



THE  
**MONTPELIER**  
AND  
**CLIFTON HILL**

ASSOCIATION

REGISTERED CHARITY  
NUMBER 267889

NEWSLETTER NO. 30  
MARCH 2019

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#### ASSOCIATION CONTACTS

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**The Montpelier and Clifton Hill  
Association was established in 1971 and is  
registered with the Charity  
Commission (Reg. Charity No. 267889).**

The MCHA executive committee  
consists of;

**Jim Gowans**, Chairman  
**Chris Jackson**, Honorary Treasurer  
**Corinne Attwood**, Honorary Secretary  
**Jack Tyson**

The co-opted members are: Duncan  
Cameron; Carol Dyhouse; Janice  
Johnson; Brian Morris; Jane Osler and  
Ninka Willcock.

Gabi Tubbs is the conservation awards  
co-ordinator.

Additional pictures by Carol Dyhouse,  
Gabi Tubbs, Stephanie Pain and  
Constance Lawrence

#### MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

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

Subscriptions are due on the 1st April  
each year.

#### FOR YOUR DIARY

**Spring Lecture**  
Friday 3rd May (see flyer)

**Geoffrey Mead Walks**  
May-June (see flyer)

**AGM and Summer Lecture**  
Friday 7th June (see flyer)

**Summer Party**  
Saturday 13th July (see flyer)

**Autumn Lecture**  
Friday 18th October (see flyer)



**19 Montpelier Place**

The cover page is the Montpelier Road entrance to the Brighton and Hove High School. The school's main building, known as "the Temple" (see article on page 3) celebrates 200 years since it was built for the man who in the early 19th century developed the fashionable estate east of Brighton which today bears his name: "Kemp Town". The Pevsner Guide describes the columns on the ground floor of the Temple as of "bizarre form, engaged and tapering with turned capitals like stoppers but carrying normal round arches..." whilst the 1960s classroom block to the right is dismissed as "drab". Not itself a listed building, No 19 Montpelier Place (above picture) stands next to a grade II\* building (the former St Stephen's Church and now First Base Day Centre), nevertheless it can be considered an example of what the area's character statement calls "high quality unlisted properties". The statement (written by council heritage officers in 2005) also refers to "the strong vertical emphasis to the street frontages, enhanced by the architectural detailing to the front elevations and tall trees planted outside in the street". It seems likely that No.s 18 and 19 Montpelier Place were built as a free standing pair in the 1860s. The street directories of the time indicate that the first occupants were medical professionals. **JG**

# 200TH ANNIVERSARY OF “THE TEMPLE”



The Temple today from Temple Gardens

The building which has housed the Brighton and Hove High School since the 1880s was erected for Thomas Read Kemp, most probably by the architects Amon and Amon Henry Wilds whose designs have greatly influenced the character of our area today. Although the upper floors are now much altered since 1819 many original features remain recognizable. The aquatint engraving by William Daniell was published in 1823 and shows Kemp's new house in Montpelier Road before alterations

to the upper storeys. Its name “The Temple” is based on the belief that the dimensions were those of the Temple of King Solomon which is plausible given Kemp's position as a prominent freemason. In the foreground is the trackway that became Clifton Hill, and left of that is the cornfield on which Powis Square and Powis Villas were built some 23 years later. The fencing that surrounded Vine's Mill can also be seen. The couple in the left foreground is probably the young Mr and Mrs T R Kemp, with their butler in

attendance, walking back to their home built on what was then an isolated spot just four years before this print. The natural inlet of Shoreham Harbour is seen in the distance. With the artist standing on the highest point in the area, near the much later site of the old Royal Alexandra Children's Hospital on Dyke Road, this 1823 view covers much of the land on which the Clifton, Montpelier and Powis roads were built. The cornfield being harvested in the middle distance is now the site of Powis Square, Powis Road and St. Michael's Place. The present Victoria

Road would later be built to the left of the cornfield and Montpelier Road runs across the print, in front of the Temple. The steel engraving by H A Ogg from the early 1830s, shows some of the alterations such as the addition of four chimneys and extension of the first floor which subsumed the classical pediment. It is a view from the Dyke Road where today it is met by Clifton Road, the latter not being laid out until the 1840s and the coming of the railway. The engraving, which was no doubt coloured sometime after first publication, shows traffic on Montpelier Road (or today's Denmark Terrace) seemingly keeping to a 20 mph speed limit! The carriage is drawn by a single horse which may well have struggled to climb the hill from the sea front; it is passing in front of the flint wall with its massive pepper-pot domed piers at each corner and four pairs of gate pillars whose appearance is virtually unchanged today. It must be pointed out that the large domed structure shown on the left margin is not the High School's proposed “bio-dome” which, since a planning application five years ago, seems to have fallen foul of global belt tightening! It was, however, a bio-dome of sorts. Constructed of glass and cast iron ribs just before the engraving was published, the “Anthaeum” (from the Greek word for a flower) was a conservatory of vast proportions intended to house a tropical garden and measuring 50 meters across and 20 meters high. It was bigger than the dome of St Paul's Cathedral but unlike St Paul's it failed to stand the test of time; in fact it failed to stand the test of being officially opened, collapsing in spectacular fashion two days before the inaugural ceremony! The photograph taken in 2019 is the view today from Temple Gardens looking over the flint and brick wall seen in the two engravings. Also visible is the ground floor colonnade with its unusually shaped coupled pilasters reminiscent perhaps of ancient Egyptian temples, although not it seems copies of those in the Temple of Solomon. The dome was unfortunately removed in 1911 and replaced with the rather over scaled mansard roof which is just glimpsed in this shot. In the background can be seen the façade of Denmark Terrace built in the 1860s. The prints are courtesy of the “Society of Brighton Print Collectors” **JG**



Steel engraving by H A Ogg



Aquatint engraving by William Daniell

# CITY COUNCIL FIELD OFFICERS AND HERITAGE PROTECTION

A new service has been fully operational since December which aims to work closely with communities and partners



in order to deliver co-ordinated, fast and effective enforcement and inspection work across a number of council services. Apart from planning enforcement, these include environmental health, housing, community safety, seafront services and parks. The field officer team has already been engaged in our neighbouring West Hill conservation area ensuring that the regulation which governs estate agents' board is adhered to and monitoring the position of houses in multiple

occupation. In the Montpelier and Clifton Hill area there is concern at the harm caused to listed building by, for example, the unauthorised use of plastic window frames as in the case of this property in Powis Square. It is a criminal offence not to seek listed building consent for all works of demolition, alteration or extension to a listed building that affect its character as a building of special architectural or historic interest and not knowing a building is listed is not a defence against criminal proceedings. **JG**

## 50 YEARS SINCE OUR CITY'S FIRST CONSERVATION AREAS

Whilst Montpelier and Clifton Hill were not designated as conservation areas until 1973, the areas of Brunswick Town and Cliftonville in Hove were designated by the then Hove Borough Council in 1969. Today there are 34 conservation areas in the City of Brighton and Hove whose special character and appearance are considered worthy of preservation and indeed enhancement. The idea of a conservation area was pioneered, strangely enough, in the United States before the Second World War and it was not until 1966 that a bill, which later became the Civic Amenities Act 1967, was introduced in the British Parliament by Duncan Sandys MP who was president of the Civic Trust (now Civic Voice) and incidentally a son-in law of Winston Churchill. In the same year the Georgian town of Stamford in Lincolnshire became the first of what are now over eight thousand conservation areas in England. The photograph is of the Old Market in Brunswick Town which opened in 1828 and was a market which unlike the squares and terraces it was intended to serve did not prove a commercial success and became a riding school in the 1840s. **JG**



## BLUE PLAQUE FOR SUFFRAGETTE

A blue plaque was unveiled last November at 13 Victoria Road to commemorate Minnie Turner who lived in the house known as "Sea View" from 1910. Turner ran her boarding house as both holiday resort and refuge for suffragettes recovering from imprisonment, hunger strikes and forcible feeding, advertising in suffragette newspapers, where she offered rest cures, home-made bread and "meals served in the garden". Guests included notable suffragettes such as Emmeline Pankhurst and Emily Davison who, less than a year after her stay with at Sea View, was killed at the Epsom Derby after running in front of the King's horse. The plaque unveiling was attended by the Deputy Lord Lieutenant and the Mayor whilst the address was delivered by Professor Carol Dyhouse of Sussex University who is both a local resident and MCHA committee member. A further plaque is planned in our area for Elizabeth Robins the American actress, playwright and suffragette who lived in Montpelier Crescent. **JG**



# 11 MONTPELIER VILLAS IS AWARDED THE 2018 MCHA CONSERVATION PLATE

After a first planning application (to which the MCHA had objected) was refused in 2013 the owners had discussions with the Association and submitted revised plans which were approved in February 2014. The work of demolishing the 20th century annex to this Grade II listed semi-detached house which dates from about 1845 and of reconstructing it to provide a third residential unit, took over four years to complete. The architect John Whiting has taken pains to include appropriate



period detail, particularly in the link between the annex and the original house, which had been an unattractive feature of the existing structure. A more detailed account

of the project with pictures of the interior will be provided by the MCHA Conservation Awards coordinator Gabi Tubbs in the next newsletter. **JG**

## 8 CLIFTON ROAD TO HAVE COMMENDATION AND BLUE PLAQUE

The MCHA trustees have commended the works carried out by Association members living in this Grade II listed house built in about 1830. The picture shows the restored front elevation. The render, which had previously deteriorated, was removed and replaced and the valance to the ground floor window restored. Cast iron features such as the railings, the balcony balustrade and the fringe to the first floor canopy with its anthemion ornament of radiating petals can now be fully appreciated. It has recently come to light that the house was once occupied by members of the Dalziel family, who had the most substantial wood engraving business in

Victorian England producing the illustrations to Lewis Carroll's "Alice in Wonderland" in 1865 and "Alice through the Looking Glass" in 1871 as well as collaborating with such household names as Dante Gabriel Rossetti, John Everett Millais, and Frederic Leighton. The Brighton and Hove Commemorative Plaque Panel recently approved the application for a blue plaque to record the association of the Dalziel family with the house and so at 11:45 am on Friday 26th April the unveiling will take place in the presence of the Mayor of Brighton and Hove and researchers from the University of Sussex. All are welcome to attend the ceremony. **JG**



# OFFICES TO RESIDENTIAL AT MONTPELIER HOUSE AND CROWN HOUSE



Montpelier House

What is termed “prior approval” is being sought for the conversion of the Montpelier House offices to 12no flats. This is not the same as

making a “planning application” it being a much simpler process for developers. On the face of it this change of use would be a good

thing for the area because the developers are also intending to improve the external appearance of this unlovely building which is in Montpelier Road next to the locally listed First Church of Christ Scientist and dates from the 1960s. Alterations to the external appearance will, however, require planning permission in due course. Meanwhile the planning application to add an additional storey to Crown House in Upper North Street has been refused although “prior approval” has been given for the existing offices to be converted to 149no flats; a proposal which is causing considerable concern to local residents. The MCHA had objected to the additional storey and is pleased to note that planning officers agreed that it would cause harm to the setting of the conservation area and to the setting of St Nicholas’ church and Rest Gardens adding that the existing block already caused harm to these heritage assets. **JG**

## 1 CLIFTON ROAD COMMENDED

A few doors away from No.8 the owners of this end of terraced house (part of a set with No.s 2 to 4) have also been commended for the works carried out last year. These include the renovation of the front elevation although mainly comprise the thoughtful rebuilding of the rear non-original extension. Whilst being of the same period (circa 1830) and again Grade II listed, the façade offers different features to No. 8. The bay windows are segmental rather than canted and the valance to the first floor, the balustrade and other iron work are of a different design. **JG**



1 Clifton Road

## 32 HAMPTON PLACE COMMENDED

The third commendation is for the front steps restored at No. 32 Hampton Place an early 19th century property next door to Billie’s Café. It is listed Grade II together with No.34. The list entry specifically mentions the spearhead finials to the railings, a feature shared with No 1 Clifton Road which also has chequerboard tiling to its front steps although the Hampton Place tiling is set as a diagonal pattern whereas the Clifton Road pattern is not. **JG**



32 Hampton Place

# CELEBRATING BEYOND THE GRAVE?

One of Brighton's most colourful characters and imaginative story tellers, whose Grade II listed tomb stone is pictured (in St Nicholas' churchyard)



Phoebe Hessel's Grave

might now be celebrating her 250th wedding anniversary. In 1769 (the exact year, like much of her story, may not be confirmed) Phoebe Hessel (nee Smith) married William Hessel. The story she related later in life was that some forty years before marrying Hessel she had fallen in love with a soldier William Golding and disguised as a man, she had managed to enlist in the Fifth Regiment of Foot in order to remain with him when he was posted abroad. In 1745 she claimed that she was wounded in the arm at the Battle of Fontenoy (in modern day Belgium). However her regiment was stationed in Ireland at the time so it is possible that she confused this battle, which involved over a hundred thousand troops from several European countries, with an Irish pub brawl, which, it must

be admitted, could be of epic proportions in the 18th century especially if taking place beyond the pale. After seventeen years' service she apparently revealed her female identity to the wife of the commanding officer and was discharged, eventually moving to Brighton after Golding's death. In 1808 she was granted a pension by the Prince of Wales and, in 1814, as the oldest inhabitant in the town, she was invited to sit beside the vicar at a dinner on the Level to mark the peace and Napoleon's abdication. She lived to be 108 years of age and whilst some may cast doubt on her military record it was nevertheless enough to convince the successor regiment of the Fifth of Foot, the Northumberland Fusiliers, who, acknowledging her as one of their own, paid to restore her grave in the 1970s **JG**

## VIEW TOWARDS THE WEST FROM CLIFTON HILL.



View west from Clifton Hill

This view from Clifton Hill towards the west may be affected by planning application BH2018/01738 to redevelop land at Lyon Close Hove. At present this plot, which is next to builder's merchants Wickes, is occupied by Graham Plumbers Merchants, Toolstation and Howdens Joinery and is behind the P&H office building whose stark red brick walls do not themselves

enhance the view of the distant South Downs. The proposal includes four residential blocks of up to ten storeys which is higher than the P&H building and which would stand above the locally listed Montefiore Hospital (formerly the Hannington's Depository) which is visible here behind the branches of the trees lining Windlesham Avenue. **JG**

## XMAS PARTY 2018

Members and their guests once again enjoyed the setting of St Nicholas Church and the seasonal music of its director of music Dominic Desouza whilst enjoying wines from the south west of France and canapes served very efficiently by catering students from City College (now called Greater Brighton Metropolitan College). A healthy surplus was made thanks largely to raffle prizes of fine wine and a home baked Xmas cake kindly donated by our member (and no doubt future "Bake Off champion") James Bowyer. **JG**



Xmas Party 2018

# WELLINGTON'S 250TH BIRTHDAY AND NAPOLEON'S!



Wellington Memorial in St Nicholas

however, be more stark; the brass plate being built into the step leading from the Chancel into the Lady Chapel and really only visible by getting down on one's hands and knees! The stone memorial has a Latin inscription around its pedestal which reads in translation as "In memory of the great Duke of Wellington, this sacred building in which, in his youth he worshipped God, is restored". The memorial is in the style of an Eleanor Cross with elaborate canopies featuring St George at its apex and Wellington's military achievements recorded on the central column: Assaye (in India); Torres Vedras (in Portugal); Vitoria (in Spain) and of course Waterloo. There is no reference, however, to his significant but somewhat chequered political career. Whilst a professional soldier he was elected Member of Parliament for Rye in 1806, subsequently holding senior political posts in government and even serving as prime minister to George IV in 1828. Whether Wellington's early years in Brighton influenced his political views in later life is hard to say; his life-

Born on the 1st May 1769 Arthur Wellesley, later Duke of Wellington, worshipped as a boy in St Nicholas Church whilst attending an "Academy for Young Gentlemen" presided over by the vicar Henry Michell, grandfather of Henry Michell Wagner. H.M. Wagner was responsible for the major restoration of the church in 1853 and he decided to dedicate this restoration to the victor of Waterloo who had died the previous year. This restoration reduced the seating capacity of the church from 1400 to 900 and was the design of the architect Richard Cromwell Carpenter who was also the architect responsible for St Paul's West Street and the Woodard schools at Lancing and Hurstpierpoint. The contrast between Wellington's imposing stone memorial and the very modest brass plate acknowledging Carpenter's work could not,



Wellington by Thomas Lawrence

long fear of mob rule and social unrest being possibly a result of having found himself on a Saturday night West Street in the 1780s! It is an irony that he was born on May Day given his disdain for the lower orders of society, (he once referred to his recruits as "the scum of the earth"). Although born into a family of Protestant Anglo-Irish aristocracy and otherwise opposed to democratic reform, he nevertheless introduced the Catholic Emancipation Act of 1829 which helped avoid major civil disturbance in England and probably open rebellion in Ireland. He also believed that by his setting a good example and showing concern for the welfare of his troops the "scum of the earth" could be transformed into "fine fellows" in the service of the crown. Rewarded with his dukedom, a large sum of money and a country estate in Hampshire he died in his official residence of Walmer Castle at Deal in Kent, having added Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports to his other titles. Meanwhile Napoleon, who was born on 15th August 1769, had died 31 years previously in exile on the wet and windswept island of St Helena in the south Atlantic. **JG**



Napoleon by Jacques-Louis David