

Sussex and the Seaside Resort c1740-1940

Sussex Archaeological Society Study Afternoon

Saturday 6th April 2013 1.25-5.30pm



West Pier and Esplanade, Brighton

1.00 -1.25 Registration	Doors open 1pm.
1.25 <i>Chairman's Introduction</i>	Mr David Fisher
1.35 <i>'Seawater with extras; how the British invented the seaside and transformed our coastlines'</i>	Dr Sue Berry
2.10 <i>'Lodging beside the seaside: the early lodging houses and their importance'</i>	Dr Jaime Kaminski
2.45 <i>'Piers and other delights - Victorian innovation beside the sea'</i>	Dr Kathryn Ferry
3.20 Tea break	Tea and Coffee and Biscuits (in ticket price)
3.50 <i>'Killing the visitors – public health crises and reactions'</i>	Mr Mike Standing
4.25 <i>'Here Comes the Sun. The Sussex seaside between the wars'</i>	Professor Fred Gray
5.10 <i>Discussion</i>	All speakers (information about the speakers is overleaf)
5.30 <i>End</i>	

Before we invented the seaside resort in the mid-1740s, only ports and fishing villages were dotted along the coastline of our islands and the sea was not regarded by most as a source of pleasure and health. Seaside tourism then became so popular that by 1940, our coastlines had more resorts along them than any other type of town.

Our curious idea that we should take from the spas the idea of drinking salty water, add some rather odd extra ingredients such as ground coal and invent bathing machines so we could strip, and dip with some privacy, transformed coastlines. Many local people quickly grasped the importance of providing accommodation and the seaside lodgings industry was born. At first a few resort towns and sea facing villas developed but once the railway and, more widespread prosperity enabled large numbers to enjoy the seaside so resorts had to cope with an ever widening range of tourists, many well-tuned to changes in fashion. The car borne tourist arrived before the First World War and in large numbers after it. Yet resorts had to innovate to keep the visitors coming and in the Victorian and Interwar periods some remarkable piers and other structures were built, some in the interwar period strongly influenced by European architectural movements. Resorts also had to learn to do what today we would all take for granted; ensure the beaches and water supplies did not kill the visitors. Some resorts thought that such investment was not essential and soon learnt the hard way that it was. By 1940, the coastline of Sussex was transformed by tourism and, the balance of population had shifted from the inland areas to the seaside. The same happened to Kent, Hampshire and some other counties, transforming local politics and employment and triggering campaigns to prevent the further loss of rural coastlines.

Come and spend an afternoon exploring how the seaside was invented and the innovatory ways in which resorts tried to keep visitors interested. *For information about the speakers, venue and how to book, please turn over.....*

The Speakers and Chairman

Dr Sue Berry is the Editor of the Victoria County History's big volume on the *City of Brighton and Hove*, expected out in 2014 and an Associate Fellow of the University of London Institute of Historical Research. Author of many articles in national journals such as *The Journal of Contemporary History* (as Farrant) and *The J. of the Georgian Group* and *Garden History*, and, in *Sussex Archaeological Collections*, of occasional papers and a book (*Georgian Brighton*) on aspects of the development of resorts and seaside villas between the 1730s and 1940, the majority using Sussex as the case study area.

Dr Kathryn Ferry. After studying for a PhD in Architectural History at the University of Cambridge, Kathryn Ferry worked as Senior Architectural Adviser to The Victorian Society. Since 2007 she has been a freelance historian, writer and lecturer. She is the national expert on beach huts and in addition to her two books on that subject has published *The British Seaside Holiday*' (Shire, 2009) and *Holiday Camps* (Shire, 2010). Dr Ferry will have books for sale.

Mr David Fisher, our chairman, was editor of the international media business journal *Screen Digest* from 1974 to 2011. He taught part of a postgraduate course in European Cultural Policy at the University of Warwick for several years and served on a government advisory committee on the British film industry in the 1980s. His book on the history of film and cinema in Brighton and Hove, where the industry was pioneered, was published in 2012 and he is now following other lines of research about the city.

Professor Fred Gray is a researcher and writer specialising in the history and contemporary character of the Western and particularly British seaside. A social scientist and historian, he has degrees from the University of Hull and University of Cambridge. For over three decades Fred worked at the University of Sussex, Brighton, becoming a senior academic and academic manager before leaving Sussex in 2011. He is the author of *Designing the Seaside: Architecture, Society and Nature*, published by Reaktion in 2006 and is currently working on a cultural history of the palm tree – in part inspired by the cast-iron examples in Brighton's Royal Pavilion.

Dr. Jaime Kaminski is a research fellow at the University of Brighton Business School where he specialises in the socio-economic impact of heritage. His work for the School's Cultural Informatics Research Group covers aspects as diverse as heritage tourism, the sustainability of heritage sites and the impact of information and communication technologies in heritage. Jaime has a Ph.D. in Archaeology from the University of Reading (1996) and is a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society. His historical interests focus on Brighton and range from eighteenth century accommodation, the social impact of the Great War to early motoring in the town.

Mr Mike Standing was for many years an Associate Tutor for the University Centre of Community Engagement (which shut in July 2012). He has published books on the history of Worthing and its vicinity and has a very strong interest in Worthing's often-ambivalent attitude to its main source of income – visitors. This included a reluctance to invest in public health, but in this, as he will show, Worthing was not alone. The reluctance to invest had disastrous consequence for some resorts and for their visitors.

The Venue

St Thomas's Church Hall is a modern building **behind St Thomas's church** at the east end of Cliffe High Street, Cliffe, Lewes on the north side. It has wheelchair access.

Car parking is available near Tesco and just north of Cliffe High Street.

Lewes Railway Station is a ten-fifteen minute walk away on level ground.

Buses drop off near Waitrose, with a short walk along the pedestrian shopping area and over Cliffe Bridge to Cliffe High Street.

Booking - if you are booking by post please keep the top of this programme for the venue and programme details

I wish to book _____ places at £20 which includes tea or coffee and biscuits at the break and a list of resources such as books, articles and web sites which I will receive on the day.

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

Email _____

Confirmation will be sent by email wherever possible. *If you wish us to post a confirmation receipt, please include an s.a.e.*

Cheques should be payable to the Sussex Archaeological Society and sent to: The Membership Secretary, Sussex Archaeological Society, Barbican House, High Street, Lewes BN7 1YE

Enquiries Lorna Gartside, 01273 405737 (10am – 3pm) or email members@sussexpast.co.uk

You can pay on-line using the Society's web site sussexpast.co.uk or **phone** the Membership Secretary (see above) and pay by card.