



fly the flyer

The chandelier above the Bodley font restored

Tom Cosgrove Church Warden

Funded by the Friends, the brass chandelier which hangs above the font in the Bodley church has recently been repaired and restored by metalwork experts Chris Smith Restorations of Hove.

It's not known when the chandelier was gifted or bought for the church, but it could only have been suspended in its current location after the completion of the Burges church around 1900, as the arch was previously the side wall of the Bodley church.

It is of gothic design, English or possibly Flemish manufacture, and was made to a mediaeval design in the eighteenth century (evidenced in its construction according to the restorer).

There are sixteen open work foliate branches which are numbered and removable, most of which were loose and damaged. The central column depicts a Bishop, or saint Bishop, indicating that it was intended for ecclesiastical use.

There were almost forty fractures and malformations to put right before the whole was professionally polished. It has not been lacquered so that it will age slowly to an antique patina. As it is rarely touched the finish will last many years.



The project was completed in time for the Carol Service, and the Midnight Mass, and was admired by many who were astonished by its renaissance.

Of Pubs and Pews - a talk by David Robson 4 June 2021

Ian Crammond

At the start of his Zoom lecture to the Friends David Robson invited us to accompany him on a pub crawl, to be followed as an act of expiation by a pilgrimage. Well, who could resist! And a fascinating and delightful journey it proved to be for anyone interested in the architecture of our area. The subject of David's talk was the Denman family, three generations of local architects, whose prodigious output and versatility spanning nearly 120 years has enhanced Brighton and left a legacy of which we can all be proud.

The story begins with Samuel Denman (1855-1945) and continues with his son John Leopold (1882-1975) and *his* son John Bluett (1914-2002). Samuel's origins were in the building trade and he is best described as a builder/architect and developer. His two most prominent buildings are Lewes Town Hall (1893) and the Hove Club (1897).

However, when we consider the Denman legacy, it is inevitable we look to John Leopold: his was a truly extraordinary record. Under his leadership the firm became an example of a provincial practice in the best sense of the word: rooted and active in the community.



St Peters West Blatchington: new nave

The firm acted as architects to the Kemp Town Brewery, as well as architects and advisers to the Diocese of Chichester. John Leopold taught for a time at the Brighton School of Art and was a member of an informal, but influential group of locally based artists which included the sculptor Joseph Cribb and the painters Louis Ginnett and Charles Knight. Both Ginnett and Cribb were to collaborate with John Leopold on several ecclesiastical and secular projects as we shall see later.



The Freemasons Western Rd Brighton

It is with John Leopold that what could be described as a Denman Style emerges, at least for secular buildings: it is a refined, sensitive, well detailed neo-Georgian. Two of the best examples can be seen in the centre of Brighton; the Allied Irish Bank (formerly the Citizens Permanent Building Society) of 1933 in Marlborough Place and the former Brighton and Hove Herald offices of 1934 in the nearby Pavilion Buildings (now sadly unoccupied). But there was also variety and imagination: look at Barclay's Bank in North Street (1957-59) and a block of flats in Wilbury Road, Wilbury Court (1956), to see Denman on a more monumental scale. And let us not forget two utterly contrasting works with which all Brightonians are familiar, even if they are unaware of the architect: The Pylons on the A23 (1928) to mark the extension of the Borough boundaries, and the glorious facade of The Freemasons pub (1928) in Western Road where the glittering blue and gold mosaics cheer up the dullest of days.

It is, however, in David's memorable words 'in pubs and pews' we are most likely to encounter the Denman legacy in our everyday lives; at least 65 pubs - around 40 of which are still open, and 12 new churches and considerably more restorations. John Leopold's knowledge of, and sensitivity to, medieval buildings and ornamentation ensured much work involving repair and restoration of the highest quality, in addition to extensions and provision of furnishings. Excellent examples of the latter are St Simon and St Jude in East Dean (1948-61) where Denman worked with Joseph

Cribb, and St Michael's Southwick, damaged in the war, both repaired and extended sensitively and successfully. St Cuthman's Whitehawk (1951-52), effectively re-built after the war, delights with an imaginatively planned interior. The font was designed by Cribb.

An improbable combination of the Diocese of Chichester and the Kemp Town Brewery ensured a steady supply of commissions for the firm, particularly in the inter-war era. The pubs, many in the Brighton area, provide a fascinating insight into changing attitudes towards alcohol consumption from the late nineteenth to the mid twentieth centuries. Typical examples of early pubs by Samuel Denman include The Bugle at Poets Corner and the nearby Ancient Mariner (originally The Eclipse) in Rutland Road. John Leopold is seen at his most inventive in two extraordinary pubs: The Duke of Wellington in Shoreham (1929) in a free neo-Jacobean style and the Tally Ho in Eastbourne (1928), both with work by Cribb. But it is in a cluster of later pubs e.g. The Green Jacket in Shoreham, the Joyful Whippet in Sompting, The Black Lion at Patcham and The Grenadier in Hove that we see John Leopold responding to social change. The Victorian 'boozer' gives way to thoughtfully planned 'family friendly' places of recreation, incorporating children's rooms, gardens and provision of ladies loos. In conclusion, I am pleased to say that, having whetted our appetites with such a stimulating talk, David is preparing a much needed, user friendly and definitive Visitors' Guide to the Denman Legacy in Brighton, conveniently organised around selected bus routes. We are in his debt.



St Simon and St Jude: nave extension East Dean



Ye Olde House at Home: Worthing



The Tally Ho: Eastbourne

The Moon in Literature

An note by Coreen Sears

Alexandra treated us to a Christmas lecture on 'The Moon in Literature'. This was a novel and fascinating account of the subject, the talk being a rich and



enjoyable sortie into the significance of the Moon as a pivotal plot device in literature.

The talk was made all the more enjoyable by the illustrations and excerpts that Alexandra provided to illuminate her topic, many of which were new to me at least.

We do thank Alexandra most sincerely for her generous and loyal support of the Friends during this period. Her contributions have enabled us to understand the possibilities of the Zoom platform in keeping the Friends' community in touch while at the same time providing a source of interest and reflection.

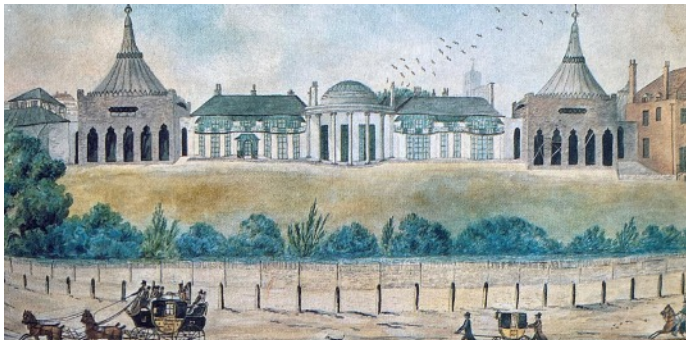
Designing an Enchanted Palace

Coreen Sears

One of our earliest Friends of St Michael's Zoom lectures took place on Friday 26th February. It was a lively and informative session entitled, 'Designing an Enchanted Palace – from detail to grand design', during which our two speakers described different aspects of the creation of the fabulous whole that is the Royal Pavilion.

Part I: French Connections, False Trails and 'folie de grandeur' – a talk by Dr Patrick Conner

Dr Patrick Conner began the evening. He is a former Keeper of Fine Art at the Royal Pavilion, Art Gallery and Museums and is now Director of the Martyn Gregory Gallery, London, which specialises in historical paintings related to the China Trade. Patrick's talk took us at a brisk



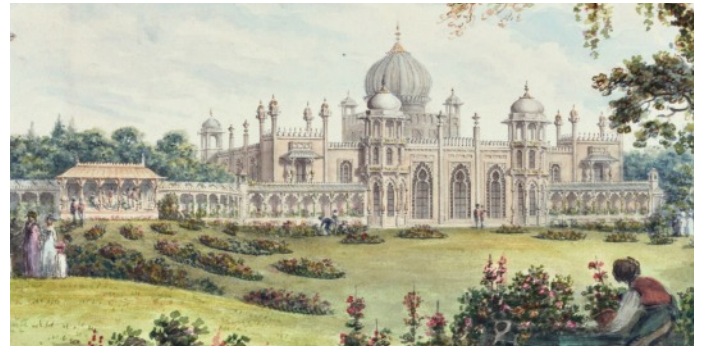
pace along the various paths that led George IV, then Prince of Wales, to create his own private pleasure palace out of the 'superior farmhouse' he had purchased for his seaside retreat.

In a city that is accustomed to seeing the Prince Regent's name on the front of local buses, it is perhaps difficult to think of George as anything other than a figure whose life was dedicated to fun. Certainly, his taste was for flamboyance and exotic 'oriental' architecture, although, as

Alexandra Loske & Patrick Conner

Patrick pointed out, George was also an established patron of the arts who secured valuable acquisitions for the royal collections.

For his Marine Pavilion, George drew on



earlier and more recent crazes for exotica from the 'east'. Perhaps he had seen printed images of the enchanting chinoiserie creations of other European princes which Patrick showed us. In any case his architects, first Henry Holland and later John Nash, marvellously fulfilled George's specification, first in the form of an Indo-Saracenic palace and later as the fantasy Indo-Islamic edifice which still takes our breath away as we ride past.



These words do not do justice to the witty and erudite talk we heard from Patrick. After his account of the influences which produced the exterior of the Royal Pavilion we were more than eager to hear Alexandra's talk about the interior.

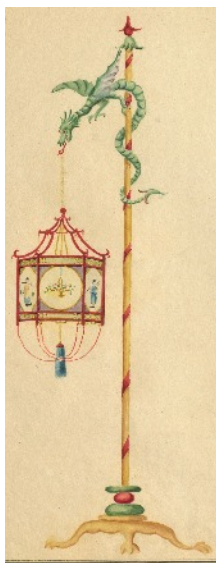
Part 2: The Dragon's in the Detail – a talk by Dr Alexandra Loske

Dr Alexandra Loske, as many of you will know, is Curator at the Royal Pavilion, Brighton. Her talk, 'The Dragon's in the Detail', had the same title as the exhibition which Alexandra was curating when the pandemic struck. This was to have run alongside another exhibition entitled, *A Prince's Treasure*, which celebrated the loan by her Majesty the Queen of 120 objects originally made for the Pavilion and moved by Queen Victoria to Buckingham Palace when she sold the Pavilion.

Among these objects are the delightful pagodas and the extraordinary Kylin clock, all of which are situated in the Music Room and which are still in place now the Pavilion has reopened once again.

The full title of Alexandra's exhibition included the words: 'designs for the Royal Pavilion by John and Frederick Crace', and it is the well-documented work of the Crace brothers that was the focus of Alexandra's exhibition and of her talk.

These upholders, the early term for what we know as interior designers, were already renowned as experts in providing 'Chinese' style decorations before they became responsible for the decorations and furnishings of George's pavilion. They sourced or designed Chinese wallpapers and objects and used their expertise in gilding and decorative painting to carry through their designs; it is they who were



responsible for the fantastical dragons and for the almost crazy profusion of multiple 'Eastern' influences in the decorative schemes. What was fascinating in



Alexandra's talk was 'to be able to track the development of their design schemes from original source via drawings by the Crace brothers to the final ornamental detail in the Pavilion' (as Alexandra writes in her on-line account of the exhibition).



Alexandra continued working on the exhibition when possible during this period and it is still in place now the Pavilion has reopened. As always with Alexandra's talks, I was bowled over by her knowledge, energy and enthusiasm for her topic – she is always a delight to listen to.

A resort transformed – a talk by Sue Berry

Helen Morris

On 25 June 2021, Sue Berry gave a talk on the history of Brighton and Hove covering the period 1815-30; this followed her first talk on the subject, which she gave on 26 March covering the period c.1750-1815. Both talks were by Zoom but this did not detract from their clarity and interest. The population of Brighton in 1794 was 5,699, which grew to 46,661 in 1841. Even between 1821 and 1831 there was a growth in population of some 18,000 persons from all over the country, with the concomitant health and sanitation problems.



The Chain Pier

The period 1815-30 saw the transformation of Brighton and the smaller, Hove, from a former poor small town into a developed seaside resort. Indeed, sea bathing continued from earlier years as its main selling point with advertisements claiming how great sea bathing made one look. From around 1800, garments were required for the sea and so with this came bathing machines.

Wealthy locals, from country houses such as Up-park and Goodwood, and rich Londoners, as well as folk interested in horse racing, all supported the financial investment in Brighton. In fact, Brighton became 'London by the sea' with investment in capital projects also by small businessmen and landowners. Part of the reason for this was the parallel major investment in coaches, turnpikes etc., which reduced the journey from London to Brighton to four hours and also the cost of the travel.

Furthermore, the Napoleonic Wars had led to the stationing of a very large number of troops on the Downs, in case of invasion, and these soldiers now wanted better accommodation. Open arable land was therefore enclosed and many big private houses were built, e.g. Regency Square by William Mackie and villas in the Montpelier area by Kemp, but also houses to rent. Kemptown dates from this period

although Kemp did not make money out of it and the Steine was by now developed.

Clearly, the increasing population demanded entertainments. Although the Prince Regent/George IV and his Pavilion were not particularly popular, the Chain Pier was a major attraction as shown in the Turner painting at Petworth. There was a call for art galleries and libraries offering also music facilities, causing the expansion of libraries into suburbs. Ireland's Gardens was developed as a cricket pitch, maze etc. but did not make money and is now Park Crescent. Queen's Park also struggled as a leisure garden although developed by Thomas Kemp. A public garden was opened to attract visitors in the North Steine and there were spas in Queen's Park and St. Ann's Well Gardens. Tamplins built a brewery in Brighton and a workhouse for the poor was constructed. Folk wanted gas lighting in their houses so gas works were built

in Rottingdean and Hove. Finally, a road and promenade were built by public subscription linking the east and west sides of the town, which promoted development in the 1820s.

Various important institutions were commissioned in this period e.g. a hospital for the poor by the Earl of Egremont, the National School in Church Street to educate servants, and the School of Industry by the architect, Henry Wilds. There was also a boom in church building, with twelve Anglican churches constructed between 1790 and 1840, including St. Peter's in the Steine, as well as various non-Conformist chapels.

From 1820s-30s a depression stalled many building projects, such as Palmeira Square and Furze Hill. However, once a road to Hove had been built and the railway developed, building took off again. Nevertheless, people were more cautious in their investments.

In conclusion, it was clear that Brighton and Hove developed between 1815 and 1830 through a series of largely unplanned, individual, privately financed initiatives, which responded to the demands of the time and have given us the city that we know today.

Chris Dawes thanked Sue Berry on behalf of The Friends of St. Michael's for her fascinating talk and pointed out that articles she had written could be accessed through the Georgian Society.