



Dear members,

These notes focus on Bexhill Heritage's exciting project to restore and repurpose East Parade's Shelter No.2. It's the most ambitious scheme we've ever attempted and a fitting project for our 10th anniversary. Members are warmly invited to become involved as volunteer restorers, sponsors or fund-raisers.

You've probably noticed that parts of Shelter 2's decorative ironwork have been removed. We've discovered how it fitted together and are now in a very strong position to re-cast new iron brackets. This will be slow, painstaking work as much of the Victorian woodwork also needs to be re-made or restored, before being repainted in Bexhill red, green and white.

Funding for the project will be 'released' over the next two years with completion planned for 2028. However, Bexhill Heritage must contribute to the scheme financially, so we'll be asking members to help raise our share of the necessary funds.

Our vision for Shelter 2 is to create a seaside 'meet and play space' for young children and their parents or carers. There'll also be a focus on storytelling and children's literature with a particular emphasis on Sussex writers such as A. A. Milne, Rudyard Kipling and Bexhill's own Joyce Brisley.

As you might expect, we're keen to restore the building closer to its original 1896 form. We'll do this by removing the central partition to maximise floor space (the partition like was added when the Bexhill Corporation acquired the East and De La Warr Parades from the De La Warr estate in the early 20th century). We'll improve safety by closing off direct access to the road and plan to install doors on the southern side facing the sea. The new doors will open on to an imaginative play and performance space, referencing the building's original enclosed Victorian garden. A ramped, accessible entrance will be created on the shelter's eastern side.

Join the Bexhill Heritage Renovation Team. Make new friends. Learn new skills. Help make a difference to our town.

Regards,

Steve Johnson
Chairman

NEWSLETTER

Spring 2026



Work Starts on Shelter No.2



In May, Playfoot Engineering removed three sample cast iron brackets which were taken to Harlings Foundry for assessment. The remaining 17 brackets are to be removed very soon, and then recasting can begin.



In the meantime, the restoration team have been making progress on stripping paint, preparing surfaces for the reinstatement of the removed brackets and restoring the original teak bench slats.

This cast iron column's beautiful intricate patterns were hidden by 130 years of paint.

The roof space has also uncovered a number of treasures including alcoholic beverages, 1950s newspapers and a ladies' swimming costume!

We have approached a number of local artists to help raise money for the restoration; a limited number of their paintings of Shelter No.2 will be available to buy at forthcoming events including this one by Raouf Oderuth.



Architecture Spotlight



La Casa Blanca, 13 Elmstead Road

Built in 1929 and known as The Close until the 1990s, the house is a rare surviving example of the Colonial Spanish style once fashionable in England and the United States. It is a substantial two-storey villa with a hipped clay-pantile roof, smooth white rendered walls and chimneys. The south garden front has five bays with multi-paned windows, green shutters to the arched ground-floor openings, and a central balcony. The west elevation overlooks the sunken garden, while the east front faces the road with Spanish-style ironwork, three slit windows and an arched entrance. White rendered boundary walls topped with honey-brown tiles and ornate Spanish-style iron gates enclose the property.

The house was designed, most unusually by its first occupier Mr Charles Crofton Black, a barrister and liveryman of the Worshipful Company of Wheelwrights in the City of London. Educated at Chigwell public school and Emmanuel College Cambridge he was called to the bar at the age of 23. He was an advisor to the Parliamentary Committee on Land Taxation, legal advisor to the Land Union and author of several works on land and agriculture. He showed a keen interest in the development of Bexhill until his early death aged only 56 in 1937.

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

 **Thursday 18th June 2026, 7:00pm**
Senior Citizens Club, 45 Eversley Road **AGM**
Speaker: Alastair Stewart on 'Rother Valley Railway'.

 **Thursday 8th October 2026, 7:00pm**
Senior Citizens Club, 45 Eversley Road
Speaker: Niall Mcrae and Rob Hiscocks on 'History and Development of Bexhill's Pubs, part 2'.

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Coronation Bandstand Free Summer Concerts



Bexhill Heritage is hosting a full programme of Bandstand concerts during the summer. We have music on most Friday afternoons during June, July and August as well as seven larger concerts on selected Saturdays and Sundays from now through to September.

Saturday 4 th July	WORLD CUP CONCERT
- 12:30pm	- The Brothers Bula
- 1:30pm	- The Jolly Boys, Ticehurst Voice Singers
- 2:20pm	- Sevenoaks & Tonbridge Concert Band
- 4:30pm	- Ian Hamilton Trio
Saturday 18 th July	SUMMER CELEBRATIONS
- 1:00pm	- The Shady Ladies
- 2:15pm	- The FOG
- 3:30pm	- Saxonymous
- 4:45pm	- The Wacky Band
Saturday 1 st August	HOLIDAY HIGHLIGHTS
- 12:00pm	- The Other Band
- 2:00pm	- Albatross Ukulele Band
Saturday 15 th August	BEXHILL DAY
- 11:00am	- Culbaba Theatre
- 12:30pm	- The Battle Ukulele Band
- 2:00pm	- The Royal British Legion Band
- 4:00pm	- Sevenoaks Saxophone Orchestra
Saturday 19 th September	GUSTAV HOLST ANNIVERSARY CONCERT
- 11:30am	- The Shady Ladies
- 1:40pm	- Heathfield Silver Band
- 3:30pm	- Saxonymous

Canvas Tote Bags



We've recently designed and printed three canvas bags to help raise funding for Shelter No.2. Choose from the Coronation Bandstand, the Bexhill Flag and the Bexhill Heritage logo. You can pick up any of these bags for £3.50 each at our members' meetings or for £4 at various events throughout the summer.

Renewing Memberships

As well as PayPal, you can now renew your membership in several other ways. We accept bank transfers, posted cheques, or cash/card payments at any of our events. Simply click the link in your renewal reminder and select 'Pay Later' so we know to look out for your payment.