



Dear members,

With the start of a New Year, this seems to be an appropriate moment to reflect on some of our achievements during our first year in 2018: After only four months since inception, a vote of confidence from Councillors resulted in Bexhill Heritage being awarded the Charter Trustee Crest (see above); Numerous fascinating heritage talks have been given by superb speakers to packed audiences; A stimulating heritage quiz and buffet; Successful restoration, re-start and backlighting of the West Station Clock by our projects team after 54 years mothballed, and a poem by Claire Baldry dedicated to the clock restart; Restoration and re-start of the Youth Centre Clock in Station Road; Gradual progress with the enormous task of creating a Local List to identify the local heritage; Cleaning and backlighting of the Methodist Church in Sackville Road, and a tremendous response to our Bexhill's favourite building or public open space competition resulting in three heritage guardian winners from St. Richard's School - good to see young people taking pride in our heritage.

2019 looks all set to be just as exciting with several new projects to be announced and rolled out soon – some of which have been initiated and driven by members. Please do attend our regular members meetings where your committee is always keen to hear about ideas and suggestions from our ever-expanding membership where there is always an opportunity to mention them during the questions and answers session - after all, this is very much a membership-led charity.

Finally, a plea to our members: Your committee is always seeking additional help no matter how modest, particularly with planning and building expertise from anyone at professional level. Please don't be shy in coming forward!

I look forward to meeting many of you at various Bexhill Heritage events during 2019, and thank you all for your continued interest and support.

Raymond Konyn
Chairman

NEWSLETTER

January 2019

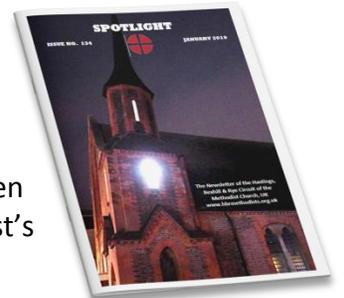


Looking to Past & Present (and future) - a view from the tower at Sackville Road's Methodist Church. The broken window has now been repaired by Bexhill Heritage.

Bexhill's Methodist Church in Sackville Road now has a night-time illumination in its tower. The project was commissioned by Methodist Minister, Reverend Tricia Williams and completed by Bexhill Heritage volunteers just in time for Christmas.

It was quite an unusual job. First we needed to remove years of accumulated bird droppings from inside, then pigeon-proof the tower by fixing the broken glass panes and a soffit. Once the big clean-up was completed, we found the tower to be in very good condition and it was relatively easy to install the two floodlights.

An article on the project has been printed in the latest Methodist's Spotlight magazine.



Pages Gap

You may be aware that a 1964 memorial plaque was removed at South Cliff in September and placed in storage at the museum. It was dedicated to the Stars Organisation for Spastics, based at Colwall Court. Bexhill Heritage is now in the process of applying for a grant to fund a new interpretation board which will reinstate the history of the ramp and how it helped the children to access the beach.

Architecture Spotlight



Drill Hall, Down Road. Currently under threat of demolition. Opened January 1915 for the local Territorial Artillery, Engineers, Rifles and Yeomanry. When built, it was an extension to an existing Drill Hall built 1901 by Joseph Barker Wall (Colonnade, St. Andrew's Church) to the east; this was sadly pulled down in 2006.

Coffee Morning

On Saturday 26th of January at 10am, Bexhill Heritage is hosting a social event for those who have an interest in the charity and our town's heritage to interact and relax. There will be refreshments, a short talk, mini-quiz, raffle and live background music.

£2 entry - includes hot drink and cake.
Friends Meeting House, 15A Albert Road.

Keep in contact

bexhillheritage.org.uk

[fb.com/bexhillheritage](https://www.facebook.com/bexhillheritage)

info@bexhillheritage.org.uk

01424 575065

If you like what we are doing then please encourage your friends to join with us and strengthen our society.

Are you interested in being actively involved in the charity? Our next members meetings are held at the Friends Meeting House at 7pm on the following dates:

 Monday 4th February 2019

 Wednesday 10th April 2019 (AGM)

The Northeye Campus

Located at the west end of Bexhill, this site was originally used during the Second World War by the Royal Air Force as a Mobile Radio Unit, a reserve if the Chain Home radar station located at Pevensey became damaged by the enemy.

It wasn't until after the war in 1958, it became the RAF Wartling Domestic Site which comprised of hatted accommodation and a Married Quarters estate (which still exists as a residential area today).

Following the closure of the radar station in 1964, the site became HMP Northeye - a Category C prison which opened in 1969. Many of the original RAF huts were used as prison buildings, although more were added in the 70's.

On the evening of the 30th April 1986, 60 of the 450 inmates began to set fire to buildings after an altercation with the guards. With many of the huts being roofed with corrugated asbestos they were vulnerable to intense heat, causing the fires to intensify and spread quickly. Police said 12 inmates were believed to have escaped during the violence, the rest had to be evacuated to Drill Hall (left) before they were moved on to various other prisons the next day. By the end of the night 40% the buildings had been completely destroyed.

The prison reopened after the riots, but for a smaller number of inmates until 1992.

After the closure of the prison, the UAE refurbished the camp and used it as a place for technical training. Aimed to prepare a younger generation of UAE nationals for a future in the UAE Armed Forces.

Northeye has been left disused since the UAE project ended in 2010 and the land is currently up for private sale.

