



# NEWSLETTER

## Summer 2025

Dear members,

Due to the dedication and hard work of our active volunteers, we've made considerable strides during the summer and look forward to the autumn with our charity in very good shape.

The bandstand is looking good after its summer refresh. At the time of writing, we still have the floor to repaint and will need to set aside some funds for re-painting the ridge crest in the spring. The original blew over (we found the remains of the supports in the roof space) and our new crest is built to last. All that will be in vain, though, unless we maintain a finish to protect it against some of the harshest environmental conditions in the town (salt spray, blown sand and unrelenting ultraviolet light). Our dedicated team of restorers are also well on the way to refreshing the benches in Shelter No.3 and have resumed work in the Hastings Road / Third Avenue bus shelter which we plan to finish in the autumn.

Meanwhile, Bandstand concerts have been well-received by residents and visitors alike. Highlights this year have included a team of Morris Dancers (Ruxley's Crew from Hastings), the suited and booted Sussex Stompers (generously sponsored by the 1066 Jazz Club) and Brass Fusion who blew us all away with the excellence and variety of their wonderful programme. They'll all certainly be invited back next year. We've held over twenty musical events at the Bandstand this summer including the Friday summer afternoon concerts in June, July and August. The Bandstand has more friends than ever and sufficient audience-donations to keep it in good fettle. I'm very grateful to all of you who have supported the concert programme and especially to Debbie Cooney and Christina Muskin who have so ably hosted our Friday afternoon music.

...and last but by no means least we have been welcoming new members including Clive O'Brien who will be taking over as Bexhill Heritage's treasurer.

I hope to see you at one of our upcoming Members' meetings. Please check your inbox for more information soon.

Steve Johnson  
Chairman

### Bexhill 100: Grateful Thanks



We have very good links with Bexhill 100, whose members cherish, restore and proudly display classic cars which might otherwise be lost from sight. Their inspiring example has encouraged so many to recognise both the excellence and importance of Britain's motoring heritage. Many Bexhill 100 members understandably also belong to Bexhill Heritage. We're extremely grateful for their support and for the joy they bring to our town.

### An Important Few Months Ahead

During the coming autumn, winter and spring Bexhill Heritage's officers will be working hard to bring several of our recent initiatives to a successful conclusion.

These include:

- The proposal to extend the existing conservation area to include heritage assets in East Bexhill. This is now being carefully scrutinised and considered by Rother District Council's officers.
- A proposal for the restoration of East Parade's Shelter No.2 (the iron-framed shelter opposite Middlesex Road). We've consulted Playfoot Engineering of Bodiam on a plan to restore this iconic shelter and now await a response from RDC and the Neighbourhood Board.
- Edward VII Coronation Memorial Clock Tower on West Parade. We're poised to give practical support to the restoration of this important local landmark and hope for news from RDC and the Neighbourhood Board in the spring.

We also continue to develop proposals for tree planting in East Bexhill and to contribute to the Neighbourhood Board's plans for Bexhill, especially proposals for the development of East Parade which we believe should respect its existing character.

### Sponsor a Concert in 2026

We're looking for concert sponsors for summer 2026.

If you would like to be part of next year's concert sponsorship programme, please get in touch via [info@bexhillheritage.com](mailto:info@bexhillheritage.com). We

## Architecture Spotlight



Shelter No.2, East Parade

There were once two Victorian cast-iron shelters on East Parade, only one remains. The other (above, furthest left) was removed in WW2 and replaced by an Observation Post, disguised as a seafront shelter.

This 1896 Grade II listed shelter is the most original with its unique ironwork supports. It was built by Henry Young & Co Engineers London who worked on the Sackville railway bridge upgrade from a cattle arch; he built Bexhill's first pavilion the Kursaal; and cast the sphinxes for Cleopatra's needle in London. William Herbert Alton was the architect, who also co-designed Marine Mansions (behind).

Next **Members' Meetings** will be held on the following dates:

📅 **Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> October 2025, 7:00pm**  
St. Barnabas Church

Speaker: Edmund Bird on the History of London's Underground.

📅 **Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> November 2025, 3:30pm**  
St. Barnabas Church

Speaker: Daryl Holter will be talking Heritage Crime as Hastings and Rother Heritage Crime Officer.

🌐 [bexhillheritage.com](http://bexhillheritage.com)

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## Bexhill Heritage: Your Legacy

*After looking after your family and friends, please consider leaving Bexhill Heritage a gift in your will.*

*An unrestricted legacy gift is one of the most valuable contributions a member can make to Bexhill Heritage's continuing work. You will be giving us useful discretion in using your donation where it's most needed.*

*Should you wish to support a particular project or discuss a potential piece of work in your name, then please contact us for a confidential discussion.*

*Please help Bexhill Heritage to thrive for years to come.*

have opportunities for supporting a keynote performer or a whole concert. In return, you or your business will receive recognition through our advertising and reserved seats for the performance.

## Commemorative Wall Plaques

We are currently in the process of putting together a list of notable people and historical places in the town to commemorate. This will complement the existing plaques below.



Members can make their own suggestions for historical places or notable former residents by emailing us. A notable person must have died at least 20 years ago or reached the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of their birth to be considered.

## Denge Sound Mirrors Visit

Early on a sunny July Saturday morning, 25 Bexhill Heritage members gathered cheerfully at the Bandstand to start their visit to the historic Denge Sound Mirrors located on Denge Island half a mile inside The RSPB Dungeness Sanctuary.

We timed our visit to coincide with one of the few Open Days when members of the public can roam freely on the site.

We all gathered in front of the largest of three structures – a 200x40 foot high concrete and reinforced steel 'mirror' built in the 1920s. We were amazed and humbled by the sheer size of the mirror, its ambitious construction and the ingenuity of purpose shown by its designers.

The need for an early warning system for approaching enemy aircraft was highlighted during the First World War following airship attacks on the UK mainland from across the English Channel.

Sounds (hitting the mirror from 20 miles away) were received by engineers stationed behind the structure. The engineer would telephone the nearest airfield - Headcorn or Biggin Hill - to scramble aircraft.

The sound mirrors were quickly superseded by RADAR which was far more effective.

An exceptionally knowledgeable and engaging historian delivered a detailed and comprehensive talk, enriched by black-and-white photographs that brought the subject to life.

Following the talk, we enjoyed some well-earned refreshment at the local excellent fish and chip restaurant. Returning home we were very grateful to have been able to see these mirrors and had an extremely enjoyable day.

