

# Discover the Loire

Last year's enjoyable spring trip to the Loire valley was a memorable follow up to 2007's highly successful vineyards and historic chateaux visit.

This time a group of fifteen members of the MCHA set off by coach from Brighton to France to taste the fine wines of the Loire Valley as well as taking in the fairytale chateaux of this rich historical area of France.

The five-day event was packed full with visits to the chateaux of Villandry, Saumur and Azay-le-Rideau (see photograph below) amongst others. A black tie gala dinner was given at Le Prieuré de Chenute where everybody enjoyed a champagne reception followed by a splendid four-course dinner. Vine connoisseurs enjoyed tasting the well known wines of the Loire, in particular Vouvray, Chinon and Chenin Blanc in chateaux and in fascinating troglodyte caves. The group also had a chance to visit Fontveraud Abbey, the burial place of the English kings Richard I and Henry II as well as Elena of Aquitaine.

Roger Amerena is hoping to arrange further trip with Great Escapes in 2010 to Burgundy and a one day excursion with Martin Foster to Dieppe and Bois de Moitiers the only country house and gardens in France by Lutyens and Jekyll then to Benedictine in Fecamp.



## OUTINGS 2009

Following the success of our outings organised by Martin Foster, we are pleased to announce that our former Treasurer and Membership Secretary has joined forces with Brighton City Guide, Michael Robins, to form an independent company called M and M Historic Tours. With their combined experience and knowledge, they promise to provide us with another year of excellent tours to historical places of interest.

This year they are planning four trips. For people who share an interest in visiting historical places.

- Sunday 10th May Oakhurst Cottages and Winkworth Arboretum, Surrey
- Sunday 5th July Cowdray House and Historic Midhurst, Sussex
- Sunday 23rd August Wrest Park and De Grey Mausoleum, Bedfordshire
- Sunday 4th October Dorney Court and Eton College, Berkshire

For further information call Martin Foster on 729 998; martin.foster2@btinternet.com

## DIARY DATES

- |              |   |
|--------------|---|
| May          | Historic walks by guide Mike Robins. See Festival Fringe programme for times/dates.   |
| 28th May     | AGM, 7pm Brighton & Hove High School. Guest Speaker Tim Craddock,.  |
| 9th July     | Sussex Heritage Trust Awards lunch, 12.30 at Farbridge, Preston Farm, West Dean, Chichester. Tickets are £45, contact, Martin Foster 729998.  |
| 11th July    | Summer Party at the High School Old Vicarage in Temple Gardens from 5 - 8pm. Weather permitting the party will be held on the lawns and in the marquee. The occasion will also provide a rare opportunity to view the interior of the Old Vicarage, not normally open to the public. Food and Wine will be sponsored by Waitrose. Application forms for tickets will be sent. |
| 3rd December | MCHA Christmas Party at Montpelier Hall. As always a very popular event, exciting raffle, plenty of wine, canapés and good company. Application forms for tickets will be sent.   |

## The Temple Dance and Fitness Centre

The dance and fitness centre is in Temple Gardens adjacent to Brighton and Hove High School. Classes in aerobics, ballet, pilates, yoga amongst many others are on offer. As an association member you will qualify for a discount on membership. To find out more, contact James Turner on 734 112; email j.turner@bhhs.gdst.net

## Membership

We are always looking for new members to join the Association who are interested in conserving the built environment. If you know of neighbours, friends or acquaintances who might like to join, please contact Ian Thorburn, membership secretary on 739 479. **RA**

We have enjoyed great coverage in The Seven Dials Directories and would like to thank Joan Evans, the publisher and editor who is also a MCHA committee member.



We have enjoyed great coverage in The Seven Dials Directories and would like to thank Joan Evans, the publisher and editor who is also a MCHA committee member.

Waitrose.com

Thank you WAITROSE for your continued support and for sponsoring our garden party. The association would like to thank our corporate member for supporting our events by supplying food, beverages and waiting staff.



Est. 1970

Reg. Charity 867889

**Roger Amerena**, Chairman, City Commemorative Plaque Panel, tel. 203 599

**Brian Brooks**, Vice Chairman

**Chris Jackson**, Honorary Treasurer, Newsletter

**Jim Gowans**, Honorary Secretary

**Mick Hamer**, Planning, CAG Representative

**Ian Thorburn**, Membership Secretary, Website, Ian.Thorburn@waitrose.com

**Richard Killick**, Editor Newsletter

**Gabi Tubbs**, Editor Newsletter, Awards

**Martin Foster**, Historic Tours, tel. 729998

**Mike Robins**, Historic Walks, Outings

**Graham Towers**, CAG Representative, Planning

**Ingela Jackson**, Tradecard

**Joan Evans**, Seven Dials Directory

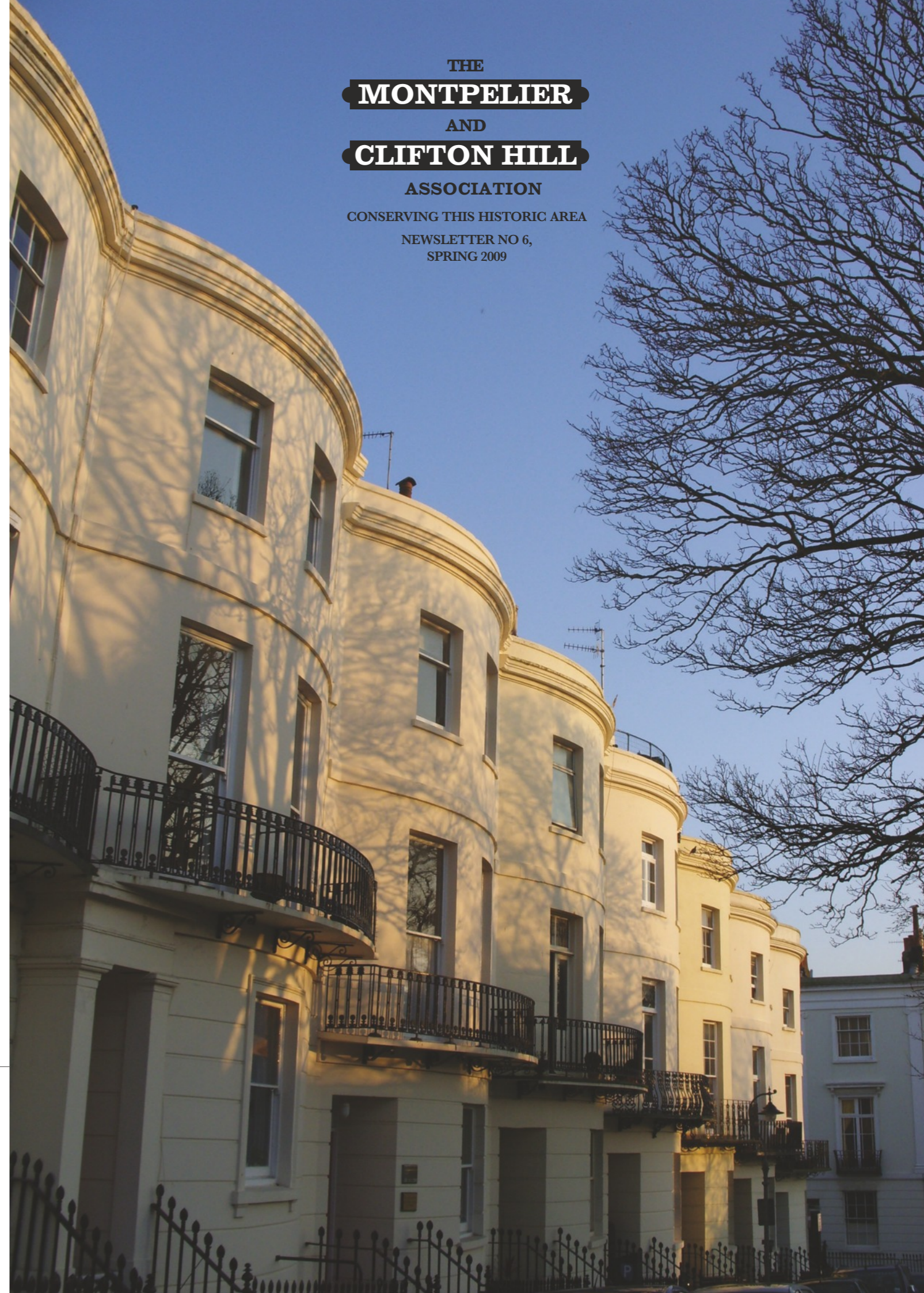
**Alan Legg**, Events Organizer

**Tim Craddock**, Co-opted Member

**Membership Subscriptions**

Single membership is £10 and couples £15, corporate £30.

[www.montpelierandcliftonhill.org](http://www.montpelierandcliftonhill.org)



# Sex and the Prussian vice-consul in Hampton Place - a "buy-to-let" disaster



The juliet balconies and stucco pilasters on the east side of Hampton Place evoke a genteel Georgian past. The centrepiece of the terrace is seven houses that were built by one of the town's foremost builders, William Hallett, who became the second mayor of Brighton. So far, so respectable.

But scrape away the stucco and you find an altogether more racy past. It is a story about sex and the Prussian vice-consul. And then story takes on a decidedly modern twist with a property boom, followed by a crash and decades of negative equity.

The man who financed the development was Edward Patzcker, a shipping merchant of Poole in Dorset, who specialised in importing timber from the Baltic. Patzcker, who had been born in the Prussian port of Memel (now in Lithuania) became the Prussian vice-consul in Poole.

In the 1820s Brighton with its royal patronage was in the middle of a building boom. And Patzcker on his voyages to unload timber at Shoreham quickly saw that there were fortunes to be made in Brighton's burgeoning property market.

His opportunity when Patzcker had a legover with a widow of Poole. Margaret Wanhill, who was in her late 30s was a very attractive catch. She was not only ten years younger than Patzcker but also very wealthy.

Patzcker married Wanhill in February 1829. Once Patzcker got his hands on her assets, as it were, he bought a substantial plot of development land on the western fringe of Brighton. In 1829 the first four houses in Hampton Place (then numbered 1 to 4, but now

numbered 6 to 12) were already being built on a plot that ran north from the corner with Hampton Street. Patzcker's land lay immediately to the north of this plot and had a frontage of 120 feet on Hampton Place.

Patzcker selected William Hallett to build a terrace of seven fashionable townhouses on Hampton Place and a mews development behind.

But Brighton's property boom was beginning to run out of steam and there are signs that Patzcker, who was also building an extravagant house near Poole for his new bride, had over-extended himself. In the mid 1820s these would have been snapped up, now they were difficult to let. By 1831 William Hallett, was living at 7 Hampton Place (now number 18) while he was building the terrace. Although Hallett finished the terrace the three houses at the southern end of the terrace have four storeys, the four houses at the northern end of the terrace are three storeys and lack basements.

In March 1836 Patzcker was forced to mortgage the terrace. He borrowed £4,000 from Patrick Hadow, a city financier and immediately tried to sell the houses to pay off the debt. The development, which was then providing an income of £348 10s a year came up for auction at the Ship Hotel on 9 July 1836.

At the Ship Hotel "seven capital newly finished houses in Hampton Place and commodious builders' yard with workshops in Back-Street" came up for sale by auction. The houses were "substantially built, and well finished and every way suited for small genteel families."

But despite their position "in a fashionable part of Brighton" the houses failed to sell. Patzcker tried to sell them at auction again in March 1839. Despite claiming that they were "within three minutes' walk of the sea" the houses again failed to sell and in 1841 Hadow repossessed the properties.

The terrace stayed in the hands of the Hadow family for the next sixty years, and was passed down from father to son until eventually it came into the hands of Walter Hadow, a noted county cricketer, who played against W. G. Grace. Hadow died in 1898 at the age of 49. Cricket was an expensive business for the gentleman amateur and his widow Constance finally sold the Brighton properties at auction in 1904.

The sale underlined the hazards of buy-to-let investment in the 19th century. The rental income at the time of the 1904 sale was £385 - only 10 per cent more than it had been in 1836. **MH**

# Book Reviews

## The Victorian Development of the Clifton, Montpelier and Powis Estates of Brighton

Steve Myall, Pomegranate Press, £14.95

The author is a MCHA member and the two major contributors are our own Chairman Roger Amerena and Vice Chairman Brian Brooks.

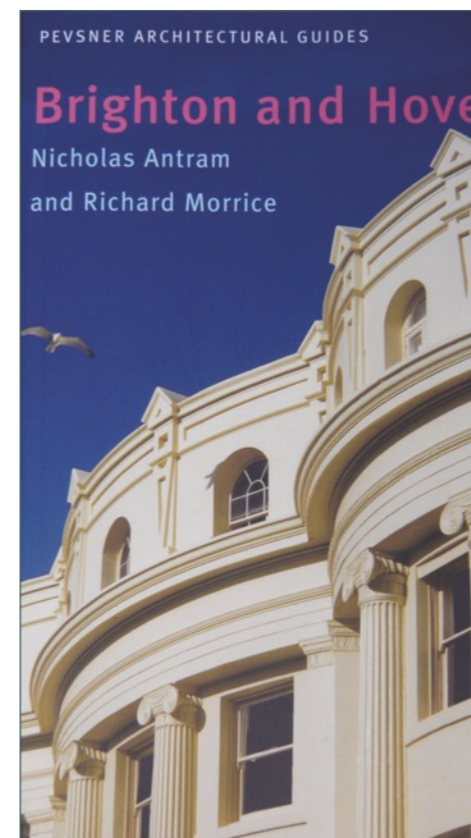
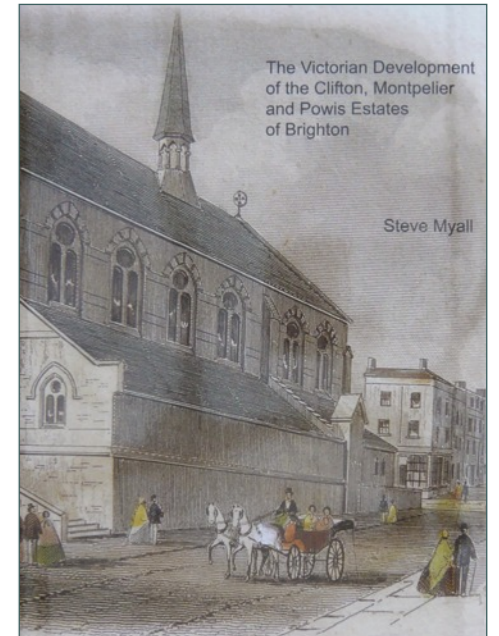
Maps, engravings, paintings and (some colour) photos support a substantial but very readable text which mainly describes the dramatic period of growth experienced by these areas in the first half of the 19th century when its character became more or less that which we know today. It, also, includes information on developments since that period and has a final chapter which brings it up to date with references, for example, to the threat to the Royal Alexandra Hospital since its acquisition by the builders Taylor Wimpey.

Apart from extensive detail describing the origins of existing buildings, roads and open spaces, there are intriguing facts on buildings that have disappeared.

Waitrose have been sponsors of several MCHA events, so let me pluck their name from amongst the 187 pages, (but also point out that the index omits it!) The supermarket site now at the junction of Western Road and Montpelier Road was where the home of a countess once stood. How appropriate some will say; the countess would certainly be turning in her grave had it been a Lidl or a Costcutter.

There are several pictures of local graveyards and it is curious to observe that the gravestones in St Nicholas' churchyard appear to have been as lop-sided in 1825 as they are today, the area looking much the same as it does today but of course without the groups of teenage goths lolling about or the dog litter bins!

The churches of the area are given a chapter to themselves. Of five built in the 19th century only two now remain and it is depressing to contemplate the dullness of the blocks of flats which have replaced them. It is to be hoped that this is borne in mind as the application to demolish the Royal Alexandra Hospital is considered, there is a fine 1881 illustration of the building which gives food for thought. **JAG**



## Pevsner Architectural Guides Brighton and Hove

Members of the association including Roger Amerena (Chairman), John Small, Ninka Willcock and Steve Myall have contributed to this authoritative guide which is based on the prestigious work by Sir Nikolaus Pevsner, "Buildings of England"

Included in the "Major Buildings" section of the guide is a substantial article on St Michael's and All Angels Church whilst one of the twelve featured walks in the city is through Montpelier, Clifton Hill and West Hill. It is a guide which is therefore of particular interest to the MCHA membership. It will complement both the walking guide brochure produced last year by your committee and the escorted walking tours offered during the Brighton Festival by committee member and professional tour guide Mike Robins.

The guide authors Nicholas Antram and Richard Morrice maintain Pevsner's high standard of prose writing, and combine clear and succinct architectural analysis with knowledge gleaned from local experts. At the same time Antram and Morrice do not refrain from giving blunt opinion. So if you want to know if your own cherished home is considered part of a "crass block of flats" or, on the other hand, is said to be "especially charming" or whether your street is damned by the description "once fashionable" or praised as being part of "one great show piece" then to satisfy your curiosity you need to spend just £9.99p on this very practical pocket guide. **JAG**

# Save our front gardens

Despite central government's growing realisation of not only the amenity value of front gardens in urban and suburban areas, but also their positive effect on climate change, local councils are still allowing these gardens to be lost, even in conservation areas such as our own.



Clifton Hill is to see a front garden converted to car parking just yards from the houses in Denmark Terrace which have already made the switch from greenery to concrete. If such conversions helped to ease the parking problems for the neighbours it might be of some consolation for the loss of the garden, but such off street parking, with its double yellow lines, actually reduces the overall parking provision.

It is sad to see how the loss of front gardens, in Upper North Street especially, has diminished the quality of the street scene there and when it is compared with nearby Victoria Street whose front gardens are such a delight, the loss appears all the more depressing.

Friends of the Earth among other organisations, as diverse as the London Assembly and The Children's Society which produced a front garden design for last year's Chelsea Flower show, have pointed to the vital environmental role of urban gardens, which is in addition to their value as a beautiful amenity enjoyed by all. Shrubs and flowers, trees and grass encourage bio-diversity, reduce flooding, improve air quality and help to maintain stable temperatures. Gardening at the front of your property also provides the opportunity for friendly, informal contact with neighbours and passers-by; a situation unlikely to occur if they are simply greeted with a blast of exhaust gases or a low maintenance Cordyline staring at them from a blank plain of concrete paviers.

It is to be hoped that local councils will recognise the environmental contribution of those who have chosen not to convert their gardens to parking by offering council tax reductions or subsidies in the same way that subsidies are already given for house insulation and renewable energy schemes. But the least councils can do is to remove the threat that still more front gardens will be lost. **JAG**

## Exciting Sculpture for the Seven Dials Roundabout

In 2007 Brighton & Hove City Council launched a competition to design a public sculpture for the Seven Dials roundabout as part of a refurbishment programme of the famous intersection. The brief was to create a striking piece that celebrated the heritage of Brighton's architecture, particularly the work of Amon Wilds and his son, Amon Henry Wilds. After an extensive selection process the commission was awarded to Myles Dacre, a local artist and sculptor who is also a MCHA member.

The winning entry is an abstract ammonite on a classical fluted column, six metres tall and all in stainless steel. "The Wilds used the ammonite as an architectural signature on many of their houses," explains Myles. "It was a visual pun on their names and cried out to be used as the basis to the sculpture." The best examples of the use of the ammonite can be seen at the top of the columns on houses in Montpelier Crescent and Montpelier Road.

Although the project is Council led, the financing for it is to be generated through private-sector sponsorship. It is hoped that installation will take place within the next twelve months.



## 2008 CONSERVATION AWARDS



Despite the economic climate, we have had a small number of high quality nominations for the 2008 Montpelier and Clifton Hill Award Scheme.

**After careful evaluation, we decided to present our conservation award to:**



### 45 Upper North Street

For the extensive restoration of exterior and interior of old shop into a treatment room, reception and shop by architect for Registered Osteopath, Gerry Carter DO (Hons).

Architects - Felce & Guy Partnership; builders - C.J Gowings



**Commendation goes to:**

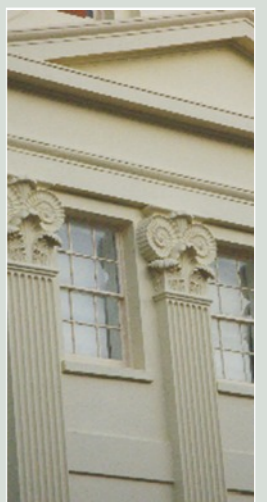
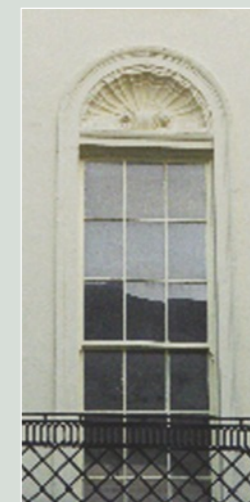
### 63 Montpelier Road

Reinstatement of collapsed first floor balcony using original design, with exceptional craftsmanship; paying extreme attention to detail, Austin Rees, Managing Agents, John Austin.

I would like to thank all of you for taking part in this worthwhile awards scheme. **GT**

## Architectural features

Early in 2009 Brighton and Hove City Council issued a draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) on architectural features for listed buildings and buildings within conservation areas. This document is likely to be approved this spring to be added to the list of advisory documents for those people that need guidance for the repair, improvement and conversion of historic buildings. It is a detailed and useful guide covering roofs, bays, gables, porticos, porches, bricks, rendering and mouldings, windows, doors, balconies and canopies, boundaries and paths and miscellaneous minor additions. Advice can be sought direct from the City Council on 290 000 or from the Association on 203599. **RA**



# Planning and Conservation Advice

Over the last year due to the increase in property values, our conservation area saw many planning applications from people wanting to convert, restore and renew. As members you are offered free conservation and planning advice prior to going to the City Council by Roger Amerena, Mick Hamer and Graham Towers, and we have had an interesting list of cases this year, from the investigation of a possible priest's hole at no 12 Wykeham Terrace which turned out to be a passageway leading to a culvert which had been bricked up many years ago to planning enforcement at no 5 Temple Street. Alerted by a member, we found that builders had removed architectural features to the building including fireplaces and windows to the rear extension, together with demolishing an outhouse. This building, being Grade II, should have had not only Planning Permission but Listed Building Consent for the interior as well as exterior work. The Planning Enforcement Officers were alerted and it was put in the hands of the conservation officer of the Council who then insisted on various reinstatement works. If members ever see building work which they believe does not have planning or listed building consent, please alert us. We will then take the necessary steps to inform the City Council.



There have also been legitimate advisory cases with which we have helped. Conservation advice was given to 12 Vernon Terrace, an outstanding Grade II house in single occupation. A successful outcome was achieved at 1 and 2 Clifton Hill where the proposal was to reinstate the boundary wall, iron railings and gates, together with incorporating a car park area for no 2. MCHA members at 89 Montpelier Road consulted us with regard to the reinstatement of the balconies on the first floor and repair work to the windows and façade as well as choice of colour, the building had been sadly neglected for years. This is very much welcomed as this is a key building in the road and we congratulate the owners for instigating the scheme of restoration. We gave planning advice to 16 Hampton Place and have also been consulted by the owners of 90 Montpelier Road who are also members. We are suggesting that the rear of the building is compartmentalized into a separate small house with its own entrance in Montpelier Terrace. The ugly parking area with sliding gates will be removed and the boundary reinstated with a suitable cast iron pedestrian gate inserted. Here again we have been consulted on choice of colour which will be Gardenia similar to no 89.

We continue to encourage owners in Hampton Place to repaint their properties in the uniform colour scheme unofficially adopted by the street. See the article in the newsletter no 5. We successfully got 48 Montpelier Road repainted from bright pink to cream, together with the rears of 55 and 56 Montpelier Road from bright blue to white, having alerted the city enforcement officer. These last two Grade II properties are superb examples of Amon H Wilds's work, are in poor condition. We have written to the City Council over our concerns regarding their condition. We are currently awaiting a reply. Also early last summer, 59 Montpelier Road was suddenly painted pea green and yellow. Again the enforcement officer was alerted and we are pleased to report this building is now a gentle shade of cream.

In addition we have given advice for the following properties; 7 Victoria Road - original features; 8 Montpelier Terrace - a roof terrace; 10 Montpelier Terrace - total restoration; 94 Montpelier Road - internal features and ground floor rear extension; Brighton and Hove High School for Girls - damaged walls and frost damaged piers. The Old Vicarage, Temple Gardens - paint treatment to elevations. The Governors of St Mary Magdalen School, boundary dispute and neighbour planning matters; 22 Montpelier Crescent (non members), total restoration; 47 Upper North Street, (non members) - inappropriate PVC rear windows and internal alterations; 50 Upper North Street, representations to the licensing committee for the limitation of opening hours for the shop; 4 Vine Place - total restoration; 7 Vine Place - planning advice, 8 Vine Place - planning advice; 18 Montpelier Villas - pigeon infestation; 26 Victoria Street (non members) - restoration; 46 Victoria Street - forecourt walls and basement area. Waitrose - yellow lines at store entrance. We are also concerned about the unsafe balcony at no 91 Montpelier Road, the Council have been alerted.

It has been an eventful year for planning applications and no doubt we will have some interesting cases over the next few months. We will keep you posted. **RA**

## Admiral Sir Edward Codrington Forthcoming event



MCHA has a seat on the City Council Commemorative Plaque Panel and every year one plaque is unveiled. MCHA's suggestion of Admiral Codrington's, a direct result of the article in issue 4 of the newsletter, was agreed to and the above plaque has been made and will be positioned at no 140 Western Road, to be unveiled hopefully during Brighton Festival. Members will be informed of this in advance and all will be welcome to the ceremony. The Admiral lived at 140 Western Road from 1828 to 1832 and was the hero of the battle of Navarino in 1828 and thus enabled Greece to gain its independence.

## Latest news on Royal Alex

For more than three years MCHA has been campaigning to save the Royal Alexandra Children's Hospital from demolition. We know that very many local people regard this attractive building as an important landmark which makes a major contribution to the Clifton Hill environment. In our survey carried out in late 2005 an overwhelming majority of respondents wanted to see the key buildings retained and re-used. In 2007 the site was sold to Taylor Wimpey, one of the biggest housing developers in the country. The developer promptly proceeded to ignore the wishes of the local community and the advice of the City Planning department by preparing a scheme to demolish all the buildings and replace them with new multi-storey flats of repetitive and simplistic design. After minimal and wholly inadequate consultation the scheme was submitted for planning permission. The application was rejected unanimously by the Planning committee in March last year.

Over last summer a second scheme was developed. While some changes were made to the proposed new buildings the basic scheme remained the same - still wholesale demolition still a large-scale overdevelopment. At the Planning Committee in December last year members threw out the second redevelopment plan and refused permission to demolish the existing buildings. The decision was almost unanimous - 10 votes to nil (with 2 abstentions) - it was reached because objectors had succeeded in persuading the councillors that the landmark Victorian building should not be lost without a much fuller examination of options for retention and conversion.

While the Councillors were persuaded, the City's Planning Officers were not. They have recommenced refusal of the first application. This time they backed the developers citing 'financial viability'. We challenged this view arguing that market values and profitability should never enter into consideration in deciding planning applications. We were able to quote, Council and Government policy in support of this argument. And the committee were persuaded but the officers recommendation to grant permission to demolish had made our task doubly difficult.

So what happens now? The 'credit crunch' may play a part. Taylor Wimpey are in serious difficulties and it is certain that they would not carry out any development on this site in the near future. Nevertheless the developers have appealed against refusal for their schemes. The appeal is now scheduled to start on 12 May. We will contest the appeal and have assembled a team of MCHA members and expert witnesses. We expect the appeal format to be helpful to us. While we only had 3 minutes to address the planning committee, we will have much longer to present our case to the Government Inspector. If the appeal is rejected we would like to see a less dense development with an imaginative combination of new buildings and conversion of the key hospital buildings. **GT 18.2.09 and 23.4.09**

## Tree planting

A tree planting scheme has been proposed and submitted to the City Council in February, recommending tree planting in Montpelier Terrace, Montpelier Place, Montpelier Road. This is the first section of a larger tree planting programme in our area. Plans can be seen if you contact Roger Amerena. Trees have been lost over the years for a variety of reasons - disease, vehicle damage, road widening, unscrupulous developers and visibility reasons. However, we believe there is a case for tree replacement and an annotated 1875 ordinance survey map was used to illustrate where trees could be replaced. In the past the common elm (*Ulmus glabra*) was used, however a modern variety has been suggested to us by the City Council arboriculturalists and we will update you with progress. The Association has offered to contribute towards some of these. **RA**

## James Gray Collection

As members are probably aware, the Regency Society owns the Gray Collection and is looking for sponsorship for some of its 39 volumes of photographs of the City. Montpelier and Clifton Hill as already been digitalized. However, Western Road which incorporates the south side of our conservation area, including the bottom of Montpelier Road, needs to be sponsored and digitalized. The Association has offered to do this but is looking for contributions from members. The cost is £1000 and we are looking for another £600. If anyone is interested in contributing towards this, please contact Chris Jackson, the Honorary Treasurer on 208 616.



## Brighton Festival Montpelier and Clifton Hill Guided Tours

The popular guided tour of our conservation area will again be featuring in the Brighton Festival Fringe. Over the years Mike Robins has successfully run this with numbers of people increasing every year. If you're not certain of the history of the conservation area and enjoy a walk, at the end of which cream teas are served, do book, as it is a worthwhile experience. For example, did you know that Martha Gunn (famous 19th century Brighton bathing machine owner) is buried in St Nicholas churchyard, as is Amon Wilds. Tour times available from the Festival box office on 709 709. **RA**

## Obituaries

Since the last publication we've learnt of the sad loss of two of our members; Lt.Col. Leonard Millar at the age of 82, having been a long standing supporter of MCHA; Gilbert Bradley, aged 90, president of the Derby Porcelain Society International, who gave us two excellent talks on Derby Porcelain and Isnik Ceramics, having been a world expert on the subject. Also Charles Howard, auditor to MCHA for ten years, died peacefully in December 2008. Our committee agreed to donate £100 to the Royal Star and Garter Homes for Ex-service men and women in his memory. He offered his services free of charge over the period and will be sadly missed. **RA**