

# Newspaper Cuttings – Lyme Regis 1978-1995



Donated by Merry Bolton, 2018.

Transcribed by Felicity Cox, LRM Research Team, January 2019

No Abbeyfield aid from Councils. Financial help has not been forthcoming for the Abbeyfield project in Lyme Regis from any local government source. Despite friendly approaches and discussions with West Dorset District Council and Dorset County Council, the local organisations have drawn a blank. Nevertheless the Society is hopeful of acquiring funds from the Department of the Environment, although the status of a Housing Association has to be formally achieved by the Society in Lyme before such finance will be given. A report from the society this week made it clear that the path to purchasing and converting Westhill was far from smooth and straightforward. Negotiations were cumbersome but progress was at last being made. Plans for conversion included the provision of 10 bed-sitting rooms, with dining room and lounge for community use, a guest room and a warden's flat. Already the Society had a substantial list of people interested in residing locally in an Abbeyfield house. Valuations on the property, fire prevention requirements and listed building consent were being dealt with. Donations had been received for the project and other money was promised, including a contribution from the Lyme Regis Dramatic Society's "old time music hall" at the Marine Theatre.  
(Bridport & Lyme Regis News 16 May 1978)

A facelift is planned for the cemetery chapel at Lyme Regis. At a meeting of the town council's grounds and gardens committee, it was reported that the property was in need of repair. A specialist firm from Exeter will be employed to restore and replace some of the stained glass windows in the chapel. Other windows will be replaced with frosted lead glass. The committee accepted the quotations obtained by the town clerk Mr Harry Williams and will request ratification of its decision from the full council. The committee also agreed that town workmen should be asked to clean and restore the chapel floor, which the vicar, the Reverend Peter Nicholson, had reported as badly worn and not very clean.  
(Lyme Regis News 16 June 1978)

Uplyme Parish Council has at last reached the contract stage in the purchase of farmland for an extension to the church cemetery. But, even after more than two years of difficult negotiations, parish councillors were in no hurry to sign the contract presented to them. They learned that, on the completion of the contract, there would be only two months left to finish all necessary accommodation works. These include drainage, fencing, gates and planting and amendments to adjoining land to reinstate the farmer's amenities. The land was being purchased for £1,000 from Mr John Manfield of Court Hall Farm. Members decided it would be wise to wait and not sign until they had acquired all the necessary tenders for the work and were in a position to get the work underway immediately the contract was complete.  
(Lyme Regis News 16 June 1978)

The Mariners Hotel in Lyme Regis has been put on the market for £500,000. Immortalized in Beatrix Potter's painting of "Susan" the cat and "Stumpy" the dog, the hotel was also illustrated in the "Tales of Little Pig Robinson." A former coaching inn of historic interest the three-star hotel includes much of its character, including a 325 year old tulip tree in the garden. The present owners Stuart and Lesley Preston have undertaken an extensive programme of refurbishment during their time in residence. All 16 letting bedrooms are equipped with tea and coffee facilities, direct dial telephone and colour television. A strong emphasis has been put on catering for the needs of the commercial client as much as the tourist. The hotel has been put on the market with Christie and Co. in Winchester. Christie's spokesman Tim Ash said "The sale is attracting considerable interest from purchasers, despite the general slowdown of the market. Lyme Regis now offers very good trading opportunities and the much improved road connections to West Dorset have removed the seasonal trading restrictions of the past."  
(Bridport and Lyme Regis News 9 February 1990)

Lyme's hospital looks set to pass into the private sector. It is poised to be sold to Care Holdings Limited, a nursing home group. The sale, which provoked widespread comment from Lyme residents, is going ahead despite a last ditch attempt by the Reverend Murray Dell to halt the proceedings. The sale of Lyme Regis hospital was already a certainty when the health authority held a public meeting last year. The sale, worth in excess of £450,000 was settled following negotiations between four parties West Dorset Health Authority, Lyme's general practitioners, Care Holdings Limited and the Hospital working party. Ten beds within the new private setup are to remain for the use of local residents and will be managed by the town's GP's. This facility is to be funded by the health authority until 1995 when the new Bridport Community hospital opens. A hospital trust is being formed to fund the facility from then onwards.

(Lyme Regis News 9 February 1990)

Much respected Lyme Regis auxiliary coastguard Peter Gill has died aged 54. He suffered with a blood disorder. He leaves a widow, two children and two grandchildren. Mr Gill, who lived at Fairfield Park, was for many years a radio officer in the merchant navy. He was the son of one time Lyme Regis traders who ran the former Argyle Café on Marine Parade. On leaving the merchant service, Mr Gill returned to Lyme to work at Stonebarrow radar station and when it closed down he joined the staff of the Post Office. He turned down another job in radar because he didn't want to move his children, Ian and Sharon, from the Woodroffe School. Mr Gill became an auxiliary coastguard 15 years ago, reaching the position of second in command. A former Lyme Regis Lifeboat coxswain, he helped to save at least 22 lives. Coastguard spokesman Jim Bolton described Mr Gill as "a diligent, hardworking and very pleasant chap." Mr Gill's ashes are to be scattered at sea.

(Lyme Regis News 9 February 1990)

Taking care of the Cobb. West Dorset District Council are working in close co-operation with English Heritage to ensure the protection of Lyme's greatest asset – the ancient Cobb. The council's principle engineer, Keith Cole, gave the assurance when he outlined the next two stages, backed with funding by English Heritage to prepare the way for repairs to the existing surface. The Cobb is a Grade 1 listed building and in terms of a church and a cathedral, English Heritage view it as a cathedral. They are prepared to give us grant aid for the overall project, including construction work but we have to follow certain procedures in the first instance. Basically the object is to repair what is there, rather than to replace it with paving setts. There will have to be some changes and it is necessary to meet EC rules of hygiene regarding the landing of fish. It is likely that the fish landing area will be of a natural stone surface. Before they can apply for a grant the district must carry out a photogrammetric survey of the causeway which should begin within the next two months. The district is also required to undertake an historical survey of the Cobb, this will be carried out by an expert yet to be appointed. In the meantime, we are most grateful to the voluntary panel at Lyme Regis who are assisting us by providing historical data, including old pictures. English Heritage will not be meeting all of the cost however, so we shall be applying for grants to the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food for the landing area and for the coast protection element of the scheme.

(Lyme Regis News 20 August 1993)

Much respected Lyme Regis building firm A G Case and Sons have moved into the European market. The firm run by Mayor Stuart Case and his brother Michael already have a fine reputation nationwide for their joinery. Last Sunday Michael journeyed to France to supervise the roofing of a building at Caen in Normandy. Next month the Lyme builder will be taking a conservatory from Lyme to Leipzig in Germany. It was constructed as part of a £22,000 contract at the firm's workshop at the former branch railway station site. Stuart told me this week that the firm has been making a conscious effort to trade on the Continent, having exhibited at a business fair in West Germany at Wiesbaden. We have contracts in France and Germany and we hope to be extending our kitchen unit business over there in the not too distant future.

(Bridport and Lyme Regis News 20 August 1993)

Popular Jim Sweetland will keep on swinging, having just retired after 45 years in the printing industry. Jim (60) intends to maintain his interest in music and will remain a keen golfer. He began his career at

the age of 15 as an apprentice with the old Lyme Regis Printing Company, then owned by the late Alex Richards, a former town mayor. After National Service, during which he was a member of the RAF Band, Jim returned to his old job where he remained until 1969 when he went into business with Mr Tony Rocket. The two opened and ran the Axminster Printing Company before Jim left the partnership in 1985. He then returned to Lyme Regis Printing Company on the industrial site, retiring with the position of works overseer. Jim, who lives in Woodmead Road is extremely well known in district music circles. He has a lifetime association with Lyme Regis Town Band where he plays the euphonium, saxophone and trombone. He was also a valued member of the Roland Halliday Dance Orchestra for 30 years. (Lyme Regis News 21 August 1992)

The man who organised the reformation of Lyme Regis Town Band Mr Chris Chapman has died aged 84. A former partner in the Serendip bookshop in Broad Street Lyme Regis, Mr Chapman helped to negotiate the payment of a sum of money from the film company that made "The French Lieutenant's Woman" which eventually led to buying instruments for the reformed town band. (Lyme Regis News 17 March 1995)

The Heroism of Local Seamen whose sacrifice inspired the opening of an RNLI station in Lyme Regis will be commemorated by a special memorial in or near the new lifeboat headquarters at Lyme Regis. Firebricks taken from the wreck of the barque Heroine which sank off Lyme will be used to construct a commemorative insert panel or a free-standing plinth. When the Heroine, believed to have been bound for Australia with cargo and emigrants, struck rocks in a fierce gale on Boxing Day 1852, she raised the alarm by firing cannons. At the time the lifeboat at Lyme was operated under the auspices of the Dorset Shipwreck Association. Five volunteer crewmen quickly responded to the rescue call in the Lyme boat Frances, but they were hurled into the mountainous seas as their oar-powered boat was smashed against the Cobb wall. There was only one survivor, William Bridle, who was awarded a silver medal for gallantry. The men who lost their lives were Hy Cox and Messrs Black, Hearne and Harvey. Ironically all of the 45 occupants of the barque got away in the vessel's own lifeboats. The RNLI awarded £20 to the dependants of the drowned men and opened its station in Lyme a year later. The barque was discovered four miles south of Lyme Regis by diver Richard Greenaway. The bricks, as many as 8,000 and bearing the name Ramsay are believed to have been made in Newcastle. They were found lying on the floor of the centre of the vessel while there were other items of cargo in the sand. Richard said it must have been a dramatic scene at Lyme Regis in 1852 as the boatmen tied cork around their waists for buoyancy, said goodbye to their loved ones and met their deaths as people watched from the Cobb. "We felt that featuring the bricks in the new lifeboat station development would be a fitting tribute to those brave men and to the beginnings of the RBLI involvement in Lyme Regis". They were accepted on behalf of the Lyme Regis Station by Deputy Launching Authority David Manners. (Lyme Regis News 17 March 1995)

The Primary School pupils in Lyme Regis have moved into purpose built new accommodation on the Kings Way site. Previously, the King's Way premises opened in 1975, accommodated only the infants, but now a superb new extension and improvements scheme, costing #300,000 means it is home for all of the primary school children from five to eleven. The main contractors, A Hammond and Sons Ltd at Sturminster Newton, have done an outstanding job, constructing a new hall, storage accommodation, toilets with disabled facilities, a kitchen and a first aid room, upgrading the classrooms and providing a new library. The hall, which will also be for community use, is particularly impressive with a specially installed PE floor. Music is an important feature in the school's curriculum and this is given a boost with the purchase of a 1,320 digital piano. The school's Friends Group provided half of the money. The school governors' financial commitment to the development is #20,000 by 1977 and they have so far found a third of this total. Mr Tozer, under whose guidance the school has come on in leaps and bounds during the past four years, says he is hopeful that, with the continuing support of the town, the governors will be able to meet their financial obligation. He knew there was some sadness in the town over the departure from the church Street area after about 100 years but the new development was undoubtedly in the best interests of the children. The move will improve continuity for the pupils, particularly between the junior and infant years. We are now in a position to utilise our advantage much more effectively in a school on one site, enabling us to develop our links with the church, the parish and the community of

Lyme Regis. There are just over 100 pupils at the school but this number is expected to rise to 120 within the next few years. Lyme youngsters started their education at the end of the 19th century in the old infants school (now the church hall) to the south of the church. Juniors were accommodated in the bottom portion of the now closed building in Church Street, while pupils who did not take up places at the former Grammar School went to the old Lyme Regis Senior School above. With the introduction of comprehensive education at the Woodroffe School the whole of the building was taken over by Lyme Regis Junior School.

(Bridport & Lyme Regis News 3 March 1995)

Lyme mourns Eddie Case. A prominent Lyme Regis man, proud of his family's contribution to the life of the town, has died. Edward (Eddie) Charles Case lived at Hermon Ferndown Road. Born in Broad Street he was the grandson of Sam Govier, whose portrait was painted by the great American artist James McNeil Whistler. Mr Case, who learned his trade as a master carpenter, was a partner in the Lyme Regis building firm of A G Case & Sons, now known as Case construction. He was unfit for war service but was involved in the aircraft construction industry during the 1939 – 1945 campaign in Oxford and High Wycombe. He lived alone since his wife died 26 years ago, but despite suffering the loss of a daughter Stephanie through illness four years ago and a fire which gutted his home he shouldered his misfortunes well. A stalwart of Lyme Regis Conservative Club, he was chairman at the time of his death. He loved sport and was a very talented skittles player in his younger days. He leaves a daughter Gillian and four children. The funeral service at Lyme Regis Parish Church will be conducted by the vicar the Reverend Murray Dell assisted by Mr Case's son in law, Baptist Minister the Reverend Eric Holdstock.

(Lyme Regis News 18 August 1995)

Lyme Regis Roman Catholic Church was packed on Friday for the induction of the new priest, Father Robert Plant, who has come to the area from St Austell in Cornwall to succeed Father Bryan Legg. The new priest, installed by the Bishop of Plymouth, is responsible for the parishes of Lyme Regis and Axminster. After the ceremony, attended by Lyme Regis Mayor Barbara Austin, a small reception was held at the home of Philip and Helen Mostyn. The parish has announced the appointment of its first deacon John Colling, who held a similar position with the Clifton Diocese.

(Bridport & Lyme Regis News 14 July 1995)

Watchdogs applaud church's success. The importance and success of the parish church at Uplyme was highlighted at a meeting of the village council. The accolade came from reports from its "watchdogs" council representatives on outside bodies. Councillor Jack Thomas revealed that the average Sunday congregation at the Parish church was 120. The choir and bell ringing team thrived as did the 30 strong Friday Club for teenagers. Some 24 youngsters attended the Sunday school. The tree warden Geoff Browne reported on success in securing tree preservation orders for species around the cricket field and at Hacker's Mead. Councillor Gwen Barnes outlined the financial structure for the King George V Playing Field where excellent income was coming from the tennis courts. Councillor David Sole gave a presentation on the Trinity Hill Nature Reserve near Axminster with its unique and vastly improving heathland and 45 species of birds.

(Bridport & Lyme Regis News 28 July 1995)

Retired minister in dingy rescue drama. Retired Lyme Regis minister the Reverend Neil Bliss was taken to hospital as a precautionary measure after being plunged into the sea when his small dingy capsized a mile off Lyme Regis. He was rescued by the police launch, after his dingy capsized while being towed back by local trawler Shimarar, skippered by Ron Bailey.

(Bridport & Lyme Regis News 28 July 1995)

Two Clergymen who have just taken up a living in the resort attended their first Mayor's service at Lyme Regis on Sunday. Baptist Minister the Reverend Mark Read and Father Robert Plant of the Roman Catholic Church were in the parish church for the service conducted by the Vicar the Reverend Murray Dell.

(Bridport & Lyme Regis News 9 June 1995)

An Uplyme firm has won an award for its strawberry jam. Thursday Cottage, who make a wide range of preserves, came top in a recent competition run by Living Magazine. Strawberry jams, including many made by leading national companies, were compared by a panel of judges. After their product was named the best, Pam Corbin who runs Thursday Cottage with her husband Hugh, said they were delighted to have beaten off such tough opposition. "It is quite an accolade for them to pick us" she said. Six years ago, Thursday Cottage marmalade was voted best in the Sunday Times Tried and Tested contest. The company, which operates at Carswell Farm in Lime Kiln Lane, Uplyme, employs 10 staff and still makes all its preserves in the traditional way, using real fruit and raw sugar all stirred by hand with wooden spoons in 20lb pans. Many of its popular products are sold overseas, with the French being particularly enthusiastic buyers of its lemon, orange and lime curds and traditional chunky marmalade. (Bridport & Lyme Regis News 9 June 1995)

Veteran returns to a place in his heart. An American war veteran, whose thoughts were of Lyme Regis during brief moments of respite in the D-Day campaign, has just completed a sentimental visit to the West Dorset resort. Ex- infantryman Henry J Brown proudly marched in the Mayor's Parade on Sunday. He met former acquaintances and talked about old times, of his days in Lyme Regis in 1944 and the warmth and kindness of the residents. Henry, who stayed in Lyme at the Queens Walk home of Mrs Cynthia Hodder, told a reporter: "The people of Lyme Regis were so good to us in those dark days of the war. They were wonderful to me then and they have been just the same this time. I would not have missed coming back for the world." Henry 79, winner of the Purple Heart and the Bronze Star, wrote to Cynthia from a foxhole as the shells flew above him during the push from Omaha Beach. When last in Lyme 51 years ago he was billeted in the former Pine Crest off Charmouth Road and in Tudor House Church Street. He and some of his comrades were befriended by local girls, who used to meet in the Bridge Street home of Mrs Mollie Hodder, Cynthia's sister-in-law, to await transport home to Combyne on the film van after seeing movies at the Regent Cinema. Henry promised he would return to meet his friends when he marched off to cross the channel for the great invasion but contact was lost at the end of the hostilities when he returned to his New Jersey home, married and did a lot of travelling. Cynthia, a widow said: "For some reason, his address stuck in my mind but I was unsuccessful at first in trying to trace him. Then a few years ago, I met in Lyme Regis, quite by chance, an American girl on an exchange scholarship to Oxford University, Julie Lin. She volunteered to do some research and traced Henry to his current home in Florida. The fact that it turned out he was a former commanding officer of an association representing overseas war veterans was a great help." Henry added "I telephoned Cynthia on Christmas Eve and said to her Hello, ho, ho, ho! I have a Christmas present for you, I am Henry Brown." Said Cynthia "I could not believe that I was speaking to him after all those years." Henry had intended to visit Omaha Beach on Tuesday, the 51st anniversary of the landings but he postponed the pilgrimage because he was having such a good time in Lyme. "I just never forgot this little town" he said I will just have to make my trip to Omaha Beach with the veterans on another occasion." (Lyme Regis News 9 June 1995)

Mister Cinema dies. A Lyme Regis man whose name was synonymous with the local cinema died last week at the age of 72. Cyril Wellman, was the doyen of the local silver screen for well over half a century and was one of the longest serving cinema employees in the country. Educated in the local school, he went to work at the cinema at the age of 14 when the picture house was in the drill hall, now the Marine Theatre. He loved everything to do with the industry, learned his trade well, and went on to become an excellent projectionist. He moved with the owning Hardy family when the current cinema, The Regent, was opened in the resort in 1937, having been purpose built. Cyril was proud of his association with the successful Regent and was always quick to point out that Lyme Regis was probably the smallest town in the country to have its own cinema. He continued working at the Regent until his health declined, although he was still doing part time duties at the age of 71. In his early days, Cyril was a choir boy, server and bell ringer for Lyme Regis Parish church. Born at 12 Broad Street, he was a bachelor but was very much a family man, always to the fore and supportive during the upbringing of his nephews and nieces. He loved sport, particularly snooker, playing in the Seaton League for Lyme Regis Conservative Club teams from 1946. He was the oldest of three brothers and is survived by one, Brian. (Lyme Regis News 5 May 1995)

A prominent Lyme Regis family is mourning this week after the loss of Lionel Emmett at the age of 74. He leaves a widow Betty, six children and ten grandchildren. Lionel, who spent the last years of his life living at North Avenue, was Lyme born and educated, becoming a building apprentice on leaving school. He went on to become a skilled bricklayer, working all his life in the trade for local firms and in partnership with his late brother George and his cousins Bob Emmett and the late Fred Emmett. It was during the war when he served in the RAF that Lionel met his future wife in Manchester. Betty, born in Liverpool, was a WAAF at the time. The couple celebrated their golden wedding anniversary in January. Lionel was very much a quiet family man who enjoyed life in his home town. He was a member of Lyme Regis branch of the Royal British Legion.  
(Lyme Regis News 12 May 1995)

Sun, Sea and Sand and No Sewage! No untreated sewage is flowing into the sea through outfall pipes at Lyme Regis for the first time since the construction of the resort's antiquated disposal system in almost 100 years. South West Water confirmed this week that its multi-million pound new sewerage scheme was well into the commissioning process. No raw sewage was going through the outfall pipes at the Cobb or East Cliff. It was being collected at the Gun Cliff station and pumped to Sleaford Wood for treatment before being returned to the sea through the East Cliff outlet. The underground pipe was expected to be completed soon, coinciding with the finishing touches to the ultra violet treatment process at Sleaford Wood. Mayor Barbara Austin said "This is grand news for Lyme. There were a lot of people on our beaches over the weekend when clean sands and the sweet smell of success were very much to the fore."  
(Lyme Regis News 12 May 1995)

A couple of senior citizens say their faith in human nature has been restored through the kindness of Lyme Regis holiday accommodation proprietor Mrs Joan Gollop. Mr and Mrs George Deegan of Aldershot had a disastrous experience they say when booking a holiday in Lyme Regis. Their plight was reported in the Lyme Regis News and Mrs Gollop came to the rescue by offering them a free holiday in one of her flats. In a letter of appreciation Mr Deegan writes "My wife and I have experienced great kindness and we also had the honour and pleasure of meeting Lyme Mayor Barbara Austin and Town Clerk Judith Amesbury." Said Mr Gollop "We had a flat available and we just felt it would be a nice gesture on behalf of the town. We rely on the goodwill and satisfaction of our visitors."  
(Lyme Regis News 12 May 1995)

Annus mirabilis for Barbara. Popular Barbara Austin, the first local born woman to become Mayor of Lyme Regis, said that her first year in office had been the most memorable 12 months of her life, when she was installed for a second term last night. The year had been highlighted by some outstanding local achievements. We have seen the completion of the new sea defence walkway, which I am happy to say will be called Gun Cliff Walk and very soon we will have the commissioning of the new pumping station. The Town Mill project has made tremendous progress and our refurbished Museum is something to be proud of. The junior and infant schools are now in one location, the children's playing field is getting back to normal and our streets are looking a lot cleaner. All these achievements have been worth waiting for and in the coming year we hope to make a start on phases two and three of the coastal protection plan and on the restoration of the Langmoor Gardens slip area. The Mayor, who thanked all for their great support, also congratulated councillors Owen Lovell, Ted Street and Sheila Poupard on being re-elected to the district authority, trusting they would continue to develop the good working relations forged between local authorities.  
(Lyme Regis News 19 May 1995)