

BOGNOR REGIS

HERITAGE TRAILS

**TAILORED WALKS
UNLOCKING THE BEST
OF BOGNOR REGIS'
RICH HISTORY**

TRAIL 3

The Sir Richard Hotham Trail

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TRAIL 3 STARTS HERE

The start of the trail is Hotham Park House at the south east corner of Hotham Park close to the bandstand. The house was acquired and renovated in 1977 by Mr Abraham Singer and converted into luxury flats which today are private residences.

An engraving of the Bersted Lodge, Bognor, a large, two-story building with a central tower and arched windows, surrounded by trees and a lawn. The text "BERSTED LODGE, BOGNOR." is at the bottom, and "Engr'd by J. Smith. 1860." is at the bottom right.

TRAIL 3 The Trail Map

Simply follow the numbered trail on the map and read the corresponding numbered descriptions and selection of images throughout this leaflet.

BOGNOR REGIS HERITAGE TRAILS



2 The Clock Tower

The Grade II* Listing describes the clock tower to the north west of the building as being built of four sections, each set back within the lower section. It has clock faces on the north and south sides of the top section with the cupola containing the bell supported on 8 columns. A weather vane sits on top of the cupola.

John Twaites of Clerkenwell designed the clock and mechanism with the bell cast by Whitechapel Bell Foundry of London, which has cast other famous bells during its history including 'Big Ben'. The Hotham Park Clock Tower Bell was cast in 1794 and weighs 3 cwt, 2qts, 3 lbs and 8 ozs (175 kgs).

For further information on the Clock Tower a good place to start is "A Tall Story" the story of the Clock Tower at Hotham Park House Bognor Regis, West Sussex compiled by Sylvia Endacott published by Hotham Park Heritage Trust.

Continue northwards up from the clock tower towards the Lodge in the Short Term car park exiting the park and crossing the road into Upper Bognor Road. Access to Dome House, Mordington and St Michael's is via the entrance to Chichester University Bognor Regis Campus where the buildings today form part of the University



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3 Dome House (Hothamton Crescent) Upper Bognor Road

Hothamton Crescent, comprised three separate buildings; Dome House, Mordington and St Michael's originally containing seven residences. All three buildings were built by Sir Richard Hotham in the 1790s with the aim of attracting Royalty to his developing resort away from Weymouth and Brighton.

Dome House is Bognor's only Grade I listed building and was the centrepiece of the crescent. The building is constructed with multi coloured bricks with an imposing front entrance and is surmounted with a plaque of Hothamton Crescent and coat of arms of Sir Richard Hotham.

The building originally formed three residences 123 feet long with around 50 rooms and a tea room under the dome. (1) It was designed in size and scale for its intended affluent clientele. Anthony Dale who was an architectural historian described Dome House as one of the finest example of buildings of the period on the South Coast.

Sir Richard's ambition of bringing royalty to his bathing resort came in September 1796 when the then Prince of Wales came to visit his mistress Lady Jersey who was staying at Dome House. (1) The Prince Regent's daughter, Charlotte, was a summer visitor from 1808 to 1811.

In 1946 the building was acquired by West Sussex County Council as a teaching centre for troops returning from the War as part of their repatriation.

Bognor Regis's tradition as a centre for Education and learning and the subsequent formation of the Bognor Regis Campus of Chichester University are intertwined as a part of this story.

Today all three buildings are part of the Bognor Regis Campus continuing the education and learning heritage.

4 Niagara House

On leaving the campus and heading north on Upper Bognor Road at its junction with Mead Lane is Niagara House. This is possibly an older property with a Georgian façade. Princess Charlotte who stayed at Dome House purchased buns from a shop on the Mead Lane site.

5 Spencer Terrace

Continuing on Upper Bognor Road is Spencer Terrace also built by Sir Richard Hotham in 1790. It is named after Lord Spencer, a politician and neighbour of Sir Richard when he lived in Wimbledon.

Otterham House, next to Niagara House was No's 6 and 7 of Spencer Terrace at the sale of Sir Richard Hotham's estate in 1800. Known as Slindon House between c1870 and 1941 and was purchased by the County Council after World War II.

The main part of Spencer Terrace was No's. 2 to 5 in 1800 and like many of the buildings became a school in 1845, initially Hope House Academy for gentlemen, after 1866 Dr Alfred Conder's Middleton School and from 1913 to 1962 was Northcliffe House School. The Building was acquired by the County Council for student accommodation, and then converted into private flats in 2000.

No 1 Spencer Terrace (Redgate House) was also a school until World War II.

6 The Shrubby

Further along Upper Bognor Road is The Shrubby originally called Garden Cottage and described as being at the entrance to Hothamton. From the 1820s it was a parsonage for the minister of St John's Chapel in the Steyne. It was renamed The Shrubby in 1880 with a new front added in 1900, and became a welfare centre for evacuees in the war and later an annex to the training college before conversion to private flats in 2000.

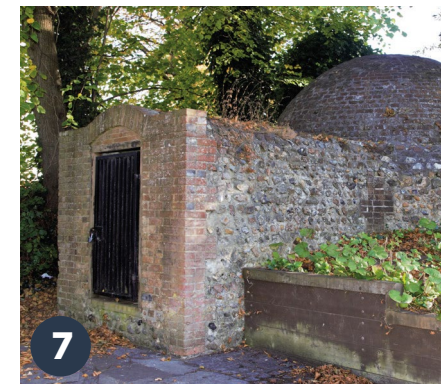
7 The Ice House

The Ice House was originally part of the Hotham Park Estate and gives you some idea of the size and extent of the original grounds. It is thought to date back to 1792 for storage and preservation of food for the House. The brick structure as seen today would originally been covered with a layer of soil with trees planted around it for shade.

The entrance is north facing and the vault below ground would have been floored with pebbles for drainage and the vault packed with ice and straw as part of the preservation process. William Fletcher continued to use the Ice House for preserving ice up to about 1914. (1)

The Ice House is 6 metres deep and about four metres in diameter and is considered to be one of the only surviving undamaged examples of an Ice House in West Sussex. Owned by Arun District Council as part of the Hotham Park estate it was restored in 1970.

The Ice House completes the Sir Richard Hotham element of Trail 3 and walkers can either carry on and visit the Railway Station and Picturedrome cinema a short walk along London Road. Alternatively walk through the Car Park and explore Hotham Park and explore its many attractions including the Tree Trail, miniature railway, Alice in Wonderland characters, Forest Falls Adventure golf or have a drink or snack at the café.



7



8 The Railway Station

Carry on down London Road and turning right into Lyon Street West will bring you to The Railway Station. The opening of the branch line from Barnham in 1864 followed by the pier just one year later was a major factor in increasing the popularity of the town as a seaside resort with the growth of day trippers.

The present station building was completed in 1902 at a cost of £68,000 creating the imposing building replacing the original wooden structure, which burnt down in 1899. Under threat of demolition it was Grade II listed in 1989 as a complete example of an Edwardian Seaside Terminus. The station has undergone further restoration with £2million investment in a Creative Digital Hub in 2018 and new paved pedestrian and landscaped frontage to the station.

Opposite the Station on Canada Grove is the Picturedrome Cinema.

9 The Picturedrome

The Cinema was originally built as the New Assembly Rooms and opened in May 1886. It was renamed The Queen's Hall in Coronation year 1911 and the octagonal lantern Tower had a pedal powered revolving light.

It became a cinema opening of the 5th June 1919 and had various owners including Cannon, Classic and ABC Cinemas.

Under the threat of closure in 2009 by its then owners The Bognor Pier Company Ltd, it was Grade II listed for preservation and purchased by Bognor Regis Town Council in 2010. The Cinema is operated by the Picturedrome Electric Theatre Company and has undergone £1 million investment in screens and cinema technology. Today it provides filmgoers with a low cost venue compared with the major Cinema multiple chains.

TRAIL 3 ENDS HERE

The Picturedrome ends The Sir Richard Hotham Trail

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks to Ron Iden and the Bognor Regis Local History Society for use of "A series of Three walks around Bognor Regis – Walk Number One", A Brief History of Bognor Regis 2008 and reprinted 2011 by Ron Iden.

The series of three booklets were combined into one publication: Bognor Regis; Buildings of Interest, by Ron Iden published by BRLHS in 2010.

(1) Gerard Young. The History of Bognor Regis (1983)

An article from The Argus May 2015 by Sylvia Endacott on Hothamton Crescent.

A Tall Story, The story of the Clock Tower at Hotham Park House compiled by Sylvia Endacott.

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