



RYDE SOCIAL HERITAGE GROUP

Beyond the Graves

Volume 20: Number 1: January 2025

Christmas is coming, The goose is getting fat.



Ryde Christmas Tree
RSHG

Greetings card 1913
[left]

WW1 Silk
greetings card [below]



IW Times 6 December 1956

More than 150 orders have been received for this year's illuminated Christmas tree lighting scheme in Ryde. The switching-on ceremony will be on December 17.

IW County Press 29 December 1956

Carols by Fairy Light – Members of the Methodist Church held a carol service by fairy light on Sunday evening. The Rev Cledwyn Wood read the Christmas story. A large illuminated Christmas tree was placed near the rostrum and at the side of the church was a beautifully executed crib made by the Ryde County Secondary Modern pupils and members of the Youth Club. Across the church were festoons of fairy lights.

IW County Press 21 December 1974

No Need – It is utterly deplored, the waste of power with thousands of coloured lights strung across Ryde High Street long before the festive season arrives. Switching on a few days before Christmas, December 21 until December 30 inclusive, would save a considerable amount of money.

Christmas Card - John O. Winsch was a publisher of quality non-topographic cards from Stapleton, New York. In general, information on him and his business appears to be scarce, and has probably never been researched seriously. A collector claims that Winsch had published some 3,000 different card designs.



Photo of holly growing in Ryde Cemetery
Holly decoration in the Centre 2018
Both RSHG



Holly - Holly is one of the most distinctive of our evergreen shrubs and trees. It is easily identifiable by its waxy, spiky leaves and clusters of scarlet red berries. Holly has long been associated with mid-winter celebrations and been gathered in great quantities for Yuletide decorations, both of the Church and of the home. The berries, though eaten by birds, are poisonous to human beings, and children should be warned against them.

IW Observer 1 November 1913
Christmas Cards - There are relatives and friends across the sea to be remembered, therefore the shop windows have commenced to display a variety of calendars and Christmas cards wherewith to tempt the early purchaser. Of all the art productions of the day, they are certainly very beautiful.

Christmas Customs

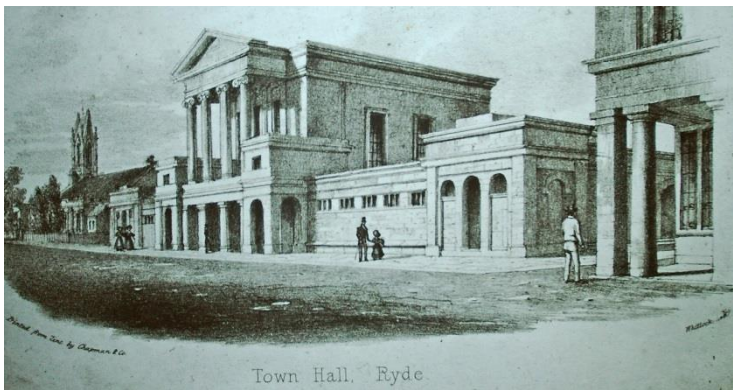
The Victorians threw themselves into charitable works with enthusiasm, giving Christmas boxes - presents of food and money to all the deserving poor of the parish, usually on the day after Christmas. It became a custom of the nineteenth-century Victorians for tradesmen to collect their "Christmas boxes" or gifts on the day after Christmas in return for good and reliable service throughout the year.

IW Observer 20 December 1856

Several old Christmas customs are extant in this locality. Bands of poor women "go-a-gooding," that is, wait upon the known generous rich for doles of various kinds; "Christmas Carols," are as numerous as holly berries, "Christmas Boxes," too, still survive, though many attempts have been made to suppress them.

IW Observer 19 December 1868

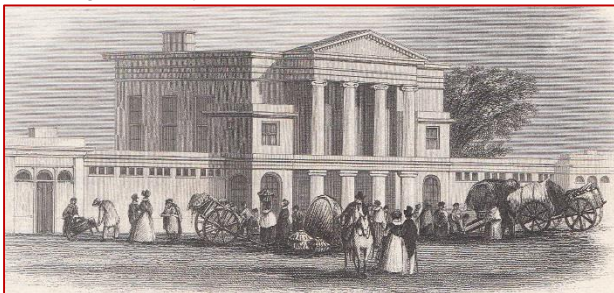
Soup to the Poor – Mr. W. Jenkins, late of Ryde, who has had a meat stall in the Market, gave notice of his intention to distribute a quantity of soup gratis. There were a large number of recipients, and about 200 quarts were given away at the commencement of the week.



In 1861 for crying any marketable commodity exposed for sale within the market 1s. first cry, and 1s. for the second and every other cry. As a servant of the town, who attended to the Town-hall and the Market House, the "crier" was given £20 a year. From a list of candidates that year, Mr Buckett was chosen as crier with a vote of 20.

The Market next to the Town Hall – RSHG, Roy Brinton Collection.

The market was held in a room under the Town Hall in 1867, while they made alterations to the market house.



The Market next to the Town Hall – RSHG, Roy Brinton Collection.

The market was held in a room under the Town Hall in 1867, while they made alterations to the market house.



O.A.P's Party At Oakfield Inn

About 1,330 "years worth" of old age pensioners enjoyed an after-Christmas treat at the Oakfield Inn on Friday. Bedecked in paper hats and waited on hand and foot, 19 O.A.P's (average age 70) were given a free evening by the pub's darts club.

Competitions and other money-raising efforts throughout the year financed a sumptuous meal, and all the free drinks the veterans wanted.

Mrs. E. Sivier, wife of the landlord, with Mrs. M. Valvona, was responsible for the catering, and members of the darts team acted as waiters.

Mr. Perce Williams, on behalf of the guests, thanked the darts team for "a wonderful time."

Mr. Jack Newbery, chairman of the club, who told the gathering that he hoped the occasion would be repeated next year.

IW Times 2 January 1969

Old People Entertained – About 36 old age pensioners were given a Christmas party at the Fleming Arms, Mr. William Whitter, 87, was among the guests.



Fleming Arms
Photograph Tony Gale

IW Times 7 January 1965

Children's Party - Ryde Post Office and Social Club held their Christmas children's party at the London Hotel on Saturday, when 71 children enjoyed an excellent tea. This was followed by Father Christmas distributing presents, fruit and sweets.

Is That An Ace In Your Ear?

Playing cards were produced from people's ears, and objects floated in the air at the London Hotel, Ryde, on Saturday, but nobody raised an eyebrow.

It was, after all, the annual dinner of the I.W. Magicians when, by tradition, the unusual is commonplace.

Since the group formed in 1961, members have done much work for charity, both as entertainers and money raisers. Mr. William Styan, Superintendent of the East-hill Home for the Deaf, Ryde, one of the guests, paid tribute to them on behalf of the many organisations which the Magicians had helped.

Mr. D. Merkel made a humorous speech on the complications which beset conjurors' relatives, and Dr. Frank Kennedy, president, said that every ticket for the evening had been sold, with many would-be diners having to be turned away.

A feature of the evening was a magical cabaret presented by Barry Rutherford, Mike Hayles, John Rann and Christopher Cox, and Tony Taro, a Portsmouth conjuror. Mr. Arthur Excell was comper.



IW Times article above 23 November 1967

IW Times 11 January 1968

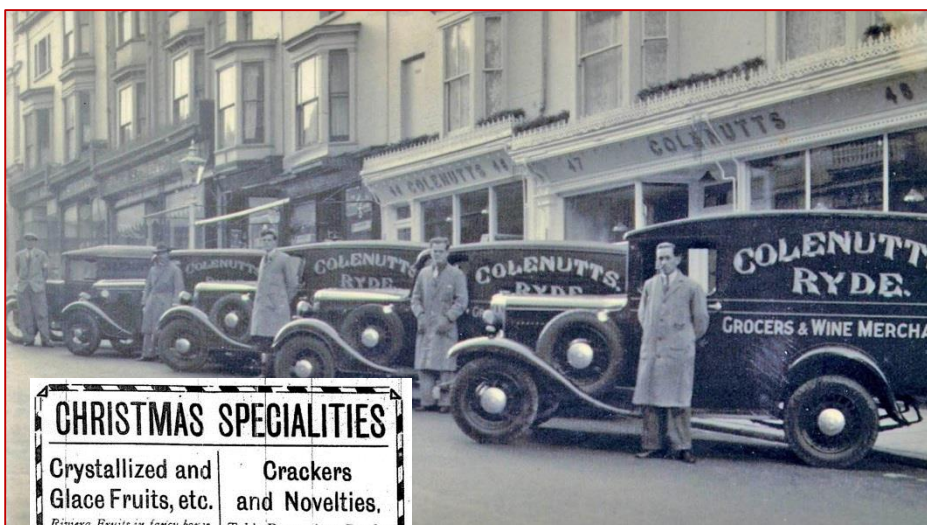
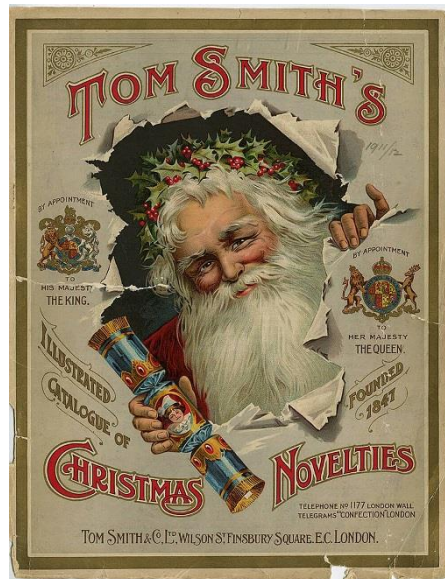
Oakfield Inn photograph – Tony Gale

London Hotel photograph – Tony Gale

Christmas Novelties & Crackers

The inventor of the Christmas Cracker was a man called Thomas Smith from London. In the early 1830s he started work as a small boy in a bakers and ornamental confectioners in London, selling sweets, pralines and gum pastilles. He was successful enough to leave and start up his own business in Clerkenwell, East London. In 1846 Tom turned his thoughts towards Christmas and came up with the idea of wrapping little toys and novelties in the twisted wrapping instead of sweets. After some experimentation Tom designed a wrapping that could be pulled apart – just like the cracker as we know it today. (Wikipedia)

1911 Catalogue for Christmas novelties & Crackers



Colenutt's Advert 5 December 1929
Photograph RSHG

CHRISTMAS SPECIALITIES	
Crystallized and Glace Fruits, etc. <i>Riviera Fruits in fancy boxes.</i> Choicest Fruits, in nice fancy boxes, various shapes. PRICE 5s. to 18/- Box. "Bright and Dainty."	Crackers and Novelties. Table Decorations, Bombs, etc., A lovely display, every conceivable size and colour. Prices 6d. to 42/-. "Pleasing and Interesting."
Stilton Cheese. Prize Leicester Dairies. Per 2/4 lb Whole Cheese, about 12lbs. 2/2 per lb. RICH. RIPE. BLUE. "And Very Good."	Old English Ginger Wine. Excellent Value. Per 1/9 Bot. ; 3 Bots. 5/- "Nice and Warm."
COLENUTT'S, UNION ST. "You always get good things there."	

IW County Press 26 December 1914
 Xmas Crackers & Novelties in great variety. Xmas Cakes and Fancy Biscuits. Muscatels, Dates, Figs &c., at lowest prices. Prime Stilton Cheese. Home cured Hams. A new consignment of Dutch Cheese direct from Holland. Inspect our stock.
 R Colenutt, IW County Stores, Union Street, Ryde. Telephone 470, Ryde.

A T Davis, where Christmas cards could be bought. Advert IW Observer 2 January 1915

THE WINTER SEASON.

Everything for the Artist. Pen Painting, Stencilling, Transparent Painting, Decora Work, Crystoleum and Pastinello.		Everything for the Artist. Pen Painting, Stencilling, Transparent Painting, Decora Work, Crystoleum and Pastinello.
A. T. DAVIS <small>(LATE ADAMS)</small> 7 & 8, CROSS STREET, RYDE, Bookseller, Stationer, and Artists Colourman. <small>ESTABLISHED 1856.</small>		

IW Observer 15 December 1900
 The best and cheapest house to buy Christmas and New Year Cards, Calendars etc., is the Fancy Repository, 135 High Street, Ryde. If desired a selection of cards sent on approval, also sample book of Private Greeting Cards. T Dimmer and Son have just received their stock of goods for the Christmas season, and invite inspection of the charming display of novelties, in all departments. On all leather articles initials or name stamped free of charge while you wait.

IW County Press 19 December 1914
 If you have not already had one of our new Xmas Lists send us a card (we will refund postage); by return you will receive a list of Xmas goods, Nuts, Oranges, &c. Well worth reading. We have a splendid assortment of Crackers, Chocolates, and Xmas Stockings all on view at the stores – C J de Launay and Son, 120-121 High Street, Ryde.

De Launey's painted sign just visible on the wall in the High Street.
Photograph Tracy Welstead



IW Times 6 December 1962
 Weston Hut – The unusual title "Christmas Crackers" was used by the St. John's area Scout and Guide groups to describe a combined bazaar and entertainment organised by parents' committees and held at the Weston Hut on Saturday afternoon. Shortly after opening time the hall was packed almost to bursting point.

RSHG Christmas Display

Christmas Presents & Food



There is nothing so nice as a freshly killed **ISLE OF WIGHT BIRD** for Christmas so

Buy at BARNETTS
WHO SELL

Only First Quality LW. Poultry and Pork

TURKEYS CHICKEN GEESE DUCKS BOILING FOWLS

HOMEMADE PORK SAUSAGES, CHIPOLATAS AND PIES - HOME COOKED HAMS CUT FROM THE BONE AS YOU BUY SAUSAGE ROLLS AND MINCE PIES DANISH BACON SPECIALISTS COOKED BACON JOINTS—ANY SIZE CUT

29 HIGH STREET, RYDE - Phone 2468 Our Aim—Your Satisfaction

NOW IS THE TIME
TO TALK
TURKEY
FOR
FARM FRESH
ISLE OF WIGHT
TURKEY · CHICKEN
GEESE · DUCKS
PHEASANT
COME TO
TIMS
We specialise in Top Quality, Free Range Isle of Wight Poultry
163 HIGH STREET, RYDE - Phone 2332

Barnetts Advert IW Times 11 December 1969
Tims Advert IW Times 23 November 1967
Stevens Advert Islander November 1968
West St Nursery Advert IW Times 9 November 1968

FOR THE YOUNG MAN WHO LIKES TO KEEP UP-TO-DATE WE HAVE HAD ANOTHER DELIVERY OF

FLARED TROUSERS

AND MORE ARE DUE THIS WEEK

◆ ◆ ◆

OUR CHRISTMAS QUOTA OF

RAVE SHIRTS

IS ARRIVING DAILY AND WE ALREADY HAVE A LARGE SELECTION OF NEW NUMBERS

J. BEVINS
(C. J. SPURGEON)

Men's and Boys' Outfitters
35 HIGH STREET, RYDE, I.W. Tel. 3257

WEST STREET NURSERY
Phone Ryde 2426

APPLES FOR CHRISTMAS
Blenheim Orange
Newton Wonder
Bramley Seedlings, etc.
12lbs. 7/6

Finest Fruit and Vegetables at Lowest Prices
AND CABBAGE FREE
YOUR ENQUIRIES INVITED FOR ALL TYPES OF WINTER GARDEN WORK

5th Nov. - 25th Dec.
JUST SEVEN WEEKS FROM GUY FAWKES TO CHRISTMAS EVE

TIME NOW TO ORDER YOUR CHRISTMAS MEATS

ME MEAT MEAT at STEVE STEVENS

SECURE THE BEST
ENGLISH TURKEYS, CHICKEN, GEESE, DUCKS
ISLE OF WIGHT PORK, GAME, GAMMON HAMS

STANLEY J. STEVENS
Butchers since 1824
NEWPORT · BINSTAD · CHALE GREEN

smart women like their men to wear these famous no-darn socks!

THE SOCK YOU'VE BEEN ADVERTISED ON T.V.

41 SHADES & DESIGNS

CAN'T SHRINK - MAT OR LOSE SHAPE

"INDESTRUCTIBLE" SOCKS

PERFECT COMFORT AND FIT
Refer to illustration - Look for the distinctive H.J. "Indestructible" Trade Mark

A PLEASURE FOR WORK & LEISURE

TWELVE MONTHS GUARANTEE with every pair

FREE! Colour Chart from HILLS & SON Shoe Goods, No. Navigation Slip manufacturers of H.J. "Indestructible" "COZY-TOZE" CHILDREN TIGHTS

Short Fancy 7/6
Plain 2/11
Matt 8/11
Fancy 9/6
Long Fancy 10/6

LOCAL STOCKISTS:
HOLMES & SONS (MENSWEAR) LTD.
170 - 171 HIGH STREET, RYDE

RICH XMAS PUDDINGS and MINCE PIES.
Tastefully Decorated NEW YEAR CAKES at prices to suit all customers.

CATERING FOR BALLS, PARTIES, &c.
— FRENCH AND ENGLISH CONFECTIONS. —
An assortment of the above would make a most acceptable Xmas Hamper for your friends. Hampers packed and forwarded to any part.

QUALITY FIRST CLASS. PRICES MODERATE.

ARTHUR S. MARLOW,
Union Street and Cross Street, RYDE. Tel. 3.

Marlow Advert
IW County Press 27 December 1913

IW County Press 19 December 1914
Christmas & New Year presents – A splendid assortment of articles suitable for presents to friends at home or at the Front at A J Sharpe's, 10 Cross Street, Ryde.

Christmas Shopping.
The fine assortment of Fruits and Dainties, the economical prices and the attentive service, make Christmas Shopping at the International one of the season's pleasures.

FIGS, Layers per lb. 8d per box 7d
Loose per lb. 6d
DATES, Tins per box 6d
Turban per carton 5d
MINCEMEAT per tin 1/4, 2/4, 3/6
XMAS PUDDINGS each 1/4, 2/4, 3/6
XMAS CAKES, food each 2/- to 8/6
DUNDEE CAKES 2/6 & 3/6
CHOCOLATES per box 8/6 to 2/6 per jar
PRESERVED GINGER 1/5, 2/5, 5/6 per box
METZ FRUITS 7d, 1/4, 2/-, 4/- & 8/-
WINES (Non-Alcoholic) per box 1/4d
XMAS CRACKERS per box 6d to 4/-
A Large Assortment
Apples, Nuts, Oranges, &c., in great variety at moderate prices.

International Stores
The Oldest Grocers in the World All International Branches are on the telephone.
Two in Oxford St. Gloucester St. Fitzroy Place
INTERNATIONAL CHINA TEA 2/6

International Stores Advert
IW County Press 6 December 1924

Bevins Advert
IW Times 14 November 1968
Holmes Advert
IW Times 23 November 1967

JUST ARRIVED!

HILLS STORES LTD RYDE

FATHER XMAS
With all the newest NOVELTIES from Toyland.

An EARLY visit to our Store will repay you as many of our LEADING lines soon sell out.

HILL'S STORES, Ltd., RYDE.

Hill Stores Advert 1934



Christmas Behind the Scenes

IW County Press 27 December 1913

The pressure at the Post Office came up to the usual Christmas standard. On the 24th December there were the heaviest parcel mails in, there being 297 parcel receptacles transferred. The 23rd was the heaviest day for letters, 247 receptacles being transferred. On December 24th the parcels delivered in the district numbered over 4,000, which is a record.

Post office sorting office – RSHG – Roy Brinton Collection



IW Times 23 December 1964

Gobbling Mail – Ryde postal sorters at the Union-street Head Office are engaged on a fowl job—dealing with 1,400 turkeys. The birds, pre-packed, are being sent to homes throughout the country by an Island poultry farm.

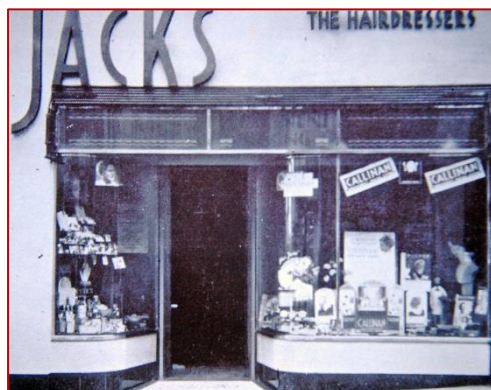
Now . . .
A Year's Permanent Waving for 9 gns.

Ideal for a present . . . Ideal for yourself . . . NOW! As many as you like . . . permitting softer and more natural movements, includes all leading systems, with the wonderful new Paris method, "GONFLA" —the ultimate choice for the full casual line, so that it stays Gonflante (voluminous) from one set to the next

75 Union Street,
Ryde
and at Southsea

Jacks
beauty shop

● Avoid the last minute rush—book your appointments NOW! Tel. Ryde 3771
Our Bond Street Beauty Specialist here Dec. 9th, 16th and 23rd



Why not let me Shampoo and Set your hair for Xmas in my New Saloon?

TRY FOR YOURSELF THE COMFORT OF OUR **NEW DRYERS**

Personal Attention of Hairdresser 20 Years in Trade
Phone: Ryde 3114 or call
***MARION* - 7 Cross St. (1st floor)**

Marion Advert 21 February 1950

Jack's Advert
IW County Press 6 December 1958
Photograph of their High Street Salon
RSHG - Roy Brinton Collection

Christmas Holidays

Prior to 1834, the Bank of England observed about thirty-three saints' days and religious festivals as holidays, but in 1834, this was reduced to just four: May Day, All Saints Day, Good Friday and Christmas Day. The Bank Holidays Act of 1871 was the first legislation relating to bank holidays and it specified Good Friday, Easter Monday, Whit Monday, First Monday in May, First Monday in August, Christmas Day and Boxing Day / St Stephen's Day as holidays. Before this Act was passed many Victorians already wanted to have the day after Christmas as a holiday.

THEATRE ROYAL, RYDE

All the week commencing December 29,
Daily at 2.30 and 7.30.

GRAND XMAS PANTOMIME.

Goldilocks and the Three Bears

WITH
FRED BECK—'the famous Mrs. Higgins'—
as Dame.

Full cast of well-known London artists.
Novel Specialities.

IW Times 18 December 1930

RYDE LABOUR PARTY

GRAND

XMAS DANCE

TOWN HALL, RYDE

Friday, Dec. 21st

8 p.m. to 1 a.m.

JIMMY LUFF AND HIS BAND

— Novelty Dances —
— Surprise Items —

Table Plan and Tickets (3/6)
at the Gift House, High Street.
Licensed Bar applied for. Refreshments

IW Times 6 December 1945

IW Times 24 December 1896

Dickens Christmas Carol was the subject of the lantern lecture of the popular series in connection with the Y.M.C.A., given at the Town Hall, on Tuesday evening. Dr. Shirtliff was the reader. Carols were rendered by members of St. James's choir.

IW Times 2 January 1969

The Clarian Players held their Christmas party at the Anglesea Tavern on Friday, about 40 patrons and members attended, and Mesdames Barbara Turner, Mary Barham and Kath Galley served refreshments.



Photograph Anglesea Tavern – Tony Gale

IW County Press 7 December 1974

A Christmas bazaar at St. James' Church hall, Ryde, on Saturday raised over £150 for church funds. Stalls included one selling home-made sweets and food and another with needlework.



Dave Bushell accompanying Society members singing Christmas carols.
2016

IW County Press 7 December 1974

Santa in Hospital – Father Christmas entered hospital on Saturday, but, to the relief of youngsters everywhere, not as a patient. He alighted from his balloon-festooned car at the Royal IW County Hospital and distributed gifts in the children’s ward, before setting off for his grotto at a Ryde departmental store.



Postcard Ian Murray



IW Times 21 December 1967

Buccs’ Hospital Tour – Costumed Ryde Buccaneers made their usual “Raids” on the town’s shops on Saturday, gathering “booty” in the form of gifts for the old and needy, and hospital patients.

IW County Press 26 December 1970

St. Vincent’s – The festive season at St. Vincent’s Convalescent Home, Ryde, which is maintained by the Forces Help Society and Lord Roberts’ Workshops, began with a sherry party and a film show for the 14 residents. Other pre-Christmas activities included the attendance of residents as guests at the Island Flower Club’s Christmas party and the Presentation Convent’s Christmas concert.



St Vincent's Brochure & photograph

RSHG - Roy Brinton Collection

IW Times 11 December 1969

Shopping Spree – With only a few more “shop breaking days” to Christmas, thieves made the most of the weekend in Ryde. Staff at Fowler’s, Union Street, arrived on Monday to find a number of fur coats and the safe stolen. At the Warwick Street premises of Vectis Office Equipment, raiders broke in through the workshop and took about £800 worth of 17 typewriters and four adding machines. About £5 in sixpences was stolen from a jar in a house at Westfield Park, Ryde.

IW County Press 24 December 1986

Local celebrities’ culinary talents went down a treat at the Ryde Gas showrooms during a 12-hour charity mince pie making marathon. By the end of the event, guests, including mayor of South Wight, Heather Humby, and television presenter David Icke, had made 1,330 mince pies, raising about £130 for the IW Special Olympics.



IW County Press 1 January 1972

Rugby Carollers – On Christmas Eve nearly fifty members of the I.W. Rugby Club went carol singing around licensed premises in Ryde town. They were accompanied by the Island mascot, Annie the goat, looking very smart in her blue coat. A total of nearly £26 was raised for distribution to local old people.

IW Times February 1968

Top Cat – The Young Vectis Players scored an outstanding success with their annual pantomime, “Puss In Boots”, at Ryde’s Esplanade Pavilion last week. A total of 900 attended the four performances, and the talented cast provided a colourful, and fast-moving show.

IW County Press 4 December 1998

Pupils from Ryde School raised £1,500 at their Christmas Fayre with the main event being a woodlice race. The woodlice were released into the middle of a specially designed board and pupils enthusiastically cheered them on as the first to the edge was crowned the winner.

Pavilion being built – Roy Brinton Collection
Detail from a Nigh’s postcard of the finished Pavilion