



# RYDE SOCIAL HERITAGE GROUP

## Beyond the Graves

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# DEMOLITION

## "I'll Huff and I'll Puff and Blow Your House Down!"

The old IW COUNTY HOSPITAL is probably one of the best remembered buildings to be lost in the town.



### Islander Magazine November 1992 (80th Anniversary Edition)

Friends and Supporters of Ryde's old Royal County Hospital - now facing demolition - will be delighted to hear of moves to incorporate part of its past and royal history in the town's proposed new community hospital. This includes preserving a stone bust of Queen Victoria, who, in 1898, opened a ward named after her, and an impressive royal crest in stone. Local county councillor Charles Chapman is hoping [that] any interesting historic relics are saved before bulldozers demolish the Victorian building which closed when the new St Mary's Hospital opened in Newport. The idea is to collect various relics for a heritage display, perhaps in the reception area of the new Ryde community hospital which is proposed on the site of the nurse's home in Adelaide Place. Mr Chapman would also like to see the erection of a plaque commemorating more than 140 years of medical and nursing care by staff of the old hospital. Planning approval has been given to residential re-development on the site.



### "The Isle of Wight"

by J Redding Ware 1871

The Infirmary is a well-proportioned building, on the road to Ashey, established 12 years since by the exertion of the late Dr Dodd. It will accommodate 50 patients, and during the year 1857-8 relieved 142 in-patients and 607 out-patients. Its income was £1.255 11s.



### IW Observer 14 September 1861

Strange but True - Many months ago some spiders weaved their webs across the aperture of the contribution box placed in the gate-post of the Infirmary, and this placed an effectual bar against the exercise of Charity in that direction. Hundreds of relatives and friends (save us from friends!) of patients passed to and fro during that time, without even a widow's mite clearing the way

### IW Observer 21 November 1863

Infirmary Lodge - We have had the pleasure of inspecting some very pretty plans, kindly given by Mr Hellyer of Bouverie House, of a lodge to be built at the south entrance to the Infirmary. After the miserable, poverty-stricken, cold-looking cottages, on the opposite side of the way above the Falcon, this lodge will have a refreshing appearance.





**IW County Press 30 June 1906** - Operation on a Dog - Mr F Halstead, of Union Street, Ryde, had a dog run over by a coach last week. As he did not wish to lose the animal, he took it to the County Hospital where one leg was amputated and another put into splints. The dog is doing well.

**IW Times 1 August 1907** - On Tuesday afternoon the opening of the new wing of the Royal Isle of Wight County Hospital took place under Royal Patronage, Princess Henry of Battenberg, who is President of the institution, making her first public function on her return to the Island after an unusually long absence.

**IW County Press 13 February 1909** - Islanders were asked to donate money to help cover the running costs of the Royal IW County Hospital, Ryde. The hospital dealt with 624 patients in 1908 but finished the year with a deficit of £250.

**IW County Press 26 December 1914**

Her Majesty the Queen has graciously sent a gift of pheasants for the patients of the Royal IW County Hospital.

**IW Times 23 August 1956** - The Mayor and Mayoress of Ryde (Councillor and Mrs H Rogers) paid an official visit to the Royal Isle of Wight County Hospital on Monday, they toured the wards and inspected the two new waiting rooms, one in the X-ray department and another a general waiting room.

**IW County Press 9 June 1962** - Stiletto heels were banned from all Island hospitals. The IW Group Hospital Management Committee decided to ban the popular shoes because they made depressions in the floors, which were a breeding place for germs and impossible to clean. It was reported £1,300 had to be spent on renewing floors at the Royal IW County Hospital, Ryde.



**Photographs of the Hospital demolition and also these photographs taken of houses on the site, on 24 August 2013, are from the RSHG Archive**



**QUARRY ROAD**

**IW Times 16 February 1967** - Slam of a Stable Door People who wish to build small private garages in the Quarry Road, Ryde, area, are now being told by the Borough Council that the ground is unstable. Nevertheless, last year the council approved the development of a much larger plan, for a filling station, where excavations are causing a landslip at the rear of houses in Surrey street.

**Dave Bushell took this photograph of the site while work was in progress. 2 May 1988.**

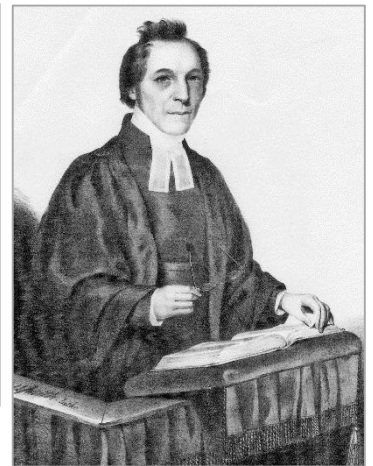




## THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH Corner of George Street and Melville Street.



Rev. T.S. Guyer was the minister at the Congregational Church in Ryde. He died 5 March 1846, and was much lamented in the town, his '*preaching was impressive and informing*'. The Rev. P. Hewitt of Binstead refused to bury Rev. Guyer alongside his two children in Binstead Churchyard as '*he was a Dissenting Minister ... and had preached against the Church of England*'. The towns people made a collection to erect a tablet to Guyer and he was buried at the foot of the pulpit in his own Chapel. The Hampshire Telegraph, 21 March 1846, reported in detail – calling Hewitt '*an ignorant, stupid, relentless, unforgiving bigot*'.



### IW County Press 6 July 1974

A recent acquisition by Mrs. Germaine Scott, of Nettlestone, who has a passion for history, is a corner arch from Ryde Congregational Church (1871) which she got from a workman during the demolition of the building.

Images of the exterior and interior of the Congregational Church, and the Rev. Guyer, RSHG Archive

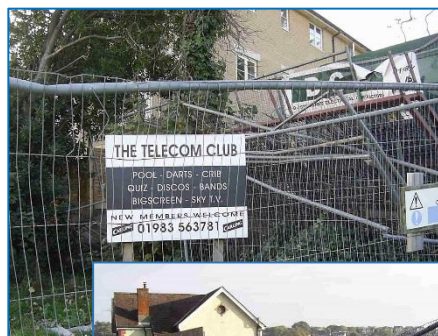
An 1888 advert for **LANGDON BUILDERS**

**M. G. LANGDON,**  
*(Late J. & J. Langdon.)*  
**BUILDER, CONTRACTOR, UNDERTAKER,  
AND PLUMBER,  
PAINTER, GLAZIER, AND DECORATOR.**

Estimates given for general repairs.  
PAPERHANGING.

**TIMBER AND CEMENT MERCHANT.**  
*Agent for the Ezbury White Brick Works.  
Agent for the Lancashire Insurance Company.*

FARM STOCK INSURED.  
Funerals personally attended with economy.  
Valuer for probate. All orders punctually attended to.  
**44, PLAYER STREET, RYDE.**



## THE TELECOM CLUB Park Road

IW County Press  
21 November 2008

**TO ALL MEMBERS OF  
THE TELECOM CLUB  
PARK ROAD, RYDE**

There is to be an  
**EGM**  
on Wednesday 26th  
November, starting  
at 19.00.

This is to discuss a  
prospective proposal for the  
future of the Telecom Club.  
Please bring your Membership  
Card with you.  
COMMITTEE



**Dave Bushell's photograph of Langdon's premises in Player Street being demolished. 24 July 1993 [Left]. Dave was also on hand to record the site of the Telecom Club, 1 November 2010 [Above].**

Charles Langdon, Builders, appealed a decision to refuse outline planning permission for two dwellings on their yard adjacent to Coleman's Wood, Upton Cross, saying it would improve the rural character of the area as the land was derelict and unsightly. Broken and derelict vehicles were spread over part of the site which was used as a car breaker's yard.

Reported in the IW County Press 13 February 1987.



## GASSIOT SCHOOL, OAKFIELD



**IW Observer 12 March 1910** - Education Committee - The Works and Buildings Sub-Committee reported: The Managers of the Oakfield Gassiot (Girls) Schools have agreed to pay half the amount of the account for water supplied to that School during the half year ended September 1909, and to provide a separate pipe to the caretaker's residence.

**IW County Press 8 December 1934** - The head teacher at Gassiot Girls' School, Ryde, introduced a new extra-curricular subject – parenting. Miss Tyler incorporated what was dubbed baby term, aimed at pupils of 13 years and over, to give them an introduction to the responsibilities of motherhood.



**IW Times 3 September 1964** - With reference to the schools in the Oakfield and Elmfield area, the children are very fortunate in that generous benefactors in the past have given them money, land and property, to be used solely for school purposes. As these are held in trust, we trust that the trustees will act promptly to see that the children are not defrauded of what is legally theirs.



### **IW County Press 5 February 1999**

Oakfield Primary School's Football Team was presented with a new kit after raising money from a mum's versus teacher's match. Mums United won the match, which raised £469 to buy the kit, as well as two new goal nets for the school.

**Photograph & watercolour of Gassiot School RSHG Archive.**  
**Photographs of the demolition by Dave Bushell**

## CAVERSHAM HOUSE. DOVER STREET

An undated cutting in the RSHG Archive shows Caversham House just before demolition. It had been built as a private house, eventually becoming residential accommodation for West Wing School until 1939. In 1946 it opened as Ryde County Infants School. After closing on 12 February it was to be pulled down to erect the island's largest and most up to date Primary School. The last pupils were presented with a commemorative mug.



**IW Times 16 April 1970** - Bad News for Tramps – Their less-than-stately home, a tumbledown cottage in Church Lane, Ryde, long used as a place for bed and breakfast by vagrants, is to be knocked down before it falls down. The walls are practically peeling off the paper and the list of defects are "so colossal" that it would have to be demolished. The cottage is scheduled for bulldozing as soon as possible.



## THE THEATRE ROYAL, ST. THOMAS' SQUARE

### Hill & Co Historical & Commercial Directory of IW 1871

The theatre (the late building), situated in St Thomas' Square, was an insignificant building. It is memorable as having been the scene of the last appearance on a public stage of the celebrated Mrs Jordan, whose exquisite delineations of character so delighted the playgoer in the palmy times of the English drama. The old building is taken down, and a handsome theatre now in course of erection on the same site. [The new building seen right]



### The Era, London, Saturday 5 October 1889

Theatre Royal [Ryde] Proprietor Mr Edgar Bruce: Manager Mr Ellis Miller – Bootles' Baby was performed on Monday before a crowded and fashionable audience. The company is one of all-round excellence.

### IW County Press 6 October 1894

"Charley's Aunt" appeared before a large audience at the Theatre on Thursday evening, and the laughter at her unfeminine eccentricities and awkward predicaments, was almost continuous from the rise to the fall of the curtain.



### IW Observer 30 January 1904

Theatre Royal – A very pleasing attraction is promised for next week, when Mr H Deniss Roberts will give his exhibition of animated photography, including coloured pictures. Not the least interesting will be the local evening pictures of Ryde, including the turn-out of the Fire Brigade.

### IW Observer 26 August 1911

Beauty Competition - The Theatre has been crowded each night during the past week, the special attraction being a "Beauty Competition." There were thirty-two competitors and judging was by the vote of the audience. First prize (silver tea service) went to Miss Gertrude Johnson, of Nelson Street. Second prize went to Miss Marie Proost, 42 Castle Street, and the third prize to Miss Florrie White, 14 Edwards Street.

The **IW Times, 7 February 1924** reported that during the recent railway strike Mr Terry Wood, of the Theatre Royal, made special arrangements for films to be brought by road from London to Portsmouth, after transport across the Solent in Mr Linnington's motor boat, they were distributed around the Island by Central Garage Motors. It was so successful they considered always using this method.

### IW County Press 27 May 1961

Ryde's Theatre Royal was destroyed by one of the fiercest fires seen in the town for many years. The outbreak was discovered about half an hour after patrons left the theatre and within hours it became a smoking shell. Firefighters from Ryde, Newport, Bembridge and East Cowes attended the blaze, which caused a large section of the roof to fall in. On the following day, crowds of people watched demolition workers work until dark to pull down unsafe walls. An investigation was launched to establish the cause of the fire.



**IW Times 3 November 1960** - At the Theatre Royal, Norman Wisdom on Ryde Pier, filmed partly in Ryde, "There was a Crooked Man" continues a week's run with Norman Wisdom and Alfred Marks indulging in sundry larceny.

### Theatre Royal photographs Roy Brinton Collection.

### IW County Press 18 May 1935

Plans were approved for the demolition of a building to make way for a super large cinema and ballroom in Ryde town centre.



## THE PIER HOTEL & THE ESPLANADE

### IW County Press 17 January 1931

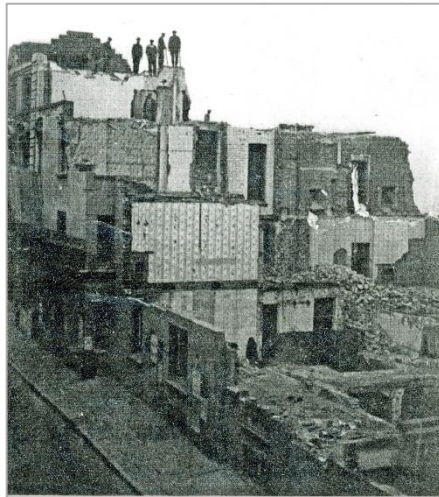
The Pier Hotel Improvement – Mr. Williams asked the chairman of the Public Works Committee if any developments had taken place as to the proposed improvement in Pier-street, involving pulling down of the Pier Hotel. Mr. Hayden replied that a good many developments had taken place, and the scheme had practically matured. He had hoped to put the whole of the facts before them, but they were daily expecting a letter from the Ministry of Transport. He hoped the matter would be completed in a few days, so that the Council could decide what line they would take.

### IW County Press 14 February 1931

Ryde's £10,000 Improvement Scheme – It is proposed to demolish the Royal Pier Hotel in order to open up the western end of the Esplanade and abolish the bottle-neck at the bottom of Union Street.

### IW County Press 17 October 1931

Pier Hotel – Mr. Hayden, for the Public Works Committee, reported that they had sold £800 worth of fittings from the Pier Hotel buildings and were getting applications for the materials daily. Three Ryde contractors were the lowest for haulage.



Photographs of the Pier Hotel and the Esplanade at the bottom of Union Street.

Roy Brinton Collection.

Note the workmen standing on the partly demolished buildings in Pier Street – no health & safety in the 1930's!



## THE LONDON HOTEL Swanmore Road & Well Street junction

The IW County Press reported, 9 September 1983, that planning permission had been granted for warden attended flats on the former London Hotel site at the junction of Swanmore Road and Well Street. An Island Builders spokesman said work on the 46 flats and 2 warden's flats would be completed in mid-1985.

Photo May 1983 RSHG Archive

