



RYDE SOCIAL HERITAGE GROUP

Beyond the Graves

Volume 21: Number 2: April 2026

LOOKING FORWARD TO A SUMMER HOLIDAY?

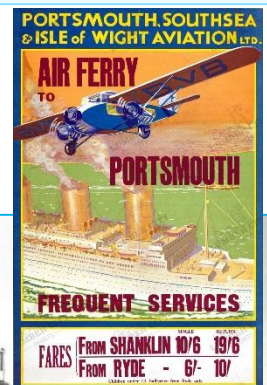
The great British Holiday, is a 'must have' of life in this present era of 2026, yet for many generations of the general public, up to some few decades ago, a holiday was a luxury that was not considered a necessity, which a family, with children to provide for, couldn't even contemplate. Usually once a year, with food packed up and their buckets and spades with them, a day out on the train to Southend, or a char-a-banc to Hastings, Margate, or one of the many south coast resorts, was the best they could manage. It was the highlight of the year ~ the people of the Isle of Wight were extremely lucky as they had sandy beaches all around them, and beautiful country walks, almost on their doorstep, so to speak.

In 1721 William Player, upon the death of his father Thomas, succeeded to his estate in Ryde at the age of 8. When he reached his majority, being a very forward-thinking man, he saw that Ryde could become one of the most important watering places of the south. The Ryde of today can certainly be attributed in part, to the fast-moving releasing of land for development of the town by William Player.

ARRIVING AT RYDE

The lucky few might have arrived by air, but for most it was crossing by steamer, or now the fast cat, to Ryde Pier Head. Visitors could then book their trips round the Island, or buy last minute gifts for those back home.

Queuing for the Tram and Ryde Airport images - RSHG.
Southern Vectis Booking Office image – Roy Brinton Collection.



Events advertised in the IW Observer 8 August 1908
for Residents & Visitors on Saturday 15th August
Seaview Yacht Club Regatta.
Tennis Match at the Mead Gardens - Ryde v. Southampton.
Cricket Match at Partlands.
Concert Party at Pier Pavilion.
Band on the Esplanade Gardens at 8 o'clock.
Concerts on the Esplanade Gardens.

RYDE CRICKET CLUB.
SEASON 1883.
LIST OF MATCHES.
Date and Time. Opponents. Where Played.
Sat., Aug. 4, 2 p.m. . . . H.M.S. Marlborough
(return) Portsmouth
Mon., Aug. 6, 11 a.m. . . . Black Watch (return) . . . Ryde
Mon., Aug. 13, 11 a.m. . . . Ventnor (return) Ventnor
Sat., Sept. 1, 2 p.m. . . . St. Helen's (return) Ryde
Other matches are being arranged for August and September.
Visitors can join the above Club at any time for long or short periods.
Members (and visitors who have joined, or wish to join) desiring to play in the matches are requested to leave their names with the Secretary, or with the ground-man at the field, which is open daily until dusk.
W. H. THIRKELL, Hon. Sec.
2, St. Thomas'-street, Ryde.

IW Observer
11 August 1883

WHERE TO STAY?

There were all types of accommodation available in the town - smart hotels, bed & breakfasts, lodging houses, etc. Many advertised in the local 'Ryde and Seaview' Guides.



MADELEY HOUSE

18 George St., Ryde, I.W.
Tel. 3349

Full Board or Bed and Breakfast and Evening Meal



Running water in all bedrooms. Good food and comfortable beds. Close to pier and sea. Separate tables. Well recommended.

Terms: Full Board 5½ to 6 gns.; Bed, Breakfast & Evening Meal 4½ to 5 gns.
Proprietress: Mrs. G. J. CRONE

Madeley House advertised in the 'Ryde and Seaview' Guides in 1955, 1964 & 1965.

Ann Barrett

Photograph – RSHG



A LODGING-HOUSE KEEPER'S TRIALS.— Lodging housekeepers at the seaside have their tales against their patrons. One of them was once showing her rooms to a prim lady, who carried all the indications of an old maid about her. "You will find this a very comfortable room, madam," observed the landlady. "It is very warm, has a lovely view, and the sun peeps in every morning about seven o'clock." "Oh, dear," exclaimed the spinster in a horrified tone. "Fancy your son prying about in such an unbecoming manner. I could never tolerate such outrageous conduct. I should never feel safe." Before the landlady was able to explain the elderly maiden had hurriedly taken her departure.

IW Observer 1 October 1904

Perhaps word had got around after seeing the newspaper piece above, but a postcard was issued with a recommendation from Admiral Jellicoe.

Front and reverse of postcard
RSHG

POST

This space may be used for communication Inland and to all Foreign Countries except Japan, Spain, and United States.

A SLANDERED ISLAND.

ADMIRAL JELlicOE'S TRIBUTE TO THE ISLE OF WIGHT.

For several months past public bodies, as well as private citizens, in the Isle of Wight have been doing their best to dispel erroneous statements alleging that the island is not a safe place at present either as a holiday or residential resort, and that the railway companies are refusing to issue through tickets.

ADMIRAL JELlicOE HAS STATED THAT THE ISLE OF WIGHT IS THE "SAFEST PLACE IN THE WORLD."

Definite undertakings have been given by the South-Western and South Coast Railway Companies that through tickets are available at all the termini, and excursion tickets available for 8 or 15 days are issued on Mondays and Fridays. The 3.45 train from Waterloo connects with a boat at Portsmouth Harbour direct to the island.

These official intimations should reassure intending visitors.

Daily Chronicle, Mar. 9, 1915.

Free Illustrated Guide with Hotels and apartments.—E. V. Matthews, Dept. A.

Moorlands
Middle Road
W. Bournemouth

Ryde & Ventnor Mercury 17 August 1907

Stopped in the street and asked why he was an hour and half late, a postman said "It is those picture postcards". On Thursday the Daily News had a leaderette on picture postcards, which said that the sending of these cards by one friend to another, had become a "Fashion".



IW Observer 10 July 1920

A letter was read from Messrs. Gurney and Skinner stating that as owners of motor boats they wanted permission to pick up passengers from the shore by means of a movable landing stage. The matter having been considered, a movable landing stage was granted at the Cornwall slipway at a fee of four guineas for the season which would end on October 31st. It was the best position and would not interfere with bathers.

IW Observer 14 May 1921

An application from Messrs. Gurney and Skinner, of Valparaiso, Swanmore Road, Ryde, to use the Cornwall Slipway for the purpose of plying for hire with their motor boats in the same way as last summer, was granted.

Motor Boat Image – Roy Brinton Collection

PADDLING & BATHING

IW Observer 20 June 1863

Bathing Stage - This public boon is at length completed and open; it has been increased considerably in size to what it was last year, and has had several minor improvements effected. Owing to the unsettled state of the weather, the attendance of "amphibious ones" has not yet been very numerous; but should the regular hot days "set in," and the tide serve, "old Isaac", the bathing-master, will find enough to do.



IW Observer 25 January 1862

Floating Baths - The deputation of ratepayers are going to develop the natural resources of Ryde again. Proposed baths are intended to be connected with the pier by pontoon bridges, and certainly will be most admirable places for ladies to bathe in if constructed. The cost of the two baths - one for males - the other for females - is estimated at £4.000.

IW Observer 15 June 1895

Victoria Pier
Lower image pre 1879 looking towards the Tramway Station.
Roy Brinton Collection



IW Observer 29 June 1895

ADDITIONAL BATHING ACCOMMODATION ON THE VICTORIA PIER.—We understand that the directors of the Pier Company have arranged a special bath on the Victoria Pier for the benefit of little children. This bath, through which the salt water will flow freely, is about 9ft long by 8ft wide, with a depth of a foot or so. It is often difficult to get children accustomed to sea bathing, but a nurse or mother can now take her little one to the Pier and, without going into the water herself, give the child a fresh sea water bath in a depth of water which will render it almost impossible for any accident to occur. The Boating Lake finds increasing favour year by year as a place where children may learn to row or sail a boat in perfect safety; and the Pier Company's addition to the Victoria Pier will no doubt be just as well appreciated.

BATHING PIER ON FIRE.—At 1.15 a.m. on Wednesday morning Mr. Gregory, a carpenter of Surrey Street, on his way back from fishing noticed that the Victoria Bathing Pier appeared to be on fire. He gave information to Acting-Sergeant, P.C. Tarrant and Mr. Ernest Austin (night-watchman), who made an inspection of the pier and found that one of the runners beneath the pier was alight. They speedily extinguished the flames and left all safe shortly after. Fireworks in connection with the regatta were held on the pier on Tuesday evening, so that an explanation was not hard to find.

IW Observer 29 August 1908

IW Journal 28 July 1888

Dangers of Paddling - A common result is a condition resembling heatstroke, but peritonitis might be brought about by this dangerous practice. The symptoms, however, in many cases may not be so severe, and numbers of children are languid and poorly, suffering from headache and malaise from this cause, while the parents account for the disturbance by the theory that "the climate is too strong for them," or that "sea air does not agree with their livers," or some such inscrutable explanation.

Postcard – Roy Brinton Collection



VICTORIA PIER, RYDE.
THESE CELEBRATED
MEDICAL BATHS
Are rapidly increasing in reputation and are especially Efficacious in
RHEUMATISM, GOUT,
OZONE IODIZED BATHS
LIVER
Derangements
INDIGESTION, &c
Or any Hereditary predisposition where it is desirable to improve the action of the skin Invigorate the circulation and give tone to the general health.
HENRY ROBERTS,
Manager.

PROVISIONAL TARIFF (until Further Notice).	
OPEN SEA BATHING.	PRIVATE BATHS.
Family Ticket for Five persons .. £2 0 0	Hot Ozone Iodized Bath
Season Ticket for One person	Hot Sea Water Bath
Book of 50 Tickets	Hot Sea Water course of 12 Baths
Book of 20 Tickets	Cold Sea Water Bath
Single Bath	Fresh Water Bath (Cold)
Hot Ticket for Ozone previous to these prices	Warm Foot Bath (Sea Water)
Ladies' Bathing Dresses	Ozone Foot Bath
Gentlemen's ditto	(Ozone-goggles inside Tanks)
Towels, each	
Open Sea Bathing after 6 pm. each	
(Overseas)	

DIVERS AT THE PIER.—Captain Gore' troupe of aquatic artistes have made their first appearance on the Pier during the past week. Their skill in the water has considerably impressed the spectators, of whom there are generally quite a number. Professor Gore's feats include an exposition of the Monte Christo dive in a sack. Miss Violet Gore has a sensational dive from a height of thirty feet and upwards, and an interesting display of trick swimming, and of various methods of life-saving is given.

IW Observer 8 September 1906



Ryde Pier Pavilion - RSHG

LADY SWIMMERS ON THE PIER.—A new and unique attraction has taken place this week at the Pier in the shape of aquatic performances by a number of skilled lady artistes. Miss Agnes Beckwith and two other ladies have been seen twice daily indulging in feats of life saving, trick swimming and diving, and prove themselves accomplished and entertaining swimmers. They also performed twice daily inside the Pavilion where from a glass tank placed on the stage they gave a varied exhibition of swimming and gliding under the water. The performance included such feats as writing, needle-working and collecting a number of shells into a basket, the whole of these involving quite a considerable spell beneath the surface. Gliding through hoops and double gliding by two artistes were also gone through, and in conclusion the artistes reclined on the floor of the tank in a variety of graceful poses.

Every Day from 11 to 1 and from 3 to 5, and on Sundays from 8.15 to 9.30, PERFORMANCES IN THE BAND-STAND, by the Celebrated GROSVENOR LADIES' ORCHESTRA. Chairs 1d and 2d. Collection for band funds. Every week day at 12.30 and 4.30, Miss AGNES BECKWITH and other LADY SWIMMERS, fancy swimming in sea, and marvellous tank display in Pavilion. MONDAY, TUESDAY & WEDNESDAY First appearance in the town of 'THE GAZEKAS' A clever and refined Vaudeville Entertainment.

IW Observer of 4 August 1906 advertised plenty to look forward to in the Pier Pavilion [near left]. They reported on the "Lady Swimmers" in their issue of 8 August 1906. [Far left]

*IF YOU PREFERRED DRY LAND ...
A Stroll along Appley Lane*

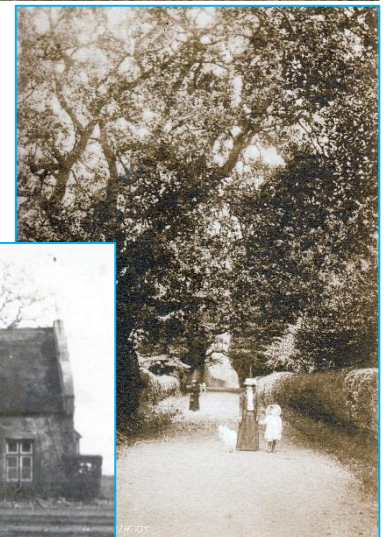
IW Observer 21 April 1900

To the Editor – I am alluding to the so-called "improvement" of Appley Lane, about the only place in the vicinity of Ryde where one may stroll without fear of the ubiquitous cyclists, and where a grateful shade is thrown by trees, which are beautiful to look at. Why the people of Ryde should be called upon to pay for a thing which is of no advantage to them, and will simply convert a pleasant walk (which is attractive to visitors in the summer) into a commonplace highway for busses and bicyclists. *A Long-suffering Ratepayer.*



Postcards of Appley Lane
Ann Barrett

Photograph of the Lodge demolished
in March 1962 - RSHG

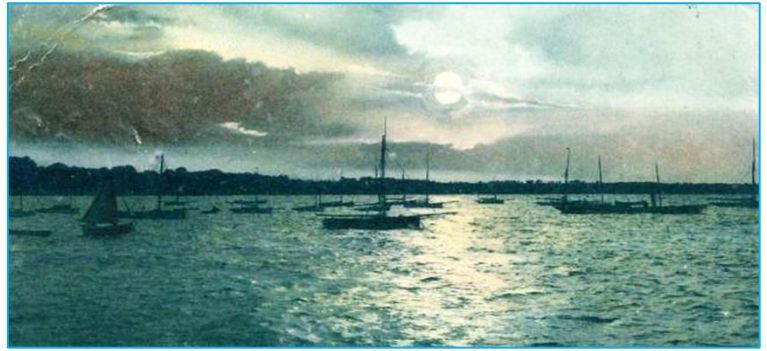


IW Observer 19 September 1878

Residents & Visitors - We briefly announced last week that Mr C. T. Andrews is giving charts of character at Mr. Debenham's Photographic Studio, Union Street. We hear that many have availed themselves of the opportunity of learning all about themselves. If anyone should be too bashful to undergo an examination, a photo can be sent, which will be marked with the characteristics of the sender. Young ladies and gentlemen will be specially interested in the remarks upon marriage, given in Mr. Andrew's book, which may be obtained of H. Wayland, stationer, Union Street.



WHEN THE SUN GOES DOWN



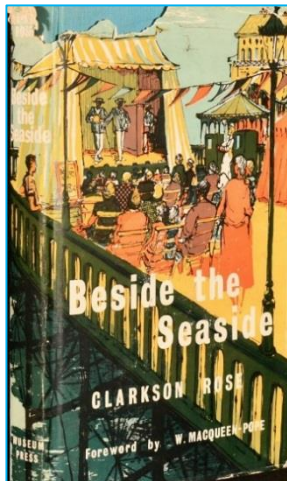
Postcards – RSHG



Spend the evening in the Hunter's Den at Hotel Ryde Castle – image RSHG. By December 1946 John Hoar was advertising a dancing club on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays at the Hotel. There were special Sunday Club concerts. His décor in the Tudor Room and the Hunter's Den reflected his imaginative personality. After owning the Hotel Ryde Castle for 15 years he retired in 1960.

IW Observer 17 July 1909

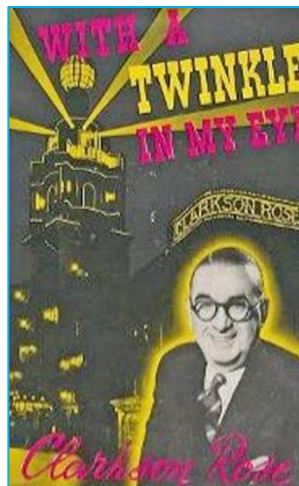
Holiday Clothes – The topic of what to wear on holiday is one of annual interest, it ends, after a great deal of consideration, in buying the first thing that comes handy. The evenings are of as much importance as the day. The average man prefers something suitable for the evening stroll. There is nothing to equal a good woollen cloth, for preference, a nice Harris tweed.



Going to the Theatre.

On Wednesday 21 August 1935 Terry Wood brought his company on a flying visit to Ryde Theatre. The show, "Twinkle", with Clarkson Rose and Olive Fox, was said to be one of the finest Vaudeville combinations on the south coast.

Clarkson Rose's book and advert - RSHG



FIREWORKS AND ILLUMINATIONS AT RYDE

ON SATURDAY AUGUST 8, from 9.30 to 10.30 p.m.
The Gigantic Display of Fireworks, by Messrs. C. T. Brock and Co., comprises
GORGEOUS AERIAL DISPLAY,
MAGNIFICENT SET PIECES ON RYDE PIER,
GRAND ILLUMINATION OF THE R.V.Y.C.
AND THE WESTERN ESPLANADE.
The Band of the Royal Marine Artillery will play from 8 o'clock on the Western Esplanade.

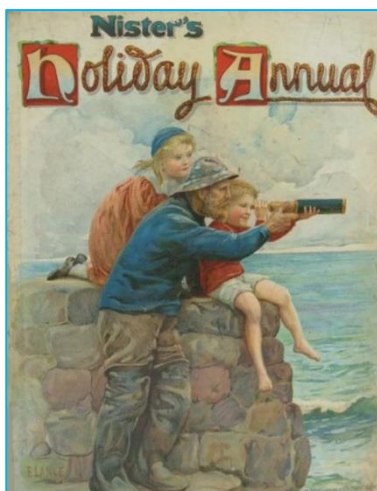
IW Observer 1 August 1914

IW Observer 8 August 1914

Abandoned - Owing to the war the display of fireworks arranged for tomorrow (Saturday) evening, the annual regatta of the R.V.Y. Club and ball and the Pier and Royal Esplanade Regattas have been abandoned. Hospital Sunday has also been postponed. The R.M.A. Concerts have, of necessity, been discontinued.

OR IF IT IS RAINING ...

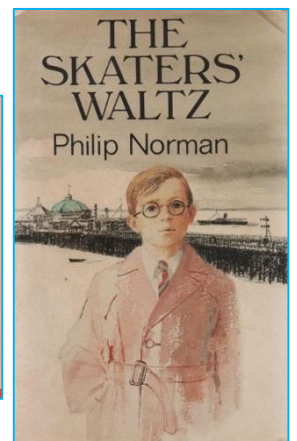
Curl Up with a Good Book



IW Observer 10 December 1904

Book Review – Nister's Holiday Annual is one of those books which, though published for juveniles, is calculated to appeal to the grown-up's sense of humour as well, who will find much to laugh at in the funny pictures. The animal pictures of G. H. Thompson are remarkably good, and the stories are all capital. The Annual is published at 3s.6d.

With tales connected to Ryde, "The Skater's Waltz", first published in 1979, might be a favourite, or perhaps a good mystery? Agatha Christie's "Partners in Crime" was published in 1929.



OR LOOK FORWARD TO THE DELIGHTS ON OFFER IN NEARBY SEAVIEW

IW Observer 24 August 1895

It was rumoured in Sea View on Thursday, that Her Majesty, the Queen, was going to pay a visit to the Pier Hotel, Seaview. In consequence of this report, a large number of people assembled outside the hotel, and stayed there until about 5 o'clock, when they dispersed.

Postcard of the Hotel – Ann Barrett

Other Seaview postcards – Paul Kingwell



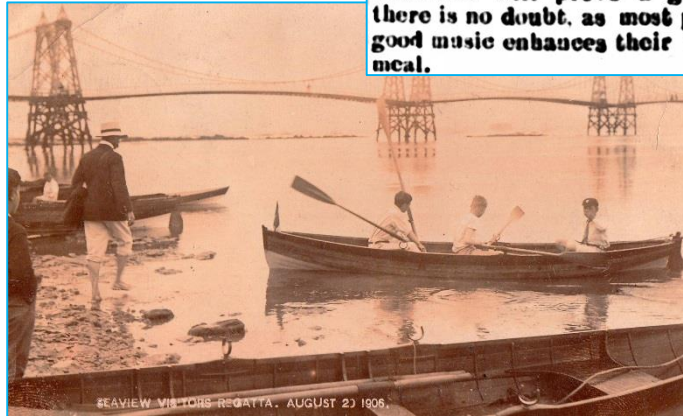
IW Observer
21 July 1906

PIER HOTEL, SEA VIEW.—The Pier Hotel, Sea View, is likely to become an extremely popular place under Mr H. G. Nutt's management. To-day (Saturday) he has arranged for the Grosvenor Ladies' Orchestra, from Ryde Pier, to play during dinner. That this will prove a great attraction there is no doubt, as most people find that good music enhances their enjoyment of a meal.

THE COLOUR OF THE DRESS.

The colour of the bathing dress is always a matter for serious consideration. It must not only be one that is becoming to the wearer, but also one that will stand the onslaught of salt water and hot sunshine. Black and navy blue are always popular, because the dye is generally fast. These have braid trimmings of white or scarlet, and are very satisfactory. Scarlet is charming for bathing-dresses, owing to its warm and cosy tint. Scarlet bathing dresses in serge and alpaca are greatly in demand. Brown is now being generally accepted as a good colour for a bathing-suit. A very pretty one displayed in a shop-window the other day was of brown alpaca, trimmed with straps in Eastern colourings. All these, of course, are for the genuine bather. The lady whose object is not so much to bathe as to display her pretty dress may use almost any colour, even down to the newest shades of hyacinth blue.

IW Observer, 9 July 1906



IW Observer 27 August 1921

Both residents and visitors of Seaview were astir early on Thursday, when favoured by good weather the annual regatta was held off the front. The programme was an exceptionally long one. There was a large crowd of spectators from the beginning at 9.45 am until the termination, shortly before 8 pm.

A French dressmaker actually came and settled last season at that tiny little seaside resort, Sea View, for the sole purpose of catering for those who required new and wonderful bathing dresses. The making of bathing gowns is becoming a most profitable branch of the fashionable dressmakers' trade.— *London Evening News*.

IW Observer 29 August 1908

WE WON'T BE LOOKING FORWARD TO THIS!

IW Times 30 August 1928

Flooding of Ryde Esplanade - Through the heavy rain on Sunday evening, a drain in the lower part of George-street burst on account of the pressure of storm water and forced the tarmac roadway up for several feet. A piece of the drain was left on top of the road after the accident and the street was closed for vehicular traffic until Monday morning when men were busily engaged in clearing up the refuse and repairing the drain. Many of the drains were choked after the downpour and the Esplanade on the eastern side was flooded with water to a depth, in some places of 2 ft. George-street almost resembled a river with water flowing down into the Esplanade and one or two of the hotels were put to considerable inconvenience. There was not a taxi available soon after the storm started and the station approaches were crowded. The rain poured and poured with great force and everywhere seemed to be "held-up." Fortunately, the band of the Royal Corps of Signals had in the meantime got safely to the Town Hall where they played to an excellent audience.

October 2023 photographs – Elaine Saunders

