

# Marine Gate Newsletter

Future: Possible Developments? | Present: AGM | Past: Bombings

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## Editor

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Mary and John are, as many know, engaged in researching the story of the building, and so historical notes will inevitably creep into the newsletter. The story of bombing in this issue was part of our presentation last December and has been requested by some who missed that discussion. Any and all tales and images of Marine Gate past will be gratefully received.

## Getting in touch

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on paper: [BI Marine Gate](#)

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## News from the Board

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### Marine Gate AGM : 7.00 pm, June 13th

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## Our garden

Marine Gate's informally organised Garden Group ensures the wonderful way our garden looks.



Currently there are five stalwarts, but (they plead) "what we really need is younger, stronger residents to take up the task."

The board employs gardeners to mow lawns and trim hedges, but all the rest is down to the Garden Group whose members, along with other residents, have also donated the pots by the three entrances, and maintain them.

Current bigger issues include:  
 + strengthening the original 1930's formal idea of the three rectangles. Perhaps looking crude on plan, in reality, with the planted borders and different levels, they provide wonderful separated havens of peace (on sunny days).  
 + possible replacement of an enclosing hedge along the garden's east (top) side.



If you are interested in joining, helping or donating to the garden, please do contact Miriam Beza, in G4.

Gate, or to make suggestions; but is not for public discussion on problems specific to any individual flat. In the Open Meeting, as in the AGM, we ask that a questioner raises a hand to be given a chance to speak, and to start by giving their name and flat, even if they have done this before, so our note takers can be sure they have the details correct for each question or topic raised.  
 © Marine Gate Holdings

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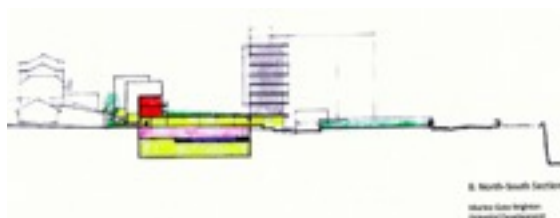
## A potential development?

At a meeting in February which 70 of us attended, architect Stephen Adutt, C5, addressed a problem he saw in these terms: "The directors are always wanting to get hold of more capital on all our behalf in order to enhance Marine Gate so that (a) our flats would be worth more and (b) we would enjoy more 'liveability.' Possibly developing our (underused) north 'garden' might raise such capital. I tried to test one or two potential solutions, without any commitment to proceed, and no fees involved. The meeting voted to take one step forward, again at no cost, to test reaction(s) from one or more developers." It was also agreed there would be a follow-up meeting to look at the issues around this question in a more general way.



Above left: existing layout showing garages, right: ground floor of Stephen's first proposal with underground car park (and even pool).

Right: section looking east with new flats in red and shared space green.



## Marine Gate in the Second World War

Marine Gate was the most heavily attacked building in Brighton in World War 2., having been hit on three raids. The first was on the evening of 26 June 1942 when the main target, the gasometer, was destroyed. 22 shells hit the building but all failed to penetrate it. Windows were shattered. and one room damaged.

## Our new flag



Robin Plummer, C2, well-known painter and former Head of Fine Art at Brighton Polytechnic, has

designed our fine new flag. His thoughts on flag design, and your comments on this new one will have to wait for the next newsletter.

## Garden Party : 13 July

*Patrick Wallace writes:*

**Sunday 13th July is your chance to socialise with your MG neighbours during a summer's afternoon, quaffing your favourite drink (which you bring on the day) and enjoying the cold buffet which is communally provided. We'll attempt to put up the marquee that morning if it is not too windy. If it is wet on the day we'll adjourn to the West foyer. Details**

**to be advised nearer the event. If you could help with setting up and clearing away, please make yourself known to the office. It will be much appreciated.**



left: the old flag at last year's garden party

In the second attack on the early afternoon of August 29, 1942, two aircraft attacked, first with machine guns and then dropping one bomb each. The first, landing close, blew out hundreds of windows and



ripped doors from hinges. Many residents were rendered homeless. One person (Claudette Mawby, aged 20, of B7) was killed - her body was found at the bottom of the lift shaft. She was the only resident casualty during the war.

These first raids made the building uninhabitable, otherwise the third and most damaging attack, on 25 May 1943, would surely have caused rather more casualties. In this attack from the North-East, seen in our photographs, 4 bombs penetrated the building. One exploded near the back (adjacent to what are now R9 and A5) causing damage to brickwork but not to the steel structure. Another passed straight through the building (probably through flat E8) and landed at sea, and a third passed through the building (probably G11) and landed on the road, destroying the water main.



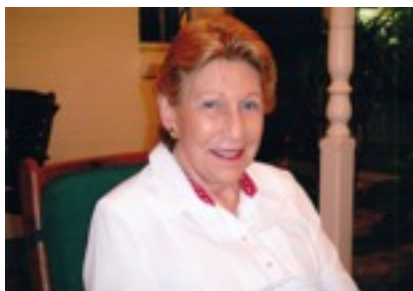
The fourth bomb was the most devastating. It entered the building at



first floor level between flats B16 and B17 and exploded inside, causing major structural damage. The stairs and lift shaft (lift 7) were destroyed and the steel structure severely damaged to such an extent that major reconstruction was needed to the whole of the East wing (flats 14 - 17). These flats were not occupied again until the mid 1950s.

## Marine Gate people

We welcome in 2014 as new neighbours Mr David Taylor (D10), Mrs Maggie Hague (A4), Ms Suzanne Sawyer (A10), Mr Octave Hill & Ms Clare Fallon (C14), Ms Val Jenkins (H10) and Mr Michael Mason (C12).



Joe Blackman writes:

Thalia el Nakeeb (above), resident in B17 since 1990, passed away on 24th January aged 80. For several years Thalia was a director of Marine Gate. R.I.P.



Ray and Barbara Baker (above), long resident in D1, had wonderful tales of life here - much of it around convivial drinks and parties in days past. With Ray's dying in the last days of 2013 and Barbara having to move to care elsewhere, some sunshine has left our south-west corner. But Ba's tales of battles with the Marine Gate garden, and Ray's of flying Wellingtons - his part in the first allied bombing raid on Berlin or of crash-landing in the desert south of Benghazi - are not easily forgotten.



Detailed knowledge of the bombs and photographs of the damage exist thanks to what they called "Marine Gate Hotel" being one of the first steel-framed buildings in Britain to be hit, and thus of interest to the experts in bomb-proof construction.

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## Our own Book Club and Film Club

A reading group, the Marine Gate Book Club, started in November 2013, attracting residents interested in fiction. Brighton & Hove Library agreed to lend 10 copies of the book of our choice once a month. At present the group has 14 members, men and women, who meet at each others' flat for discussion, a glass of wine and a lot of talk. MG Management offered the service room for meetings but most preferred to meet in an environment more appropriate to their taste, which inevitably limits the numbers.

Dr. Miriam Beza writes: "I must say each of the participants is an enthusiast and has something to say. We meet on a Thursday evening once a month and I enjoy every minute of it."

To join, do contact Miriam in G4.

Complementing the reading group, David Browne, who has a life time experience in television and the film industry, will be showing films, wherever possible made from the books the group has read. For example, two weeks after discussing Ian McEwan's *Enduring Love*, the film was shown.

To join, do contact David in E6

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Seen for the first time in 75 years, the architect's original sketch of the West entrance, with buff brick walls and blue tiled entrance, has been found in an archive in Ipswich.

Sadly these prices from 1939 cannot be guaranteed in 2014

**Rentals**

Rents are from £135 per annum, and application should be made to the letting office at Marine Gate (Brighton 4662) or the joint managing agents: Messrs. Fox and Sons, 134, King's Road, Brighton (Brighton 7211), and Messrs. Keith Cardale and Partners, "Unicos Centre," Berkeley Square House, London, W.1, Mayfair 4631.

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