian; he devised the Bexhill open-source mapping project; is involved in Bexhill Museum's Local History Study Group which gives walks and lectures; and provides free trishaw rides along the seafront for people with mobility difficulties.