

SNGSA NEWS

A busy summer in the Green Spaces



July brought the welcome arrival of a team of around 15 young volunteers from the Princes Trust who worked hard at a number of tasks for three days, putting our new tools and gloves, purchased with a grant from Southern Water's Community Fund, to good use: in the Children's Garden, they took on the bindweed along the long chain link fence. They cleared masses, ready for us to start our Big Planting Day on 2 October (see below). They also cleared litter, and even sieved the sandpits. Over in the Rest Garden they cleared weeds, cut back brambles, and did sterling work on the benches. Four of the saddest-looking are now spruced up, after a thorough sanding and oiling.



Compost Event

Also in July the Children's Garden hosted a very helpful talk by Compost Expert, Ali Walters, of Friends of the Earth. It was also an opportunity to make people more aware of the Children's Garden, and we have

three keen new volunteers as a result. Quite a crowd arrived, lured by the cardboard worms that decorated the park. People tasted herbs, picked raspberries, and looked for bugs using the new magnifying boxes. The children disappeared to play, while adults stayed to listen: a small but appreciative group. So enthused, we started turning the compost immediately after the talk!



PHOTOGRAPHS BY SARAH CHRISP



Dates for your diary

- 11 September**
Visit Sue and Mick's Eco-home (see page 10)
- 29/30 October**
White Night in the Churchyard
- 10 December**
CMPCA Christmas party

Much more on pages 12 and 13

Sunday October 2 12 noon

Help us plant an **edible wall**! Transform the ugly fence in the Children's Garden with figs, grapes, and all sorts of berries. Gloves and tools provided – stout footwear needed. Funded by Southern Water Community Grant.

>>>Community Meetings

Saturday 1 October 11am
First Base, Montpelier Place
The work of First Base and the history and restoration of the building

Tuesday 21 November 8pm
St Mary Magdalen's Community Centre
Topic to be confirmed

Confirm dates and topics at www.cmpcaonline.org.uk

Who are we?

Welcome to the Clifton Montpelier Powis Community Alliance, the community association for the Montpelier and Clifton Hill Conservation Area which covers 40 streets (see streets and map on page 15) in the historic centre of Brighton and Hove. The CMPCA was founded in 2005 by a group of residents as a not-for-profit community association to foster a sense of community and help residents come together to discuss and take action on issues of concern in the area. Membership is free and open to all residents in the area.

Community meetings

Community meetings are open to all, including non-residents, and are normally held on the third Tuesday of the month in January, March, June, September and November (see front page for next meetings). To suggest topics for meetings contact chair@cmpcaonline.org.uk

Officers and Management Committee members are elected annually at the AGM (March/April). They and our Street Reps are listed on page 15.

www.cmpcaonline.org.uk

We hope you enjoy using and contributing to our new Lottery-funded community website! Discover our local history, have your say on local issues and sign up to our email list so that you can be consulted on local issues. See how easy it is to produce and submit a webpage or send material to webmaster@cmpcaonline.org.uk and the editors will produce your webpage.

Useful numbers

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Caroline Lucas

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Councillors

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ania.kitcat@brighton-hove.gov.uk

Jason Kitcat

jason.kitcat@brighton-hove.gov.uk

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or write to councillors c/o King's House, Grand Avenue, Hove BN3 2LS

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CMP Festival

Every July, since 2007, we hold the Clifton Montpelier Powis Festival – a community arts festival which celebrates the area's cultural and literary heritage, with around 20 literary, musical and film events, sponsored by over 20 local businesses. Details of past festivals and future plans at www.cmpcaonline.org.uk



CMPCAnews

CMPCAnews is the community newsletter for our area, by residents, for residents and is published quarterly in March, June, September and December. Produced by the Newsteam – Philippa Sankey, Judy Bow and Teresa Dearlove (design), it is distributed free by our Street Reps (see page 15) to around 2,500 households and businesses in the area. Contributions always welcome – contact info@cmpcaonline.org.uk or ☎ 07816 403099.

Advertise in CMPCAnews! Contact advertising@cmpcaonline.org.uk for rates.

The views expressed in CMPCAnews are those of the contributors and do not necessarily reflect the official view of the CMPCA



SNGSA needs you!

The St Nicholas Green Spaces Association, founded in 2007, is a group of volunteers who aim to protect and enhance the three (Council-owned) green spaces – the Churchyard, the Rest Garden and the Children's Playground that surround St Nick's Church in Dyke Road (see map on page 15). More volunteers constantly needed – find out more at www.sngsa.org.uk



First Base restored and renewed



The CMPCA has always taken a keen interest in the work of the Brighton Housing Trust's day centre, First Base, in Montpelier Place: Andy Winter addressed us about its work in 2006, and our 2007 Christmas party raised funds for its work.

We are delighted that after twelve months' restoration work, First Base's major refurbishment has not only revealed the beauty of St Stephen's Hall (built as a ballroom for the Castle Inn in 1766, converted into a private chapel by George IV in 1822) but also affords its clients new and improved facilities. BHT's Director of Homelessness Services, Nikki Homewood, says 'We're thrilled with the new building. The restoration work is beautiful and sympathetic to the history of the building,

whilst the new facilities for clients provide a modern fit-for-purpose service'.

The centre formally re-opened in July, and has been redesigned as a support, healthcare, training and resource centre that can provide much needed services to clients enabling them to move on to employment and accommodation.

Operational Manager, Simon Hughes, says 'We look forward to welcoming members of the community to the CMPCA meeting on Saturday 1 October at 11am. There will be a presentation about the work of First Base and the history and restoration of the building by the First Base Client Heritage Group. Sandwiches, tea, coffee and cake will be available from Dine, our catering company run by former clients providing delicious food to private clients and businesses in the city'.

Follow First Base on Twitter
www.twitter.com/FirstBaseBHT

Royal Alex site

Taylor Wimpey expects demolition of the buildings not to be retained to start shortly and to continue until Christmas.

How Green is my Brighton?

At our 21 June community meeting, Councillor Jason Kitcat – cabinet member for finance and central services – outlined the aims of the new Green Party-led minority administration: to reduce inequality – there is a ten year difference in life expectancy between different city wards – and to introduce a 'living wage' for the lowest paid Council staff; more transparent decision-making and city-wide consultation on budget-setting particularly in the context of saving £84 million; rolling out solar panels at 40 city sites to both save money and generate income; the introduction of a 20mph speed limit; with one of the poorest recycling rates in the Southeast, reducing waste, trialling food waste collection and exploring community composting are Green priorities. This led to a lively discussion about the disposal of green and garden waste – should this be paid for or free?



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The Crescent



We first wrote about The Crescent – the old coaching inn on Clifton Hill and one of the oldest buildings in the area – in 2006. Since that time pubs generally have experienced a decline but the Crescent has gone from strength to strength. How is that possible? Manager Ian Axell thinks it's because the Crescent is friendly, welcoming and appeals to all age

groups and sectors of the community 'Young, old, gay and straight – families too'.

A real neighbourhood pub that has moved with the times but not lost its regulars, the Crescent hasn't changed its name or chased a niche market: there's no pool table, no Sky Sports and no loud rock music. But there IS an attractive flint walled courtyard garden re-shaped (a garage removed) and the walls clothed with plants. Ian clearly has green fingers: he long ago stopped paying a fortune to others to maintain the magnificent flower displays at the front of the pub and looks after them all himself. The Crescent has been owned for the last 12 years by Cameron Whyte, who likes the area so much he's recently



black Labrador and Dolly, his black and white cat. He has also circumnavigated the hazards of extended opening hours with aplomb: his midnight extension is only used on Friday and Saturday nights. It is not a noisy pub – there's no music in the garden – and it lives amicably with its neighbours.

Perhaps the Crescent's crowning glory is its legendary Tuesday quiz night that has run for over twenty years. A general knowledge quiz (including picture and charity rounds) devised weekly by longstanding regular Pete, the teams hotly contest the prize money with anything up to 70 punters. Eager students discover its challenging nature each autumn, only to fall by the wayside. It is now supplemented by a monthly music quiz night.

moved here. While he wants it kept primarily as a drinkers' pub, and not to go down the gastropub route, the menu is a classy mix of homemade pub classics and a popular Sunday roast.

Ian, who has recently married his long-term partner, Steven, lives over the shop with his



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The **view** from my **window**

Olivia Laing

I write, more often than not, sitting on my sofa, and when I glance up from my laptop I see a sycamore and the roof of the Victorian villa that forms part of the old children's hospital. I don't know how many hours I've spent staring at it, admiring the elephant-grey tiles, festooned with acid-yellow splashes of lichen, while trying to conjure my next sentence.

Sycamores aren't popular trees. People like to point out that they're not natives, though they were brought here by the Romans, and to disparage them for their habits of swift and prolific growth. Having lived next door to one for the past six years, I think they're the ideal city tree: both beautiful and useful. In spring they're hung with lovely coral-coloured buds; now, in summer, their palmate leaves flutter in the slightest breeze. They're also remarkably useful, having the highest insect productivity by weight of any widespread tree (considerably more than oak and ash). In an urban environment they're often the only significant source of food for airborne insect feeders such as house martins and swifts.

I can see both now: the sycamore bending in the wind and above it a cloud of swifts, bent like arrowheads, darting through the pale sky. The view



is all the more precious because I know it won't be here much longer. This is probably the last summer before the hospital site is converted into flats by Taylor Wimpey. I'm dreading it. I love this abandoned space, which is heaven for a naturalist. If I loiter by the window, I'm certain to see squirrels. Magpies and crows perch on the big beech at the back, and most days I'll see a fox slinking under the security guard's portacabin or snoozing on the fire escape steps. There used to be a family of jays too, though I haven't seen them all summer. It always lifted my spirits to catch a flash of their jazzy plumage and hear their wheezy, raucous cry.

Sites like this are vital in a city – places where nature can flourish, unaffected by man's urge to tidy, weed and prune.

I know the pretty tiled roof won't last, and keep my fingers tightly crossed that the beech, the sycamores and the horse chestnut are left to flourish. But what of the foxes and squirrels?

As the poet Gerard Manley Hopkins put it:

*What would the world be, once bereft
Of wet and wildness? Let them be left,
O let them be left, wildness and wet;
Long live the weeds and the
wilderness yet.*

Olivia Laing is the author of *To the River*, published by Canongate.

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Who's got Tiny Cox?

Phil Mellows

If anybody asks me whether I'm a football fan I say 'no – I support Leyton Orient'. Living in Brighton, self-disparagement seems a sensible tactic. Brighton & Hove Albion followers don't seem to like us. Although since moving here I've developed a soft spot for our arch-rivals. There's a certain spirit about the club and, like the Orient, they've tended to bump along amiably in the lower divisions.

Until last season that is, when the Albion, inspired by a determination to fill their beautiful new stadium, stormed away with the League One title (Division Three in old money).

The fans are justifiably excited about the prospects. But I've noticed some are hoping success doesn't change the club too much. This is perhaps like the recent lottery winner saying she didn't want all those millions to change her life. In that case she better give the money to people who could jolly well do with having their life changed. Honestly.

Football is different, though. Many thousands of people loyally follow little clubs through thin and thinner. A few give up and reveal they've always supported Man United. But that's generally frowned upon. Take my own beloved Os. The official Orient song at one time included the line 'We don't care if we win or lose or draw'. I'm not sure I ever heard it sung at a game. It might have encouraged the opposition. But there was one occasion when Orient swiftly fell two-nil down and the fans behind the goal on the South Bank at Brisbane Road were gripped by a miserable silence. A frustrated supporter down the front turned round and yelled 'Sing! sing!', and without missing a beat a bloke at the back launched into 'I left my heart in San Francisco . . .'

You need a sense of humour to be an Os fan. Our manager now is Russell Slade, who used to manage Brighton. He's a jolly sort of chap and one of the first things he did was sign a former Albion player, a speedy winger called Dean Cox. He's 5' 4" and, as he did at Brighton, he's inspired the chant 'We've got Tiny Cox, oh we've got Tiny Cox!'

It would be a shame if Brighton's new elevated status means they're above that kind of inverted pride.

www.philmellows.com



They certainly do things differently in Spain. I've just returned from a couple of weeks sleuthing around some fantastic wine regions, slurping (and mostly spitting) my way from Bilbao to Barcelona by way of Rioja, Navarra, Somontano, Costers del Segre and Penedes, all in the name of work. And I can't help thinking that perhaps we should adopt a few aspects of Iberian culture.

Anglo-Saxon that I am, it was initially hugely frustrating trying to set up this trip at the end of June. Spain goes on to summertime work hours, mornings only, ahead of August when the whole country pretty much shuts down. As winemaker after winemaker told me there would be no one to host visits in the afternoons, a voice in my head kept saying 'what, 20% unemployment, moribund economic situation, a depressed wine industry and yet I'm going to be left twiddling my thumbs from lunchtime on . . . !'

My first evening spent tootling around the tapas bars that line the old streets at the heart of Logrono in Rioja soon soothed these thoughts. Each bar specialises in a tapa, say garlicky mushrooms or pimenton-laden octopus or rich morcilla (blood sausage), and you eat standing up, washing these fabulous morsels down

with a glass of local wine. Late into the night the amenable crowd rambles from place to place, grazing and chatting. Even on one's own, it feels sociable and fun. Above all, it's a great insight into what makes Spain so, well, Spanish.



Part of the reason for my trip was to explore the incredible cornucopia of Spanish wine. Almost half of Spanish wine sold in Blighty bears the label Rioja, plus many look-a-likes beside, but from the Basque Country to Catalonia, Galicia to Andalucia, each region has a deep-rooted and strongly individual culture of food and wine.

From the green north, there's delicately aromatic Albarino from Galicia and the searingly tangy (but seafood-friendly) Txakoli from the Basque country, plus crisp, grassy-fresh Rueda from further inland. Rioja's rich reds reflect the meatier food and mood of the region, as do the even punchier wines of Ribera del Duero and Toro, which are fabulous with local lamb still traditionally cooked over an open fire.

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Andrew Catchpole

lands of Penedes beyond, and you'll discover another face of Spain, mixing it up with traditional varieties and better known grapes such as Cabernet Sauvignon and Chardonnay, but nonetheless capturing a flavour of where the grapes are grown. And, inevitably, the local cuisine does the same.

It's a fabulous testimony to a pervasive culture where nourishing a tradition of local food and wine goes hand in hand with a siesta-infused rhythm of life that still centres more on agriculture, family, community and regionality than our own blinkered obsession with earning, consuming and globalised efficiency.

Rose tinted view? Perhaps. And I'm not making light of the economic woes embroiling Spain. But as I watched young families meandering in Logrono's old quarter late into the night – without a drunkard or fight in sight – while grazing on the local food and wine, I couldn't help thinking that Spain has got some things very right. Which is why – if you more than scratch the surface – it has such a fabulous wealth of wines.

Andrew Catchpole is a freelance wine, food and travel writer living in the CMP area.
www.andrewcatchpole.com

Why has Spanish food taken so long to be 'discovered'?

After years of increasing industrialisation in our food manufacture, Great Britain's 'nouveau peasantry' are now setting about rediscovering the art of making great artisan foods. In Spain they never stopped writes local resident Tom Power, who presented a Spanish evening for the Friends of St Michael's in February.

Our mission at The Spanish Food Company is to go about discovering them and bringing them over here. Why has Spanish food had such a low profile until now? I don't think Spain has really understood just what a treasure trove it is for food. If it has, it's done a poor job of telling the world. One problem is that, broadly speaking, Italian and Spanish foods share many characteristics. Unfortunately for Spain, nobody's better at selling than the Italians.

However, the biggest issue has to be Spain's prolonged spell on the margins of Europe. Spain pre-Civil war was a cultural, political and economic powerhouse. Afterwards she found herself marginalised: in the post WWII reconstruction, Spain was literally left to starve. It wasn't until 1992 and the Barcelona Olympics that Spain truly returned to the world stage.

It would be crass to characterise Spain 1939–1992 as a singular entity. However, in broad terms, it was a country that remained poorer, more rural and less



integrated than her European neighbours. In short, Spaniards had to provide for themselves. This necessity, combined with her considerable natural food resources, explains the incredible variety and quality of unfussy artisan food production Spain has today.

Because we are talking about such recent history these artisans are, by and large, still working today. However, it's a hard way to earn a living that doesn't generally appeal to the younger generation. Large swathes of rural Spain are losing their populations at an alarming rate. Naturally enough, as the people leave the countryside, we lose the treasures.

Unless we can make artisan food production an attractive option then it will wither away.

In some small way, The Spanish Food Company aims to arrest the decline by giving our producers a route to the UK market. In the process, we make sure that they get the recognition they deserve. In July our products won a total of five stars in the prestigious Great Taste Awards. We might yet make sure that Spain's great foodie heritage keeps delivering us treasures for generations to come.

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The Royal Pavilion: extravagant, eccentric and beautiful

Rob Yates, Head of Fundraising since 2010 at the Royal Pavilion & Museums Foundation has exciting plans for the renamed Friends of the Pavilion – of which more in our next issue. Meanwhile he urges us:

Become a member from just £23 a year and help protect our city's unique cultural heritage AND receive some great benefits:

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Those who enjoyed **Rose Collis's fascinating Walkie Talkie history tours** in the

CMP Festival will be pleased to

hear that tours on various themes and areas of Brighton are available all year round, and can be booked for special occasions, such as birthdays. And, if anyone missed the CMP tours, Rose is happy to conduct private tours, for groups of six or more. **To contact her, and for full details of forthcoming tours, visit www.rosecollis.com**

★ ★ Fifth CMP festival

As we put the fifth CMP Festival to bed we pay our respects to Francis King (who inspired our first festival) and reflect on some of this year's highlights. This real community enterprise involving hundreds of volunteers: performers, sponsors, organisers, stewards and festival-goers has been called 'an amazing effort all round!' and 'a fantastic success'. Joyce Duncan enjoyed the 'variety of events and of such quality and on our doorstep . . . there was of course that special element of doing this within our own community which was particularly important!' Special thanks to our numerous sponsors, to B&HCC for their grant, to Bunkers Solicitors, to City Books and to Caroline Archer who designed our publicity and to our Festival partners at Saint Michael's and St Nicholas.

On the music front, the **Heath Quartet** were universally acclaimed: 'What a treat to hear and see the delightful Heath Quartet' and 'A relaxing heart-lifting evening with the Heath Quartet – perfect performance' (Sidonie Bond). 'The Beethoven concert was superb.' The Heath, in turn, enjoyed both the audience and the venue.

Music programmer Anthony Hawgood masterminded and starred in a riproaring Pirates of Penzance.



Francis Clarke-Lowes enjoyed all three coffee concerts: 'The Quilter concert was delightful and very interesting because of his local connection.'

On **Lisztomania** Louise Schweitzer wrote in her *Argus* online review: 'John Spurling beautifully read an early chapter [of his Book of Liszts], an intense and tragic love story, his heart, like Liszt's, on his sleeve. His concern to demonstrate the greatness of his hero in words was matched by pianist Grace Francis. . . The award winning young pianist played with such breathtaking virtuosity that it seemed that either the audience or the strings would collapse. We both survived – exhilarated and informed'. Lianne Jarrett found 'Lisztomania an outstanding and enlightening evening'; Colin Spencer also enjoyed Lisztomania: 'I was completely devastated by the Liszt playing, what an extraordinary pianist, made you feel the huge and dramatic effect that Liszt would have had in the drawing room at the time'.



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highlights



Filmspot's showing of *Animal Farm* was a hit: 'the *Animal Farm* evening was an excellent event. Knowing very little about early animation, the talk by **Vivien Halas** really illuminated the film, which is timeless in its relevance.' Others said 'We were fascinated by the talk about *Animal Farm* and were glad to see the film again'.

ROSE COLLIS



COLIN SPENCER MAKING HIS THIRD CMP FESTIVAL APPEARANCE

Louise Schweitzer, again, on **Derek Granger** talking about Laurence Olivier: 'A stream of fascinating anecdote, delivered in beautiful, old-fashioned English, kept a large audience vastly entertained. *The Prince and the Showgirl*, Rattigan's 1957 film version of his original play, followed. It illustrated the adorable Marilyn Monroe and a rarely droll Olivier with moments of inspired silliness from both stars'.



Literary coordinator **Peter Burton** was particularly pleased with the way this year's Literary Programme came together: everyone seems to have enjoyed themselves and Peter's expert conversations with speakers were appreciated. **Clare Peake** wrote to Peter, 'Thanks for making my little talk so easy for me. I'm not keen on talking at these things – you are so funny and nice'.

ROSE COLLIS



TONY WARREN AND PETER BURTON: LITERARY FESTIVALS SHOULDN'T BE THIS MUCH FUN

Sidonie Bond found 'the amusing **Tony Warren's** talk about his association with **Dougie Byng** very entertaining and informative and so professionally narrated'.

Nicola Beauman of Persephone Books was found to be 'Very interesting and impressive' and provided 'an insight into the extraordinary world of publishing. An amazing lady who has created/ recreated the wonderful experience of selective reading.'



Francis King 1923–2011

Peter Burton

A sometime Brighton resident (at 17 Montpelier Villas in the 1960s) and a regular visitor until his death (3 July), the writer Francis King featured the Clifton Montpelier Powis neighbourhood in two books. King's highly autobiographical novel *A Domestic*

Animal (1970) details the obsessive passion felt by a middle-aged novelist for his lodger, a much younger, football-playing Italian academic. The book, one of his finest, was the reason for his abandoning Brighton for London after he had to sell his house as a result of libel action taken against him over a character in the novel being recognised by the original, one-term Labour MP Tom Skeffington-Lodge, then resident in Powis Grove.

The short stories that make up the diverting collection *The Brighton Belle and Other Stories* (1968) are all located in the CMP area and stem – to a large degree – from King's acute observation (his last published short fiction, *The Man who Noticed*, appeared earlier this year in the anthology *What Love Is*).

Over a distinguished career spanning almost 70 years (his first novel, *To the Dark Tower*, appeared in 1964; his last, *Cold Snap*, was published in 2010), King produced novels, short stories, volumes of poetry, biography and an honest and entertaining autobiography (*Yesterday Came Suddenly*, 1993). He was also an industrious and perceptive critic, reviewing books for a range of publications including *The Listener*, *The Literary Review*, *The Oldie* and *The Spectator*. He served for ten years as theatre critic for *The Sunday Telegraph*.

Our friendship began in August 1971, over a lunch hosted by Robin Maugham for King and the critic Cyril Connolly. He became a regular contributor to *Gay News* and *Gay Times* for which I was Literary Editor and contributed short stories to six of the eight anthologies I have edited. We regularly appeared at literary festivals, performing our double act at the first and fourth CMP festivals (2007, 2010). As a writer Francis had a robust sensitivity that enabled him to dissect humanity with the thoughtful precision of a surgeon; as a man he had a tremendous gift for friendship and great generosity. He will be much missed.



Insulation, insulation, insulation

Former Green Party Councillor, SNGSA Treasurer and Marlborough Street CMPCA Street Rep **Sue Paskins**' interest in sustainable living is well known, but what made her and husband Mick go one enormous step further and build their own eco-house?



'We loved our house in Marlborough Street and had no real desire to move until with the extended licensing hours the noise of late night revellers and the increasing disturbance of shop deliveries by

day became too much. If we were going to move then we wanted to build our own to incorporate as many eco features as possible. The rural good life was not for us – too much dependency on the car – so the search was on for a site as close to the city centre as possible'.

Finding the site was relatively easy: an architect found it within three days of their asking – in an area Sue had already identified as quiet but near the city centre. This was 2005. It would take another two years to purchase the plot and obtain planning permission to build a house on the site (the rear garden of a large Edwardian house) designed to their spec: August 2007.

Building would take a further three years and Sue and Mick moved in in June 2010. The shape and design is a one off but Sue says there is nothing particularly 'clever' about the design. 'It's all about insulation' says Sue, 'conservation – a 5000 litre water tank is installed under the decking – and recycling. I actually think all new houses should be built with these features – not nearly enough are'.

What were the challenges?

Because of height restrictions the house had to be dug into the sloping



site; the biggest challenge for the builder was all the different angles. For Sue it was the constant demands by the builders to take big decisions with very little notice. On occasion, in order to preserve the integrity of the design, Mick needed to find solutions himself eg how to have only two downpipes not the five the builder insisted were necessary. The sceptical plumber was also a challenge.

Is it more expensive than building a conventional house? 'Yes, but mainly because of the features we've chosen to include, such as the glass balustrading.'

Would they do it all again? Yes – but with their acquired expertise they would have queried the architect's advice much more – they had a narrow escape with their photovoltaic solar panels (installed this summer) which don't work in dappled shade. Luckily the neighbour's tree was pruned in the nick of time and they work well.

What advice would they give others? 'Find a good architect who works to build the house YOU want and not what they want! Do masses of research and speak to others who've done it (very few had when we started).'

What has given them greatest pleasure so far? For Sue, undoubtedly the joy of

growing her own fruit and veg . . . 'and the definite buzz from checking the diminishing electricity bills . . .' More next time on how that's achieved.



Visit Yew Tree Cottage on Sunday 11 September as part of Eco Open Houses Brighton and Hove. Free tickets in advance from www.ecoopenhouses.org

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Just back from. . .

Georgetown via Bali and Singapore

Ann Smith

A conservation tour? **Bali** for us means Ubud where traditional theatre and dance survive unspoilt and the royal palace has been carefully preserved.

Singapore is much more than that. Here conservation is studied, careful and stunning and at times surprising. The elegant government buildings of the former colonial district are well known to tourists: Raffles, the cricket club, the Anglican cathedral, the law courts, the parliament buildings – all beautifully conserved, modernised and used. Little India and Chinatown are on the tourist trail but go a little further out on the bus and glimpse to your left the shop houses resplendent in bright paint, or sometimes from a restaurant table, you see in the midst of modernity a reminder of the past. Further still and you will find the 'black and white houses' set in vast green gardens, a wonderful lot of real estate preserved on a tiny island where space is at a premium. These are the Edwardian villas built for the colonisers but not ripped down in the heat of revolution. You can see them from Google Earth: the owner needs a Mini Moke to tour his grounds and garden the size of a football pitch. Singapore recognises that to build in the style of a past era is a distortion of history. The new is, in materials and construction methods, appropriate to the present and creates a positive dialogue between old and new.



And what about **Penang**? **Georgetown** is a UNESCO world heritage site. By taxi from the airport we went through palm-lined, hot looking streets with a mix of low and high-rise buildings, none remarkable until we reached the centre of Georgetown, named in honour of George III. Here is the usual range of British colonial government buildings, the Anglican church, the clock tower for Queen Victoria's jubilee, the E & O hotel. Turn the corner and you find the Blue Mansion, the house built before the end of the 19th century by Cheong Fatt Tze, known as the Rockefeller of the East, for his favourite concubine, later his seventh wife. He built it using the best materials and technology available: cast iron from Glasgow, art nouveau stained glass, crafted in England, decorative encaustic tiles from Stoke-on-Trent as well



as the best of Chinese craftsmanship, carving, inlay, 'Chien Nien' cut-and-paste chard works. The whole airy and light – and built of course with due respect for Feng Shui (as is the most recent hotel in Singapore). After the death of Cheung's last son in 1989 the house came on the market. It was almost derelict with more than 30 illegal families living there; it was sold and saved, winning a UNESCO most excellent project award in 2004.

You are nearer the locals than in Singapore: next to the mansion is a huge food market, with stalls selling delicious hot food to what seems like the whole population, and as you walk the streets, you look into their house. You find the shop houses too still in use by Indian money changers, Chinese antique dealers, Malay motor bike mechanics and a few restored: there is a café, a book

shop, holiday lets, one shop house for two people. There are grander Chinese buildings like the Khoo Kongsi temple complex built for one clan and alongside all this sits quite comfortably the 65 storey Komtar building.

I love going to the Far East, I love the exciting modern architecture, the efficiency of the new, I

love the chaos of the old, Georgetown has it all.

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the laying of the foundation stone of S Michael's.
Refreshments after Mass. All are welcome.
CHRIST THE KING Sunday 20 November
The preacher at the Sung Mass for this festival
will be Father Damian Feeney, SSC, Vice-Principal
of S Stephen's House, Oxford.
A Parish Lunch follows Mass.



Friday 16 September 6pm
Alexandra Loske: George and his giraffe;
a tale of politics, exoticism and science
£6 to include a welcome glass.

Saturday 15 October 2.30pm
The Annual Lecture
A N Wilson on 'Dante in Love' with
reference to his new book
£10 includes refreshment
Details from Parish Office ☎ 822284

SEPTEMBER

Friday 9 1pm-3pm
Saturday 10 10am-6pm
Sunday 11 1pm-3pm
Heritage Open Door
St Nicholas Church

Saturday 10 9am-6pm
St Nicholas' open for Sussex Historic
Churches Trust sponsored Ride and Stride in
aid of Sussex historic churches and chapels

Saturday 17 7.30pm
Sussex Musicians' Club: Purcell, Schumann,
Richard Strauss, Henri Busser, Lili Boulanger.
BHHS, Montpelier Road £4

Saturday 24 2pm
Riko Tanaka, Soprano, with Classical
Guitar. Donations to Japan Tsunami.
St Nicholas Church, Dyke Road

OCTOBER

Wednesday 5 7pm
Regency Society Lecture 'To build a
dream: John Nash and the Royal
Pavilion' Mark Perry Nash.
City College, Pelham St £5 non-members

Saturday 8 7.30pm
Sussex Jazz Orchestra. Proceeds to SJO
and St Nicholas Choral Foundation for
Young People.

St Nicholas Church, Dyke Road £5 (£3)
Saturday 8 7.30pm
Sussex Musicians' Club: Debussy, Cecile
Chaminade, Schumann, Mezzo-soprano
solos. BHHS, Montpelier Road £4

Thursday 13 – Sunday 16

City Books 25th Birthday Festival includes
October 13 (evening)

Alistair Darling (*Back from the Brink:*
1,000 Days at Number 11)

October 15 (morning)

Emily Gravett and her new book
AGAIN all about bedtime stories.



Mainly at The Old Market
City Books 23 Western Road
☎725306 for details

Saturday 15 7.30pm
Bunch of Daphs Musical Evening.
St Nicholas Church, Dyke Road £5 (£3)

Saturday 22 7pm
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Events Events Events Events Events Events

Saturday 29 7pm

Friends of St Nicholas Quiz night including food and wine £15

Saturday 29 7.30pm

Sussex Musicians' Club 'Mostly Mozart'. BHHS, Montpelier Road £4

Monday 31 8pm

Lewes Monday Lit: Lisa Appignanesi – non-fiction author and novelist. Pelham House, Lewes £7.50. chris.mondaylit@gmail.com or ☎ 478512

NOVEMBER

Saturday 5 10am

AUTUMN FAIR: Christmas cards, gifts, refreshments, homemade preserves, toy stall, tombola and quality bric a brac. St Michael's Hall.

Wednesday 16 7pm

Regency Society lecture: 'Indian soldiers and the Royal Pavilion' Kevin Bacon. City College, Pelham Street non-members £5

Saturday 19 7.30pm

Brighton Consort Choir 'Bach and Brahms': Director Katie Thomas. St Nicholas Church, Dyke Road £10 (£8)

Saturday 19 7.30pm

Sussex Musicians' Club: Schubert, Faure, Khatachurian, vocal quartets. BHHS, Montpelier Road £4

Saturday 26 7pm

'The Fantastic Friends' Feast' Contact Friends of St Nicholas richard@hallogram.freeserve.co.uk £35

Monday 28 8pm

Lewes Monday Lit: Polly Toynbee – political commentator. Pelham House, Lewes £7.50. chris.mondaylit@gmail.com or ☎ 478512

DECEMBER

Saturday 4 6pm

The Merry Opera Company perform Handel's Messiah. St Nicholas Church, Dyke Road £11

Free listings page for events in and around our area and beyond (or pay to advertise). Email event details to info@cmpcaonline.org.uk for December-March by end October 2011

Thursday 8 December 7.30pm Royal Pavilion

Carol Concert in the Music Room. Mulled wine and mince pies in the Banqueting Room. £28, Members £20. Children £5



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Sunday 27 November
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Saturday 3 December
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Thursday 8 December
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Open Doors	<p>Junior & Senior Schools: Thursday 13th October, 9:30 - 11:30 a.m.</p>
For More Information	<p>Please contact our Admissions Secretary, Sue Wilkes, on 01273 280151 or e-mail enquiries@bhhs.gdst.net www.bhhs.gdst.net Registered charity number 306983</p>

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21	Jennifer Jones and Jonathan Leigh Soprano and Piano
28	Ingrid Cusido Piano

October

5	Stephen Carroll Turner and Friends Music for Horn, Strings and Piano
12	Geoffrey James Bass Baritone
19	James Shenton and Glen Capra Violin and Piano
26	Janet Ormerod and Friends Music for Piano, Voice and Oboe

November

2	Emilie Capulet Piano
9	Mary Chappelle (and Jonathan Steele) Soprano
16	Patrick Avery Classical Guitar
23	Helen Burford Piano
30	Cantique Vocal Quartet

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Street reps

Our street representatives deliver CMPCAnews and provide contacts and channels of communication throughout the area. To contact your street rep whose details do not appear below e streetreps@cmpcaonline.org.uk or ☎ 07816 403099 and we will put you in touch or try www.cmpcaonline.org.uk

Would you like to be a Street Rep? There are currently vacancies for Crown Street, Dean Street, Denmark Terrace, Marlborough Street and Regent Hill.



Borough Street	Jo McCartney
Church Street (Upper)	Shaun Kiddell
Clifton Hill	Carole Moorhouse
Clifton Place	John & Jenny Riddington
Clifton Road	Pauline Messum
Clifton Road (Homelees)	Michael Hales
Clifton Terrace	Morham White
Crown Gardens	Helen Smedley
Crown Street	
Dean Street	
Dyke Road (west side)	Bernard Howells
Denmark Terrace	
Hampton Place/Street	Arnold Rose
Hampton Terrace	Richard Brown*
Marlborough St/Mews	
Montpelier Crescent	Peter Freeman
Montpelier Road (Lower)	Margy Nixon
Montpelier Road (Upper)	Alex Williams
Montpelier Road (Park Royal)	
Montpelier Street	Bernard Dutton-Briant
Montpelier Place	John Warmington
Montpelier Terrace	Hal & Julia Doyne-Ditmas
Montpelier Terrace (Heather Court)	Geoff Courts

Montpelier Villas	Jane Osler
Norfolk Road	John Bristow
Norfolk Terrace	Peter Mullarky
Powis Grove	Steve Crockett
Powis Square	Ann Smith
Powis Road	Brian Izzard
Powis Villas	Angela Oliver
Regent Hill	
St Michael's Place	Roz Charters & Dan Wilson
Spring Street	Steve Pavey
Temple Gardens	Sharon-Thérèse Horlor
Temple Gardens (Temple Heights)	Mary Bacon
Temple Gardens (York Mansions)	Simon-Pierre Hedger-Cooper
Temple Street	Aidan Lunn
Upper North Street	Richard Brown
Vernon Terrace	Lynne Shields
Victoria Place/Street	Peter Woodhead
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