

BEYOND THE GRAVES

Volume 14: Number 3: July 2019

THE SEASON ~ Entertainments; Excursions; Excitements!



Ryde was the gateway to the Island and the Pier was one of Ryde's most important assets for arriving, leaving and promenading. Almost immediately the town's commissioners realized the potential for enterprise and to make the town prosper.

The Illustrated London News [left] showed the genteel Victorian scene in 1864, when the Season was quite short. What would they have thought of 'The Move' performing at the 'Seagull Ballroom' on the pier a hundred years later?

1968 poster courtesy of Steve Lloyd.



Steamers brought visitors over to the Pier, day trippers, those on a short holiday or the gentry taking a house for the season. While they were staying in Ryde the steamers offered them various excursions.

The Duchess of Fife at Ryde Pier head— LL Postcard [IW County Record Office]
Advert from IW County Press 25 June 1910

IW Observer 6 August 1910

Ryde Season - Messrs. Wallis, Riddett & Co., have arranged for the following further lets of furnished houses for the season. St. Clare Castle to Mr. Douglas Hall, M.P., Thornbury to Sir Henry Chamberlain, The Old House to Henry Brown, and No. 21 Argyll-street to Mrs. Perrorr.

| JOINT RAILWAY COMPANIES' POPULAR WATER EXCURSIONS (weather, &c., permitting), by the Steam-ship | | | |
|--|------------|-------------|---------|
| DUCHESS OF FIFE. | | | |
| EVERY MONDAY, WEDNESDAY, AND SATURDAY, | | | |
| ROUND the ISLE OF WIGHT, | | | |
| From Ryde Pier-gates | 11 a.m. | Fare | 2/10 |
| " Ryde Pier-head | 11.15 a.m. | | |
| " Sandown Pier | 12.15 p.m. | | |
| " Shanklin Pier | 12.25 p.m. | | 2/6 |
| " Ventnor Pier | 12.45 p.m. | | |
| EVERY TUESDAY AND THURSDAY, | | | |
| TOTLAND BAY & ALUM BAY, | | | |
| From Ryde Pier-gates | 11 a.m. | | |
| " Ryde Pier-head | 11.15 a.m. | | |
| Return Fares—Totland Bay. | | Alum Bay. | |
| Ryde Pier-gates | 1s. 4d. | | 1s. 6d. |
| Ryde Pier-head | 1s. 0d. | | 1s. 2d. |
| FRIDAY JULY 1st, | | | |
| BRIGHTON, | | | |
| From Ryde Pier-gates | 10.10 a.m. | | |
| " Ryde Pier-head | 10.25 a.m. | | |
| " Sandown Pier | 11.15 a.m. | | |
| " Shanklin Pier | 11.25 a.m. | | |
| | | Return Fare | 3/- |
| For further particulars see Bills and Programmes at Stations and Piers, &c. | | | |



Isle of Wight Observer 21 May 1910
Ryde Advertising Association – The Association is making a special appeal for funds in order to carry on the valuable work in which they are engaged. The Ryde people should do their utmost to assist the Association, whose work has borne such good fruit in the past few years.

For those who preferred dry land there were numerous excursions. A horse-drawn coach piled high with tourists waits outside the Pier Hotel on Ryde Esplanade. [Roy Brinton Collection]

A view along the Esplanade, horse-drawn carriages line up waiting for the tourists. The cabmen's stand is the octagonal shaped building, In the left background can be glimpsed the Victoria Pier.

[F.N. Broderick postcard - Ian Murray Collection]



Isle of Wight Observer 7 May 1910
Advertisement – Ryde Pier Company, the Victoria Pier is now open for Hot and Cold Salt and Fresh Water Baths for Ladies and Gentlemen. Special Ozone Iodized Baths for Invalids, strongly recommended by the Medical Profession. Full particulars as to Tariff, etc. can be obtained at the Pier Gates.

Above - motorised vehicles are now taking over from the horse drawn carriages and the cabmen's shelter has been moved to one side in this circa 1920's postcard [RSHG]

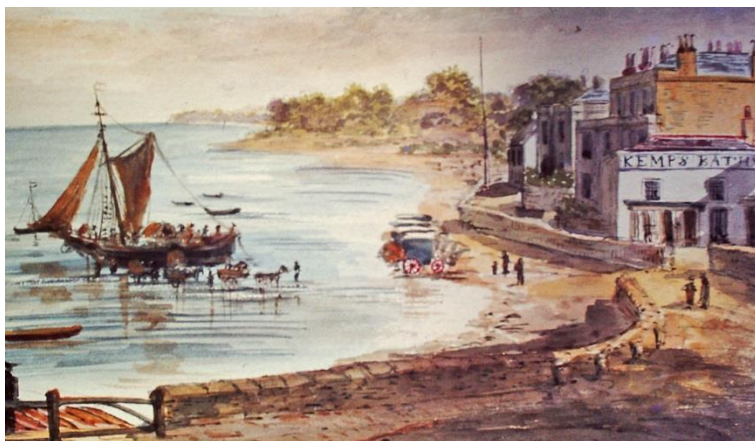
Isle of Wight Observer 1 June 1912

The season for reference to the Island in the various periodicals has commenced. The "Co-operative News" makes a flattering reference to Ryde and the coach rides therefrom.

Coaching companies such as Paul's Tours, Seaview Services, Moss's, Southern Vectis and others lined up along the Esplanade. They offered coach trips round the Island either all day, afternoon or evening trips to Blackgang, Alum Bay, Godshill, Osborne House, Brighstone tea gardens, and others. There were even morning trips from the camps to the Ponda Rosa and also Newport for shopping.

Detail from a circa 1950's postcard [RSHG]





FORESHORE IMPROVEMENTS.
To the Editor of the Isle of Wight Observer.
 Sir,—The seats at Apley are a great attraction both for residents and visitors, and especially invalids; but I would suggest a further grand improvement in that neighbourhood. Let the Town Council purchase the old unused buildings now standing at Apley (Kemp's baths and the house built by the late Mr. Alnutt) *in the borough*, and I think that part of the town may be made very attractive by pulling down the wall and houses, and laying it out similar to that already provided. Invalids would then be able to avail themselves of a Bath chair along this quiet and pleasant part of Ryde.
 Yours, &c., **LOOKER-ON.**

An early painting showing Kemp's Baths, [now the site of the Marine and Esplanade Hotels] and some bathing machines on the beach [Roy Brinton Collection] Above a letter published in the IW Observer, 15 June 1878 suggesting improvements.



IW Observer 7 May 1870 – The Free Bathing Stage -
 The bathing stage will be opened to the public on Monday next for the summer months ... Our local legislators are now on the alert, and the opening of this bathing station will be a convenience to both residents and visitors.

Detail from a postcard by F.N. Broderick of sea bathing at Seaview, but this would have been a common sight at Ryde as well.
 [Paul Kingswell Collection]

Isle of Wight Observer 17 June 1865

The Coming Season - Unquestionably the most world-wide attraction of the Solent will this year receive a great and early impetus, as the Royal Thames Yacht Club have generously arranged that their Great Ocean Match shall be from the Thames to Ryde. A fine fleet have already entered for this match, comprising some of the best of the old yachts, and some of the new ones.

Beach huts at Puckpool, an improvement on the earlier bathing machines, and the improved sea wall walk for tourists [Postcard Ann Barrett]



Photograph of crowds on the beach watching punch and Judy [Anonymous donation to RSHG]
 Some of the well-dressed people may have been from the East London factories which closed completely for two weeks, allowing a mass exodus by train and coach towards the coastal resorts in the post-war years.
 [recalled by Ann Barrett]

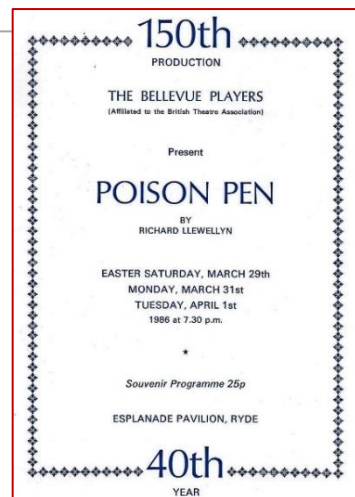


The Pavilion – detail from a postcard [RSHG]

IW Times 4 May 1967

Bellevue Players – It was in April 1946 that the Bellevue Players staged their first performance ("Poison Pen") under the producership of their founder—the late Mrs Madelaine Cooper (then Miss Pleninger [pictured]), at the Esplanade Pavilion, and they have played there every Easter since in addition to many other performances. This is an achievement of which the Players are justly proud.

The Players reprised the play for their 150th production. Thank you to Derek Warman for supplying photos and cuttings collected by his father, a member of the Players.



22nd Year The Bellevue Players 72 Productions

Autumn Programme

"BUSYBODY"
A COMEDY-THRILLER by Jack Popplewell
following its Record Breaking run at the Duke of York Theatre
Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sept. 26th, 27th, 28th at 8 p.m.

"THE PARAGON"
THE DRAMATIC POST-WAR PLAY SET IN 1946
by Roland and Michael Pertwee
Thursday, Friday, Saturday, October 24th, 25th, 26th at 8 p.m.

In aid of the Isle of Wight Society for Physically Handicapped Children
THE BELLEVUE PLAYERS will present

A REVUE
on Thursday and Friday, December 12th and 13th
ADVANCE BOOKINGS for all productions at
Messrs. FOWLERS FASHION STORE, 41 UNION STREET, RYDE. Tel. 2433

ESPLANADE PAVILION, RYDE

Bellevue Players – A "crime wave" hit the Esplanade Pavilion on Saturday, Monday and Tuesday, when the Bellevue Players presented "A Breath of Spring," a comedy by Peter Coke. Played with verve by a competent, close-knit team, this highly amusing, if somewhat incredible story brought to a happy conclusion the Bellevue Players' 1962-63 season.
Isle of Wight Times 6 June 1963

An advert for the Parade Tea Rooms in a 'Moonstones' programme, 1921, at the Pavilion.

Advert below from Lightbown's Visitors Guide 1955

TEA DANCES
Every Afternoon throughout the Season
from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. at
THE SEAGULL RESTAURANT
RYDE PIER HEAD
3/6 inclusive

Dancing to the perfect tempo of a Hammond Electric Organ

Drink in comfort at Popular Prices in the spacious Fully Licensed Bar with the Hammond Organ to entertain you

DANCING EVERY EVENING ADMISSION FREE

Watch for further announcements of Talent and other Competitions
WHITBREADS BEERS WATNEYS ALES SIMONDS BEERS

PARADE TEA GARDENS,
EASTERN ESPLANADE RYDE.

The Tea Garden is situated in the Beautiful Esplanade Gardens, facing the Sea and adjoining the well-known Bowling Green of the Town and the Hard and Grass Tennis Courts.

ICES, MINERALS, LIGHT LUNCHEONS, TEAS, & ALL KINDS of REFRESHMENTS can be obtained, also TOBACCO, CIGARS and CIGARETTES at Reasonable Prices.

ROSS'S Superb London Orchestra
PLAYS EVERY AFTERNOON.
OPEN SUNDAYS.

Isle of Wight Observer 17 June 1865

We see by advertisement that the Hungarian Brothers will arrive at the end of the month for the season, with a large addition to their usually excellent bank.

IW Observer 3 October 1868

Italian String Band – We notice that the members of this band who, during the summer months have so charmed the inhabitants and visitors of Ryde by their performances, appeal to the public to patronise them, at a farewell concert, to be given at the Victoria-rooms, on the evening of Tuesday the 13th. We trust the appeal will not be made in vain.

Listening to the band, with bowling in the background, at the Esplanade Gardens. [Broderick postcard - Ian Murray Collection]



BOROUGH OF RYDE.

1920

**MUSIC ON
WESTERN ESPLANADE**

By kind permission of the respective Commanding Officers, and until further notice.

**THE BAND OF THE
1st Battalion
ROYAL IRISH RIFLES**
will play every
**Thursday Evening at 7 p.m.
Sunday Evening at 8 p.m.**
Afternoons at 3 p.m.

**THE BAND OF THE
3rd BATT. RIFLE BDE.**
will play every
Tuesday at 7 p.m.
Admission 3d., (including Tax).
Chairs 3d.

IW Observer 2 April 1910

Improvements at the Gardens – The Corporation have decided to make a fresh entrance at the Eastern Gardens, near the Bowling Club Pavilion. It will be of considerable service when bands are playing from the bandstand, and access to the gardens from Dover-street entrance is impeded by chairs. The new entrance will be paved by cement flags and will be closed at night. Intending players of bowls will be brought within easy reach of the bowling greens and the pavilion from the roadway. With reference to the laying down of a third lawn tennis court at the extreme Eastern end of the gardens it may be noted that only about eight feet of extra space has been required.

IW Times 3 June 1920

Advert for the Royal Irish Rifles Band



IW Observer 3 August 1912
Ryde Royal Regatta – At the Royal Esplanade Regatta on Monday next, the band of the Royal Marine Artillery under Lieut. B.S. Green, M.V.O. will play in the Eastern Gardens. Mr. Grahame White, the well-known aviator, is expected to make a flight in the direction of the Gardens in the afternoon.

IW Observer 22 April 1905 – On Monday the famous John Philip Sousa and his equally famous band visited the Theatre Royal and gave two concerts. The house was well filled both in the afternoon and evening, and those who attended were evidently very much impressed by the fine performance. [Photo of Sousa - Wikipedia]

IW Times 3 June 1920

Advert for the Humortainers

WESTERN PAVILION, RYDE.

8.15 Mon., Wed., Fri., Sat., 8.15
8.45 Tues. (AFTER BAND) Thurs., 8.45

**LEONARD MORRIS'S
HUMORTAINERS**
REGD.
Seven First-Class London Artists.

Maggie Lawson-Tait ... Contralto
Ida Williams...Songs at the Piano. Violinist
Daisy Crossley Comedienne. Child Mimic
Jimmie Lawson-Tait Scottish Entertainer
Louis Garnett ... Baritone
Frank B. Wilcock Piano Solos. Accompanist
Leonard Morris Humourist. Impersonator

**Not a Dull Moment Throughout.
Change of Programme Nightly.**

Prices—2' - (Bookable at) 1/-, & 6d.
Tax Extra.

Ryde Canoe Lake – a 1920's view [note the WW1 tank just visible top left] & circa 1970. [RSHG]



Isle of Wight Observer 24 April 1909

Rallying Ryde – It would be well if Ryde people imitated their neighbours in their interest in the welfare of their town, and did their best to enhance Ryde's popularity.

Isle of Wight Observer 29 March 1919

Flights – Flying boats promise to make south coast resorts very lively in the coming summer. In the scheme, small flying boats at each resort to make occasional trips; a passenger service between the different towns; larger machines available for flights to any part of the country.

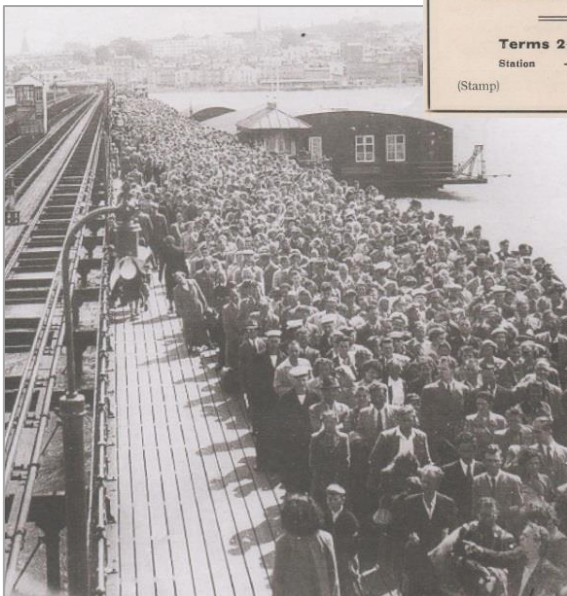
IW Observer 11 August 1917

Holiday Makers Detained – In addition to the large number of visitors in the town there was a big influx of holiday makers on Monday. Those from the mainland who remained for the mail-boat were more than could be conveyed on the one steamer, which had to make a return journey.



This 1935 advert for the Dorset House Hotel was typical of the many found in the Ryde Guides of the inter and post war years sent out for potential visitors to plan their stay. Their guests were not advertised in the same way as this list of 'Fashionable Arrivals' found in the IW Observer, 17 August 1867.

Sir Augustus and the Misses Clifford have arrived at their residence, Westfield.
Sir John Carnoe, bart., and Lady and Miss Carnoe, have arrived at Bedwell House, George-street.
The Marquis and Marchioness of Exeter arrived at Brookfield on Wednesday.
Lord and Lady Conyers have arrived at Anglesea House, Buckingham-road.
Lord and Lady Trimleston and Miss Barnwell have arrived at 1, Pier Terrace.



Isle of Wight Times 8 August 1968

Posters – British Rail still persist in smothering their mainland stations with "Hover over to Ryde" posters advertising the non-existent Ryde-Portsmouth HM2 service—which broke down practically as soon as it started in the spring.

With the advent of cheaper foreign holidays Ryde's season went into decline. The town gradually lost many amenities, including the Dotto train. Hotels and guest houses closed. Scenes like this of day trippers queuing down the pier became a thing of the past. [Photo Roy Brinton Collection]



The Dotto train [RSHG]