



Photo By John Anthony

DECEMBER 2021 NEWSLETTER

December 2021 **Winter Newsletter** No. 49

Local History—Group Visit

The Local History Group finally were able to visit the Volks Railway in September, a trip deferred from 2020. Seven members gathered at the Sealife Centre, having travelled by bus; three members travelled by car, parking at the Marina, for free and meeting the rest of the group at the Volks railway station. The railway ticket is a very reasonably priced at £3-95 return. Sadly, we were not able to have a group tour and presentation as previously planned. Nevertheless, it was an enjoyable day. Following a one-way trip, some went into Brighton Marina for refreshments, the Marina went into Brighton.



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Magnus Volk (1851-1937)

Magnus Volk was an enthusiastic inventor. As a young man, Magnus liked to build soon became an expert in all things electrical. In 1879 he brought the first telephone and that of his friend, William Jago. A year later, at the age of 29, he was to fit electric lights in his house.



machines and experiment with electricity. He phone system to Brighton, installing it in his the first person on the south coast of England

You can see another of Magnus's inventions in Brighton. In 1887 he worked on the Clock tower on North Street, providing it with a hydraulically powered ball for the top of the tower. The ball rises up the mast just before the hour and drops to chime on the hour. The chime is no longer present, but you may still see the ball rise.

Volk's Electric Railway

Magnus's most famous invention were his Railways. In 1883 he decided to build a small line going along the seafront in Brighton, using electricity to power the trains. It opened on 4 August 1883 and is still in operation today, now the oldest electric railway in the world.

As soon as the Railway was up and running, Magnus was keen to take the next step and extend it further into town. Unfortunately, the Corporation would not give him permission to do this, so he extended the line to the east instead. As it continued to grow in popularity, new carriages were added to the service to increase capacity.

In 1901 the line was extended again, this time out to Black Rock. By this time the route was now 1.25 miles in total.

Pioneer (Daddy Long Legs)



By 1892 the Railway was up and running successfully, so Magnus turned his attention to his next challenge; extending the line towards Rottingdean. Steep cliffs stood in his way, so he decided to build a line that would run through the sea. The train carriage sat on stilts above the water, earning it the nickname 'Daddy Long-Legs'.

Pioneer first ran on 28 November 1896, but sadly did not last long. A storm a week after the launch caused extensive damage, and it looked like it might be the end of Pioneer. However, the remains were salvaged and carefully repaired, and Pioneer was back up and running in July 1897.

In 1900 Magnus was informed that the Railway would need to move to allow for new sea defences. This would have meant moving it into deeper water, which simply wasn't viable. Thus the line closed and Pioneer was abandoned.

Sue Leaney.



INTEREST GROUPS

GROUP NAME	GROUP LEADER
Art Appreciation - FULL	Wendy Bowers
Art/Painting and Drawing	Peggy Smart Leader / Janice Gray email contact
Bird Watching	Gwen Davies
Book Group (1) - FULL	Kathy Schilbach
Book Group (2)	Vacancy for new Leader
Bridge Group - SUSPENDED	Bryan and Anne Partridge
Card Making (1) - FULL	Gill Plummer
Commonwealth War Graves - NEW / TBA	Andy Bray
Creative Writing - FULL	Jenny Barnes
Cryptic Crossword Basic Group	Heather Stone / John Leaney
Cryptic Crossword Group	Heather Stone / John Leaney
Current Affairs	Peter Bowers
Easy Cycling	Terry Pashley
Exploring Psychology Group	Ann Richardson
History	David Fleck
Interactive Travel - SUSPENDED	Ann and Ron Richardson
Jazz and Music Appreciation	John Anthony Leader / Sue Maxwell email contact
Knitting and Crochet	Anne Dobbs
Local History	Sue Leaney
Mah Jong	Barbara Black
MandM Online	Heather Stone
Military Matters	Don Kinnear Leader / Joe Kirk email contact
Petanque Group	Sue Fleck
Play Reading	Roger Frewin
Poetry Group - FULL	Anne Partridge
Psychology Today	Maureen Condick
Quilting & Patchwork - WAITING LIST	Lyn Christmas
Rag Rug Group - FULL	Jenny Barnes
Roots and Memories - NEW / via Zoom	Andy Bray
Scrabble - FULL	Bryan and Anne Partridge
Visits	Jan Smyth / Barbara Black
Walking	Heather Stone / Mike Hester / Marion Wood
Wine Appreciation	Peter Bowers

COMMITTEE MEMBERS 2021—2022

Chair	Sue Shoosmith
Vice-Chair / News Bulletin Editor	Jean Upton
Secretary	Diane Formoy
Treasurer	Gill Bull
Interest Group Co-ordinator	Janice Roberts
Membership Secretary/ Beacon Administrator	Tony Dobbs
Webmaster	Joe Kirk
Committee Member	Daphne Bonner
Committee Member / Meeter-Greeter / Welfare	Elizabeth Burchell
Committee Member/ Visits / Welfare	Jan Smyth
SUN Representative	Marion Wood

NON COMMITTEE MEMBERS 2021—2022

Speaker Secretary	Hilary Farnworth
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VACANCIES 2021—2022

Asset Manager / Equipment Register
Publicity Officer
Refreshment Organiser