

Digital Editions

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If you want more information on the places to see, stay, eat, drink or shop advertised in this guide all you need to do is click on the relevant website or e-mail address contained in the advertisement.

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Travel Publishing

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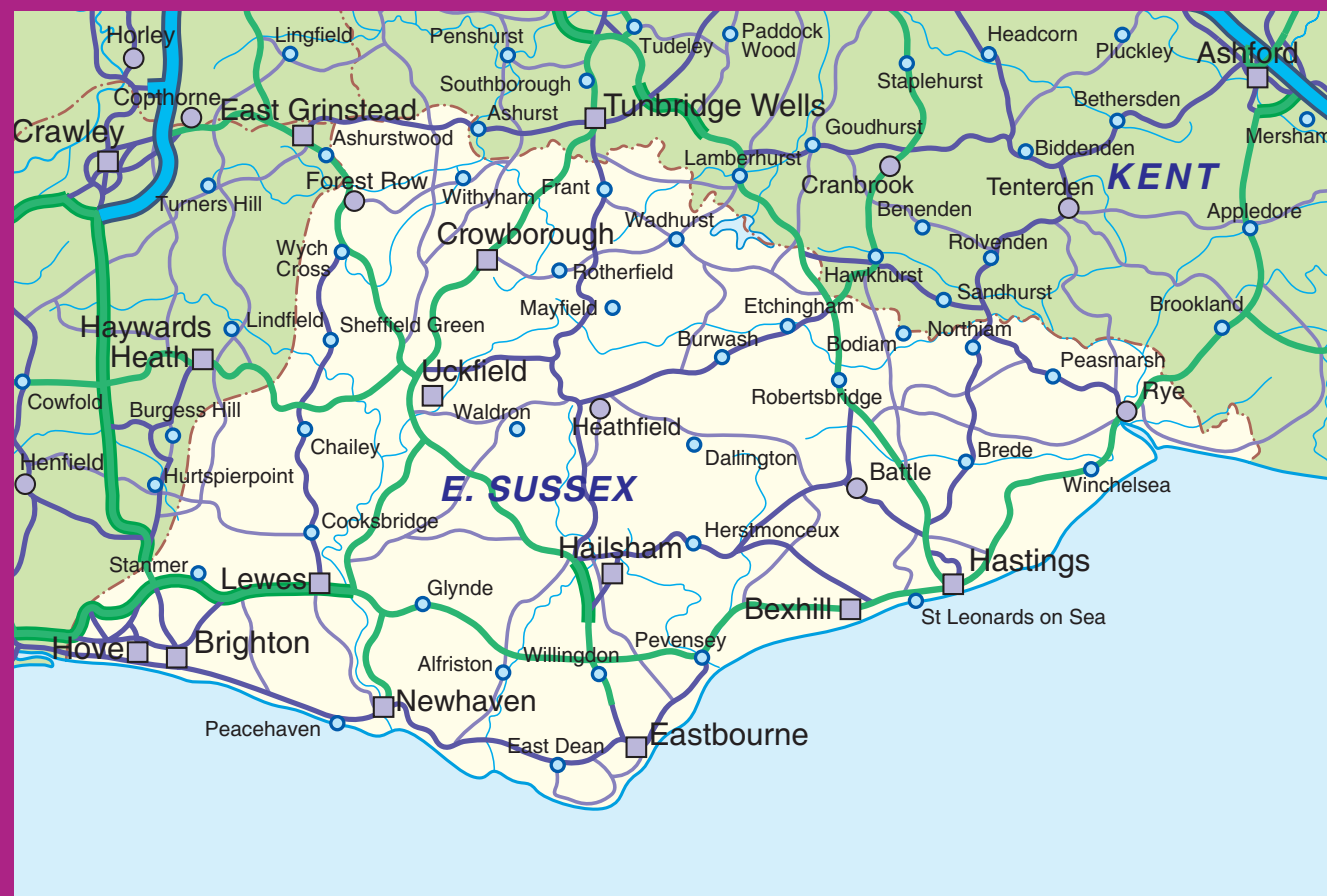
Guide to Rural England

EAST SUSSEX



WHERE TO GO | WHAT TO SEE | WHAT TO DO
WHERE TO STAY | WHERE TO EAT | WHERE TO BUY
Fully illustrated with detailed directions and maps

LOCATOR MAP



Towns and Villages

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East Sussex

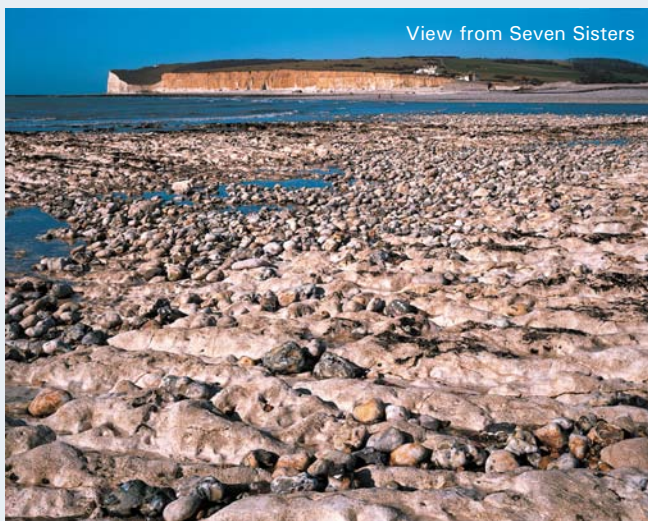
Good Old Sussex by the Sea – in 1912 Rudyard Kipling wrote a poem about it and, five years later, William Ward-Higgs composed an anthemic song. Sussex was all one county then; it's two now, but the appeal that inspired verse and song remains to this day.

East Sussex has been witness to some of the most momentous events in the history of England. The coastal village of Pevensey was the landing place of William, Duke of Normandy, and his army in 1066 and, as every school child knows, William proceeded to defeat Harold near



Hastings and claim the crown of England. Hastings and Battle, the town that grew up around the site of the battlefield, have museums and exhibitions on these history-changing events. The victorious Normans soon set about building castles and fortifications from which to defend their new territory, as well as religious buildings, and the area is still rich in Norman architecture.

The south coast was always an obvious target for invasion and, in the days before the Royal Navy, the confederation of Cinque Ports was established to provide a fleet of ships to defend the coast. Many Sussex



towns, now some distance from the sea, were part of the confederation. The silting up of the harbours has changed the landscape of the East Sussex coast considerably in the past 1,000 years.

Nowadays, the coast is the preserve of holiday-makers, taking advantage of the generally moderate climate and the bracing sea air. The thriving resorts of Brighton and Eastbourne began life as quiet fishing villages, but developed rapidly at the beginning of the 19th century. Brighton is best known for its exotic Royal Pavilion, designed in magnificent Indian style by John Nash for the Prince Regent. Eastbourne, by contrast, was carefully planned and laid out in genteel style by William Cavendish, the 7th Duke of Devonshire, close to the chalk cliffs of Beachy Head. St Leonards and Bexhill are quieter resorts, but perhaps the most picturesque of all is Rye, with its many medieval buildings.

Away from the coast, on the high ridges of the Weald, is the largest area in southeast England that has never been put to agricultural use. Ashdown Forest was a royal hunting ground and its thriving population of deer made it a favourite sporting place. The network of tracks across the forest goes back to prehistoric times, the Romans built a road



straight across it, and the rights of commoners to gather wood for fuel, cut peat and graze cattle, were well established by Norman times. Much of the woodland has been lost, but the remaining forest is protected as an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and Site of Special Scientific Interest. The surrounding area is characterised by small towns and villages of weatherboarded cottages, traditional hall houses and unspoilt farmsteads.

Many artists and writers of the 19th and 20th centuries chose to live here. A A Milne set the Winnie the Pooh stories in Ashdown Forest and surrounding area. Virginia Woolf and her husband Leonard lived at Monk's House, Rodmell, while her sister, Vanessa Bell, was at nearby Charleston in Selveston. The Elms at Rottingdean was the home of Rudyard Kipling until 1902, when he moved to Burwash, and the village of Ditchling was home to several of the leading lights of the Arts and Crafts Movement.

Ashdown Forest and the Sussex Weald

This region of East Sussex is centred round the ancient Ashdown Forest, a royal hunting ground that also provided fuel for the area's iron industry. Much of the actual woodland has been lost both as fuel and for shipbuilding. The area is characterised by small towns and villages of weatherboarded cottages, traditional hall houses and unspoilt farms. There is evidence in ancient tracks that the area has been inhabited since prehistoric times, but the exciting discovery of a supposedly 150,000-year-old skull in 1912 at the village of Piltdown was proved some 40 years later to be a clever and complicated hoax.

Over the centuries the area has been notable for many fine houses and castles. The impressive Herstmonceux Castle, home of the Royal Observatory from 1948 until the 1980s,

is a magnificent medieval brick fortress, which also provided comfortable living accommodation for its inhabitants; it is set in the most glorious gardens and parkland.

Other houses here have a more personal appeal and one, Bateman's at Burwash, was the home of Rudyard Kipling from 1902 until his death in 1936. A quiet place in a secluded position, the house has been left as it was when Kipling died and is full of his personal possessions. Ashdown Forest and Hartfield are linked with another 20th-century writer, A A Milne. He lived close by and wrote the Winnie the Pooh stories, set in the forest and surrounding area, for the amusement of his son, Christopher Robin.

Crowborough

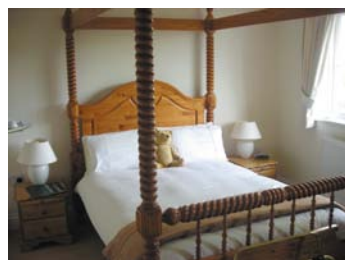
This Wealden town, on the eastern edge of Ashdown Forest is, at over 750 feet above sea level, one of the highest towns in Sussex.

YEW HOUSE BED & BREAKFAST

Yew House, Crowborough Hill, Crowborough, East Sussex TN6 2EA
Tel: 01892 610522
e-mail: yewhouse@yewhouse.com
website: www.yewhouse.com

Resident owner Robert Stewart welcomes guests to **Yew House**, his handsome modern home in a pleasant street a short walk from the railway station. Four well-appointed bedrooms offer quiet, comfortable Bed & Breakfast accommodation all year round for business people, couples or families taking a break in an interesting part of the county.

The four-poster room has a large double shower en suite; one double has a shower en suite, the other a private shower room not en suite; the fourth room is a versatile room that can be a single, twin or triple, with a dedicated shower room. All four rooms are covered by wireless LAN (wi-fi). Eco-friendly Robert has planted a number of trees in the ample grounds that adjoin the house. Crowborough is well connected to London by rail, and buses run from close to Yew House to Tunbridge Wells, Uckfield, Lewes and Brighton.



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Before the arrival of the railways in the 1860s, this was a small community of iron smelters and brigands centred around the parish church and vicarage. At the heart of the town is a triangular green where stands the greystone church dating from 1744.

The railways put Crowborough within easy reach of London, so it was gradually transformed into the flourishing residential town it is today. A relatively peaceful place, its convenient location attracted a number of well-known late 19th-century writers, including Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, creator of Sherlock Holmes, perhaps the best-known detective in the world. Conan Doyle's house, high up on Crowborough Beacon, was a country house called Windlesham. Apparently he nicknamed it Swindlesham because of the amount it cost to extend and refurbish it.

Around Crowborough

GROOMBRIDGE

4 miles N of Crowborough on the B2110

Groombridge Place

This unspoilt village straddles the county border with Kent and, while the Sussex part of the village, which grew up around the railway station, has little to offer, the Kent side is particularly charming. The name is said to be derived from the Saxon 'Gromen', meaning man as in bridegroom. Centred round a triangular green, there are attractive 15th and 16th-century estate cottages and a superb manor house **Groombridge Place**, dating from the 17th century. The site on which the foundations were laid is much older and there is some evidence that there was first a Saxon, then a Norman

castle here. Built by Charles Packer, the Clerk of the Privy Seal, who accompanied Charles I on his unsuccessful journey to Spain to ask for the Infanta's hand in marriage, Groombridge Place is a splendid redbrick house surrounded by a moat. Set within beautiful terraced gardens, the house has a small museum dedicated to Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, who was a frequent visitor to the house and the surrounding woodland known as the Enchanted Forest. This is indeed a magical place, with a wild wood area, a Celtic Forest, a North American Wood and a Jurassic Valley. The gardens and woodlands are open throughout the summer months. Groombridge Manor was the model for Birlstone Manor in Conan Doyle's *The Valley of Fear*.

HADLOW DOWN

4 miles SE of Crowborough on the A272

Wilderness Wood

This handsome hamlet is surrounded by winding lanes that weave their way through some of the most glorious Wealden countryside. Just outside Hadlow Down, the **Wilderness Wood** is a living museum of woodland management that does much to maintain the crafts and techniques of



woodland management. Visitors can see the woodland being tended in the traditional chestnut coppices and plantations of pine, beech and fir. The wood is then harvested and the timber fashioned, using traditional techniques, into all manner of implements in the centre's workshops. There are also woodland trails, a bluebell walk and an adventure playground for children.

WALDRON

7 miles S of Crowborough off the B2192

The 13th-century village Church of All Saints has a lovely kingpost roof and, unusually for its age, a very wide aisle and nave, the reason for which has never quite been explained.

BUXTED

5 miles SW of Crowborough on the A272

 Buxted Park  Hogge House

A village long dominated by the great house of **Buxted Park**, this Grade II listed building was built along classical lines in 1725. Almost destroyed by fire in 1940, it was restored by the architect Basil Ionides. Although altered from its original design, it was sensitively rebuilt using numerous period pieces from other locations. There are doors and chimney pieces by Robert Adam, cabinets and pillars from grand London houses and country mansions, and a particularly fine staircase from a house in Old Burlington Street in London.

In the 19th century, the house was the home of Lord Liverpool who, wishing to give himself more privacy, decided to move the village further away. The villagers were incensed and refused to move, so his lordship retaliated by declining to repair the estate cottages. Eventually the villagers gave way and moved to the village that is now Buxted. However, several buildings have remained in

the old location including, at the entrance to the park gates, the half-timbered **Hogge House**. Dating back to the 16th century, the house was once the home of Ralph Hogge, who is said to have been the first man to cast guns in England, in 1543. The much-restored 13th-century parish church also remains in the park's grounds, and the Jacobean pulpit was once used by William Wordsworth's brother, who was vicar here for a time.

MARESFIELD

5½ miles SW of Crowborough off the A22

Before the turnpikes between London and the south coast were laid through the Weald, this was a remote place. However, in the 18th century, its position at a crossroads on the turnpike ensured its development. The tall Georgian Chequers Inn is arguably the village's oldest building and a fine example of its type. Close by is a white-painted iron milestone with the number 41 and four bells and bows in outline. One of a whole chain of such milestones that stood on the old turnpike road, this is a particularly witty one as it refers to the distance, in miles, from Maresfield to Bow Bells in London.

In the neighbouring village of Fletching is one of the loveliest churches in East Sussex. It was here in May 1264 that Simon de Montfort kept vigil the night before he and his troops defeated Henry III at the Battle of Lewes. It is said that some of the knights who fell in the battle are buried in full armour beneath the nave.

PILTDOWN

7½ miles SW of Crowborough off the A272

Though the village itself is not well known, its name certainly is. In 1912, an ancient skull was discovered by a Lewes solicitor and amateur

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archaeologist, Charles Dawson, in the grounds of Barcombe Manor. At the time, archaeologists the world over were looking for a 'missing link' between man and the ape and the skull seemed to fit the bill. It had a human braincase and an ape-like jaw. The find was believed to be about 150,000 years old, but it was not until the 1950s, with much-improved scientific dating techniques, that the skull was shown to be a fake. It was actually the braincase of a medieval man who had suffered a bone-thickening disease, and the jaw of an orang-utan, both carefully treated to suggest fossilisation. The perpetrator of the hoax was never discovered.

UCKFIELD

7 miles SW of Crowborough on the B2102

Situated in the woodland of the Weald, on the River Uck, this was once a small village at the intersection of the London to Brighton turnpike road with an ancient pilgrims' way between Canterbury and Winchester. When the stagecoaches arrived, a number of coaching inns sprang up. Before this, the village had been a centre of the iron industry thanks to its plentiful supplies of wood and water.

However, despite these advantages, Uckfield remained small until the 19th century, when a period of rapid expansion followed the arrival of the railway.

Several of the old coaching inns survived the move from horse-drawn to steam-powered travel, and among the Victorian buildings there is Bridge Cottage, a very fine example of a 15th-century hall house.

SHEFFIELD GREEN

8 miles SW of Crowborough on the A275

 Bluebell Railway  Sheffield Park and Gardens

The village takes its name from the manor house, a Tudor building that was remodelled in the 1770s by James Wyatt for John Baker Holroyd, MP, the 1st Earl of Sheffield. At the same time as creating his mansion, Sheffield Park, the Earl had Capability Brown and Humphry Repton landscape the gardens. While living here, the Earl's great friend Edward Gibbon came to stay during the last months of his life, and it was during this time that he wrote much of his epic *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* in the library.

A later inhabitant, the 3rd Earl of Sheffield, was a keen cricketer and was the first to organise the test tours between England and Australia. At the same time he began a tradition that the visiting team come to **Sheffield Park** to play their first match against the Earl of Sheffield's XI. Though the house remains in private hands, the splendid gardens belong to the National Trust and are open to the public. From the mass of daffodils and bluebells in spring, to the blaze of colour from the rare trees and shrubs in



Sheffield Park Gardens

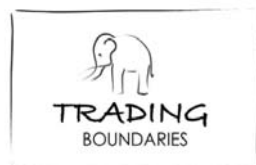
TRADING BOUNDARIES

Sheffield Green, nr Fletching, East Sussex TN22 3RB

Tel: 01825 790200

website: www.tradingboundaries.com

Trading Boundaries offers an enticing and eclectic mix of furniture and lifestyle products from all over the world.



A passion for sourcing the finest products for its customers – including quality furniture, vibrant textiles, architectural pieces, beautiful jewellery, stunning antiques and artefacts – is the inspiration behind everything it does.

Trading Boundaries is filled with an ever changing collection of wonderful finds; beautiful and often one-off pieces simply unavailable anywhere else – an 'Aladdin's cave' where customers will always find something new and exciting. All products are sourced directly from overseas manufacturers, giving outstanding quality to customers at unmatched prices.

The showroom is complemented by the fully licensed Elephant Café Bar where customers can enjoy a fresh and appealing menu and a year-long programme of live music events.

Providing a tranquil and relaxing shopping environment, the award-winning Courtyard houses a number of high quality shops, offering something for everyone – from children's toys, home wares and furniture to designer women's wear and handbags.

Trading Boundaries is housed in splendid Georgian Grade II* listed buildings in the heart of the Sussex countryside. The former coaching inn is a well known landmark situated in an area of outstanding natural beauty, close to The Bluebell Steam Railway, The Sheffield Park National Trust Gardens and The Ashdown Forest (home of Winnie the Pooh).

Opening times: Mon-Sat 10am – 6pm
Sunday 11am-5pm, Thurs open for breakfast from 8.30am.

On the A275 just north of the Sheffield Park National Trust Garden and the Bluebell Steam Railway.



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VILLANDRY HOME

The Courtyard, Trading Boundaries, Sheffield Green,

nr Fletching, East Sussex TN22 3RB

Tel: 01825 790890 Mob: 07929 347288

website: www.villandry.co.uk

Villandry is the unique home interiors shop with a wide variety of interesting merchandise to adorn the most discerning of homes. Recently rejuvenated under the ownership of Sarah Cotter, Villandry is located within the grounds of Trading Boundaries, an exclusive array of courtyard shops, surrounding beautiful gardens and featuring the popular Elephant restaurant and cafeteria.

With a veritable variety of goods on display a visit to Villandry is more than just a shopping experience, it offers an opportunity to find exclusive items that will add a certain character to any home, ranging from furniture, linen, crockery, candles, gifts and accessories the list goes on.

Sarah, personally selects her goods from throughout France and other European cities, enjoying exclusive distribution rights to many ranges as well as having established brands such as Linum, Cote Table, Cote Bastide, Le Pere Pelletier and many more.

The constantly changing selection of goods ensures that shoppers return again and again with many regular customers attending VIP evenings to see the newest of products before they go on general sales.



autumn, there is always plenty to look at and enjoy.

Not far from the house, in the village, lies the Sheffield Arms, a coaching inn built by the 1st Earl in the 18th century. Local stories told of a cave behind the inn with an underground passageway to a nearby farmhouse that was used by smugglers and, in order to test out the truth of the tales, three ducks were shut in the cave. After 10 days, one of the ducks reappeared - in the cellars of the farmhouse.

The village is also the terminus of the **Bluebell Railway**, and the cricketing Earl would surely have been pleased with the railway's success today as he was on the board of the Lewes and East Grinstead Railway that originally built the line. For details of the line and timetables call 01825 720825, or visit the website www.bluebell-railway.co.uk.

CHAILEY

9 miles SW of Crowborough on the A275

 Chailey Common

This large and scattered parish comprises three villages: North Chailey, Chailey and South Common. Though small, Chailey has some impressive old buildings, including the 13th-century parish church and a moated rectory. To the north, lies **Chailey Common**, a nature reserve covering some 450 acres of wet and dry heathland where Chailey Windmill can be found. Unlike many Sussex windmills, Chailey's splendid smock mill was saved from ruin just in time.

Overlooking the common is Chailey Heritage, which was founded in 1903 as a home for boys with tuberculosis from the East End of London. The home has become a

learning centre for children with disabilities and has a worldwide reputation.

NEWICK

9 miles SW of Crowborough on the A272

The village is centred around its large green on which stands an unusual long-handled pump, erected to mark Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1897. The actor Dirk Bogarde spent some time in the area and was given his first big acting part in an amateur production here in the 1930s.

NUTLEY

5 miles SW of Crowborough on the A22

 Nutley Windmill

The village is home to **Nutley Windmill**, Sussex's oldest working windmill. It was restored in 1968 by a group of enthusiasts after it had stood unused and neglected for over sixty years.

ASHDOWN FOREST

3 miles W of Crowborough on the B2026

 Ashdown Forest

This ancient tract of sandy heathland and woodland on the high ridges of the Weald is the largest area in southeast England that has never been ploughed or put to agricultural use. The original meaning of 'forest' was as a royal hunting ground and this is exactly what **Ashdown Forest** was. The earliest record dates from 1268, and its thriving population of deer made it a favourite sporting place. However, the area was used long before this, and in prehistoric times there was a network of tracks across the forest. Later, the Romans



Post Mill, Nutley

built a road straight across it and, by the time of the Norman invasion, the rights of the commoners living on its fringes to gather wood for fuel, cut peat and graze cattle were well established.

During medieval times it was a great place for sport and a 'pale', or ditch, was dug around it to keep the deer within its confines. A famous sporting owner was John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, and during his ownership the forest became known as Lancaster Great Park. Henry VIII and James I were frequent visitors in their time. By the end of the 15th century, much of the woodland had been cut down to be used as fuel for the area's iron industry; the forest was neglected during the Civil War and by 1657 no deer remained.

Today, the forest is designated an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, a Site of Special Scientific Interest and a Special Protection Area for birds. It is a place of recreation with many picnic areas and scenic viewpoints and open access for walking throughout. The deer have returned and the clumps of Scotch pines that make prominent landmarks on the higher points of the forest were planted in the 19th century.

WYCH CROSS

6 miles W of Crowborough on the A275

 Ashdown Forest Llama Park

Marking the western limit of Ashdown Forest, local folklore has it that the village's name is derived from a cross that was erected on the spot where the body of Richard de Wyche, Bishop of Chichester, rested overnight on the journey from Kent to its burial place in Chichester during the 13th century. This is the location of the **Ashdown Forest Llama Park**, one of the top visitor attractions in Sussex. The herd, which arrived here in 1987, now numbers more than 100 llamas and alpacas, and in 2007 they were joined from Sweden by the reindeers Dasher, Dancer and Blitzen. The 30 acres also includes a farm trail, picnic area, adventure play area, coffee shop, knitwear and gift shop, and a museum. The Park is open all year from 10 to 5 (or until dusk if earlier).

THE PAVILION

County House, Lewes Road, Forest Row,
East Sussex RH18 5AN
Tel: 01342 822199
e-mail: pip.ejje@btinternet.com
website: www.pavilionshaurroom.com

The Pavilion is a specialist furniture, interiors and gift shop occupying a white-painted weatherboarded building in the village of Forest Row, on the A22 south of East Grinstead. It's run with passion and dedication by Philippa (Pip) Ejje and her mother Eileen, who offer a complete quality service for interiors; they have assembled the stock from many sourced in the UK and Europe and display it as in a home setting. Larger items include restored painted French furniture and pieces from England and Scandinavia, while stylish home and gift products run from soft furnishings to tableware and crockery, lamps, candles, clocks, books, handmade cards, soaps and home fragrances. The Pavilion is a major stockist of Cabbages & Roses, Votive candles and Geodesis candles and fragrances.

This exceptional shop is open from 10 to 5 Tuesday to Saturday; closed Sunday and Monday.

FOREST ROW

6 miles NW of Crowborough on the A22

This hillside village in Ashdown Forest is a popular place with walkers and also a good starting point for wonderful forest drives. The village was founded in the late Middle Ages when the forest was still extremely dense in places and provided a thick swathe of vegetation between the Thames Valley and the south coast.

Unusually, many of the village's buildings are older than the parish church, which dates only from 1836. The village is also the proud owner of a stone wall that commemorates a visit made by President John F Kennedy.

HAMMERWOOD

7 miles NW of Crowborough off the A264

 Hammerwood Park

Down a potholed lane lies **Hammerwood Park**, a splendid mansion that was built in



1792 by Benjamin Latrobe, the architect of the Capitol and the White House in Washington DC (Latrobe's work was much admired by Thomas Jefferson and he became Surveyor of Public Buildings in 1803). The house has had a chequered history. Divided into flats in the 1960s, it was bought by the rock group Led Zeppelin in the 1970s, and was rescued from ruin in the 1980s.

HARTFIELD

4 miles NW of Crowborough on the B2026

Pooh Corner

An old hunting settlement on the edge of the Ashdown Forest, which takes its name from the adult male red deer, or hart. The village is very closely associated with A A Milne and Winnie the Pooh. Milne lived at Cotchford Farm, just outside Hartfield, and he set his books, which he wrote in the 1920s, in the forest. Designed to entertain his son, Christopher Robin, the books have been delighting children ever since and, with the help of illustrations by E H Shepard, the landscape around Hartfield has been brought to millions around the world.

In the village lies the 300-year-old sweet shop to which Christopher Robin was taken each week by his nanny. Now called **Pooh Corner**, this is a special place to visit for both children and those who remember the stories from their own childhood. Full of Winnie the Pooh memorabilia, the shop caters for all tastes as long as it involves Winnie. All the famous Enchanted Places lie within the parish of Hartfield. Poohsticks Bridge, a timber bridge, crosses the little Posingford Stream in Posingford Wood, which can be reached from a car park off the B2026 Uckfield Road; the bridge was fully restored in 1979. A A Milne wrote only two stories about his son and the

bear of very little brain, *Winnie-the-Pooh* (1926) and *The House at Pooh Corner* (1928). But Pooh fans can look forward to an addition to the books, due to be published in October 2009: the challenge for the distinguished author David Benedictus and illustrator Mark Burgess in *Return to the Hundred Acre Wood* is to revive a much-loved series in a way that is sympathetic to the originals without being a pastiche.

WITHYHAM

3½ miles NW of Crowborough on the B2110

This small village, with its church and pub, was the home of the Sackville family from around 1200. The original village church was struck by lightning in 1663. The lightning was said to have come in through the steeple, melted the bells and left through the chancel, tearing apart monuments on its route. Completely rebuilt following the destruction, the church incorporates some original 14th-century features including the west tower. The Sackville Chapel was commissioned in 1677 to house a memorial to Thomas Sackville, who had died aged 13. The marble memorial incorporates life-size figures of the boy and his parents. There is also a memorial to Vita Sackville-West, the poet and owner of Sissinghurst Castle in Kent, who died in 1962.

Burwash

Bateman's

Standing on a hill surrounded by land that is marsh for part of the year, Burwash is an exceptionally pretty village, whose main street is lined with delightful 17th and 18th-century timber-framed and weatherboarded cottages. Among the buildings is Rampyndene, a handsome timber-framed house with a sweeping roof that was built in 1699 by a

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wealthy local timber merchant. Between the 15th and 17th centuries, Burwash was a major centre of the Wealden iron industry, which brought great prosperity to the village.

However, it is not the village that brings most people to Burwash, though it certainly deserves attention, but a house just outside. In 1902, Rudyard Kipling moved from Rottingdean to **Bateman's** (see panel below) to combat the growing problem of over-enthusiastic sightseers. Located down a steep and narrow lane, the Jacobean house was originally built in 1634 for a prosperous local ironmaster. With its surrounding 33 acres of beautiful grounds, landscaped by Kipling and his wife, it proved the perfect retreat.

Kipling and his wife lived here until their deaths - his in 1936 and hers just three years later - and during his time here the author wrote many of his famous works, including *Puck of Pook's Corner*, the poem *If* and the *Sussex* poems. Now in the care of the National Trust, the rooms of the house have been left as they were when the Kiplings lived here, and among the personal items on display is a watercolour of Rudyard Lake in Staffordshire, the place where his parents met and which they nostalgically remembered at the time of

their son's birth in Bombay. Also here is a series of terracotta plaques that were designed by Kipling's father, Lockwood Kipling, and which he used to illustrate his novel *Kim*. Lockwood was an architectural sculptor and went to India as the principal of an art school; he later became the curator of Lahore Museum.

While the family lived at Bateman's their only son, John, was killed on active duty during World War I at Loos, France in 1915. A tablet in the village church remembers the 18-year-old.

Around Burwash

THREE LEG CROSS

4 miles N of Burwash off the B2099

Bewl Bridge Reservoir

In 1975, the Southern Water Authority dammed the River Bewl to create **Bewl Bridge Reservoir**, the largest area of inland water in the southeast of England. A great many buildings were lost under the water but one, the 15th-century Dunsters Mill, was taken down, brick by brick, before the waters rose and re-sited above the high water level. Another couple of timber-framed farm

Bateman's

Burwash, Etchingham, East Sussex TN19 7DS
Tel: 01435 882302
website: www.nationaltrust.org.uk

The interior of this beautiful 17th century Jacobean house, Rudyard Kipling's home from 1902 to 1936, reflects the author's strong associations with the East. There are many oriental rugs and artefacts, and most of the rooms - including his book-lined study - are much as Kipling left them. The delightful grounds run down to the small River Dudwell with its watermill, and contain roses, wild flowers, fruit and herbs. Kipling's Rolls Royce is also on display.



buildings in the valley were also uprooted and sent to the Weald and Downland Museum at Singleton.

The land around Bewl Bridge is a Country Park and has much to offer, including lakeside walks, trout fishing, pleasure boat trips and glorious countryside.

TICEHURST

3½ miles N of Burwash on the B2099

Pashley Manor Gardens

This ancient village is filled with attractive tile-hung and white weather boarded buildings that are so characteristic of the settlements along the Sussex-Kent border. Among the particularly noteworthy buildings here are Furze House, a former workhouse, and Whatman's, an old carpenter's cottage with strangely curving walls. The village is also home to **Pashley Manor Gardens**, which surround a Grade I listed timber-framed house that dates from 1550. With waterfalls, ponds and a moat, these romantic gardens are typically English, with numerous varieties of shrub roses, hydrangeas and peonies adding colour and lushness at every corner. Less formally, there is a woodland area and a chain of ponds that are surrounded by rhododendrons, azaleas and climbing roses. The gardens and house are privately owned, but the gardens are open to the public throughout the summer.

ETCHINGHAM

2 miles NE of Burwash on the A265

This scattered settlement, located in the broad lush valley of the River Rother, was home in the Middle Ages to the fortified manor of the de Echyngham family. Built to protect a crossing point on the River Rother, the house, which stood where the station now stands, has

long gone. Just outside the village lies Haremere Hall, an impressive Jacobean manor house now rented for holiday accommodation.

BRIGHTLING

2½ miles S of Burwash off the B2096

Sugar Loaf Mausoleum

The character of this tiny hillside village is completely overshadowed by the character of one of its former residents. It is certainly not unkind to say that the Georgian eccentric, 'Mad' Jack Fuller, was larger than life since he weighed some 22 stones and was affectionately referred to as the 'Hippopotamus'. A local ironmaster, squire and generous philanthropist, 'Mad' Jack, who sat as an MP for East Sussex between 1801 and 1812, was elected only after a campaign that had cost him and his supporters a massive £50,000. Fuller was one of the first people to recognise the talents of a young painter, J M W Turner, and he was also responsible for saving Bodiam Castle from ruin.

However, it is for his series of imaginative follies that this colourful character is best remembered. He commissioned many of the buildings to provide work for his foundry employees during the decline of the iron industry and among those that remain today are Brightling Observatory, now a private house, a Rotunda Temple on his estate, and the Brightling Needle. The 40-foot stone obelisk was built on a rise to the north of the village which is itself 650 feet above sea level.

One of Fuller's more eccentric buildings was the result of a wager. Having struck a bet with a friend on the number of spires that were visible from Brightling Park, Fuller arrived back to find that the steeple of Dallington church, which he had included in the bet, was not visible. In order to win the

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bet, Fuller quickly ordered his men to erect a 35-foot mock spire in a meadow on a direct line with Dallington, and the monument is affectionately referred to as the **Sugar Loaf**. Perhaps Fuller's greatest structure is his **Mausoleum**, a 25-foot pyramid, which he built in the parish churchyard some 24 years before his death. The story went around that Fuller was buried inside in a sitting position, wearing a top hat and holding a bottle of claret. However, despite the appropriateness of this image of his life, the parish church quashed the idea by stating that he was buried in the normal, horizontal position.

CROSS IN HAND

8 miles W of Burwash on the A267

This intriguingly named settlement lies on a busy road junction that has a post mill standing in the triangle formed by the

converging roads. Certainly worth a second glance, the windmill at one time stood five miles away at Uckfield.

CADE STREET

5 miles W of Burwash on the B2096

This hamlet, used as a street market until the early 20th century, is reputed to be the place where the notorious Jack Cade, leader of the Kentish rebellion, was killed in 1450 by the High Sheriff of Kent, Alexander Iden. A stone memorial marks the spot where he fell, and on it is inscribed the moral, 'This is the Success of all Rebels, and this Fortune chanceth ever to Traitors'.

HEATHFIELD

6 miles W of Burwash on the A265

To the east of the town centre lies the large expanse of Heathfield Park, once owned by

PETALS FOR PLANTS

Burwash Road, Broad Oak, Heathfield, East Sussex TN21 8XG

Tel: 01435 884111 Fax: 01435 882930

e-mail: info@petalsforplants.co.uk

website: www.petalsforplants.co.uk

Petals for Plants is a top-notch plant nursery just off the A265 east of Heathfield. The owners have been involved in the industry for almost 30 years and ran another nursery and garden centre before setting up here in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty on the High Weald overlooking the Rother Valley in 1066 Country.

Petals is passionate about plants and everything needed to help them to flourish and in 2006 created this plant-lover's paradise combining beautifully laid-out display beds with a high-tech glasshouse, three acres of mature planting and an extensive accessories section in an oak-framed barn. In addition to the wide, seasonally changing selection of plants Petals for Plants sells a wide selection of garden essentials, pots, stoneware, water features, composts and aggregates and houses and feeders for birds and other wildlife.

As well as discovering the diversity of the plants and complementary products and gaining inspiration for their own gardens visitors can stroll through the adjacent woodland or enjoy a coffee and cake, a light lunch or a cream tea in the Taste Buds café. This outstanding nursery is open from 9 to 5 (10 to 4.30 on Sunday).



HOLLY GROVE B&B

Holly Grove, Little London, Heathfield,
East Sussex TN21 0NU

Tel: 01435 803375

e-mail: jochristie@btinternet.com

website: www.hollygrovebedandbreakfast.co.uk

In the tiny village of Little London, on the A267, **Holly Grove** is the perfect place for a well-earned break. Light and roomy, it stands in south-facing gardens and grounds bordered by a stream in a quiet country lane. The accommodation comprises the Nutcracker Suite, the New Room and the Stable. 2 single beds can be added to the Nutcracker Suite, the New Room is a smaller en suite double and the Stable is a twin room with private bathroom. A heated outdoor swimming pool is a real bonus in the summer months, and guests can sit by the pool, on the terrace or in the garden listening to the birdsong. In the cooler months the open fire in the lounge and the log burner in the Great Space beckon. The Christie family are the most welcoming of hosts and always do their best to ensure that their guests have a pleasant stay – the number of return visits show how well they succeed! They share their home and paddock with cats, dogs and horses; guests can bring their four-legged friends by arrangement, and a spare stable is available if needed. No children under 12. There's excellent walking, riding and cycling hereabouts, and the many varied delights of the Sussex coast and countryside are within easy reach.



THE BREWERS ARMS

Vines Cross, Heathfield,
East Sussex TN21 9EW

Tel: 01435 812288

e-mail: info@brewersarmspub.co.uk

website: www.brewersarmspub.co.uk

Since opening the doors in May 2006 owners/hosts Tim and Chas Earley have been busy putting the **Brewers Arms** on the gastropub scene. Tim has many years' experience as a chef, with spells at some of the top restaurants at home and overseas, while Chas, also a trained chef, does an excellent job front of house with his passion for real ales and fine wines. The pub brings in the customers with real food at realistic prices, using good seasonal produce mostly shot, reared or grown in Sussex; everything is made on the premises, from the bread to the chutneys and preserves and the luscious hokey pokey ice cream.

This is also very much a friendly local, relaxed and informal, with a warm welcome for all who pass through the door. The bar is open lunchtime and evening and all day Friday, Saturday and Sunday, and food is served every session. The village of Vines Cross is located off the A267 or B2202 a short drive south of Heathfield.



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General Sir George Augustus Elliot (later Lord Heathfield), the Governor of Gibraltar and commander of the British garrison that successfully withstood attacks from both France and Spain between 1779 and 1782. Despite the wall surrounding the grounds, Gibraltar Tower, a castellated folly erected on his estate in his honour, can be seen.

Heathfield remained a quiet and undistinguished town until the arrival of the Tunbridge Wells to Eastbourne railway in the 19th century, after which it grew to become an important market town for the local area.

MAYFIELD

6 miles NW of Burwash off the A267

Mayfield Palace

This ancient settlement, one of the most attractive villages in the area, possesses one of the finest main streets in East Sussex, with a number of fine 15th to 17th-century houses. According to local legend, St Dunstan, a skilled blacksmith by trade, stopped here in the 10th century to preach Christianity to the pagan people of this remote Wealden community. While working at his anvil, St Dunstan was confronted by the Devil disguised as a beautiful maiden. When she attempted to seduce the missionary, he spotted that her feet were cloven and grabbed her by the nose with a pair of red-hot tongs. The Devil gave out an almighty scream and beat a hasty retreat. But he soon returned, this time dressed as a traveller in need of new shoes for his horse. Dunstan again saw through the deception and, threatening Satan with his blacksmith's tools, forced him to promise never again to enter a house that had a horseshoe above the door.

St Dunstan became Archbishop of

Canterbury in 959 and, some time later, **Mayfield Palace**, one of the great residences of the medieval Archbishops of Canterbury, was built here. Though little remains of the grand palace, a Roman Catholic Convent School incorporates the surviving buildings. St Dunstan also founded here a simple timber church, replaced by a stone structure in the 13th century. It was rebuilt after a fire in the 14th century and again after a lightning strike in the 17th century. The present day Church of St Dunstan is a conglomeration of styles, incorporating a 13th-century tower, a Jacobean pulpit, a font dated 1666, and some 17th and 18th-century monuments to the local Baker family.

WADHURST

5 miles NW of Burwash on the B2099

Church of St Peter & St Paul

This was another great centre of the Wealden iron industry in the 17th and 18th centuries, and it was also one of the last places in Sussex to hold out against the improved coal-fired smelting techniques that had taken root in the north. Though the village **Church of St Peter and St Paul** is not quite built of iron, the floor is almost entirely made up of iron tomb slabs, a unique collection marking the graves of local ironmasters who died here between 1617 and 1772.

Many of Wadhurst's fine buildings date from the iron industry's heyday, including the large Queen Anne vicarage on the main street, built by John Legas, the town's chief ironmaster. In the late 19th century, the village found fame when an important prize fight was held here, with many of the spectators travelling down from London by train to this otherwise rather obscure venue.

The Cinque Ports and the East Sussex Coast

The story of this area of the East Sussex Coast is, of course, that of the events leading up to October 14th, 1066. William, Duke of Normandy, came here to claim the throne of England and, after defeating Harold a few miles from the town of Hastings, this is exactly what he did. Hastings and Battle, the town that grew up around the abbey that was built on the site of the battlefield, have a concentration of museums and exhibitions on the events of the 11th century. The victorious Normans soon set about building castles and fortifications from which to defend their new territory, along with religious buildings. Today this area is still rich in Norman architecture.

The south coast was always susceptible to invasion and, in the days before the Royal Navy, the confederation of Cinque Ports was established to provide a fleet of ships to defend the coast. Many of the towns that were part of the confederation seem unlikely sources of ships today, but the silting up of many of the harbours has changed the landscape of the East Sussex coast considerably in the past 1,000 years.

More recently, the coast has been the preserve of holiday-makers taking advantage of a moderate climate and bracing sea air. St Leonards was created in the 1820s and went on to become a fashionable resort, while the small and more modest Bexhill-on-Sea is home to the impressive De La Warr Pavilion, constructed from steel in the 1930s.

Perhaps the most picturesque of the coastal settlements is the ancient

town of Rye. Situated on a hill and once a great haunt for smugglers, the changing fortunes of the town have left it with a great number of handsome old buildings, making it a charming place to visit.

Hastings

-  1066 Story  The Maritime Stade
-  Shipwreck Heritage Centre
-  Fishermen's Museum  Smugglers Adventure
-  Museum of Local History  Hastings Embroidery
-  Underwater World

Long before William the Conqueror landed on the beach at nearby Pevensey, Hastings was the principal town of a small Saxon province that straddled the county border between Sussex and Kent. Its name comes from 'Haestingas', a Saxon tribal name, and, during the reign of Edward the Confessor, the town was well known for its sailors and ships. In fact, the town became so important that it even had its own mint. Earlier, during the 9th century, when the Danes were occupying the town, the crowing of a cockerel, awoken by the movements of the townsfolk preparing to surprise their oppressors, alerted the



Hastings Castle

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occupying force to the uprising. As a vengeance on all cockerels, the people of Hastings instituted a game called 'cock in the pot', where sticks were thrown at an earthenware pot containing a bird. Whoever threw the stick that broke the pot was given the cockerel as his prize and the game continued to be played each Shrove Tuesday until the 19th century.

Following the Battle of Hastings, which actually took place six miles away at Battle, the victorious William returned to Hastings where the Normans began to build their first stone castle in England. Choosing the high ground of West Hill as their site, the massive structure is now in ruins and all that can be seen on the clifftop are the original motte and parts of the curtain wall. Here, too, at Hastings Castle the **1066 Story** is on permanent display. Housed in a medieval siege tent, the exhibition uses audio-visual techniques to tell the story of the Conquest and the Castle. Other attractions include the 'Whispering Dungeons' and the once grand Eastern Gateway.

The West Hill also contains a system of elaborate underground passages, known as St Clement's Cave, where the naturally formed tunnel network has been extended. The caves were leased to Joseph Golding, who spent a great deal of time fashioning the sandstone into sculptures, arcades and galleries, which became one of the town's first commercial sights. Used as air raid shelters during World War II, the caves are now home to the **Smugglers Adventure**, where visitors are told stories of the town's illegal trade by a grizzly old smuggler known as Hairy Jack. After the Conquest, this already important



The Maritime Stade, Hastings

port became a leading Cinque Port, a role it played until the harbour began to silt up in Elizabethan times. Nevertheless, the fishing industry has managed to survive here: **The Stade**, or 'landing place', is home to Europe's largest beach-launched fishing fleet. Boats are pushed across the shingle by tractors to be launched at high tide. On their return, they are pulled back up the beach by winches, and their catches, including herring, mackerel, Dover sole, cod, bass and plaice, are unloaded and sent to the fish market. One of the town's greatest features is the cluster of tall wooden huts used for drying nets and storing fishing tackle. Dating from the 17th century, they are known as net shops or 'deezes'. The Church of St Nicholas, built on the beach to minister to the local fishing community, is now home to the **Fishermen's Museum**, which has as its centrepiece *The Enterprise*, dating from 1912, and one of the last of the town's sailing luggers. Also here, among the displays of fishing tackle, model boats and historic pictures and photographs, is the *Edward and Mary*, the first locally built boat to be fitted with an engine. Staying with a

MINSTREL'S REST

21 Greville Road, Ore, Hastings, East Sussex TN35 5AL

Tel: 01424 443500

e-mail: minstrelrest@hotmail.com

website: www.minstrelrest.co.uk

Minstrel's Rest is a medieval-themed guest house in the village of Ore, on the northeast edge of Hastings. The location is quiet and peaceful, yet the town centre and the sea front are only five minutes' drive away, making it the perfect base for holidaymakers and business people to relax or explore historic Hastings and 1066 country.

Resident owners Michelle and Phill Wood, who renovated the property from top to toe when they arrived in July 2005, offer comfortable, characterful accommodation in five rooms decorated and furnished in the medieval style that runs through the house. Taliesin the 6th century bard, lends his name to the king-size, four poster en-suite room. Perdigon, Berdic and Blondel, named after a french minstrel and minstrels of William the Conqueror and Richard Lionheart, are en suite doubles, and Taillefer, remembering William's minstrel at the Battle of Hastings, is a twin-bedded room with private bathroom. All have TV, hospitality tray, mini-fridge with fresh milk and juices, and free broadband internet access. An excellent breakfast, including preserves made with home-grown fruit, is served at a Jacobean-style solid oak table using handsome glazed pottery plates and cups.



maritime theme, the **Shipwreck Heritage Centre** (see panel opposite) is an award-winning museum devoted to the history of wrecked ships. Exhibits on display here include the remains of a Roman ship, a medieval sailing barge sunk on the River Thames in London, the warship *Anne*, beached near Hastings in 1690, and the hull of a Victorian barge. Additional displays cover modern methods that help eliminate the possibility of a shipwreck, including radar and satellite navigation. Next to the Shipwreck Heritage Centre is **Underwater World**, where many of the underwater creatures living off Hastings can be seen. A dramatic glass tunnel under a huge tank allows visitors to walk beneath the ocean – and stay dry.

The old part of Hastings consists of a network of narrow streets and alleyways - or 'twittens' - which lie between West and East

Hill. There are two cliff railways, one running up each of the hills. West Hill railway runs underground, taking passengers to Hastings Castle and St Clement's Caves, while the East Hill Railway, the steepest in England, takes passengers to the clifftop and the beginning of Hastings Country Park. This 500-acre park is unlike the clifftops around Eastbourne as the drop here is not sheer, but is split by a series of sloping glens overhung with trees.

The best way to discover the town's many interesting old residential buildings, inns and churches is to take a walk up the High Street and All Saints Street. St Clement's Church, in the High Street, has two cannonballs embedded in its tower, one of which was fired from a French warship, while the Stag Inn, in All Saints Street, has a concealed entrance to a smugglers' secret passage and a pair of

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Shipwreck Heritage Centre

Rock a Nore Road, Hastings, Sussex TN34 3DW

Tel: 01424 437452

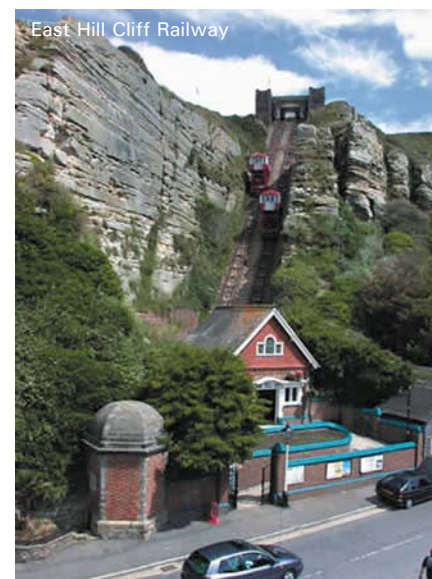
This award winning museum is devoted to the history of wrecked ships. Hastings has one of the richest displays of shipwrecks at low tide in Europe. An exciting audio-visual presentation tells the story (the ships featured in the display. These include a medieval sailing barge sunk in the Thames at London; the 70-gun English warship *Anne* beached near Hastings in 1690 during the Battle of Beachy Head; and the Dutch East Indiaman *Amsterdam* that ran aground at Bulverhythe. Additional features include radar, weather satellite, push-button videos and *Primrose*-the last Rye barge. Hearing loop for the deaf. Open all year.



macabre 400-year-old mummified cats.

Occupying the old Town Hall, which was built in 1823, the **Museum of Local History** is an excellent place to find information on this historic town. Going right back to the Stone Age, and with a considerable section on the Norman Conquest, the museum also covers the more

recent past, including displays on the rise of the Victorian resort, its life as a Napoleonic garrison and its role as a Cinque Port. By contrast, the **Hastings Museum and Art Gallery** on Bohemia Road covers a wider range of exhibits that also take in the county's ancient crafts. Hastings also contains a variety of attractions that are typical of a traditional seaside resort. The 600-foot pier was completed in 1872 and had to be repaired after World War II when, like many piers, it was deliberately holed in two places to prevent it being used as a landing stage for Hitler's forces. According to local legend, the Conqueror's Stone at the head of the pier was used by William the Conqueror as a dining table for his first meal on English soil. The town also has its own version of the Bayeux Tapestry, the **Hastings Embroidery**, made by the Royal School of Needlework and completed in 1966. It was in 1923, in a house in Linton Crescent, that the television pioneer John Logie Baird succeeded in transmitting the image of a man's hand. He later moved to Queens Avenue, later to London and eventually to Bexhill, where he lived in a house near the railway station.



Around Hastings

WESTFIELD

3½ miles N of Hastings on the A28

This modern redbrick village on the edge of Brede Level has at its old centre weatherboarded cottages and a Saxon church, with a beautiful Norman arch.

Vineyards in this country are still something of a novelty, but the gentle rolling slopes of the South Downs and the high mineral content of the soil are ideal for growing grapes. At Carr Taylor Vineyards, visitors can follow the Vineyard Trail from the vines, to the massive presses that crush two tons of grapes in one load, right through to the bottling plant to see the fascinating process of turning grapes into wine.

BREDE

5 miles N of Hastings on the A28

Situated to the north of the River Brede, this compact village has a long history, shrouded in myth and tales of the supernatural. One particular legend is that of the Brede Giant, based around the 16th-century owner of Brede Place, Sir Goddard Oxenbridge. At over seven feet tall he was certainly a giant and, by all accounts, he was a god-fearing gentleman of the parish. However, some time after his death, stories spread that he was a child-eating monster who was eventually killed by a band of Sussex children who, having got him drunk, sawed him in half - the children of East Sussex holding down one end of him with the children of West Sussex securing the other.

Tombs of the Oxenbridge family can be seen in the small Norman village church, as



can a wood carving of the Madonna created by a cousin of Sir Winston Churchill, who died, aged 84, in 1970. This remarkable woman travelled to America, where she learnt to carve in wood while staying for six months on a Native American reservation. In the aftermath of the Russian revolution, she journeyed to Moscow and, staying for two months at the Kremlin, she carved busts of both Lenin and Trotsky.

The more recent Giants of Brede are massive pumping engines hidden behind Baroque and Art Deco buildings in the lovely Brede Valley.

NORTHIAM

9½ miles N of Hastings on the A28

- Brickwall House Great Dixter House
- Kent & East Sussex Railway

In this large and picturesque village, characteristic white weatherboarded cottages and a number of fine 17th and 18th-century buildings overlook the triangular green at its heart. Elizabeth I is known to have dined and rested on this green under a great oak tree on her journey through Kent and Sussex in 1573. Her green high-heeled shoes must have been particularly uncomfortable as she took them

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off here and left them to the villagers, who saved them as a memento of her brief visit. Unfortunately, the vast oak tree, which was said to be over 1,000 years old and was held together by chains and clamps, has died and all that remains of it is its giant stump.

Of the memorable buildings in the village, **Brickwall House** is one of the finest. This imposing 17th-century gentleman's residence was the home of the Frewen family, an old local family who had been living in Northiam since 1573 when the first Frewen came to the village as rector. Well known for its splendid plaster ceilings, it also has a comprehensive series of family portraits from the 17th century. On display in the house are Elizabeth I's famous green shoes, and a sedan chair that belonged to Martha Frewen, who burnt to death in her bedroom in the 1750s. Several members of the family were strict Puritans and one family named their two sons Accepted and Thankful. Despite the handicap

of these unusual names, Accepted went on to become first the president of Magdalen College, Oxford, and then the Archbishop of York, while Thankful is remembered for having donated the communion rails to the church in 1683. The church is also home to an impressive 19th-century family mausoleum. Brickwall House, so named because the house and grounds are surrounded by a high stone wall, has some splendid topiary in the gardens, as well as an arboretum and chess garden. Now a private school, the house and grounds are open by appointment only.

Just three miles northwest of Northiam lies **Great Dixter House and Gardens** (see panel below), one of the finest examples of a late medieval hall house, surrounded by a very special garden. Built in the 1450s, the manor house was purchased in 1910 by Nathaniel Lloyd, who then employed Sir Edwin Lutyens to renovate and extend the property. He restored the house to its original medieval

Great Dixter House and Gardens

Great Dixter High Park, Northiam, Sussex TN31 6PH
Tel: 01797 252878
website: www.greatdixter.co.uk



Despite major alterations made about 1595, since removed, the principal medieval features of **Great Dixter House** have remained relatively intact. It is one of the largest surviving timber-framed halls in the country and the fine roof has hammerbeams strengthened with a tiebeam. The fine armourial shields on the hammer beams depict the arms of the Etchingshams, the Dalyngriggs and the Gaynesfords and suggest an approximate building date of between 1440 and 1454.

One of the pleasant features about the gardens is that they lie all around the house. Make a circuit of the gardens and you have made a circuit of the house exterior. Each has good views of the other. Great Dixter nurseries offer a quality service of direct and mail order sales. Most of the plants are raised by the nursery and many can be seen in the fabric of the gardens.

grandeur, as well as adding suitable domestic quarters for an Edwardian household. The Great Hall, constructed of Wealden oak and moved here from nearby Benenden to be incorporated into the building, is one of the largest surviving timber-framed rooms in the country. Many of the original rooms are filled with antique furniture, and there are some very fine examples of 18th-century needlework.

However, it is the gardens that make Great Dixter so special. The imaginative design was laid out by Lutyens and various new features were added, such as the sunken garden, the topiary lawn and the meadow garden. Begun by Nathaniel Lloyd and his wife, Daisy, the gardens were added to by their son Christopher (Christo), who died in January 2006. A regular contributor to gardening magazines, Christopher's lively and inventive approach to horticulture obviously stemmed from working in the gardens. A mixture of formal and wild, there are many rare plant specimens on display here and the gardens are open to the public.

Northiam Station is also on the **Kent & East Sussex Railway**, which was restored in 1990 and has steam trains running through a



Bodiam Castle

pleasant rural landscape for 10 miles between Tenterden in Kent and Bodiam during the summer months. At one time too, the River Rother was navigable to this point and barges were brought upstream to be unloaded at the busy quay. This must have been an ancient port as in the 1820s the remains of a Viking long ship were found in the mud by the river where they must have lain hidden since the 9th century.

BODIAM

10½ miles N of Hastings off the B2244

Castle

Situated in the valley of the River Rother, this attractive village, whose name is pronounced 'Bodjem', is home to one of the most romantic castles in the country. In the 1380s, Richard II granted Sir Edward Dalyngrigge a licence to fortify his manor house in order to defend the upper reaches of the then navigable River Rother. Thankfully, Dalyngrigge chose to interpret the licence liberally and thus one of the last great medieval fortresses in England was built.

Construction on **Bodiam Castle** was begun in 1385, when the technology of castle building was at its peak and before the use of gunpowder. Completely surrounded by a wide moat, the arrow slits, cannon ports and aptly-named murder holes (through which objects were thrown at attackers below) were never used in anger. However, there was a minor skirmish here in 1484, and during the Civil War the castle surrendered without a shot being fired.

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A long period of decay followed in the 17th and 18th centuries until, in 1829, plans to dismantle the castle were thwarted by 'Mad' Jack Fuller of Brightling and a programme of restoration begun. This was started by George Cubitt at the end of the 19th century, and completed by Lord Curzon in 1919. On his death in the 1920s, Lord Curzon left the castle to the National Trust and they continued the restoration programme, including replacing the floors in the towers so that visitors can climb to the top of the battlements and gain a real feel of the security that Bodiam must have offered its inhabitants over the centuries.

GUESTLING THORN

4½ miles NE of Hastings on the A259

With no real village centre and an isolated ancient church found down a small lane, it is hard now to believe that this was probably the meeting place for the important governing body of the Cinque Ports. However, as it lay on neutral territory and was not controlled by any of the ports, it would have been a suitable venue for all the parties concerned.

PETT

4 miles NE of Hastings off the A259

Pett level

Situated on top of a hill, the village overlooks, to the south, **Pett Level**, a vast expanse of drained marshland that now consists of watercourses and meadows. Dotted with small lakes the area provides a suitable sanctuary for wildfowl.

FAIRLIGHT

3 miles NE of Hastings off the A259

Separated from Hastings to the west by its country park, this village is a small settlement of, chiefly, old coastguard cottages. The 19th-

century greystone church occupies a magnificent position overlooking the coast and its tower can be seen for miles out to sea. So much so, in fact, that when the weathervane blew down the villagers were inundated with requests from anxious sailors asking for it to be replaced. In the churchyard, among a number of elaborate tombstones, is the rather neglected final resting place of Richard D'Oyly Carte, the founder of the opera company linked with the works of Gilbert and Sullivan.

To the west of the village lies Fairlight Glen, an attractive place where a gentle stream approaches the sea through a steep sided woodland valley. The Lovers' Seat placed here is said to be in memory of a girl who waited on this spot for her lover to return to her from his ship. Unlike many similar tales, this one had a happy ending as, not only did the girl's lover return from overseas unharmed, but her parents also consented to their marriage.

ST LEONARDS

1 mile W of Hastings on the A259

Gardens

St Leonards was created in the 1820s as a fashionable seaside resort by the celebrated London architect, James Burton, who was also responsible for designing much of Bloomsbury. The centrepiece of Burton's plans was the Royal Victoria Hotel, which, although still standing, is now rather overshadowed by the vast Marina Court, built in the 1930s to resemble an ocean liner. Assisted by his son, Decimus, a talented architect in his own right who later designed the Wellington Arch at Hyde Park Corner, London, James Burton went on to create a model seaside town that was designed to attract wealthy and aristocratic visitors.

SHERWOOD GUEST HOUSE

15 Grosvenor Crescent, St Leonards-on-Sea,
East Sussex TN38 0AA

Tel: 01424 43331

e-mail: jimandjeanette@btinternet.com

website: www.sherwoodhastings.co.uk

Enthusiastic owners Jim and Jeanette Morgan extend a warm and friendly welcome to guests at **Sherwood Guest House**, their home opposite West Marina Gardens, the beach and the sea. West St Leonards-on-Sea Station is nearby, and there's easy access to the main road network. The versatile centrally heated accommodation numbers nine rooms – two singles that share a bathroom, a twin, three doubles (two with en suite facilities) and three en suite family rooms. Travel cots and a high chair are available on request; rooms at the front enjoy sea views. The house has a licensed bar, and a multi-choice full English or Continental breakfast is served in the dining room.

Open all year round, Sherwood House is an ideal choice for a short break, a traditional seaside holiday, a start point for touring the area or a base for a business trip. St Leonards itself is a pleasant spot with some delightful gardens, and its big neighbour Hastings and the area inland are rich in history.



In its heyday, the town's formal social activities took place, behind the Royal Victoria Hotel, in the Assembly Rooms. A classical building, it had a tunnel running between the two so that the hotel could provide suitable refreshments for the wide variety of functions. The Assembly Rooms are now the Masonic Hall. During the Victorian era, this well-organised town even had its own services area. Mercatoria was the tradesmen's quarters and Lavatoria the laundrywomen's.

The delightfully informal **St Leonards Gardens** stand a little way back from the seafront and were originally private gardens maintained by subscriptions from the local residents. Acquired by the local council in 1880, they form a tranquil area of lakes, mature trees and gently sloping lawns that can now be enjoyed by everyone.

In the churchyard of the parish church, which was destroyed by a flying bomb in 1944

and rebuilt in a conservative modern style in the 1960s, lies James Burton's curious tomb - a pyramid vault where he and several other family members are buried.

BULVERHYTHE

3 miles W of Hastings on the A259

A port during the Middle Ages, in the 19th century the noise made by the shingle as it was washed by the tide was called the 'Bulverhythe Bells' and their sound was seen as an indicator of bad weather by local fishermen. Just off the coast, at very low tides, the remains of the wreck of the Dutch East Indiaman *Amsterdam* are clearly visible.

BEXHILL-ON-SEA

5 miles W of Hastings on the A259

De La Warr Pavilion Museum

This small seaside resort became a popular resort in the 1880s thanks in part to the

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De La Warr Pavilion, Bexhill-on-Sea

influential De La Warr family, who lived at the original village of Bexhill, just a mile from the coast. The old Bexhill was an ancient place, with its roots well established in Saxon times, when the land around 'Bexle' was granted to Bishop Oswald of Selsey by Offa, King of Mercia. Fortunately, a good many of the older

buildings have survived the late 19th century development including old weatherboarded cottages, a 14th-century manor house and also the part Norman parish church.

Among the many fine buildings, the **De La Warr Pavilion** stands out. Built in the 1930s by Erich Mendelsohn and Serge Chermayeff, it is a fine example of Art Deco, a style that was becoming fashionable at the time. Looking rather like an ocean-going liner, with its welded steel frame, curves, abundance of glass and terraces, the Grade I listed building is one of the most important modernist buildings in Britain. It was commissioned by Earl de la Warr, Mayor of Bexhill from 1932 to 1934, as a 'peoples' palace by the sea'; recently fully refurbished, it offers a year-round cultural

THE OLD MANSE B&B

18 Terminus Avenue, Bexhill-on-Sea,
East Sussex TN39 3LS

Tel: 01424 216151

e-mail: debbie.march@virgin.net

website: www.theoldmansebexhill.co.uk

Debbie and Eric March welcome Bed & Breakfast guests to **The Old Manse**, their handsome home standing in quiet, mature gardens a short walk from the Bexhill seafront. The letting accommodation consists of two beautifully appointed, spacious rooms named after local parks. The Egerton Suite has en suite facilities, an inviting sofa and plasma TV, and the Polgrave Room is a double (a single bed can be added) with a large adjoining private bathroom. Both have splendidly comfortable beds, luxurious furnishings and a well-stocked beverage tray; wireless internet connection is also available. An excellent breakfast, using organic and fair trade produce whenever possible, is served in the smart south-facing dining room, which opens out onto a covered terrace. The choice includes juices, cereals and preserves, a full English main course or several lighter options, including scrambled eggs & smoked salmon. After a days sightseeing guests can relax and enjoy a selection of teas and homemade cakes. All in all, the Old Manse is a very pleasant, civilised base for discovering 1066 Country and all that Bexhill, its neighbours Hastings and Eastbourne and the Sussex countryside have to offer.



VINTAGE STYLING BY LILLY ROSE

50/52 Sea Road, Bexhill-on-Sea, East Sussex TN40 1JP

Tel: 01424 221444

e-mail: lillyrose60@gmail.com

website: www.lilyroseonline.co.uk

Vintage Retro Neo-Retro

In a double-fronted Victorian building a short walk up from the sea, **Vintage Styling by Lilly Rose** is stocked with an eclectic range of clothing, shoes, jewellery, handbags, textiles and quirky vintage items for the home.

Owner Julia Platt has many years' experience in interior design and fashion, combined with a passion for vintage clothing and fabrics, and acquiring the empty premises in April 2008 gave her the chance to bring her creativity and eye for style to Bexhill. Julia has always had strong views on the environment and on Fair Trade and sees value, quality and desirability in items that many would discard. The shelves are a riot of colour and ideas, a browser's delight, with unusual and quirky items, many beautiful, many salvaged and revived, emphasising Julia's stand against the throwaway society. Prominent among the eye-catching items is her own range of 30s and 40s-inspired trousers in linen, silk and cotton and tops and dresses in vintage fabrics. There are satin pyjamas, antique petticoats, silk and lace lingerie, cushions, kitchenalia, art deco lampshades, obscure paperbacks, locally handmade jewellery, beautiful painted healing stones and so much more – and with the stock changing constantly every visit will uncover new surprises and treasures.



BEXHILL LINENS

57 Western Road, Bexhill-on-Sea,

East Sussex TN40 1DT

Tel: 01424 212125

'For All Your Household Linens'

**Independently owned with old fashioned service.
We can source items the large stores cannot.**

That's the motto of **Bexhill Linens**, which has been owned and run since 2005 by Kerry Roe. Kerry has stocked her shop with bed linen in all sizes and style: blankets, sheets and duvet covers in 100% Egyptian cotton and poly/cotton, duvets and pillows in down or microfibre. But there's much more here than just bed linen, including ready made and made-to-measure curtains, café nets, roller and Venetian blinds, tracks and poles, a wide range of throws, cushions and cushion covers, draught excluders, towels and bath sets, tablecloths, napkins, seat pads, covers for chair backs and arm caps, aprons, tea cosies and lots of useful little gifts.

Bexhill Linens are agents for Sibona, Bronte Blankets and Helena Springfield. Shop hours are 9am to 5pm Monday to Saturday, closed at 1pm on Thursday.



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programme exploring a range of responses to modernism by artists, architects and designers.

For what would appear today to be a relatively conservative resort, Bexhill was the first seaside town to allow mixed bathing on its beaches – in 1900! A very progressive move then, the gently sloping shingle beaches still offer safe and clean bathing, as well as facilities for a range of watersports. The town has

another first: in 1902, it played host to the birth of British motor racing when a race and other speed trials were held here. The huge Edwardian cars – nine-litre engines were not uncommon – flew along the unmade roads around Galley Hill and stopping was a matter of applying the rear wheel brakes, brute force and luck. Among the competitors were some of the best-known names of early motoring,

WA WAA'S WOOL 'N' BITS

22 Parkhurst Road, Bexhill-on-Sea, East Sussex TN40 1DF

Tel: 01424 222488 e-mail: fran@wawaanwools.co.uk

website: www.wawaanwools.co.uk

The small seaside resort of Bexhill has plenty to interest the visitor, including a mecca for anyone who loves knitting. **Wa Waa's Wool 'n' Bits** is stocked with a wide selection of yarns from top producers like Debbie Bliss, Noro, Adriaal and Bergère de France. Fran wants buying yarn to be a pleasurable experience and has introduced a 'Knit 'n' Natter' concept – customers can exchange knitting and crochet tips over a cup of tea or coffee. She also holds regular evening knitting and crochet classes.



ARDEN HOUSE

28 Manor Road, Bexhill-on-Sea, East Sussex TN40 1SP

Tel: 01424 225068 e-mail: info@ardenhousebexhill.co.uk

website: www.ardenhousebexhill.co.uk

Arden House offers a quiet, civilised break in a central location close to the town centre, the seafront and the railway station. In his elegant 1920s detached house owner Peter Lapham has three well-appointed bedrooms, a double en suite, a twin-bedded/family room and a double with private bathroom. All are handsomely furnished with mainly antique furniture and have bath and shower rooms that have been recently modernised with up-to-date facilities. The rooms are also provided with TVs/videos, digital radios, hospitality trays, mineral water and fresh flowers. There is ample parking available to guests. A full and varied breakfast menu, with the emphasis on local produce, is served in the conservatory that overlooks the mature enclosed garden. There's a beautifully relaxing lounge where guests can unwind after a day's sightseeing and plan the next day's activities.

Bexhill has plenty to interest the visitor, including the town museum and the renowned De La Warr Pavilion, a striking 1930s modernist building named after the family who helped to popularise the town as a resort; it offers a year-round programme of exhibitions and events. The surrounding area is rich in both history and breathtaking scenery making it a wonderful place to enjoy a walk. The room rates at Arden House are very reasonable, and discounts are available for stays of three days or longer.



EVE'S BED & BREAKFAST

20 Hastings Road, Bexhill-on-Sea,
East Sussex TN40 2HH

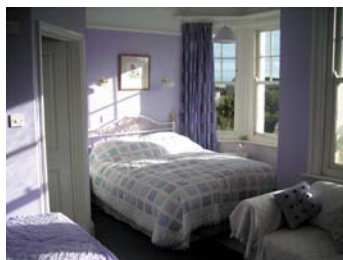
Tel: 01424 733268

e-mail: evesbandb@googlegmail.com

website: www.evesbedandbreakfast.com

Eve's Bed & Breakfast is a beautifully restored Victorian house with masses of character and many original features. It has been run since 2003 by Eve and Barry Davis and is a 4-Star Visit Britain rated guest house. The accommodation comprises four roomy comfortable en suite bedrooms – two doubles and two family rooms, each with its own individual decorative theme. The doubles can be booked as singles. Breakfast is served between 7.30 and 9, and an evening meal is available by arrangement. There's free parking in the drive or on the road right outside the house.

Bexhill, a popular seaside resort, is an excellent choice for a traditional family holiday but is a pleasant place to visit at any time of the year. Among the attractions are the fascinating Bexhill Museum and the striking 1930s De La Warr Pavilion, where year-round exhibitions explore a range of responses to modernism by artists, architects and designers. And the area is rich in scenic and historic appeal, with the story of 1066 and the Battle of Hastings very much to the fore.



including H S Rolls, Herbert Austin and Baron Rothschild. The anniversary of this first race was celebrated here each year until quite recently.

To discover more about the history of this seemingly modern but truly ancient settlement a visit to the **Bexhill Museum** is a must. As well as a range of exhibitions on local wildlife, history, geology and archaeology, there are also dinosaur exhibits and even a Great Crab from Japan.

NINFIELD

7 miles NW of Hastings on the A2109

Ashburnham Park

To the north of this village, straggled along a ridge, lies Ashburnham Place, a redbrick house that is much less impressive than it once was. The house has been subject to many alterations over the years, including the addition of a new

block in the 1960s. However, the landscaped **Ashburnham Park** has survived much as it was conceived by Capability Brown in the 18th century, though a large number of trees were lost in the hurricane of 1987.

Close to the house lies the parish church where there are several monuments to the landowning Ashburnham family. One member of the family, John Ashburnham, was a supporter of the monarchy in the Civil War and he followed Charles I on his last journey to the scaffold in London. Imprisoned in the Tower by Cromwell, the late king's possessions that he was wearing on the day of his death - his shirt, underclothes, watch and the sheet in which his body was wrapped - came into the hands of the Ashburnham family. These relics were kept in the church following the restoration of Charles II to the throne and for many years

historic building museum and heritage historic site scenic attraction flora and fauna

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NOBLES RESTAURANT

17 High Street, Battle,
East Sussex TN33 0AE

Tel: 01424 774422

e-mail: contact@noblesrestaurant.co.uk

website: www.noblesrestaurant.co.uk

'We created **Nobles Restaurant** to offer our customers a modern dining experience. We regularly change our menus to incorporate the best local and seasonal produce available.'

That's the philosophy of owner/head chef Paul Noble, whose 30 years' experience includes spells at such leading establishments as the Goring and Landmark Hotels in London and the Royal Crescent in Bath. He opened his restaurant in June 2007 in a Grade II listed building in the High Street, a stylish, relaxed setting with cream, green and red walls, a modern red-panelled bar and a pleasant sun terrace. Paul's menus delight with such beautifully prepared and presented dishes such as tempura-battered plaice or lemon sole, blue swimmer crab risotto, a fish mixed grill and an amazing pork dish with chargrilled loin, braised belly and roast fillet served with a faggot of black pudding and chorizo. Desserts like red wine poached pear and steamed syrup sponge pudding keep the enjoyment level high to the end, and the fine food is complemented by a well-chosen, well-annotated wine list and friendly, attentive service led by manager Debbie Grant. Nobles is open for lunch and dinner Monday - Saturday.



were believed to offer a cure for scrofula, a glandular disease called King's Evil.

BATTLE

6 miles NW of Hastings on the A2100

Battle Abbey Prelude to Battle Exhibition

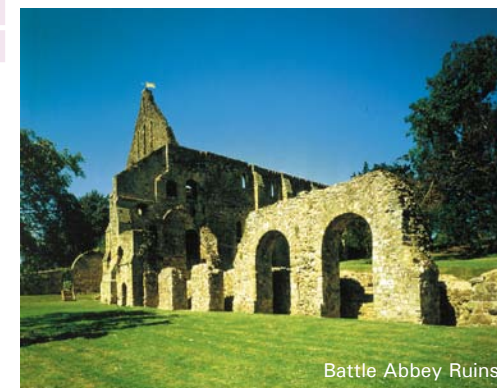
Museum of Local History

Yesterday's World

Battle of Hastings Site

This historic settlement is, of course, renowned as being the site of the momentous battle, on October 14th 1066, between the armies of Harold, Saxon King of England, and William, Duke of Normandy. The Battle of Hastings actually took place on a hill, which the Normans called 'Senlac', meaning 'lake of blood', and even today some believe in the myth that blood

seeps from the battlefield after heavy rain. However, any discolouration of the water is, in fact, due to iron oxide present in the subsoil. The battle was a particularly gruesome affair, even for those times, and it was not until late in the afternoon that Harold finally fell on the field. However, what happened to Harold's



Battle Abbey Ruins

stories and anecdotes famous people art and craft entertainment and sport walks

Battle to Bexhill

Distance: 5.3 miles (8.5 kilometres)

Typical time: 150 mins

Height gain: 60 metres

Map: Explorer 124

Walk: www.walkingworld.com ID:206

Contributor: Jacky Rix-Brown

ACCESS INFORMATION:

Battle is on the main railway line from Hastings to London, and Bexhill is on the railway line between Hastings and Eastbourne. Bus service 395 runs between Battle and Bexhill, and other buses connect each town with Hastings. Parking in Battle may be tricky, but the walk finishes at a large car park in Bexhill, so best advice is to park there, walk to Bexhill Town Hall Square and take the bus to Battle.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

In 1066, William, Duke of Normandy, landed at Pevensey. King Harold marched south to defend his land, but was defeated by William in the Battle of Hastings, which was fought at Senlac Hill. William founded a monastery there, and round it grew the town of Battle. The 1066 Country Walk connects Battle with Pevensey, Rye, Hastings and Bexhill. These five historic towns abound with interesting places to visit. In Battle: abbey, museum, ancient church, pubs and eating places, shops and tourist information centre. In Crowhurst: Fore Wood nature reserve, ancient church, 1000-year-old yew tree. In Bexhill: museum, ancient church, bathing beach, shops, pubs, eating places and tourist information centre.

DESCRIPTION:

Appropriately for the scene of the Battle of Hastings in 1066, the town of Battle is the hub of the 1066 walks. The main walk is from Pevensey to Rye via Battle. This spur takes you from Battle almost due south to the seaside town of Bexhill-on-Sea. It begins on Senlac hill where Battle Abbey marks the place where King Harold fell. But before you start, the town is well worth exploring, with many interesting places to visit.

The walk takes you out through rolling hills, passes through a woodland nature reserve and the sleepy village of Crowhurst with its ancient church and centuries old yew tree.

Having crossed small streams in the early part of the walk you come to the low marshy lands formed by the streams that run into the Coombe Haven. The latter part of the walk takes you through the quiet residential streets of Bexhill. It ends at a car park beside a park in which are a museum and the ruins of a manor.

FEATURES:

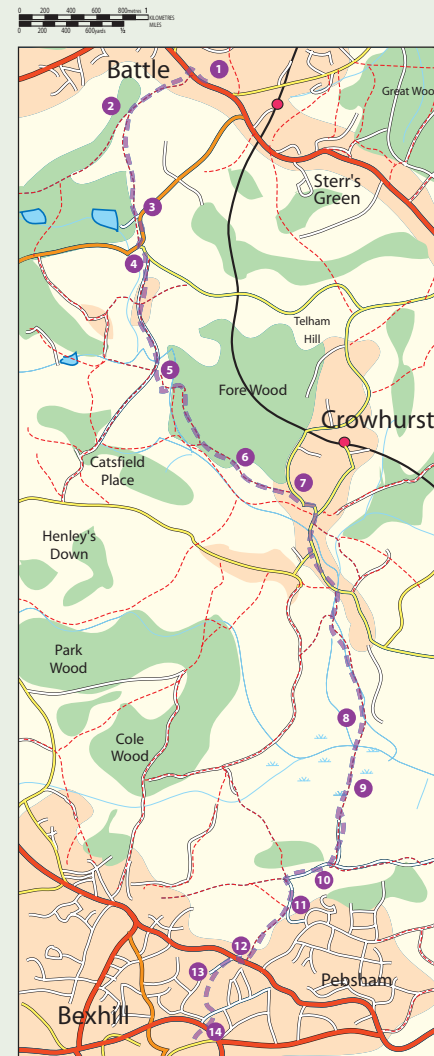
River, sea, toilets, museum, church, castle, wildlife, birds, flowers, great views.

WALK DIRECTIONS:

- 1 | From the front of Battle Abbey, walk west past the Pilgrims Rest restaurant (formerly the Abbey hospice). The road ends in a track and the 1066 walk symbol points the way along the track beside a wood.
- 2 | Where the ways divide be careful as two routes are both 1066 walk! Ignore the right fork to Pevensey and take the left to Bexhill. Initially, this stays alongside the wood. Continue over a hill, across a stream and onwards until you meet a tarmac track near a road.
- 3 | On reaching the track, cross straight over (as shown by arrow of 1066 symbol) and over a stile onto a path that runs between a fence and hedge, parallel to a road. Be careful! The stile from the path leads straight onto a road that can be quite busy, as well as being on a blind bend with another road leading off and a drive alongside – quite a road safety hazard. Cross the main road and go down the side road directly opposite the end of the path.
- 4 | Soon leave the side road (Talham Lane), taking the right fork towards Peppering Eye Farm (private road). Continue past the farm and other houses, ignoring paths to right and left, and go up hill towards woods.
- 5 | At a major junction of paths, near a cottage at the start of woods, go left, then keep right (effectively forking, rather than turning, left) as shown by 1066 symbol. On emerging from wood, turn left downhill with the footpath. (The track ahead here is not a right of way.) Cross the stream and enter another wood. On entering this wood, bend right on the main track, going south. Keep your eyes skinned, this is the Fore Wood Nature Reserve. There was an Elephant Hawk Moth larvae beside the path when we were there. Stay on the main track through the wood.
- 6 | Here the map doesn't fully match the ground. In the wood just past a pond on the left (not on map) you reach a fork in the path. Keep right and go to

the stile at the edge of the wood, where the familiar 1066 symbol directs you forward. Cross the field and bear left up the hill on the obvious track and continue to the road.

7 | Turn right onto the road through Crowhurst village. Here I suggest deviating from the 1066 walk to go through the village. Go right into the church and pass its ancient yew. Go right round the church



and leave the churchyard at the bottom gate and turn right down the hill. Cross the stream and up the other side (on the road) past the millennium memorial garden. Keep left at the fork. Ignore the first footpath on the right. Where the road bends sharp left go right over a stile onto the footpath beside a stream. You are now back on the 1066 way. Continue on this path by the stream for about a kilometre.

8 | Just past the track to Adam's Farm, the main track curves left beside the stream. Turn right, as shown by 1066 sign, to follow a zig-zag path to the bridge. The ground is marshy so keep to the path even though it takes you right then left. There are actually two bridges across adjacent watercourses. From the bridges continue south across the marshland, noting the embankments where a railway line used to cross on a long viaduct.

9 | Approach the stile, which is hidden in a corner under a tree. Once over it, continue up a dry valley beside the hedge with the railway embankment to your left, then on across an open field, rising to cross the course of the old railway. Follow the track up, past Little Worsham farm, where it is more of a road.

10 | At the T-junction turn right and pass a low building with a red tiled roof. After about 400m, at another junction, turn left toward Upper Worsham Farm. Continue about 150m.

11 | Look out a fork, where the main track continues south and another track forks right to the farm. In the angle of the fork, almost hidden by the hedgerow, and just to the right of a telegraph pole, there is the stile. Climb this and continue on a well-walked path across the field, over a stream and on beside a hedge until you come to a busy road, the A2036.

12 | With care, cross the main road directly, and enter an enclosed footpath between gardens. Follow this for about 300m until it meets a road at right angles.

13 | On emerging onto a residential road, do not take the continuation of the path between gardens, but turn left along the pavement (as signed 1066). Continue to the next road junction and turn right (another 1066 sign). Follow this road to its end.

14 | Take the footpath that leaves the end of the road going left up onto a bridge across a very busy trunk road, A259. On the far side of the bridge, the footpath takes you back to the right to the end of another road. This road leads you straight to the car park where the walk ends.

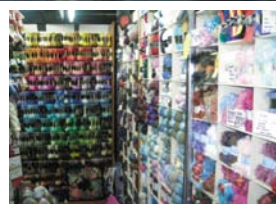
BATTLE WOOL & NEEDLECRAFT SHOP

2 Mount Street, Battle,
East Sussex TN33 0EG
Tel: 01424 775073
e-mail: battlewools@tiscali.co.uk

Battle Wool & Needlecraft Shop is the creation of Shelagh Duffill, who took over an 18th century weatherboarded shop close to the high street in 1989. Since then it has 'grown like Topsy' and Shelagh has the valued assistance of long-serving staff Jenny, Carol, Gill and Lynn, who are always ready with help and advice.

The stock includes a wide range of craft materials, knitting wool, needles, patterns and accessories; embroidery, needlecraft and tapestry supplies; haberdashery; beading supplies, and an enormous variety of craft books. An Aladdin's Cave!

She also runs two clubs: Knit & Knatter, held from 11am to 1pm on the second and fourth Saturdays of the month, and Bead & Banter, 1pm to 3pm on the first and third Tuesdays of the month. Both these clubs meet at the Kings Head pub opposite the shop. There is a large car park close by, its entrance is just a long Mount Street.



body remains a mystery. One story tells how it was buried by his mother at Waltham Abbey in Essex, while another suggests that William the Conqueror wrapped it in purple cloth and buried it on the cliff top at Hastings.

After the battle and subsequent victory, William set about fulfilling his vow that, if he were victorious, he would build an abbey. Choosing the very spot where Harold fell, **Battle Abbey** was begun straight away and was consecrated in 1094. Throughout the Middle Ages, the Benedictine abbey grew increasingly more wealthy and powerful as it extended its influence over wider and wider areas of East Sussex. This period of prosperity, however, came to an abrupt end in 1537 when Henry VIII dissolved the monasteries. The abbey buildings were granted to Sir Anthony Browne and, during a banquet to celebrate his good fortune, a monk is said

to have appeared before Sir Anthony announcing that his family would be killed off by fire and water. The prophecy was forgotten as the family flourished until, some 200 years later, in 1793, the home of Sir Anthony's descendant, Cowdray Hall near Midhurst, burnt to the ground. A few days later another member of the family was drowned in the River Rhine in Germany.

Although little of the early Norman features remain, Battle Abbey has much to offer the visitor. The most impressive part is the Great Gatehouse, a magnificent medieval abbey entrance built around 1338. The **Prelude to Battle Exhibition** introduces visitors to the site and its history. This is followed by a video on the Battle of Hastings. Other on-site attractions are a children's themed play and picnic area and an educational Discovery Centre. Battle Abbey is

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the staging ground for an elaborate Reenactment of the Battle of Hastings every October, which draws hundreds of specialist performers from around Europe. The 1066 Country Walk passes through Battle on its route between Pevensey and Rye.

There is more to Battle than the abbey and the battlefield, and any stroll around the streets will reveal some interesting buildings. The **Battle Museum of Local History** is an excellent place to discover more about the lives of those who have lived in East Sussex through the ages. There is also a replica of the Bayeux Tapestry. Opposite the abbey, and housed in a 600-year-old Wealden hall house and new exhibition centre, is **Yesterday's World**, where 100,000 objects are displayed in authentic room settings covering the period from 1850 to 1950. The exhibits include replicas of a Victorian kitchen, a 1930s country railway station, an English country garden, a grocer's, a chemist's, a wireless shop, a bicycle shop and the 1930s-style Nippy's Tea Room.

SEDLSCOMBE

6½ miles NW of Hastings on the B2244

This former flourishing iron founding settlement is a now a pleasant and pretty village, stretched out along a long sloping green, where the parish pump still stands under a stone building dating from 1900. The interior of the village church, on the northern edge of the village, retains its seating plan of the mid 17th century, which lays out the hierarchy of this rural society in no uncertain terms. The front pew was retained for the Sackville family, with the other villagers seated behind; right at the back, the last few pews were kept for 'Youths and Strangers'.

To the southeast of the village, centred

around an adapted 19th-century country house, is the internationally renowned Pestalozzi Children's Village. Founded in 1959 to house children from Europe who had been displaced during World War II, the centre follows the theories of the Swiss educational reformer, Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi. This influential gentleman believed that young people of all nationalities should learn together, and took into his care orphans from the Napoleonic Wars. The village now takes children from Third World countries, who live here in houses with others from their country under the care of a housemother of the same nationality. After studying for their first degree, the young adults return to their own countries where their newly learnt skills can be put to excellent use in the development of their homelands.

ROBERTSBRIDGE

10 miles NW of Hastings off the A21

Situated on a hillside overlooking the valley of the River Rother, the village's name is a corruption of Rothersbridge. In the 12th century an annexe to a Cistercian Abbey was founded here by the river, and today some of the buildings, now part of a farm, can still be seen. The unusually high pitched roof protects the remains of the abbot's house and other ruins stand in the garden. Robertsbridge has long been associated with cricket and, in particular, the manufacture of cricket bats. The village establishment of Grey Nicholls has made bats for many of the sport's famous names, including W G Grace, who once stayed at The George Inn in the village.

HURST GREEN

12 miles NW of Hastings off the A21

 Merriements Gardens

Set in four acres of gently sloping Weald

farmland, close to the village, **Merriments Gardens**, is a place that never fails to delight its visitors. A naturalistic garden, where the deep borders are richly planted according to the prevailing conditions of the landscape, it nurtures an abundance of rare plants. By contrast, there are also borders that are planted in the traditional manner of an English garden, and colour-themed using a mix of trees, shrubs, perennials and grasses.

Rye

🏠 Lamb House 🏰 Rye Castle Museum
 🏠 Mermaid Inn 🌿 Rye Harbour Nature Reserve
 🏠 Heritage Centre 🏰 Landgate

This old and very picturesque town was originally granted to the Abbey of Fecamp in Normandy, in 1027, and was only reclaimed by

Henry III in 1247. It became a member of the confederacy of the Cinque Ports, joining Hastings, Romney, Hythe, Dover and Sandwich as the ports that were a key part of the south coast's maritime defence, and became a full Head Port in the 14th century. Over the years, this hill top town, which overlooks both the Rother estuary and the Romney Marshes, was subjected to many raids, including one by the French in 1377, which left no non-stone building standing. As a result, the rebuilt town is one of the prettiest in England, with timber-framed houses, some with jettied upper storeys. The harbour suffered the same fate as many others along the south coast as it silted up, and was moved further down the estuary. **Rye Harbour Nature Reserve**, on the mouth of the River Rother, is a large area of sea, saltmarsh, sand and shingle, which supports a wide range of

JEAKE'S HOUSE HOTEL

Mermaid Street, Rye, East Sussex TN31 7ET
 Tel: 01797 222828 Fax: 01797 22623
 e-mail: stay@jeakeshouse.com
 website: www.jeakeshouse.com

Jeake's House Hotel caters admirably for discerning guests who want to capture the sense of history about the town while enjoying high standards of comfort and relaxed hospitality. Guests can look forward the warmest of welcomes from resident owners Jenny Hadfield and Richard Martin, along with their adorable Tonkinese Yum Yum and Monte. Jenny created the B&B from three separate houses on one of the most delightful cobbled streets of Rye. The galleried dining room was once a religious meeting place: its pews now furnish the bar and the old baptismal font still lies under the floorboards. The bedrooms are named after literary and artistic figures associated with the town – Conrad Aiken, Elizabeth Fry, Malcolm Lowry, Radclyffe Hall. Most have en suite bathrooms and they all have telephone, television, drinks tray, fluffy towels and dressing gowns. The day starts with an excellent choice for breakfast, including such very English treats as oak-smoked haddock, kippers and devilled kidneys. Rye is a charming place to visit at any time of the year, and Jeake's House offers discounts for stays of any two nights between November and March (not Christmas or New Year).



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both plant, animal and bird life. One of the most unusual plants is the Least Lettuce, which flowers in late-July and only shows itself in the morning.

Rye's prominent hill top position was a factor in making it a strategically important town from early times. A substantial perimeter wall was built to defend the northern approaches, and one of its four gateways, the **Landgate**, still survives today. This imposing structure is all that remains of the fortifications erected by Edward III in the 1340s.

Found in the heart of this ancient town, Durrant House Hotel is a charming, spacious Georgian residence that played a strategic role in the history of Rye. Built for a local gentleman in the 17th century, the house was, like so much of the town, at the centre of the smuggling trade. However, in the 18th century,



Landgate, Rye

TOWER FORGE FIRES

Tower Forge, Hilders Cliff, Rye, East Sussex TN31 7LD
 Tel: 01797 229447 mob: 07702 849828
 Website: www.towerforge.co.uk

John Little, owner and founder of **Tower Forge Fires**, spent many years dealing in pine furniture supplied to the trade, fire surrounds and woodburners. In 2007 he seized the opportunity to set up a business in these beautiful premises, which were the old forge. The Grade II listed Georgian building is charming and quirky, with tiled roof, exposed white-painted beams and the original bellows on display. The building is unusual and so is what's inside!

Fireplaces and fire surrounds are the main business, with granite or slate hearths and pine surrounds can be made to individual requirements in the workshop. Also in stock are multi-fuel stoves, tables, pine settles, garden benches and smaller items ranging from tiles, fire baskets, firedogs, coal scuttles and companion sets to mirrors, wall plaques, toy boxes and cast-iron railway signs. Deliveries can be made within a 100-mile area. Tower Forge is open every day from 10 to 5 in summer, 11 to 4 in winter.



THE QUEENS HEAD HOTEL

19 Landgate, Rye, East Sussex TN31 7LH

Tel: 01233 770394

Situated by one of the ancient gateways on Rye's perimeter wall, the **Queens Head Hotel** is a great place for a drink, a meal or a well-earned break. It was first licensed in 1636 and has been part of Rye's hospitality scene ever since. Formerly called the Two Brewers, it acquired its present name because it stood on the site occupied by Queen Elizabeth I and her court when they came to inspect the town's defences.

Since December 2005 it has been in the excellent care of Claire and Stephen Clare. In the three bars of this atmospheric free house a fine selection of real ales and lagers is always on tap; the public bar is a favourite local meeting place with a convivial ambience, a pool table, darts, pinball, juke box and big-screen TV for the major sporting events. A good choice of bar snacks – eggs Balmoral, hot buttered prawns, peppered chicken strips – is served lunchtime and evening, while in the 60-seat restaurant a full à la carte menu proposes such delights as plaice on the bone, sea bass, sizzling curries and juicy steaks.

For guests taking a break to discover the many attractions of Rye and the surrounding area, the Queens Head has five comfortable letting rooms, four with en suite facilities, one with a four-poster. Bar hours are 11 to 11 (Friday and Saturday to midnight, Sunday from 12). Food is served from 12 to 3 and 6 to 9 (all day Sunday with traditional roasts).



HAYDEN'S

108 High Street, Rye, East Sussex TN31 7JE

Tel: 01797 224501

e-mail: haydens_in_rye@mac.com

website: www.haydensinrye.co.uk

Hayden's is a small, family-run, environmentally friendly Bed & Breakfast establishment that also incorporates a coffee shop and restaurant. In the heart of Rye, it offers a comfortable, luxurious setting in which guests can relax and unwind, whether it's for a short break, a coffee or a meal. The four guest suites, the Red Room, the Chocolate Room, Kingfisher Room and the Silver Room, are large and very comfortable, with en suite bathrooms and seating areas. The restaurant is open for evening meals on Friday and Saturday throughout the year. The chef seeks out the finest local, seasonal and (where possible) organic produce for the menus, which are traditional English with a contemporary twist. Local produce is highlighted by Romney Marsh lamb, Rye Bay plaice and organic beef pies made in Udimore.

Hayden's is the ideal base for exploring the many attractions of Rye, including the Museum, the Heritage Centre, the Mermaid Inn, Lamb House and Rye Harbour Nature Reserve.



the property was bought by Sir William Durrant, a friend of the Duke of Wellington, and gained respectability. During the Napoleonic Wars, it was an operations centre for the defence of the Channel port and a relay station for carrier pigeons bringing news of the victory at Waterloo.

The town grew prosperous in the late medieval period due to the activities of its fishermen and the merchant fleets that traded with continental Europe. But the loss of the harbour through silting denied Rye the chief means of earning a living and the town fell into decline. Visitors today very much benefit from this turn of events as Rye still retains a large number of medieval buildings that would undoubtedly have made way for new structures if the town had been more prosperous.

Naturally, being a seafaring town, there is

an abundance of old inns, and the **Mermaid Inn**, an early timbered building down a cobbled street, is one of the most famous. Rebuilt in 1420 after the devastating French raid over 40 years before, the inn was the headquarters of the notorious Hawkhurst Gang in the 18th century. The most infamous band of smugglers on the south coast in their day, they reputedly always sat with their pistols close to hand in case of a sudden raid by the excisemen.

Another interesting building is a handsome Georgian residence **Lamb House**, built by a local wine merchant, James Lamb, in 1723 and now in the care of the National Trust. The family was well known in the town and not without a certain influence. Not long after the house was built, the family were involved in an infamous murder when, in 1743, a local butcher named Breads killed James Lamb's



THE GOLDEN FLEECE

16 Lion Street, Rye, East Sussex TN31 7LB

Tel: 01797 224271

Website: www.thegoldenfleece.co.uk

Since 1973, the **Golden Fleece** has been selling top-quality clothing and accessories for town

and country use to the local community and to visitors to Rye from all over the world. The Fassum family, members of the Guild of Master Craftsmen, have developed the shop's own unique style of design and have earned a far-reaching reputation for quality, reliability, service and value for money. They are main agents for **Barbour**, makers of the famous waxed cotton jackets and a comprehensive range of other clothes for town and country wear in styles that prove that good design never dates. The single-storey double-fronted shop stocks many other well-known brands for gentlemen and ladies, including Regatta, Alice Collins, Pomodoro, Emreco, Poppy, Glencroft, Peter James, Lebeck and Concept UK. The shop stands just off the main high street by the The George Hotel, close to the church, the town hall and the charming cobbled streets of Rye.



brother-in-law by mistake. His intention had been to murder James, then the town's Lord Mayor, against whom he held a grudge. Tried and found guilty, Breads was hanged on a gibbet and his bones were stolen to be used as a cure for rheumatism. Only his skull remains and it can be seen, along with the gibbet, in Rye Town Hall.

More recently, Lamb House was the home of the novelist, Henry James. He saw it in 1896 and fell in love with it; he rented it for a while, then bought it for £2,000 and lived in it until his death in 1916. Many of his personal possessions are on show in the house, including his massive French writing desk and a painting of him by Burne-Jones. Upstairs is the panelled bedroom where George I spent a night in 1726 on his return from the continent to open Parliament. A storm drove his ship onto Camber Sands and James Lamb, the



Ypres Tower, Rye



FORGET-ME-NOT

72 Church Square, Rye, East Sussex TN31 7HF

Tel: 01797 222330

e-mail: sarah@forgetmenotrye.com

website: www.forgetmenotrye.com

Forget-Me-Not is a delightful lifestyle and giftware shop in a fine old corner building opposite St Mary's Church. Sarah Hastings, who acquired the business in April 2008, has lost no time in making her mark, sourcing unusual

and interesting items from new places and choosing as far as possible goods made in England. The constantly changing stock includes a wide variety of clothing, including hand-made baby clothes and ladies nightwear, bedding, quilts, cushions and throws and cushion covers, curtains and ties, hangers and hanging organisers, table cloths and table mats, coasters and napkins and napkin rings, food covers, jugs and candle snuffers, lampshades, vintage tins and soft toys. There are gemstones and handmade bracelets and necklaces, oils, soaps and lotions, foam baths and bath salts, hand creams and moisturising creams. For art-lovers, Forget-Me-not keeps a selection of limited edition prints featuring, among others, Emma Ball, Claire Davies, Sheila Gill, Maureen Jordan and Patricia Hall. Customers who can't get to the can shop online by way of the excellent website.



Mayor at the time, offered him shelter. Henry James was also responsible for laying out the gardens and he invited many of his friends to the house, including H G Wells, Rudyard Kipling, G K Chesterton and Joseph Conrad. The literary associations do not end there as, in the 1920s, the property was leased to E F Benson, who is best remembered for his Mapp and Lucia novels, which include descriptions of the town, thinly disguised as 'Tilling'. Benson was also for a time the Mayor of Rye. (The cartoon character Captain Pugwash was also conceived in Rye.) One of the town's oldest surviving buildings is Ypres Tower, which forms part of the **Rye Castle Museum**, the other part being in East Street. The collection concentrates on the town's varied past and includes exhibitions on smuggling, law and order and the iron industry. On the second site, there is an old fire engine, pottery made in the town, nautical equipment and much more that tells the full history of Rye. Combining the traditional craft of model-making with the latest electronic techniques, the **Rye Heritage Centre** presents a model of the town, complete with light and sound, that transports visitors back through the ages.

Around Rye

PLAYDEN

1 mile N of Rye off the A268

Royal Military Canal

This smart hamlet has a rather battered old 12th-century church, with a shingle broach spire. Inside there is an unusual memorial to a 16th-century Flemish brewer, Cornelius Roetmans. A refugee from Spanish persecution in the Low Countries, he settled in

the area along with a community of Huguenots and carried on his trade as a brewer. After his death, he was remembered in the church by a memorial slab carved with beer barrels and mash forks - the tools of the brewing trade. In the chancel is a memorial to the men of *HMS Barham*, sunk in 1941. The country lanes to the northeast of Playden lead to the start of the **Royal Military Canal**, an unusual waterway built in 1804 as part of the defences against a possible invasion by Napoleon. A 20-mile towpath between Rye and Hythe offers easy and attractive walking along the fringes of the now drained Walland and Romney Marshes.

CAMBER

3 miles SE of Rye off the A259

Camber is a small village lying on the western edge of Romney Marsh and is famous for its beach of golden sands. It was known as a good place for smugglers - goods were landed on Camber beach as the dunes provided cover for those taking part. The Excise built a Watch House in the early 1800s, which is now adjacent to the Lydd Ranges. The village has seen a lot of development since World War II with the building of bungalows on the sand dunes.

WINCHELSEA

2½ miles SW of Rye on the A259

Camber Castle Court Hall Museum

Though Winchelsea lies only a short distance from Rye, there could be no greater contrast. While Rye is a place of tourist bustle, Winchelsea is a quiet place that time seems to have forgotten. An ancient Cinque Port and one of the smallest towns in England, Winchelsea lay several miles to the south until the 13th century. This site was engulfed by the

SUTTON'S FISH SHOP

Sea Road, Winchelsea, East Sussex TN36 4LA
Tel: 01797 226261

Since 1970 Hugh Sutton has been running the shop that has borne the family name since 1932. Hugh's father created the business, selling the fish he caught, the game he shot, the vegetables he grew and the preserves and honey (from their own bees) that his mother made.

Fish and shellfish caught in Rye Bay are still the mainstay of the shop, on sparklingly fresh display behind the cheerful red and white striped blind. Dover and lemon sole, cod, plaice, skate, crab and scallops are among the favourites that bring customers from many miles around. Sutton's also stocks a selection of French fish soup and bisques. Seasonal game is another speciality, including wild boar (steaks and sausages), venison, rabbit, hare, wild duck, pheasant, partridge and quail.

Locally grown fruit and vegetables are on show outside at the front of the shop, and there's always a selection of pure fruit juices. Customers can always expect a warm, friendly welcome at Sutton's, which is open all day, every day including bank holidays and Sunday. Closed Tuesday.



J WICKENS FAMILY BUTCHER

Castle Street, Winchelsea, East Sussex TN36 4HU
Tel: 01797 226287

Jamie Wickens was born in Uckfield and served his apprenticeship there before establishing **J Wickens Family Butcher** here in Winchelsea in 1987.

Everything is of the very best quality, and Jamie is known for many miles around for his speciality sausages. They come in about two dozen varieties and among the favourites are pork & leek, pork & sage, pork & apple, venison & apple, beef with tomato & onion and lamb with rosemary & garlic. Traditional cuts of Sussex beef are beautifully dressed and presented in the long display case, along with prime pork and Romney Marsh lamb. One of the major suppliers of the shop is Elms Farm in Winchelsea, where Stephen and Anne Rumsey produce top-quality beef, lamb and pork. The chickens are organically raised, and Jamie is a licensed dealer in game, selling pheasant, partridge, mallard, pigeon, woodcock, venison, wild boar, hare and rabbit in their seasons. Other items not to miss are traditionally cured bacon, superb beef, pork and game pies and a choice of 40+ English and Continental cheeses.

J Wickens Family Butcher is a worthy recipient of many local and national awards from the National Federation of Meat Traders as well as being numbered among Rick Stein's Food heroes. The shop is open every day except Sunday.



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Strand Gate, Winchelsea

sea after a series of violent storms. The 'new' Winchelsea stands on a hill and was built to a rigid grid pattern laid out by Edward I. The ambitious rectangular plan of 39 squares - a feature that can still be seen some 700 years later - became the home of about 6,000

inhabitants, nearly 10 times the number of residents here today.

For a short time in the 14th century, Winchelsea prospered as the most important Channel port, but nature took its toll and the town lost its harbour. As a result of the Black Death and constant raids by the French, the town declined into almost complete obscurity. It was not until the mid 19th century that a successful recovery plan was put together to restore the town to something like its former grandeur

and historic beauty.

Winchelsea Court Hall Museum

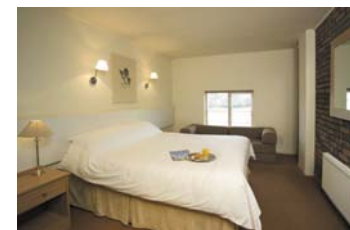
illustrates events that led to the town's prosperity, culminating in it being made a Head Port of the confederation of Cinque Ports, and its gradual decline. The museum is

THE LODGE AT WINCHELSEA

Hastings Road, Winchelsea, East Sussex TN36 4AD
Tel: 01797 226211 Fax: 01797 226312

e-mail: juneannah58@hotmail.com
website: www.thelodgeatwinchelsea.co.uk

Winchelsea is a very pleasant little town, an ancient Cinque Port, and **The Lodge at Winchelsea** is an ideal base for exploring 1066 Country and the numerous other local attractions. Three miles from Rye, in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, the heart of the Lodge is a superbly converted Sussex barn. The Bed & Breakfast accommodation offered by owner Martin Nathan and manager Julie Hannah is quiet, comfortable and stylishly decorated and furnished. In 2007 eight new ground-floor rooms were added and all 20 rooms on the first floor were completely refurbished. The rooms are a mix of doubles, triples and family rooms, all with en suite facilities, TV, tea/coffee tray and wireless internet connection. The Lodge is an excellent place for a meal, with prime local produce providing a real taste of Sussex. The specials menu changes regularly to highlight what's best in season, and Sunday brings a popular lunchtime carvery. It's also a great place for meeting friends and socialising, and the Piano Bar is well stocked with real ales, other beers, cider, wines and spirits. A pianist plays from 6 o'clock until late on Thursday, Friday and Saturday evenings. The Lodge caters well for functions and celebrations, and the Piano Bar and Restaurant can seat up to 65 for dinner and 100 for a buffet.



housed in one of the oldest surviving buildings, close by the ruins of a 14th-century Franciscan Friary.

Just to the east of the town lies **Camber Castle**, a fine example of the coastal defences built by Henry VIII in the 16th century. The fortress, reached by a walk across the sands, seems rather far inland today, but when it was built, it held a commanding position on a spit of land on one side of the Rother estuary.

BECKLEY

4½ miles NW of Rye on the B2088

When Alfred the Great died in 900, he referred to lands at 'Beccanleah' in his will and there was certainly a Saxon church here. A medieval building with a Norman tower now stands on the site. Inside there are two grotesque stone heads with leaves protruding from the mouths that were known as 'jack in the greens'. On still nights, it is said that Sir Reginald Fitzurse can be heard riding furiously to the church for sanctuary after taking part in the murder of Thomas à Becket.

Brighton and the East Sussex Downs

This coastal area of East Sussex centres around the thriving resorts of Brighton and Eastbourne. Both began life as quiet fishing villages but, following Royal visits, they developed rapidly at the beginning of the 19th century. Brighton, the favoured holiday resort of the Prince Regent, is best known for the lavish Royal Pavilion, a splendid monument to exotic architecture and design. However, its Lanes, the narrow streets and alleyways of the old village, are a real treat for antique lovers.

Eastbourne has none of the grand

architecture of its rival. Carefully planned and laid out by William Cavendish, the 7th Duke of Devonshire, this is a genteel resort close to the spectacular chalk cliffs of Beachy Head.

The county town of Lewes dates back to Saxon times and it benefited greatly just after the Norman Conquest, when both a great castle and the important St Pancras Priory were founded here by the Norman William de Warenne. Another coastal village, Pevensey, was the landing place of William, Duke of Normandy, and his army in 1066.

Although many of the inland towns and villages have their roots in Saxon England they are also linked with artists and writers of the 19th and 20th centuries. Virginia Woolf and her husband Leonard lived at Monk's House, Rodmell, until Virginia's death in 1941, while her sister, Vanessa Bell, maintained her eccentric household at nearby Charleston, in Selveston. The Elms at Rottingdean was the home of Rudyard Kipling until his success as a novelist forced him to move to a more secluded location in 1902, and the village of Ditchling was home to a group of artists and craftsmen at the centre of the Arts and Crafts Movement.

Brighton

 Royal Pavilion  The Dome  Preston Manor

 Metropole Hotel  Sea Life Centre

 Church of St John  Toy & Model Museum

 Stanmer Park & Rural Museum  Theatre Royal

 Booth Museum of Natural History  Pier

Before Dr Richard Russell of Lewes came here in the 1750s, this was an obscure little south coast fishing village called Brighthelmstone, dating back to medieval times. Dr Russell, a believer in the benefits of sea air and water, published a dissertation on 'The Use of Sea

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TERRACES BAR & GRILL

Unit 8, Madeira Drive, Brighton, East Sussex BN2 1PS

Tel: 01273 570526

e-mail: sales@the-terraces.co.uk

Showcasing the best of British cooking with some Mediterranean influences, **Terraces Bar & Grill** enjoys an unbeatable setting on the seafront just along from the Pier. There are truly stunning views from the terrace, where customers can enjoy anything from a glass of wine or a cup of perfect Segafredo coffee to a snack or a full meal. Light breakfast are served until noon, and the main menu runs from small plates – super sandwiches, mezze platter, baked camembert, chorizo with a poached egg and salad – to seafood dishes (traditional fish & chips, oysters, fricassee) and meaty main courses typified by gourmet burgers, lamb chops, corn-fed chicken and rib eye steak. Sunday lunch brings a selection of roasts served with all the trimmings. A spacious, self-contained area on a lower level is available for hire for parties, wedding receptions, formal dinners, corporate events, product launches or business meetings – free wireless broadband is on hand. Options run from informal buffets to sit-down meals, and the area can cater for groups of 10 to 240. Terraces Bar & Grill (TBG) is open from 11am - 11pm (Sun 10am - 10.30pm).



Water in Diseases of the Glands. Russell set about publicising the village as a place for taking sea air, bathing and even drinking sea water in order to gain relief from ailments and diseases. He also promoted the medicinal virtues of the mineral waters of St Ann's Well at Hove. By the time of the Prince Regent's first visit to the village, at 21 years of age in 1783, it was already becoming a popular place, but still remained concentrated around the old village of Brighthelmstone. The effect of royal patronage on the village was extraordinary and the growth here was rapid. By the time of the Prince Regent's last visit to Brighton, some 47 years after his first, the place had been completely transformed.

The Prince Regent, later to become George IV, was so taken with the resort that he first took a house here and then built his extraordinary **Royal Pavilion** (see panel on page 191). The small farmhouse on the site was

transformed in 1787 by architect Henry Holland into a neoclassical building with a dome and rotunda. (Henry Holland was a partner of Capability Brown and married his daughter.) John Nash was employed to rebuild and enlarge Holland's building in a magnificent Indian style. Based on a maharajah's palace, complete with minarets, onion-shaped domes and pinnacles, the Royal Pavilion has been the best-known Brighton landmark for almost 200 years. The interior of the palace is one of the most lavish examples of Regency chinoiserie in the world. The detail in the decoration is astonishing, with imitation bamboo everywhere. Even the kitchens have flamboyant cast-iron palm trees.

The gardens surrounding this seaside pleasure palace are also the work of John Nash, though one ancient oak tree here is said to be the one in which Charles II hid after the Battle of Worcester. Although this is an unlikely claim,

sixtyseven

67 Dyke Road, Brighton, East Sussex BN1 3JE

Tel: 01273 735314

e-mail: jo@shopatsixtyseven.co.uk

website: www.shopatsixtyseven.co.uk

On the corner of Dyke Road and Clifton Road, in the Seven Dials district of north Brighton, **sixtyseven** is a treasure trove of gorgeous gifts, gift wrap, cards, toys, jewellery, lighting, chocolates and furniture. Owner Joanna Weeks is following in the footsteps of her grandparents, who ran a similar shop in Southsea. She sources the great majority of her stock in the UK, with much of it the work of talented Sussex craftspeople. Among the impressive variety of goods on display – the choice changes all the time – are bags and satchels by Moth and Neoma; jewellery by Ridley & Dowse; organic bath and baby products by local firm Roots & Wings; candles, wooden toys, games and colouring books; flower presses; tea towels and mugs by Pearl & Earl; scarves; cards by local artist Shyama Ruffell: Momiji dolls; Ercol furniture from the 50s and 60s; and delectable chocolates made by Chocoholly of Hove. There's no better place to browse and find a treat or a special gift than sixtyseven, which is generally open from 10.30 to 5.30 Tuesday to Saturday.



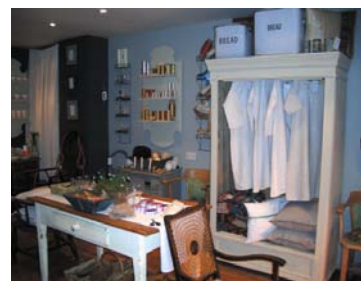
ARAMAS INTERIORS

86 Dyke Rd, Brighton, East Sussex BN1 3JD

Tel: 01273 711009

e-mail: gemma851@btinternet.com

Dyke Rd lies at the heart of the Seven Dials area of Brighton, a mile north of the city centre at a point where seven streets meet. The area is filled with fabulous places to eat, but anyone seeking out the best in lifestyle items, home ware and collectibles with a period feel to the place to head for is ARAMAS at number 86. Behind it's newly signed frontage this fascinating place is filled with desirable objects all carefully sourced. Objects both large and small at prices to suit all pockets. The owner of the shop is Gemanica St Clair, whose career started in a family business in Oxford specialising in Antique Furniture and French polishing. Furniture is very much still at the heart of ARAMAS, focusing on antique chairs, along with handmade Vintage Fabric soft furnishings. Cushions, Bolsters, Blankets. ARAMAS also offers a hand embroidered monogram service as well as a traditional upholstery service. All gifts purchased are wrapped beautifully at no extra cost. Stock changes regularly and among the smaller items are perfect pampering treats, quality scented candles, handcrafted soaps and organic essential bath oils.



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the tree certainly predates Nash's splendidly laid-out grounds. Beginning life as the Royal Pavilion's stables, and once housing a riding school, **The Dome**, dated 1805, is now a superb concert hall. Another part of the complex has been converted into the **Brighton Museum and Art Gallery**. Opened in 1873, this outstanding museum houses collections of both national and international importance. Among the marvellous displays are Art Nouveau and Art Deco furniture, decorative art, non-western art and culture, archaeology from flint axes to silver coins, paintings by both British and European masters, musical instruments, costume and design.

The creation of the Royal Pavilion and the almost permanent residence of the Prince Regent in the resort certainly sealed Brighton's fate as a sought-after seaside location and the town rapidly expanded - westwards until it met up with Hove, and eastwards to Kemp Town, laid out by Thomas Reid Kemp, a local lord of the manor in the 1820s. Another notable feature of Brighton is Royal Crescent, an early

example of town planning. Built in the late 1790s, this discreet row of little houses was built to face the sea rather than have their backs turned towards the coast as was the norm at the time.

For many visitors to Brighton a trip to The Lanes, the warren of narrow streets that represent what is left of the old village, is a must. Today, these tiny, twisting alleys are the preserve of smart boutiques, antique shops and restaurants. The old Parish Church standing outside the old part of Brighton is shown in ancient pictures as an isolated building. It has long since been engulfed. In the churchyard is a curious gravestone to Phoebe Hessel. Born in 1713, she served in the army as a private and, after her retirement, she came to Brighton where she died, aged 108, in 1821.

Another church worth visiting is the Roman Catholic **Church of St John** in Kemp Town. However, it is not for any ancient feature that visitors make their way here but to see the last resting place of Mrs Fitzherbert, who died in 1837. Maria Anne Fitzherbert, twice a widow,

Royal Pavilion

Brighton, Sussex BN1 1EE

Tel: 01273 290900

website: www.royal.pavilion.co.uk

Indian architecture contrasts with interiors inspired by China in this breathtaking Regency palace. Built for King George IV, the Royal Pavilion was also used by William IV and Queen Victoria. Originally a farmhouse, in 1787 architect Henry Holland created a neo-classical villa on the site. It was transformed into Indian style by John Nash between 1815 and 1823. A £10 million restoration scheme has returned the palace to its full Regency splendour with lavish decorative schemes. The centrepiece of the Banqueting Room is a huge chandelier held by a silvered dragon illuminating a table laid with dazzling Regency silver-gilt. The Music Room is equally stunning, with lotus-shaped lanterns hanging from a high domed glazed ceiling.



was secretly married to the future George IV in London in 1785. They honeymooned in Brighton, where Mrs Fitzherbert took a house, said to be linked to the pavilion by an underground passage. Their marriage had to remain a secret as it was completely in breach of the Royal Marriages Act. Eventually, the Prince Regent, who could not acknowledge her publicly without renouncing the throne, broke off their affair in 1811.

The Church of St Bartholomew has one of the highest naves in the country, and the Church of St Michael contains fine windows by Burne-Jones, Webb, Morris and Kempe.

Just a short distance from the seafront lies **Preston Manor**, a delightful old house, now restored and refurbished in the style of an Edwardian gentleman's residence. Beginning life as a 13th-century manor house, set within beautifully landscaped grounds, the manor was rebuilt in the 1730s and much extended in 1905. Laid out on four floors, there are some 20 rooms to explore, from the attics and nursery on the top floor to the servants' quarters, kitchens and butler's pantry 'below stairs'. The dining room is dominated by a case filled with an amazing collection of



Preston Manor, Brighton

Buddhist Chinese lions. Within the pleasant grounds are a walled garden, a pets' cemetery and a croquet lawn.

Another lesser known place of interest in Brighton is **Stanmer Park and Rural Museum**, a 200-acre country park centred around the fine early 18th-century mansion that was once the home of the Earls of Chichester. The park now contains a large municipal nursery as well as glasshouses where flowers are grown. Behind Stanmer House is a unique collection of agricultural implements, including blacksmith's and wheelwright's tools. The late 17th-century well house, which was designed to supply water to the house and was originally powered by oxen, can also be seen here.

For those wishing to take a step back into

PARDON MY FRENCH!

15 St George's Road, Kemp Town Village, Brighton,
East Sussex BN2 1EB Tel: 01273 694479

e-mail: sales@pardonmyfrench.co.uk

website: www.pardonmyfrench.co.uk

Pardon my French! – a quirky shop in the Kemp town area of Brighton. Hands-on owners Stephanie Moss and Sandra Lopez have filled the floors, walls, tables and shelves with a cornucopia of French goods, from stylish ladies' fashion wear to wall signs, shopping trolleys, candles, cake stands, baby beakers and plates, bath towels, fragrances and aromatic sprays. Other countries get a look-in with the likes of German cushions and quilts, Italian confectionery and tableware from Denmark.



their childhood, the **Brighton Toy and Model Museum**, under the arches of Brighton station, is the place to go. A fascinating display of trains, dolls, teddy bears, planes and much more will delight all members of the family - young and old. The world of natural history can also be discovered in Brighton, at the **Booth Museum of Natural History**, the creation of Edward Booth, a Victorian ornithologist. His original collection of some 500 species of bird, assembled between 1865 and 1890, has been extended by displays of butterflies, fossils and animal skeletons. The Sea Life Centre concentrates very much on live creatures and has the longest underwater viewing tunnel in Europe. The tunnel winds through a series of underwater habitats where both fresh and sea water creatures can be viewed. Although this is an up-to-the-minute centre, some of the original 19th-century display cases are still in use in this Victorian building. Few visitors to the city leave without taking a walk along **Brighton Pier**. The Palace Pier, one of the most famous in the land, was opened in 1901. It was designed by R St George Moore and built by James and Arthur Mayoh to replace Samuel Brown's Chain Pier, the world's first pleasure pier, which was the terminus of the cross-channel ferry service to Dieppe; it was destroyed by a storm in 1896 while awaiting demolition. A plaque on the sea wall below Marine Parade marks the site of this pier, and its two entrance kiosks, rescued from the storm, now flank the land end of the present pier. The **Theatre Royal**, opened in 1807, is one of the country's best and loveliest provincial theatres. The arts certainly flourish in Brighton, and the annual Brighton Festival, held each May, is one of the largest in the country. A popular feature on the seafront is the Volks railway, the first electric railway in the country. It was designed by Magnus Volk, Brighton Corporation's

Electrical Engineer, and opened on August Bank Holiday 1883. It runs for about a mile from the Aquarium (close to the Pier) to Black Rock and the Marina, the largest in Europe. Volk was also responsible for bringing the telephone service to Brighton.

Naturally, Brighton also has a wealth of places to stay, from small bed and breakfast establishments to splendid five star hotels. Side by side on the front, are two superb hotels that symbolise Victorian holiday luxury, the white-painted **Grand Hotel**, built in the 1860s, and its neighbour, the **Metropole Hotel**, completed in 1890. In 1896 it marked the finish of the Emancipation Run, celebrating the abolition of the rule that every motorised vehicle had to be preceded by a man carrying a red flag. In commemoration the London to Brighton Veteran Car Run takes place each year, on the first Sunday in November.

Around Brighton

HOVE

W of Brighton on the A259

13 Brunswick Place Museum & Art Gallery

British Engineerium Foredown Tower

Nestling at the foot of the downs, and now joined to Brighton, Hove is a genteel resort with Regency squares - such as Brunswick and Palmeira - and broad tree-lined avenues. An interesting project that is still in progress is the restoration of **13 Brunswick Place**, a Regency house dating from 1820. The work is being carried out by a group of enthusiasts called the Regency Town House. A former fishing village, major development of Hove took place in the early 19th century when the seafront was built with its distinctive terraces. As well as the usual attractions of a seaside

IGIGI HOME-WEAR

37A Western Road, Hove, East Sussex BN3 1AF

Tel: 01273 775257

e-mail: igigi@igigigeneralstore.com website: www.igigigeneralstore.com

igigi General Store is a beautiful and inspirational space filled with an eclectic mix of vintage and antique pieces. The furniture ranges from simple dining chairs and tables to Victorian reading and nursing chairs upholstered locally in hand woven linens.

The store also houses ranges such as hand-blown glassware from Belgium by Henry Dean, silver plated classic cutlery from France and ceramics from across the globe including Royal Staffordshire and Wonkywear from South Africa and much more. Please visit our website for more info and register for up dates (see above).

Monday to Saturday 10am to 6pm & Sunday 11am to 4.30pm



IGIGI CAFE

31A Western Road, Hove, East Sussex BN3 1AF

Tel: 01273 775257

e-mail: igigi@igigigeneralstore.com website: www.igigigeneralstore.com

The **igigi cafe** sits above the General Store at the top of the magnificent sweeping staircase. Whether you enjoy a healthy stew or soup of the day the cafe really does cater for all tastes. For breakfast dippy eggs and hot buttered soldiers are a favorite whilst the Welsh rarebit served with fresh green salad and roasted tomatoes speaks for itself. While our organic cream teas and homemade cakes are second to none.

Special 'Two for Tea' vouchers can be purchased for that special occasion. Freshly brewed Monmouth coffee is served all day.

Monday to Saturday 10am to 5pm & Sunday 11am to 4.30pm



IGIGI WOMENS BOUTIQUE

37 Western Road, Hove, East Sussex BN3 1AF

Tel: 01273 734160

e-mail: igigi@igigigeneralstore.com

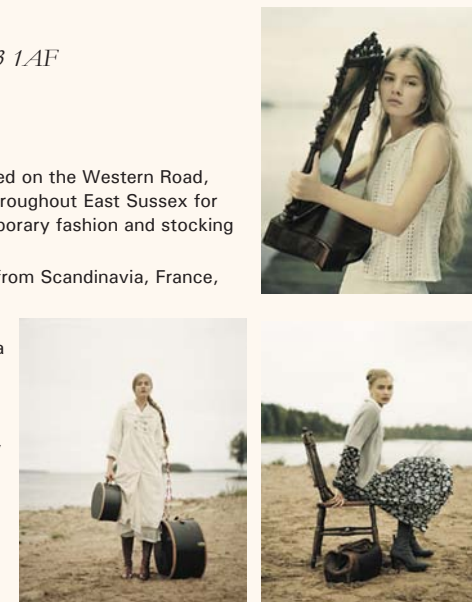
website: www.igigigeneralstore.com

igigi Women's boutique has been established on the Western Road, Hove for over 10 years. It is well known throughout East Sussex for carrying a fine collection of classic contemporary fashion and stocking a wide range of sizes from 8 to 18.

We specialise in niche designer brands from Scandinavia, France, Italy and the UK. The collections include soft palettes of natural earthy colours which change with the seasons. Every piece has a hidden twist which brings a contemporary feel to our great classics.

Our experienced staff will help you create the perfect wardrobe, for both every day or evening wear. An in-house tailoring service is also available.

Monday to Saturday 10am to 6pm & Sunday 11am to 4.30pm



IGIGI MENSWEAR

31A Western Road, Hove, East Sussex BN3 1AF

Tel: 01273 775257

e-mail: igigi@igigigeneralstore.com

website: www.igigigeneralstore.com

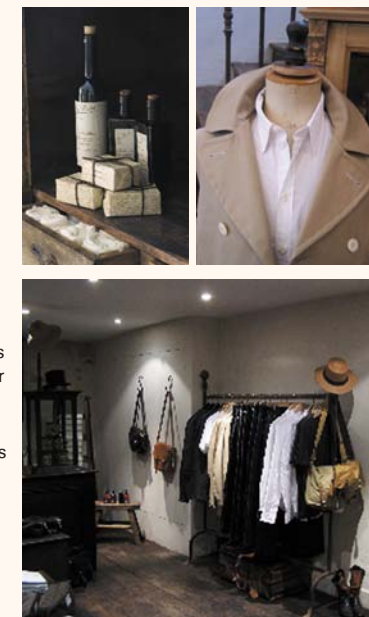
The long awaited menswear collection has finally arrived in the basement at the General Store.

The quirky emporium has a dark and masculine feel to it making it a great setting for the collection. Classic antique chairs and vintage pieces mingle with jackets and suits chosen for their natural fibers in sumptuous cashmeres, linens, cottons and denim.

With well chosen accessories, scarves, bags, belts and wallets, there is certainly plenty to choose from for either yourself or a gift.

Designers include; Ally Cappellino for leather goods, Doctor Harris for traditional toiletries and clothing labels such as Albam, Hartford & 120% Lino. These bring a much needed and unique collection for men.

Monday to Saturday 10am to 6pm & Sunday 11am to 4.30pm



town, Hove is home to the Sussex County Cricket Club and hosts teams from all over the world at their ground.

The **Hove Museum and Art Gallery** contains a whole host of exhibits on the history of the town. There is also a superb collection of 20th-century paintings and drawings and 18th-century furniture. (The splendid wooden pavilion, Jaipur Gateway, an elegantly carved structure that was transported to England from Rajashtan in 1886, has recently been moved to the other side of the building.) For history of a different kind, the **British Engineerium**, housed in a restored 19th-century pumping station, has all manner of engines - from steam-powered to electric. Many of the model and life size displays still operate and the museum's working beam engine is powered up on a regular basis. The Giant's Toolbox is a hands-on

display of gears and levers, cylinders and pistons that visitors can discover for themselves. Hove Ikon Gallery includes an exhibition about the Turin Shroud and paintings by local artist Norma Weller.

For one of the most spectacular views of the South Downs a visit to **Foredown Tower** is a must. Housed in a beautifully restored Edwardian water tower, there is a viewing gallery with Sussex's only operational camera obscura and a mass of computers and countryside data that tell the story of the local flora and fauna, as well as the geography of the night sky.

Also in Hove, and rather out of place with the grand Regency squares and avenues, is West Blatchington Windmill. Built in the 1820s and still with all its original machinery working on all five floors, the mill has been fully restored.

SECOND SEED BESPOKE FURNITURE, UNIQUE INTERIORS & GIFTS

94 Portland Road, Hove,
East Sussex BN3 5DN
Tel: 01273 323078
e-mail: shop@secondseed.com
website: www.secondseed.com

Bespoke handmade furniture and inspirational interiors and gifts are the stock in trade of **Second Seed**, which has graced one of Hove's main shopping streets since May 2008. Joint-owner Paul Soden creates stunning handmade pieces from a variety of reclaimed and recycled materials, notably including old sea groynes from along the Southeast coastline. The shapes and colours of these sea-weathered timbers inspire a vast array of furniture for the home and garden.

The shop's name is derived from the theory of wood originating from seed. Working with old wood gives it a second life in a different form, a second seed creation. Each tree is individual and each piece of wood unique, so that even if the size and design of two or more pieces are the same each will have its own unique characteristics. Commissions are invited and shoppers are welcome to visit the workshop. In addition to these marvellous designs Second Seed stocks an original selection of fairly priced homeware and inspirational gifts, including log baskets made from old timbers or old tyres, cast-iron or wrought-iron table tops, French porcelain tableware, Polish glassware and Danish candles and tea light holders.



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BRASS MONKEYS

109 Portland Road, Hove,
East Sussex BN3 5DP
Tel: 01273 725170

website: www.brassmonkeys.org.uk

Jewellers and silversmiths Samantha Maund and Jenifer Wall originally set up the aptly named Brass Monkeys in a freezing mechanic's garage in February 2002. It quickly evolved into a busy, creative workshop with 12 makers, and became a popular venue on the Brighton Festival Art Trail.

Following its success, Samantha and Jenifer decided to relocate to warmer premises in 2007. They found an old second-hand furniture shop to renovate and transformed it into a delightful gallery with workspaces for eight resident designer makers.

Brass Monkeys sells a diverse range of exquisite handmade jewellery and metalwork by 30 established and emerging British designer-makers. Solo exhibitions and featured artists ensure regularly changing collections of work throughout the year.



As well as watching the fascinating milling process, visitors can view an exhibition of agricultural equipment, which includes an oat crusher and a threshing machine.

DITCHLING

6 miles N of Brighton on the B2116

Anne of Cleves' House Ditchling Beacon

Ditchling Common Country Park Museum

This historic village, known as 'Diccelingas' in Saxon times, has records going back to 765. Once part of a royal estate belonging to Alfred the Great, it was passed on to Edward the Confessor and then to the Norman William de Warenne. The oldest building here, the parish Church of St Margaret of Antioch, dates from the 13th century, though details from before the Norman Conquest can still be seen in the nave.

Close by the village green and opposite the

church, stands Wings Place, an unusual Tudor house, also known as **Anne of Cleves' House**. There is no record that the fourth wife of Henry VIII ever stayed here, but she is thought to have acquired the property as part of her divorce settlement.

At the beginning of the 20th century, this pretty village, at the foot of the South Downs, became the home of a lively group of artists and craftsmen including Eric Gill, Sir Frank Brangwyn and Edward Johnston. Today, it remains a thriving artistic community with many studios and galleries.

To the north of the village lies **Ditchling Common Country Park**, a splendid nature reserve and beauty spot, with a lake, stream and nature trails. Meanwhile, south of Ditchling lies the 813-foot summit of **Ditchling Beacon**, the third highest point on the South Downs. Once the site of an Iron Age hill fort, and

almost certainly occupied by the Romans, the beacon was used as a vantage point from which fires were lit to warn of the coming of the Spanish Armada. A magnificent place from which to view much of this area - southerly over the coast and northwards over the Weald - the beacon was given to the National Trust in memory of the owner's son, who was killed in 1940 during the Battle of Britain.

Visitors wanting to discover more about the locality's long and interesting history should make a point of calling in at the superb **Ditchling Museum**, which is located in the Victorian former village school. From the Iron Age there has been evidence of settlement in this area, and the museum's Attree Room shows archaeological finds from prehistoric sites nearby and remains of Roman pottery dug up to the east of the village. It also displays the history of the parish church and of 17th-century non-conformist worship in the village. As this remarkable village has an important place in the English Arts and Crafts movement, the museum features an important collection of work by 20th-century artists and craftspeople, including stone carver and typographer Eric Gill, calligrapher Edward Johnston, painter and poet David Jones, weaver Ethel Mairet, silversmith Dunstan Pruden and artist Frank Brangwyn. The village school itself opened in 1838, and the schoolmaster's garden is stocked with fruits, flowers and vegetables as it would have been in the days of the first schoolmaster, George Verrall. The life of the village, at home and on the farm, is shown in the schoolmaster's cottage.

PLUMPTON

6 miles NE of Brighton on the B2116

 Plumptown Place  Racecourse

The village is divided in two by the railway line: the modern Plumpton Green and the old

village of Plumpton. Plumpton Green, to the north, grew up around the railway station and is the home of the popular **National Hunt Racecourse**. Spectators arriving by train should look out for the Victorian signal box, which has been designated a listed building following the valiant efforts of local railway enthusiasts to preserve it.

Old Plumpton is centred around its flint-built church which dates from the 12th century. The elegant moated 16th-century **Plumpton Place** was substantially remodelled by Sir Edwin Lutyens in the 1920s. The then owner, Edward Hudson, was a wealthy magazine proprietor who had already commissioned Lutyens to renovate his other country property, Lindisfarne Castle, off the Northumberland coast. A previous Tudor owner, Leonard Mascall, was a great cultivator of apples, a tradition that is still maintained at the East Sussex Agricultural College here in Plumpton.

The site of an early Bronze Age settlement can be found up a footpath opposite the college and, nearby, is a sandstone block that commemorates the Battle of Lewes, where Simon de Montfort defeated Henry III in 1264.

HAMSEY

8 miles NE of Brighton off the A275

This must have once been an important place for, in 925, King Athelstan held a meeting of his counsellors at Hamsey Manor. Today, though, all that remains of this hamlet is the old church that is reached through the yard of a 400-year-old farm.

BARCOMBE

9 miles NE of Brighton off the A275

Set on the banks of the River Ouse, which is tidal as far as this point, Barcombe is a

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tranquil place that was a favourite picnic place with the Edwardians. As well as fishing and picnicking, artists would come here to paint the dilapidated mill buildings in this splendid Ouse Valley setting. There is evidence that the Romans were here, and the village was described as having a church and three and a half mills in the Domesday Book. The half mill was one that spanned the river so the other half was accredited to the village of Isfield.

The parish church of St Mary once lay at the heart of the village but, as the Black Death came to the area, the village was devastated and those who survived rebuilt their houses a mile away to the north. There are marvellous views of the South Downs from the churchyard.

RINGMER

9½ miles NE of Brighton on the B2192

This spacious village, familiar to anyone arriving at Glyndebourne by car, is one of the earliest recorded settlements in Sussex. Though nothing remains of the Saxon church that once stood close to the village's enormous green, there has been a place of worship here for over 1,000 years. The present church was built in 1884 by William Martin after fires in the 16th and 19th centuries had burnt down the previous buildings. Inside the church is a poignant memorial to the village's cricket team. During World War I they joined up en masse to fight at the front and, of the 34 club members who went to France, only six returned alive.

During the 17th century, this rural village

GIGANTEUM

The Planteria, Heron House, Laughton Road, Ringmer, East Sussex BN8 5UT

Tel: 07958 399824

e-mail: giganteum@hotmail.co.uk

Recently relocated from Lewes to Ringmer, **Giganteum** stocks hardy, exotic plants in all shapes and sizes to transform any interior or exterior space of whatever size. Giganteum really captures the imagination with a catalogue of inspirational 'statement plants' that are interesting even in the depths of winter.

Bamboos, palms, topiary, succulents, ferns, trees and shrubs are all available to buy, or to hire for special occasions, including weddings, parties and corporate events. Giganteum also offers a consultation service tailored to the clients' needs, whether it be expert advice on existing gardens and the plants within, or a full design service aimed at working with the unique opportunities that each space has to offer.

Giganteum vouchers are also available for that extra special gift. The shop is open from 9.30 to 5 on Tuesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday. Private appointments are available by request on Monday and Wednesday.





PUNZI

27 Station Road, Lewes, East Sussex BN7 7DB

Tel: 01273 475476

e-mail: margherita@margheritahale.co.uk

Artist/craftswoman Margherita Hale has been exhibiting and selling in Lewes for

more than 20 years, and since 2004 she has been based at her shop **Punzi** just off the High Street (A277). Here she designs, makes and sells a range of beautiful gemstone jewellery in a wide range of styles and colours at affordable prices. Her creations include earrings, necklaces and pendants, each a unique and desirable work of art, and most items can be tailored to customers' individual requirements. Many feature unusual gems, including amazonite, iolite, kyanite, red garnet and yellow opal. As well as the lovely gemstone jewellery Margherita also sells many interesting rough and polished stones and fossils from all over the world and her own oil paintings. Commissions are welcome and the shop offers a same-day necklace repair service.



THE WORKSHOP

164 High Street, Lewes,
East Sussex BN7 1XU

Tel/Fax: 01273 474207

website: www.theworkshoplewes.com

The Workshop is owned and run by Jonathan Swan, a distinguished jeweller with many years' experience. He was made a Freeman of the Goldsmiths' Company in 1989 and has won several prestigious awards, the most recent being the Goldsmiths Craft & Design Award for Innovation in 2003. The Gallery is recommended as among the countries best by the Crafts Council and is a showcase for his work and for the work of more than 70 contemporary jewellers. The Workshop also accepts commissions, identifying and developing exactly what the customer requires. They also run jewellery classes spread over 4 evenings a week in the workshop behind the gallery.

The Workshop is easily identified with its bold blue frontage on the High Street. The earliest part of the building dates from around the 9th or 10th century, making it some 300 years older than its near neighbour the Castle. The Workshop is open from 9.30 to 5 Monday to Saturday.



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played, in a roundabout manner, an important part in the history of America. Two young women of the parish married men who went on to become influential figures in the birth of the United States. Guglielma Springett, the daughter of Sir William, who supported Parliament during the English Civil War, married William Penn, the founder of the State of Pennsylvania, while Ann Sadler married John Harvard, the founder of Harvard University.

Ringmer's most famous inhabitant was Timothy, a tortoise. He belonged to the aunt of the 18th-century naturalist Gilbert White. During his visits to see his aunt, White became fascinated by Timothy's activities. After his aunt's death, White continued to study the tortoise and, in *The Natural History of Selbourne*, he describes the tortoise's lethargic movements. Timothy's carapace can

be seen in the Natural History Museum in London.

LEWES

7 miles NE of Brighton on the A27

Castle Martyrs' Memorial

Anne of Cleves' House Barbican House

The county town of East Sussex, Lewes is an historic settlement that occupies a strategically important point where the River Ouse is crossed by an ancient east to west land route. Much of the town's street plan dates from Saxon times. It was one of the Saxon capitals visited by Alfred the Great and it was considered important enough to be allowed to mint currency. The Norman invasion in the 11th century and William the Conqueror's success at Battle, however, really saw Lewes grow in stature.

HISTORIC DAYS OUT IN EAST SUSSEX

Tel: 01273 486260 Fax: 01273 486990

e-mail: admin@sussexpast.co.uk

website: www.sussexpast.co.uk

Thomas Paine House - The house at 92 High Street, Lewes once lived in by the revolutionary writer Tom Paine, is open for guided tours by appointment. (Tel: 01273 486260).

Anne of Cleves House Museum - This beautiful 15th century timber-framed house was given to Henry VIII's wife, Anne of Cleves. The kitchen and bedroom are furnished in Tudor period with costumes for children to enjoy. Exhibitions tell the story of Lewes from the medieval to modern times. Complete your visit with a stroll around the period-style garden. (Tel: 01273 474610). Joint tickets available with Lewes Castle.

Lewes Castle & Barbican House Museum - Lewes Castle was built soon after the Norman Conquest of 1066. Magical views of Lewes, the Downs and the River Ouse reward everyone who climbs to the top of its high towers. Barbican House Museum, opposite the Castle, tells the story of Sussex from the Stone Age to the end of the medieval period. Displays include a delightful model of Lewes. (Tel: 01273 486290)

Michelham Priory - The house was once part of the original priory and is now surrounded by beautiful gardens and a Moat Walk. Also see the working forge, Rope Museum and restored Medieval watermill. Enjoy a meal in the licensed restaurant or book a tour of the house. (Tel: 01323 844224.)

Michelham Priory, Lewes Castle and Anne of Cleves House are used for weddings and civil ceremonies. See www.sussexpastweddings.co.uk.



Because of their closeness to the English Channel, William gave the Sussex estates to his most trusted barons, and the lands around Lewes were granted to his powerful friend, William de Warenne. De Warenne and his wife Gundrada began the construction of **Lewes**



Castle and founded the great Priory of St Pancras. Today, a substantial part of the castle remains, including a section of the keep and two towers dating from the 13th century. During the early 19th century, the castle was owned by the Kemp family and they are responsible for the elegant Georgian façade to the Barbican House. Overshadowed

by the Barbican Gate, the house is now home to the **Barbican House Museum** where relics found in the area, from prehistoric times through to the Middle Ages, are on display. Here, too, is the Lewes Town Model, a sound and light show based round a model of 19th-century Lewes. Splendid views over the town are the reward for climbing to the

KINGS FRAMERS

57 High Street, Lewes, East Sussex BN7 1XE

Tel: 01273 481020

e-mail: peta@gorgeousthingsltd.com

website: www.gorgeousthingsltd.com or www.kingsframers.com

Easy to spot with its bright yellow frontage, **Kings Framers** stands at the top of the High Street. Founded in 1993, it combines the traditional skills and high standards of cabinet-making with the fast-changing innovations in modern materials. The staff aim to present customers' artwork beautifully, using top-quality boards, mouldings and glass; all are experts with experience in the shop and the workshop, linking all the processes and keeping in communication with each other. The large workshop allows them to carry an impressive stock of materials ready for every framing challenge. They are always ready with advice on mounts and frames, helping the client to find the perfect combination to suit the image and its place of hanging. The shop stocks a wide range of original paintings and prints, workshop-made picture, photo and poster frames, art books, albums, sketch books, greetings cards, handmade papers and lots of stylish gifts. Kings Framers offers a picture cleaning and restoration service and a consultancy on all aspects of art collection, display and exhibitions. **Gorgeous Things Ltd** is an online gallery selling limited edition artwork and prints.



roof of the keep.

Little remains of the Priory of St Pancras. Built on the foundations of a small Saxon church, the priory and a great deal of land were given to the abbey of Cluny in Burgundy. At its height, the priory had a church as large as Chichester Cathedral, with outbuildings on the same scale, but all were destroyed at the time of the Dissolution of the Monasteries in the 16th century.

During the 14th century, a feud developed between the 4th Earl de Warenne and Lord Pevensey. In order to settle their differences, the two met, one May morning, under the walls of Lewes Castle. As they fought, Lord Pevensey cornered de Warenne and, as he was about to drive home his sword, Lady de Warenne began to pray to St Nicholas to save his life and she vowed that, should her husband be spared, her first-born son would not marry until he had placed St Nicholas' belt on the tomb of the Blessed Virgin in Byzantium. At that moment, Lord Pevensey slipped and, as he fell, de Warenne drove home his sword. Years went by before the earl's eldest son, Lord Manfred, became engaged to Lady Edona and, halfway through a banquet to celebrate the 21st

anniversary of de Warenne's victory, a vision of the combat appeared to all the guests. Understanding at once that the vow must be fulfilled before their son's wedding, the earl and his wife sent Manfred to Byzantium. For over a year Lady Edona waited for him to return and, finally, his ship was sighted off Worthing. A welcoming party gathered and then, with every one watching, the ship struck a hidden rock and sank with all hands. Lady Edona, watching the ship go down, gave out a sigh and sank to the ground dead. A plinth stands in memory of Lady Edona, who was buried where she fell.

Beside the priory ruins is a bronze memorial by the sculptor Enzo Plazzottia that was commissioned to commemorate the 700th anniversary of the Battle of Lewes. Fought on Offham Hill, the Battle of Lewes took place in May 1264, between the armies of Henry III and Simon de Montfort. The night before the battle, de Montfort and his troops were said to have kept vigil in the church at Fletching, while Henry and his men had a wild, and in some cases drunken, evening at the castle. Whether this was the reason for the king's defeat or whether it was down to bad military tactics is open to debate.

Anne of Cleves House Museum

52 Southover High Street, Lewes, Sussex BN7 1JA

Tel: 01273 474610

e-mail: pro@sussexpast.co.uk

website: www.sussexpast.co.uk

The oldest part of this beautiful timber-framed house was built in the fifteenth century. It was given to Henry VIII's fourth wife, Anne of Cleves, as part of her divorce settlement but she never lived in the house. The kitchen and bedroom are furnished in period style. The Lewes Gallery tells the story of Lewes from the fifteenth century to modern times, the role of local resident Tom Paine, the Lewes Bonfire Night traditions and the story of the Snowdrop Inn. Another gallery illustrates the important Wealden iron industry and there are also displays of everyday domestic objects.



Another monument in the town is the **Martyrs' Memorial** erected in 1901 in memory of the 17 Protestant martyrs who were burnt to death on Lewes High Street during the reign of the Catholic queen Mary Tudor. The mainly Protestant inhabitants of Lewes found an outlet for their resentment at this treatment after the foiling of the Gunpowder Plot and the Bonfire Celebrations, which still take place here, are elaborate affairs.

Like Ditchling, Lewes has an **Anne of Cleves House** (see panel on page 203). In this case, an early 16th-century Wealden hall house that, again, formed part of Henry VIII's divorce settlement with his fourth wife. Also like the house in Ditchling, it is unlikely that the queen ever set foot in the building. Today, it is open to the public and the rooms are furnished to give visitors an idea of life in the 17th and 18th centuries.

In 1988, the Railway Land Wildlife Trust was founded to establish a Local Nature Reserve, a 60-acre wildlife sanctuary within easy walking distance of the town centre.

GLYNDE

9½ miles NE of Brighton off the A27

Glynde Place Mount Caburn

Situated at the foot of **Mount Caburn**, this small and attractive village is home to a splendid house and an ancient church. Overlooking the South Downs, **Glynde Place** was built in 1579 for William Morley out of flint and Normandy stone that was brought across the Channel in barges. The most notable family member was Colonel Herbert Morley, a Parliamentarian, who was also one of the judges at the trial of Charles I. Fortunately for the family, Morley did not sign the king's death warrant and so, at the Restoration, the family was able to gain a pardon for him from Charles II. The house

passed by marriage into the Trevor family and, in 1743, it was inherited by the Bishop of Durham, Richard Trevor. He left the exterior of the house untouched, while turning the interior into a classical 18th-century residence.

At the gates to the house stands the church built by the bishop in 1765 to the designs of Sir Thomas Robinson. Having recently visited Italy, Robinson was very enthusiastic about Renaissance architecture and, as a result, the church has a coved rococo ceiling, box pews and a gallery.

The village is also the home of the black-faced Southdown sheep, first bred here by John Ellman, who lived here between 1753 and 1832. A benevolent farmer, he built a school for his labourers' children and, when they married, he gave the couple a pig and a cow. He even allowed the single labourers to lodge under his own roof. However, Ellman would not allow a licensed house in the village, though he didn't mind if his men brewed their own beer at home.

The distinctive Mount Caburn, to the west of Glynde, can be reached along a footpath from the village. Many thousands of years ago, this steep sided chalk outcrop was separated from the rest of the Downs by the action of the River Glynde. This process created a mound about 500 feet in height whose natural defensive properties have not gone unnoticed over the centuries. The earthwork defences of an Iron Age hillfort can still be made out near the summit and there is evidence of an earlier Stone Age settlement.

GLYNDEBOURNE

9½ miles NE of Brighton off the B9192

Opera House

Glyndebourne, a part Tudor, part Victorian country house, just a mile north of Glynde

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village, is now the home of the world famous **Glyndebourne Opera House**. In the early 1930s, John Christie, a school master, music lover and inheritor of the house, married the accomplished opera singer Audrey Mildmay and, as regular visitors to European music festivals, they decided to bring opera to England and their friends. In the idyllic setting of their country estate, they built a modest theatre and, in 1934, Glyndebourne first opened with a performance of Mozart's *Marriage of Figaro*. Audrey sang the role of Susanna, lady's maid to the Countess Rosina. Their scheme was not an overnight success: on the second night, when *Così fan Tutte* was performed, the audience was very sparse. Fritz Busch was the conductor and Carl Ebert the producer. Joined later by Rudolf Bing, they enlarged the theatre in 1939, doubling the capacity from 300 to 600. The opera house reopened after the War with a performance of Benjamin Britten's *Rape of Lucretia*, and in 1947 the premiere of Britten's *Albert Herring* was staged, with Britten himself conducting. Since those days, Glyndebourne has gone from strength to strength and, as well as extending the theatre further, the repertoire has also been widened. Today, each summer season, from May to August, sees opera-lovers venturing here dressed in evening wear and laden with picnic hampers, to enjoy a wide range of opera in a unique setting and to eat their picnics in the grounds during the long interval.

WEST FIRLE

10 miles E of Brighton off the A27

Firle Place Firle Beacon

Though the village is known as West Firle, there is no East Firle - or any other Firle - in the area. A feudal village of old flint cottages at the foot of the South Downs, it is

dominated by **Firle Beacon** to the southeast, which rises to a height of 718 feet. As one of the highest points in the area, the importance of this vantage point has long been recognised. It was used by the Admiralty for a fire beacon to warn of the approaching Spanish Armada in the 16th century, and remains of a Stone Age long barrow and a group of Bronze Age round barrows have been found on the summit. There was also a Roman observation point here. Today, the summit can be reached by taking a small detour off the South Downs Way, and the breathtaking views make the climb well worth while.

Back in the village, and set in its own idyllic parkland, is **Firle Place** (see panel on page 206), the home of the Gage family for over 500 years. Built by Sir John Gage in the 15th century, this marvellous Tudor manor house was greatly altered some 300 years later and today it will be familiar to many who have seen it as a backdrop for major feature films or as a location for TV series. Still very much a family home, today owned by the 7th Viscount, its rooms contain a wonderful collection of European and English Old Masters, as well as some rare and notable examples of French and English furniture and Sèvres porcelain. The magnificent deer park, which surrounds the house, was landscaped by Capability Brown in the 18th century and features a castellated tower and an ornamental lake. It is open to the public in the summer.

RODMELL

7 miles E of Brighton off the A26

Monk's House

This little village of thatched cottages is thought to have got its name from 'mill on the road' and, though no mill can be found here

FIRLE PLACE

Firle, nr Lewes, East Sussex BN8 6LP
 Tel: 01273 858307 Fax: 01273 858188
 e-mail: gage@firleplace.co.uk
 website: www.firleplace.co.uk

Set in idyllic parkland, **Firle Place** has been the home of the Gage family for more than 500 years. It was built in the 15th century by Sir John Gage, using Caen stone thought to have been rescued from a monastery dissolved by Henry VIII. The original Tudor building was remodelled in the 18th century and now has the look of French chateau. Still the Gage family home, it contains a wonderful collection of English and European Old Masters, including Gainsborough, Kneller, Reynolds, Guardi, Van Dyck, Moroni, Rubens, Tintoretto, Teniers and Zoffany. Other treasures include fine English and European furniture and an impressive collection of Sèvres porcelain. Firle Place is open to visitors on Wednesday, Thursday and Sunday afternoons between June and September, also Easter, May & August Bank Holiday Sundays and Mondays. The licensed Terrace Restaurant is open for lunch and tea, and private dinners can be booked in the Tudor Great Hall or the terrace area.

The deer park, which was landscaped by Capability Brown, features a castellated tower and an ornamental lake. The house lies at the foot of the Sussex Downs off the A27 Lewes-Eastbourne road – take the turning marked Firle Village.



today, there is a Mill Road and, in the small 12th century church, there is a reference to the village's old name 'Rodmill'.

However, the village's main claim to fame is that it was the home of Virginia and Leonard Woolf from 1919 until her death in 1941. The couple, escaping the confining intellectual world of the Bloomsbury set in which they were influential figures, settled at **Monk's House**, a delightful early 18th-century farmhouse that is now in the hands of the National Trust and open briefly in the summer. The garden, which is lush with hollyhocks, dahlias and hydrangeas, gives good views over the downs across the River Ouse.

During her time here, Virginia wrote many of her best remembered works, but throughout her life she suffered great bouts of depression and mental illness. Finally, in 1941, she took her own life by wading into the river

with her pockets full of stones. Surprisingly for the disappearance of such a well-renowned figure, her body was not discovered for three weeks, and only then by some children playing on the riverbank. Her ashes, along with those of her husband, who stayed in Rodmill until his death in 1969, are scattered in the garden.

SOUTHEASE

7 miles E of Brighton off the A26

This tiny village, in a dip on the Lewes to Newhaven road, was first mentioned in a Saxon charter of 966, when King Edgar granted the church and manor here to Hyde Abbey in Winchester. Some 100 years later, at the time of the Domesday Survey, this was a flourishing village that was assessed as having 38,500 herrings as well as the usual farm produce. Inside the early 12th-century church is a copy of King Edgar's charter. The original

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is in the British Museum in London. There is also an unusual organ built by Allen of Soho and installed in 1790. The only other organs of this kind known to be still in existence are in Buckingham Palace and York Minster.

TELSCOMBE

6 miles E of Brighton off the A26

Telscombe was once an important sheep rearing and a racehorse training centre. In fact, the last man in England to be hanged for sheep stealing, in 1819, is believed to have come from the village. In 1902, the racing stables at Stud House trained the winner of the Grand National - Shannon Lass. The horse's owner, Ambrose Gorham, was so delighted with the win that he rebuilt the village church and each Christmas gave every child of the parish a book and a pair of Wellington boots.

PIDDINGHOE

7 1/2 miles E of Brighton off the A26

Set on a wide curve of the River Ouse, this village - pronounced 'Piddnoo' by its older inhabitants - is a picturesque place, with a host of 17th-century cottages and pleasant riverside walks. It was a great place for smugglers in days

gone by. Today, however, the ships and boats that tie up at the quayside below the church belong to deep sea anglers and weekend sailors. The golden fish weather vane on top of the church tower was referred to by Kipling as a dolphin, but is actually a sea trout.

NEWHAVEN

9 miles E of Brighton on the A26

Newhaven Fort Museum

Planet Earth Exhibition

Newhaven itself is a relatively new settlement and it replaces the much older village of Meeching. Inhabited since the Iron Age, when a fort was built on Castle Hill, Meeching lay beside the River Ouse. However, in 1579 a great storm altered the course of the river and its outlet to the sea moved from Seaford to near Meeching. Thus Newhaven was established at the new river mouth and it is now one of the county's two main harbours (the other is at Shoreham-by-Sea) with an important cross-Channel passenger service and also a cargo terminal.

Newhaven's rise began in the 19th century and it grew steadily busier once the rail link with London was established in 1847. Two of the earliest visitors to use the passenger

steamer service to Dieppe were the fleeing King and Queen of France, Louis Philippe and Marie Amelie, who stayed at the Bridge Inn in 1848 after their sea journey before continuing to London by train where they were met by Queen Victoria's coach and taken to Buckingham Palace. In order to maintain their anonymity, the couple registered themselves at the inn under the rather original names of Mr and Mrs Smith.



Newhaven Harbour

THE GARDEN OF EDEN

2 Coronation House, High Street, Newhaven, East Sussex BN9 9PR

Tel: 01273 515913

e-mail: edenchadwick@aol.com

Owner Eden Chadwick found a deliciously apt name for her café situated in a parade of shops on the main thoroughfare in Newhaven. Opened in 1999, the **Garden of Eden** is a bright, sociable eating place, smartly refurbished in 2008, with seats for 40 inside, a few more in the hidden rear patio area and a couple of seats outside on the pavement. It's a great place to meet friends or to take a break from shopping or the office, and it's also a favourite spot with tourists and passengers from the ferry.

Food is typical café fare, with almost everything prepared and cooked on the premises, and the all-day breakfast combinations, the hot and cold lunches and the home-made cakes and biscuits are particularly popular. The Garden of Eden also offers a takeaway service.

The café is open from 8am to 4pm Monday to Saturday (closed Wednesday) and from 10 to 2 on Sunday.



Also in the 19th century, during one of the periodic French invasion scares, **Newhaven Fort** was built. Consisting of a ring of casements constructed around a large parade ground, the fort was equipped with modern guns during World War II; it received several direct hits from German bombs. Today, it is a Museum where visitors can explore the underground tunnels and galleries and view the displays of wartime Britain. The **Newhaven Local and Maritime Museum**, in Garden Paradise, contains a wealth of information relating to Newhaven's port, the town's history and its role in wartime. Here also is the **Planet Earth Exhibition**, which explores the world of natural history from millions of years ago to the present day. Displays trace the origins of the Earth through fossils and minerals; one of the most remarkable exhibits is a fossil dinosaur egg

found in China, which was laid nearly 100 million years ago and preserved in a flood before it could hatch.

PEACEHAVEN

9 miles E of Brighton on the A259

If nearby Newhaven is a recent town, Peacehaven must be considered just a fledgling village. The brainchild of wealthy businessman, Charles Neville, it was planned and designed during World War I, when the intention was to call the new town Anzac on Sea in honour of the Australian and New Zealand troops who were stationed here before going off to fight in the trenches. However, after the Armistice, it was renamed Peacehaven which very much caught the mood of the time. Laid out in the grid pattern, and with no immediate connection with either the South Downs or the coast, it

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remains a quiet place off the usual south coast tourist itinerary.

Along the cliff top promenade there is a 20-foot monument to King George V that also marks the line of the Greenwich Meridian.

ROTTINGDEAN

3 miles E of Brighton on the A259

North End House The Elms The Grange

Built in a gap in the cliffs between Newhaven and Brighton, Rottingdean was, naturally, a key place for smugglers at one time. However, more recently, it became the home of more artistic citizens. The artist Sir Edward Burne-Jones lived here for the last 20 years of his life in the rambling **North End House** by the green. During his time in Rottingdean, Burne-Jones designed seven windows for the originally Saxon parish church of St Margaret that were made up by William Morris. After his death in 1898 (he was buried in St Margaret's churchyard), his wife maintained her high profile in Rottingdean and in 1900 caused uproar when she hung anti-war banners from her windows following the Relief of Mafeking.

Lady Burne-Jones was also Rudyard Kipling's aunt, and he lived here, at **The Elms**, for five years before moving to Bateman's in 1902. Overlooking the village pond, the gardens of The Elms are open to the public. Surrounded by old stone walls are formal rose gardens, wild and scented gardens and a wealth of rare plants. At the Museum of the Rottingdean Preservation Society, at **The Grange** in Rottingdean, there is a Kipling Room with a reconstruction of his study in The Elms, and other exhibits devoted to his work. It was while living here that Kipling wrote the *Just So Stories*, *Kim* and *Stalky & Co.*, and his feelings for his beloved Sussex are summed up in his well-

known poem about the county:

*God gives all men all earth to love,
But, since man's heart is small,
Ordains for each one spot shall prove
Beloved overall.
Each to his choice, and I rejoice
The lot has fallen to me
In a fair ground - in a fair ground -
Yea, Sussex by the sea!*

Stanley Baldwin and Enid Bagnold, author of *National Velvet*, also spent time in Rottingdean, and another famous resident was J Reuter, a German bank clerk, who started a pigeon post to bring back news from abroad that expanded into the internationally respected worldwide news agency. He is buried in the churchyard of St Margaret.

Eastbourne

Martello Tower Heritage Centre
 Museum of Shops Military Museum
 RNLI Museum
 Beachy Head and Countryside Centre

This stylish and genteel seaside resort, which has managed to avoid both becoming too brash or disappearing into shy gentility, takes its name from the stream, or bourne, which has its course in the old reservoir in the area of open land that is now known as Motcombe Gardens. When George III sent his children here in the summer of 1780, it was, in fact, two villages, the larger of which lay a mile inland from the coast. Slowly the villages were developed and merged, but it was William Cavendish, later the 7th Duke of Devonshire, who really instigated Eastbourne's rapid growth as a seaside resort from the 1850s onwards.

As much of the land belonged to the Cavendish family, the expansion was well

THE GABLES BED AND BREAKFAST

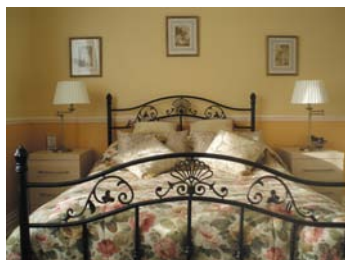
21 Southfields Road, Eastbourne, Sussex BN21 1BU

Tel: 01323 644600

e-mail: chrisymills@hotmail.co.uk info@gablesbandb.co.uk

website: www.gablesbandb.co.uk

Situated only a few minutes away from Eastbourne's town centre, is the delightful **Gables Bed and Breakfast**. Personally run by Chrissy and Andy Mills, all guests are assured of the most warm and friendly welcome. This charming, detached, Edwardian property, with its pretty garden, is conveniently situated in a residential area with many restaurants and traditional pubs nearby, as well as a theatre, cinema and main line railway station. Close to The South Downs Way, the Cliffs of Beachy Head and many other local attractions, it is an ideal base for visitors exploring this beautiful part of the country. Everything possible is done to ensure guests of a comfortable, enjoyable stay. The three bed-roomed residence, (one king, one twin and one double) has a modern feel to it while retaining a cosy, informal atmosphere. A selection of continental, as well as English breakfasts, are served in the bright, pleasant breakfast room with all food made from the finest ingredients, free range eggs and home-grown fruit when in season. There is a no smoking policy in guest rooms and all public areas and it is a gay friendly B & B.



SAVOY COURT HOTEL

11-15 Cavendish Place, Eastbourne,

East Sussex BN21 3EJ

Tel: 01323 723132

Fax: 01323 737902

e-mail: info@savoycourthotel.co.uk

website: www.savoycourthotel.co.uk

The **Savoy Court Hotel** is a 18th Century listed building 50 meters from the Pier and Beach. It is a short stroll from the shopping centre and Train Station. The friendly management and staff and the hotel's amenities make this an excellent base for a weekend or longer break, a traditional family holiday or business trip. The two stars hotel has a lift and the guest accommodation comprises of 29 comfortable appointed bedrooms. All have en-suite facilities, TV, alarm clock-radio and hospitality tray and iron board and hairdryer available on request. Wireless Internet connection is available free of charge. Permits can be obtained from the hotel staff for street parking. The classic bar and restaurant are open to both residents and non-residents – traditional English cuisine is the basis of the menu. Other public rooms include reception room and function room and the hotel has a large rear garden. Eastbourne is a lovely place to take time to explore with numerous attractions for all ages and a wide variety of interests. Notable among these are the Heritage Centre, the Martello Tower and the RNLI Lifeboat Museum, and few visitors will not want to leave the area without a trip to the spectacular cliffs at Beachy Head. Discounts for groups. Check website for special offers.



thought out and managed agreeably, which created the elegant town of today, well known for its delightful gardens. Among the first buildings that Cavendish had constructed are the handsome Regency style Burlington Hotel, St Saviour's Church, the town hall and the extremely elegant railway station. The classic pier was built in the 1880s and it remains one of the finest seaside piers in the country.

There are, however, several buildings that pre-date the intervention of William Cavendish. The original parish church, inland from the coast, dates from the 12th century though it stands on the site of a previous Saxon place of worship. The development of the old village into a seaside resort is told at the **Eastbourne Heritage Centre**. In the centre of Eastbourne is the **Museum of**



Eastbourne Town

Shops with its Victorian streets, room-settings and displays depicting shopping and social history over the past 100 years.

As a coastal town, during the scare of French invasions at the beginning of the 19th century, Eastbourne had its own defences. The **Martello Tower No 73**, one of 103 built

THE CHERRY TREE GUEST HOUSE

15 Silverdale Road, Eastbourne, East Sussex BN20 7AJ

Tel: 01323 722406

e-mail: carol@cherrytree-eastbourne.co.uk

website: www.cherrytree-eastbourne.co.uk

The **Cherry Tree Guest House** is a charming, Edwardian house two minutes from the seafront and ten minutes from the shops, restaurants and other amenities and attractions. Traditional English décor, carpeted floors and warm lighting create a welcoming, home-from-home atmosphere that's assisted by the friendliest of welcomes from owner Carol Butler. The guest accommodation consists of nine en suite rooms – three singles, two twins, three doubles and a family room. All have TV, radio, wireless internet connection, beverage tray with biscuits and a supply of toiletries. Guests can unwind and plan their days in an elegant lounge with antiques, paintings, books, magazines, newspapers and board games. The day starts with a tasty breakfast, and packed lunches are available. Carol can help you arrange your day providing information on local attractions to visit, ideas for country walks in the beautiful surrounding countryside or even arrange guided birdwatching tours. The cherry Tree is open all year round with special out of season offers.



along the south coast, is also referred to as the Wish Tower. Another Napoleonic defence, the Redoubt Fortress, was built between 1804 and 1810 on the seafront. Now the home of the **Military Museum of Sussex**, the exhibitions here cover some 300 years of conflict on land, sea and in the air. Highlights include, relics from the charge of the Light Brigade at Balaklava and Rommel's staff car from World War II.

The sea has always played an important part in the life of the town, from its early days as a fishing village, and now as a resort offering a safe beach environment. Naturally, the lifeboats have played an important role through the years and, close to their lifeboat station, is the **RNLI Lifeboat Museum**. Here the history of the town's lifeboats, from 1853 onwards, are charted



Lifeboat Museum, Eastbourne

through a series of interesting exhibits, including photographs of some of their most dramatic rescues.

While the town is undoubtedly a charming and delightful place to explore and enjoy, most people wish to see **Beachy Head**. One of the most spectacular chalk precipices in England,

CROMWELL HOUSE

23 Cavendish Place, Eastbourne,
East Sussex, BN21 3EJ
Tel: 01323 725288 Fax: 01323 725288
e-mail: info@cromwell-house.co.uk
website: www.cromwell-house.co.uk

In the heart of Eastbourne town and only 100 metres away from the Eastbourne Pier and beach stands the charming 4 star **Cromwell House**. This beautiful Grade 2 listed, Victorian Town House is a family run guesthouse with Neil and Sue Tacey resident proprietors. They have been busy here since July 2007 putting their mark on this charming property and making sure their guests have the most enjoyable stay. In the spacious, yet homely dining room we serve a full English breakfast daily. From June to the end of September a choice of menu for evening dinner is offered. The cosy, attractive bedrooms are equipped to very high standards and all have en-suite shower rooms.

The premises are fully licensed so guests can enjoy a drink in the pleasant lounge as well as being able to watch a DVD on the large, flat screen TV. With Eastbourne's wealth of entertainment and culture, many fine pubs and restaurants, and excellent shopping this is a great place to stay. The railway station is within easy walking distance and all major credit/debit cards are accepted.



with a sheer drop of over 500 feet in places, this very famous natural landmark lies just to the southwest of the town. The grand scale of the cliffs is brought home by the sight of the lighthouse, completely dwarfed at the cliff base. On the cliff top is the **Beachy Head Countryside Centre**, which focuses on downland life from the Bronze Age onwards, and includes numerous wildlife displays. This is also the end (or the beginning) of the South Downs Way, the long distance bridleway that was first established in 1972.

Around Eastbourne

POLEGATE

4 miles N of Eastbourne on the A27

Windmill & Museum

The village grew up in the 19th century around a railway junction and, today, it is

almost a suburb of Eastbourne. Visitors generally make for the Polegate **Windmill and Museum**, a splendid redbrick tower mill, built in 1817, and one of the few tower mills open to the public (though on a limited basis). Restored as early as 1867, all its internal machinery is in working order and here, too, is a small but fascinating museum of milling.

HAILSHAM

7 miles N of Eastbourne on the A295

This market town, which first received its charter in 1252 from Henry III, is a pleasant town where the modern shopping facilities sit comfortably with the chiefly Georgian High Street. Once a thriving centre of the rope and string industry, Hailsham had the dubious honour of supplying all the rope for public executions. Now, its rope and string are put to less lethal uses. It maintains its rural roots and the three-acre cattle market is one

THE PUMPKIN PATCH

10a St Mary's Walk, Hailsham,
East Sussex BN27 1AF
Tel: 01323 442821
e-mail: pumpkinpatchquilting@hotmail.co.uk

Hailsham is a pleasant town with a renowned three-acre cattle market, a monthly farmers market and a summer charter market. Markets apart, Hailsham has a number of interesting shops, and for knitters and sewers the **Pumpkin Patch** is the place to make tracks for. The shop is owned and run by the mother-and-daughter team of Shirley and Sarah Bridgman. Turning a hobby into a business, they first started trading in the Old Granary at Broad Farm, Hellingly, and opened here in 2003 in the heart of Hailsham. Patchwork and quilting are among the specialists, and knitters and sewers at all levels will find everything they need from the extensive stock of wools, cottons, needles, patterns, books and fabrics from top brands like Moda, Makower, Sirdar and Timeless Treasures – and help and advice willingly given by the friendly owners and their staff.

The Pumpkin Patch also offers a selection of classes and workshops – phone for details.



of the largest in East Sussex.

HERSTMONCEUX

9 miles NE of Eastbourne on the A271

Castle & Gardens Science Centre

Herstmonceux Castle was built on the site of an early Norman manor house in 1440 by Sir Roger Fiennes, treasurer to Henry VI. This is a remarkable building on two counts: it was one of the first large scale buildings in the country to be built of brick and it was also one of the first castles to combine the need for security with the comforts of the residents. As the castle was built on a lake there was added protection, and the impressive gatehouse, with its murder holes and arrow slits, presented an aggressive front to any would-be attackers.



Herstmonceux Castle

Later, the castle passed into the hands of the Hare family, who presided over a long period of decline for Herstmonceux, which culminated in most of the interior being stripped to provide building materials for another house in 1777. The castle lay semi-derelict for 150 years before a major programme of restoration was undertaken in

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the 1930s under the supervision of a Lewes architect, W H Godfrey. His careful and inspired work saw the turrets and battlements restored to their former glory and, today, the castle is as when first built in its delightfully romantic setting (not open to the public). **Herstmonceux Castle Gardens**, the 500 acres of grounds around the splendid moated castle, are open for most of the summer.

In 1948, the Royal Observatory at Greenwich was looking for somewhere to move to away from the glow of the street lights of London. It moved here and, after 20 careful years of planning and building, they opened the gigantic Isaac Newton telescope in the grounds. Although the Royal Observatory has moved on, the castle now contains the **Herstmonceux Science Centre**, where, among the domes and telescopes that the astronomers used between the 1950s and the 1980s, visitors can experience the excitement of viewing the heavens. There are also hands-on displays and an Astronomy Exhibition tracing the history and work of the world-famous Royal Observatory.

PEVENSEY

4 miles NE of Eastbourne on the A259

Castle Mint House 1066 Country Walk

On the coast, in the shelter of Pevensey Bay, Pevensey was the landing place for invading Roman legions and it was here they built a fortification to protect their anchorage. The fortress of Anderida, built around AD280, was one of the first south coast defences. William the Conqueror landed here with his troops prior to the Battle of Hastings and left his half brother, Robert, behind while he went



Mint House, Pevensey

off to defeat Harold. Robert built a Norman fortress here, which was joined, in the 13th century, by a stone curtain wall. **Pevensey Castle** seemed well able to withstand attack. Following the Battle of Lewes, Simon de Montfort laid siege to the castle without success. However, the structure gradually fell into disrepair although it was brought back into service, briefly, during the advance of the Spanish Armada and again during World War II. Today, the castle is besieged only by visitors who can explore the ruins and follow its history, from the days of the Romans to the mid 20th century.

In the rest of the village there are several fine medieval buildings including the **Mint House**, a 14th-century building that lies outside the castle gates. Coins have been minted on this site since 1076 and, though it is now an antiques showroom, visitors can see the priest's secret room and King Edward VI's bedroom. Any self-respecting old building has a ghost and the Mint House is no exception. In the 1580s an Elizabethan woman, the mistress of the London merchant Thomas Dight, lived at the house. Coming back unexpectedly, Dight found her in bed with her lover. Incensed with jealousy, Dight ordered

ARTS HUT

Gardner Street, Herstmonceux, East Sussex BN27 4LE

Tel: 01323 831831

e-mail: anna@artshut.com

website: www.artshut.com

Arts Hut is the studio gallery of artist Anna Wilson-Patterson situated in the picturesque village of Herstmonceux. Anna's current paintings are inspired by country life: walking her dog at dawn and dusk has ensured that she meets fascinating locals, with two feet, four feet or exotic feathers. Invitations to nearby farms, yards, fields and barns have inspired her tiny mono-prints and collages, and also exciting and colourful life-size portraits of poultry and cattle. Visitors will also find seasonal collections of distinctive work by other local artists – for anyone who is inspired by home-grown rural art with a contemporary twist, this is definitely a place to seek out. Built in 1727, the premises, which were previously the Old Sweet Factory, have been restored to include an elegant beamed gallery showing original drawings, paintings, prints and sculpture. Within Anna's studio are displays of smaller items – ceramics, wood, textiles and glass. In the cottage Sculpture Garden are large metal, stone and ceramic pieces. Arts Hut is *the* place to find a personal treat or a gift for a special friend among the wide range of original and unique artefacts: dramatic landscapes; poultry, cattle, sheep and pig prints; flocks of ceramic birds and some very dotty pots and textiles. Arts Hut is open 9 - 5pm Wednesday - Saturday.



East Dean

Distance: 6.0 miles (9.6 kilometres)

Typical time: 180 mins

Height gain: 17 metres

Map: Explorer 123

Walk: www.walkingworld.com ID:590

Contributor: Martin Heaps

ACCESS INFORMATION:

The start and end point are easily accessible from Eastbourne town centre with a bus stop only a few yards away. For the energetic, the start point can be accessed by walking from the town centre along the A259 towards Brighton, but the climb up East Dean Hill can be taxing.

DESCRIPTION:

An easy walk on grassy downland paths and farm tracks. Navigation is straightforward and paths are well marked. The climb up East Dean Hill can be taxing but is certainly rewarding.

FEATURES:

Sea, pub, toilets, National Trust/NTS, great views.

WALK DIRECTIONS:

- 1 | The start of the walk is well-defined, just a few yards from the bus stop. Walk along the grassy path towards the sea and enjoy the fine views over Eastbourne and further east towards the Pevensey Marshes and Hastings. The Royal Sovereign Light can be seen out to sea.
- 2 | The triangulation point soon comes into view with the dew-pond nearby. Bear right towards the road and keep to the right to reach Waypoint 3.
- 3 | Be careful when crossing the road as it does get busy, especially in summer. Pass through the gate and after a short while you are walking amongst the sheep. Please keep your dog on a lead. The path can get muddy, particularly around the gates. Continue to follow the path to the wonderfully-named Crapham Bottom and into East Hale Bottom. There is a newly-

built pumping station, which has been built in sympathy with the area. Walk on through the next gate and past a group of farm buildings to join a concrete track at Cornish Farm.

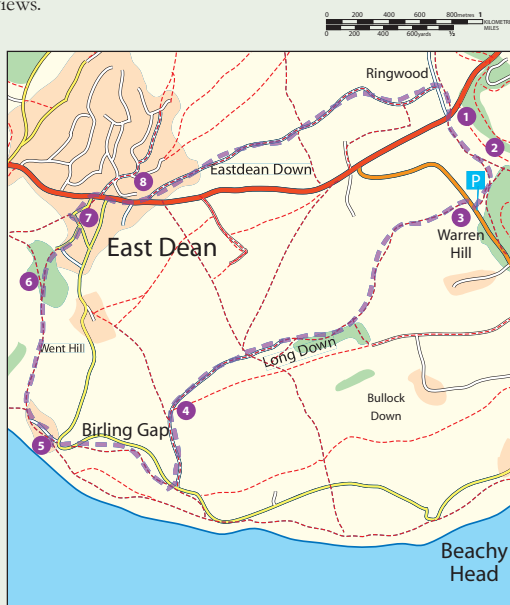
4 | The track leads directly towards Belle Tout, a disused lighthouse and now a residential home. Follow the path to the road, cross to join the path and turn right towards Birling Gap.

5 | Walk through the car park towards the toilet block and turn left onto the stony track.

6 | A gradual climb to Went Hill, but be careful not to miss the path on the right leading downhill towards East Dean. The path bears right to a gate and then past several houses to become a narrow road. The road emerges on to the village green and the Tiger pub is a welcome sight.

7 | The Tiger has a wide range of meals and refreshments and the green can be used for picnics.

8 | Facing The Tiger, walk to the left and onto the main road. At the road turn right and on the left is Downsview Lane. This track runs parallel to the road through the golf course and back to the start of the walk.



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WESTHAM

4 miles NE of Eastbourne on the B2191

This pretty village is home to one of the most ruggedly beautiful churches in Sussex, dating from the 14th century and much patched and braced over the years. Inside the church there is a memorial to John Thatcher, who died in 1649 and left his estate to the 'Old Brethren' in the hope that Roman Catholicism would one day be the religion of England once more.

EAST DEAN

3 miles W of Eastbourne off the A259

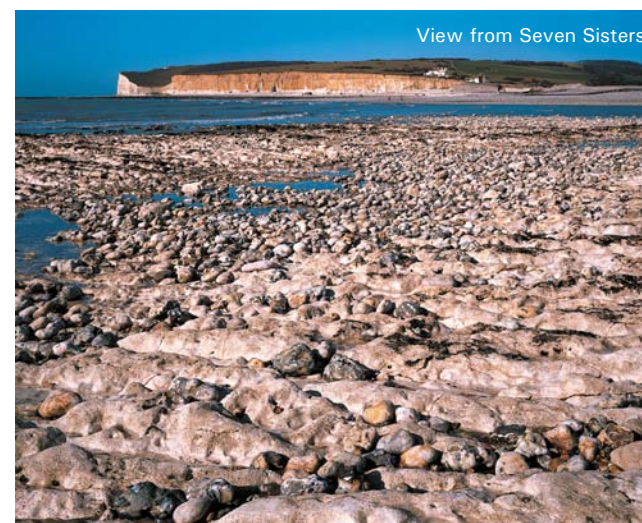
📍 South Downs AONB 📍 Seven Sisters

This charming village at the foot of the South Downs is one of the county's most picturesque, with its village green surrounded by flint cottages, a pub and an ancient church.

During the 18th century, the local parson, Jonathan Darby, is said to have made a cave in the nearby cliffs from which he could display a huge lantern on stormy nights to warn sailors of the hidden rocks. However, some say that

the reason for his retreat to the caves was actually to get away from Mrs Darby!

Just south of the village, right on the coast, is Birling Gap, a huge cleft in the cliffs that offers the only access to the beach between Eastbourne and Cuckmere Haven. Naturally, this was a great place for smugglers who landed their contraband here before making their way



HIKERS REST COFFEE AND GIFT SHOP

Village Green Lane, East Dean, East Sussex, BN20 0DR

Tel: 01323 423733

e-mail: kimsbearer@btconnect.com

website: www.beachyhead.org

The Hikers Rest Coffee and Gift Shop is everything it says in its name and more! A perfect position for walkers and visitors to the area, The Hikers Rest is situated on the beautiful village green, a great starting point for your walk over to the cliff tops and the nearby Seven Sisters.

Open since March 2007, this welcoming café and gift shop offers tasty light lunches and sandwiches all of which are freshly prepared in the 'farmhouse' kitchen. For those who have a sweet tooth there is also a selection of delicious cakes and cream teas. With a great selection of coffee's and tea's plus wines and beers for those who want something stronger, there is something for everyone. Inside there is seating for 40, plus comfy sofa area. There is further seating on the patio as well as benches on the nearby village green. Alternatively the friendly staff can prepare a picnic for you to takeaway and enjoy on your walk.

Free parking close by and toilet facilities for the disabled make this a practical spot for all visitors. The Gift Shop offers a wide range of gifts and paintings. Open Tues - Fri 10am - 4.30pm & Sat/Sun 10am - 5.30pm.



up the steep steps to the cliff top. This stretch of the coast, during the 18th century, was controlled by a particularly notorious gang led by Stanton Collins. He had his headquarters in Alfriston, and on one particular night, the gang are said to have moved the lumps of chalk from the cliff path so that pursuing customs officers could not find their way. One unfortunate officer fell over the cliff edge but miraculously held on by his fingertips. The gang came upon him and stamped on his fingertips, causing him to fall to his death. Stretching between Birling Gap and Cuckmere Haven in the **South Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty** are the gleaming white cliffs of the **Seven Sisters**, huge blocks of chalk that guard the coast between Eastbourne and Seaford. The downland is home to a wide variety of birds, including the skylark, and butterflies. There are traces here of ancient

settlements, including a Beaker settlement at Belle Tout, east of Birling Gap, and Bronze Age barrows at Belle Tout and Crowlink.

FRISTON

3½ miles W of Eastbourne on the A259

This is rather more a hamlet than a village, as only a part Norman church and a Tudor manor house can now be found around the village pond. The churchyard, however, is interesting as it contains the grave of the composer and virtuoso violin and viola player Frank Bridge, one of the pioneers of 20th century English music and also the mentor and teacher of Benjamin Britten. Born in Brighton, Bridge lived in Friston for much of his life though he died in Eastbourne in 1941 - the south door was placed here in his memory. Britten was his pupil from the age of 12 and dedicated his *Sinfonietta* to his teacher. Later, he

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Countryside at Friston

River Cuckmere, which in his day formed a much deeper and wider estuary.

The village is now the home of **Charleston Manor**, an ancient house built in 1080 for William the Conqueror's cupbearer. Recorded in the Domesday Book as Cerlestone, the house has been added to over the years and forms the centrepiece of a remarkable garden. Planted in the narrow valley, just north of Westdean's centre, the parterres and terraces give the garden something of a Continental look and feel.

SEAFORD

8 miles W of Eastbourne on the A259

Museum Seaford Head

wrote *Variations on a Theme of Frank Bridge*, which became a popular classic. The village pond, too, has a claim to fame as it was the first in the country to be designated an ancient monument.

To the north and west of the village lies Friston Forest, 1,600 acres of woodland planted in 1927 by the Forestry Commission. Among the fast-growing pine trees slower-growing broad-leaved trees have also been planted. There is a waymarked circular tour through the forest.

WEST DEAN

5 miles W of Eastbourne off the A259

Charleston Manor

Though the village is only a couple of miles from the south coast and close to Eastbourne, its position, hidden among trees in a downland combe, gives an impression that it is an isolated, timeless place. King Alfred is thought to have had a palace here, and no more idyllic spot could be found for such a place. Alfred is also said to have kept a great fleet here on the

Once a thriving port on the River Ouse, Seaford was also a member of the confederation of Cinque Ports. Following a great storm in the 16th century, which changed the course of the River Ouse, Seaford lost its harbour and also its livelihood to the newly established Newhaven. Traces of the old medieval seafaring town can still be seen around the old church but, overshadowed by Brighton and Eastbourne on either side, the town never gained the status of its neighbours. The building of the esplanade in the 1870s did bring some development as a modest resort, but the constant pounding of the sea, particularly in winter, has kept the development small.

However, during the threat of a possible French invasion in the early 19th century, Seaford was considered important enough to be the site of the most westerly Martello Tower - this one is number 74. Today it is the home of the **Seaford Museum of Local History**, and among the exhibits in this friendly and lively museum are a World War II

kitchen, radio sets and mementos from shipwrecks. The tower's contemporary cannon stands on the roof, from where there are magnificent views over the town and beyond.

To the west of the town lies **Seaford Head**, an excellent place from which to view the Seven Sisters (see under East Dean page 217). The local nature reserve here is home to over 250 species of plants and the reserve supports a wealth of wildfowl on its extensive mudflats, meadowland and downland. A footpath runs to the Seven Sisters Country Park.

JEVINGTON

3½ mile NW of Eastbourne off the A22

This old smugglers' village was established during the time of Alfred the Great by another Saxon called Jeva. Inside the parish church, which can be found along a tree-lined lane, there is a primitive Saxon sculpture. The tower dates from the 10th century. During the 18th century, when smuggling was rife in the area, the local gang brought their illegal goods up here from Birling Gap and stored them in the cellars of the village rectory. The gang used the local inn as their headquarters - conveniently their leader was the innkeeper who was also the ringleader of a group of highwaymen; he was finally caught and hanged in the 1760s.

ALFRISTON

6 miles NW of Eastbourne off the A27

 Star Inn  Market Cross

 Cathedral of the Downs  Clergy House

Alfriston is one of the oldest and best preserved villages in Sussex. The settlement was founded in Saxon times and it grew to become an important port and market town on the River Cuckmere. The old market cross still stands in the square, one of two left in the

county (the other is in Chichester). However, it has not escaped the ravages of time as it was smashed by a lorry and repaired by replacing the shaft.

One of the oldest buildings remaining in the town is the **Star Inn**, built in the early 15th century as a resting place for pilgrims on their way to and from the shrine of St Richard at Chichester. Inside can still be seen the original medieval carvings of animals on the ceiling beams. Another ancient inn, the **Market Cross**, had no fewer than six staircases, and during the 19th century was the headquarters of the notorious gang of smugglers led by Stanton Collins (see also under East Dean). Though he was never arrested for smuggling, Collins was eventually caught for sheep stealing and, as punishment, was transported to Australia. It was tales of Stanton Collins and other local gangs that inspired Rudyard Kipling, living at nearby Rottingdean, to write his atmospheric poem, *A Smuggler's Song*.

The former prosperity of the town is reflected in its splendid 14th-century parish church that is often referred to as the **Cathedral of the Downs**. As recently as the 1930s, local shepherds would be buried here with a scrap of raw wool in their hand - a custom that served to inform the keeper of the gates of heaven that the deceased's poor church attendance was due to his obligation to his flock.

Beside the church is the thatched and timbered **Clergy House**, the first building to be acquired - for £10 - by the National Trust, in 1896. A marvellous example of a 14th-century Wealden hall house, its splendid condition today is due to the skilful renovation of Alfred Powell, who managed to save both its crown pot roof and the original timbers. Visitors to the house can see an interesting

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exhibition on medieval construction techniques. The house is surrounded by a magnificent and traditional cottage garden that includes rare flowers grown since Roman times and almost lost to cultivation.

By contrast, to the north of the village lies Drusillas Park, a child-friendly zoo that is certain to delight the whole family. As well as housing over 90 species in imaginative and naturalistic enclosures, it also has a creative play area, a train ride and attractive gardens.

WILMINGTON

5 miles NW of Eastbourne off the A27

 Priory  Long Man

This delightful village, with its mix of building styles, is home to the historic remains of **Wilmington Priory**. Founded in the 11th century by William the Conqueror's half brother, Robert de Mortain, as an outpost of the Benedictine Abbey of Grestain in Normandy, the priory was already in steady decline by the time of the Dissolution. Many of the buildings were incorporated into a farmhouse, but other parts remain on their own including the prior's chapel, which is now the parish church of St Mary and St Peter.

Cut into the chalk of Windover Hill is Wilmington's famous **Long Man**, which took its present form in 1874. There is much debate about the age of the Long Man and archaeologists and historians have been baffled for centuries. The earliest record of this giant is dated 1710, but this is inconclusive as it could be prehistoric or the work of an artistic monk from the local priory. However, what is known is that, at over 235 feet high, it is the largest such representation of a man in Europe. The giant, standing with a 250-foot shaft in each hand, is remarkable, as the design takes account of the slope of the hill and

appears perfectly proportioned even when viewed from below. Covered up during World War II, as the white chalk was thought to be a navigation aid to German bombers, the Long Man was outlined in concrete blocks in 1969.

ALCISTON

7½ miles NW of Eastbourne off the A27

 Dovecote

This quiet hamlet, which once belonged to Battle Abbey, became known as the 'forgotten village' after its inhabitants left following the ravages of the Black Death and settled close by. The villagers left, among other buildings, a 13th-century church, which had been built on a hill on the foundations of a Saxon structure to avoid flooding, and 14th-century Alciston Court, that was once used by the monks. During the Middle Ages, the tenant farmers paid a rent to the abbot of Battle in the form of one tenth of their annual farm output and, at harvest time each year, this was brought to the abbey's vast medieval tithe barn that still looms in front of the church. After the village was abandoned, Alciston Court became a farmhouse. The remains of a large **Medieval Dovecote** can also be seen close by. During the winter, large numbers of pigeons would be kept here to help supplement the villagers' dreary winter diet.

SELMESTON

8 miles NW of Eastbourne off the A27

 Charleston

This ancient hamlet, which is sometimes pronounced 'Simson', was the site where, during the 1930s, archaeologists discovered tools, weapons and pottery fragments in the churchyard, thought to date from the New Stone Age. However, though the finds are interesting in themselves, Selmeston is better

remembered as being the home of Vanessa Bell, the artist. Vanessa moved here to **Charleston** in 1916, with her art critic husband, Clive, and her lover, fellow artist Duncan Grant.

Over the next 50 years, the intellectual and artist group that became known as the Bloomsbury Group frequented the house. David Barnett, John Maynard Keynes, E M Forster, Lytton Strachey, Roger Fry and Virginia and Leonard Woolf, who lived not far away at Rodmell, were all frequent visitors. During the 1930s, the interior of the house was completely transformed as the group used their artistic skills to cover almost every wall, floor, ceiling, and even the furniture, with their own murals, fabrics, carpets and wallpapers. They hung their own paintings on the walls, including a self-portrait of Vanessa Bell and one of Grace Higgens, the valued housekeeper, along with works by Picasso, Renoir, Sickert, Derain, Henry Lamb and others. The garden of the house, too, was not forgotten and a delightful walled cottage garden was created at the same time with carefully laid out mosaic pathways, tiled pools, sculptures and a scented rose garden. Following Duncan Grant's death in 1978, a trust was formed to save the house and garden, restoring them to their former glory. This unique task has been described as "one of the most difficult and imaginative feats of restoration" to be carried out in Britain. A Day in the Life of Charleston is an award-winning tour exploring the details of a working day at Charleston and includes an opportunity to see the kitchen and Vanessa Bell's studio.



UPPER DICKER

8 miles NW of Eastbourne off the A22

Michelham Priory Priory Gardens

This hamlet, which overlooks the River Cuckmere, is centred around a minor crossroads in an area that was once known as 'Dyker Waste'. In 1229, Augustinian canons chose this as the site for the beautiful **Michelham Priory**. Founded by Gilbert de Aquila, the Norman Lord of Pevensey, the six-acre site is surrounded on three sides by the River Cuckmere and on the other by a slow flowing moat - England's longest water-filled medieval moat. The slow moving water is still used to power an old mill where traditionally ground flour is produced in small batches. A splendid gatehouse to the priory was added in the 14th century and the priory continued to flourish until the Dissolution of the Monasteries.

After the Dissolution, the priory came into the hands of first the Pelham family and then the Sackville family who, in the 300 years of their ownership, incorporated some of the priory's buildings into a Tudor farmhouse that went on to become the focal point of a large agricultural estate. Today, the grand Tudor farmhouse rooms are furnished with a

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collection of Dutch paintings, Flemish tapestries and old English furniture, and the gatehouse, topped by the Pevensey coat of arms, is home to a working forge.

Michelham Priory Gardens are equally interesting and cover a range of styles. To the south of the house is a physic herb garden containing plants that were, and still are, grown for their medicinal and culinary benefits. There is also a re-created cloister garden, which illustrates the ability of the original monks to combine a pleasing garden with one that requires little maintenance. An Elizabethan Great Barn can also be found in the grounds of the priory, as can the medieval watermill, and the river and moat attract a variety of waterfowl throughout the year.

LAUGHTON

11 miles NW of Eastbourne on the B2124

This scattered village, isolated on the Glynde Levels, was once home to flourishing marble mines, potteries and a brickworks. Laughton Place, built in 1534, was one of the first brick buildings constructed in Sussex. The interior of the village church, which lies some way from the village centre, is dominated by a stone war memorial that features a soldier and sailor, both carved in minute detail.

HALLAND

13 miles NW of Eastbourne on the A22

Bentley House & Motor Museum

Just to the south of Halland lies the fascinating **Bentley House and Motor Museum**. Covering some 100 acres of beautiful Sussex countryside, the estate cleverly combines a wildfowl reserve, a stately home and a museum in order to provide a fun day out for all the family. Originally a modest

17th-century farmhouse, Bentley was transformed into a splendid Palladian mansion by the architect Raymond Erith, who also oversaw the restoration of 10, 11 and 12 Downing Street in the 1960s. Exquisitely furnished throughout, the house is particularly renowned for its Chinese Room and the Philip Rickman gallery, which contains a collection of over 150 wildfowl watercolours by the celebrated Sussex artist.

The formal gardens surrounding the house are laid out in a series of rooms, separated by yew hedges, and they often follow a colour theme. Beyond the house are the grounds and a woodland walk through the cool tranquillity of Glyndebourne Wood. The Motor Museum comprises a superb collection of privately owned vintage cars and motorcycles, which follow the history of motoring from its infancy in the Edwardian era to an elegant modern Lamborghini.

The waterfowl collection, which includes swans, geese, ducks and flamingos, was begun in the 1960s by Gerald Askew. The emphasis at the wildfowl centre is on conservation and breeding, particularly of the world's endangered birds.

EAST HOATHLY

12 miles NW of Eastbourne off the A22

Situated some 20 miles from West Hoathly, this compact village was immortalised by Thomas Turner in his *Diary of East Hoathly*. Although the village church was almost completely rebuilt in the mid 19th century, the 15th-century squat tower remains from the original building. Known as a Pelham Tower, because it was built by the local Pelham family, the structure has a belt buckle carved on it on either side of the door. This distinctive emblem was awarded to Sir John Pelham for

PEKES MANOR HOUSE

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East Sussex BN27 4AD

Tel: 020 7352 8088

e-mail: pekes.afa@virgin.net

website: www.pekesmanor.com



Pekes Manor House and the surrounding properties on the 28-acre estate offer exceptional self-catering accommodation in lovely countryside. It was a Monsieur de Peke, an aide to William the Conqueror, who built the first house on the site, a large one-room Norman hall. Only his name survives, but what now stands on the site is an eight-bedroom residence dating in the main from 1550. The superb interior retains many original features, including beams, panelling and beautiful period furnishings.

The eight bedrooms are serviced by four bathrooms and there are three reception rooms. The oldest part is the kitchen, which retains oak beams, the original brick floor, a large hearth and lattice windows. Down the years, the house passed through the hands of several farming families before being bought in 1908 by the grandfather of the current owner Eva Morris. He restored the property and the neighbouring properties and created a beautiful garden, including a walled vegetable garden and a croquet lawn. The Edwardian Wing, originally a cowshed, was converted in 1911 to make a drawing room and library for the manor house and now provides quiet and comfort in two bedrooms.

Elsewhere on the estate are several equally distinctive self-catering properties, with accommodation varying from 4/5 to 11 guests. The largest is the Oast House, a 'fairy tale' property with two circular towers and its own jacuzzi. Tudor Cottage, built in 1937; Mounts View Cottage – with a state-of-the-art barrel sauna on the terrace; and Gate Cottage with its own garden.

his part in capturing King John of France at Poitiers in 1356. One of the door emblems has a deep slit in it that was supposedly caused by a bullet fired at Sir Nicholas Pelham in the 17th century. The failed murderer is said to have been a Cavalier, Thomas Lunsford, who joined the French army after being exiled for the attempted murder. He returned to Britain to fight with the king during the Civil War, then emigrated to America and died in Virginia in the 1650s.

CHIDDINGLY

10½ miles NW of Eastbourne off the A22

This small village is dominated by the 15th-century spire of its church, which, at 130 feet, is a useful local landmark. Inside the church is an impressive monument to Sir John Jefferay,

Baron of the Exchequer under Queen Elizabeth, who lived at nearby Chiddingly Place - a once splendid Tudor mansion that is now in ruins.

However, his memorial is overshadowed by that of his daughter and son-in-law, who both appear to be standing on drums. Tradition has it that the Jefferay family once laid a line of cheeses from their manor house to the church door so that they would not get their feet wet. So the large discs of Sussex marble could, in fact, be a reference to those cheeses!

Curiously, the monuments have lost hands and fingers over the years as enraged locals knocked them off, thinking that the family were related to Judge Jeffreys, who presided at the Bloody Assizes.

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