

Your Weekly Business Bulletin from Thanet & East Kent Chamber

Thanet & East Kent Insider

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1. Turner Contemporary

The Chamber business breakfast on 11th May 2010 featured an inspiring presentation by Paul Hart, Head of Operations and Research at the Turner Contemporary gallery, Due to open in spring 2011 in time for next year's tourist season, the gallery is expected to make a major contribution to the regeneration of Margate and the neighbouring coastal towns. Paul assured delegates that "There will always be at least one painting by Turner on display" as befits "arguably Britain's greatest painter". Paul envisages a programme of three major exhibitions a year but with an additional blockbuster exhibition in the first twelve months of the gallery's existence. Keen students of art and business will appreciate the contribution to the local economy from a successful exhibition. The Treasures of Tutankhamun exhibition at the British museum ran for six months from 30th March 1972 and attracted 1.6 million visitors. Paul Gray expects the major attractions to be scheduled for the low season of January to March when tourist numbers are traditionally at their lowest. Kent County Council (KCC), the Arts Council and the South East England Development Agency (SEEDA) have provided the finance for the gallery which, supplemented by donations, has produced the £17.4 million finance needed to complete the construction. KCC will remain the freehold owner. Since 1st April this year, the Turner Contemporary has been an independent trust and a tenant of KCC. An annual turnover of £2.2 million is targeted with a throughput of 150,000 visitors per year. Admission to the gallery is expected to be mostly free but it is anticipated that sales from the shop and café will contribute towards the running costs. The project is currently on time and on budget. A "big Emin show" will be offered in the first year, celebrating the work of Tracy Emin, who of course was shortlisted for the Turner Prize in 1999 following her My Bed exhibit at the Tate Gallery. Throughout the presentation, Paul Gray emphasized the world-class nature of the new gallery and the iconic status of its architect, David Chipperfield who, he concluded, "may be appreciated more overseas than he is at home". The gallery is committed to working with local suppliers wherever possible and is currently looking for a caterer.

2. What Has Art Got To Do With Business?

A fair question that deserves an answer. There is a direct comparison with the Columbia Museum of Art (CMA) in South Carolina. We know from a recent economic impact study of 2008 by Millo Gallo & Associates that the CMA directly and indirectly supports more than 370 jobs in the Columbia area and generates more than USD 23, 000,000 in economic activity annually. It is estimated that the City of Columbia, Richland County and the surrounding area receive a more than a sixteen-fold return on their combined USD 1,426,000 investment in the museum through increased tourism, retail sales, support of the local labour force and accommodation and hospitality tax revenues. Events and outreach programmes touch an average of 10,700 people per month. Overnight visitors spend USD 8.2 million per year in Columbia directly on lodging, retail and restaurant/bar expenditures. CMA's arts education programs reach over 28,000 local children per year. The South Carolina Arts Commission commissioned a survey which indicated that "99% of CEO's state that the availability of cultural activities is an important consideration when choosing a new location". The study was completed before CMA's record-breaking exhibition in 2009 entitled interestingly, "From Turner to Cézanne". Now there's an idea.

3. Manston

This is the final call for delegates interested in the business opportunities resulting from the expansion of Kent International Airport at Manston. Daily Manston – Edinburgh flights begin on 27th May 2010. A business networking breakfast is scheduled at the airport on Thursday 20th May 2010 from 0730 hrs to 0900 hrs. Speakers include senior decision-makers from the airport owner, Infratil, and the UK's busiest domestic airline, Flybe. Booking is essential. Reserve your place by email to manager@tekc.co.uk with the subject line "Airport Business Breakfast". Price: members £12.00, non-members £15.00.

4. Not Quite A Million Exclusive

Chamber member The Fire Strategy Company was established by Russ Timpson in 2004. Building on his experience as Group Fire Safety Manager at BAA and operating from a base at Manston on the fringe of Kent International Airport, Russ quickly established a reputation for providing high quality bespoke fire engineering solutions. Additional services were soon added to the product list that now includes business continuity planning. Steady growth ensured

a solid client base that includes well-known names such as Bulmers, Cuisine de France and Mitsui Sumitomo. Official confidence in the company's expertise can be measured by the patronage of public sector bodies The Palace of Westminster, HM Treasury and Imperial College London. A recent addition to the portfolio is a New Heritage Salvage Course which offers training in the recovery of highly valuable artifacts, paintings, books and furniture at times of flood, fire or other high risk events. The coalition agreement between the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats released on 12th May 2010 promised to block new runways at Stansted, Gatwick and Heathrow. This increases the value of Kent International Airport at Manston. Any company supplying services to our local airport is in a favoured position. We do not know if this was uppermost in the minds of Zeta Compliance Group Ltd, but we are sure that on that same day Zeta announced that it had bought The Fire Strategy Company in a deal that will net the owners a possible £945,000. Russ Timpson remains as the Managing Director of The Fire Strategy Company. In an exclusive interview with the Thanet & East Kent Insider, Russ said that he is looking forward to taking full advantage of the new opportunities presented by the increased resources available from Zeta. He also emphasized the contribution made by his staff and expressed his full confidence in the new owners. East Kent should also stand gain from the deal as the company enlarges its list of local suppliers. Zeta has a published policy to support the area around their operational bases, "We strive to help and improve the communities where we work and live" For full details of The Fire Strategy Company's services, telephone 01843 826282.

5. Silly Article

Noted for its trenchant support of business, the high quality of its prose and the occasional dramatic scoop, the Daily Telegraph does sometimes stray from the straight and narrow. At least, this appears to be the case in a recent article on Lydd Airport by Clive Aslet, whose main job is as the Editor-At-Large of Country Life magazine. Although the latest edition of Country Life has the headline, "What have the Romans done for us?", it would be completely wrong to dismiss this publication as backward-looking as it has championed the cause of rural living with distinction since its very first edition in 1897. However, both the Telegraph and the magazine may have cause to reflect on the article of 1 May 2010 which states, "The county already has the proudly named Kent International Airport at Manston, outside Ramsgate, which lurches from crisis to crisis, its commercial future invariably on life support. Why should Lydd fare any better? It is quite likely, say local campaigners, to do worse. Manston not only has an extra-long runway, bequeathed by the Americans who wanted to land B52 bombers, but good road links." Clive is right about the road links but woefully wrong about the crisis. He is rightly rebuked by one informed commentator; see comments at <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/earth/environment/7657908/Romney-Marsh-and-keeping-the-Lydd-on-aviation-pressures.html> Thanet & East Kent Chamber will continue to promote the interests of our corner of East Kent however misinformed remote critics may be. We look forward to working with our elected representatives in parliament and local government to ensure that our members in urban and rural communities are represented fairly and positively in the media.

6. Arts Festival

Earlier today, Thanet & East Kent Chamber joined with our associates at the Dover District Chamber of Commerce to present an Arts Festival at Dover College featuring Chamber members Cloudberry Ltd and Lovelys Gallery. The previous day, Allain Renoux, the famous French artist, had conducted Master Classes for local school children. Renoux was undoubtedly one of the stars at the festival which took place in the 12th century refectory of Dover College. Cloudberry reported strong sales until just before 3.00 pm when fans of Portsmouth and Chelsea were understandably distracted by the afternoon's FA Cup Final. The music on offer was of the highest order with distinguished performances from a tenor, a mezzo-soprano, a piano soloist and the intriguingly named, Zen Bicycle Band. The visiting contingent from France supplied the duo Les Bellejolaises who offered an original set of lively songs in English and French. Busy all day was the French wine grower, Jean-Luc Longère, who sold his wine by the glass and by the case. Centre stage were the artists. Graham Clarke, an official Kent Ambassador, was fully occupied signing his books and prints to eager purchasers as well as entertaining the whole hall with an impromptu spirited performance on his concertina. Kent artist Martin Aynscombe-Harris took delight in explaining where he found the inspiration for his celebrated paintings. Aynscombe-Harris will be travelling to France next month to participate in our sister festival at the Biennale D'Art Figuratif. The works of Kent's own Cheryl Culver and Judith Gardner were also roundly praised. Visitors were treated to a preview of the designs for a National War Memorial on Dover's Western Heights by John Pegg of Craft:Pegg Architects. The memorial is intended to celebrate the 1.7 million servicemen, women and civilians who gave their lives in the first and second world wars. The whole festival was filmed for television. A DVD will also be produced in the next few weeks. BBC Radio Kent featured a report on their Saturday show which can be heard for the next seven days on the BBC iPlayer at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/iplayer/console/p007rt4v> by fast forwarding to 2.18.30. The festival website with links to the exhibitors and sponsors can be found at www.doverartsfestival.org.uk.

7. Risk-free Profit Growth Proposal

Alchemy is the ancient science of turning base metal into gold leading to wisdom, wealth and longevity. This must one of the reasons behind the choice of name for the Alchemy-Network programmes offered by Chamber member, Edward McCann. Marketing and business development are the main features of the services on offer to business owners together with an undertaking that payment is by results. As Edward McCann puts it, "All payment for the service comes as a small percentage of the extra income generated by the Alchemy-Network programme."

Qualifying companies must be in the bracket of 8 – 249 employees and have an annual turnover between £400,000 and £2,000,000. To avoid any conflict of interest, a strict ethical policy dictates that no two companies from the same sector are accepted as clients. Too good to be true? Find out by giving Edward McCann a call, tel: 01843 596 708 or email: Edward.m@alchemy-network.com.

8. Nick Ewbank

Anyone who is familiar with the magnificent support to East Kent's by its number one benefactor, Roger De Haan, will be aware of the contribution made to the operations of The Creative Foundation by Nick Ewbank. His work in cultural regeneration in East Kent is unique. Since arriving in Folkestone in 2001, Nick has worked with business and the public sector to bring positive social change. Nick has announced his departure as Artistic Director of The Creative Foundation, prompting Roger De Haan, Chairman of the Trustees, to write, "His innovative approach, energy and vision have been key ingredients in moving this project forward from tiny beginnings to the major initiative that is now recognized nationally. We have been extremely fortunate to have him here". Praise is also recorded from Professor Michael Wright, Chairman of the Governors of Thanet College and outgoing Vice Chancellor of Canterbury Christ Church University who notes what Nick has brought to education as "an innovative and committed contributor". Similar fine words from the South East Director of the Arts Council, Sally Adams, confirm that "Nick's energy and vision will be greatly missed". The Thanet & East Kent Insider wishes Nick every success with his new independent company and looks forward to working with him on future initiatives to stimulate the economy of East Kent.

9. Maximum Support To Employers

Maximus Employment & Training UK is a welfare to work provider specialising in helping the disadvantaged in the labour market to gain employment. The Maximus group of companies operates throughout the UK, Europe, Australia, the United States, Canada and Israel. Ramsgate now hosts its own Maximus office in the Argyle Centre where Business Manager Lesley Game assisted by Chris Bishop, Kerry Jones, Nicky Charles and Sara Lawrie offers a free recruitment service. In an email to the Thanet & East Kent Insider, Chris Bishop writes that he is keen to work with local companies as "It is our objective to place the right people into the right jobs so naturally they will sustain". To find out more, give Chris a call, tel: 01843 808410 or email cbishop@maximusuk.co.uk.

10. Politics & Put Downs

Clement Atlee is the much respected Labour Prime Minister of the immediate post-war years who oversaw the creation of the NHS and is generally considered to have offered a praiseworthy example of consensual government. It was not always the case. He was famously described by Winston Churchill as "A modest man, but then he has so much to be modest about". Indeed after his death in 1967 aged 84, his estate was valued at £7,295, a modest sum indeed which is comfortably below the current estate duty threshold of £325,000 and somewhat more below what the children of modern Prime Ministers may fairly expect to inherit. Television occasionally gives us a classic put down moment. Some readers may recall Caroline Aherne's remark on the Mrs Merton Show when interviewing Debbie McGee the young wife of an ageing magician, "So what first attracted you to the millionaire Paul Daniels?" Our traditionally adversarial political system specializes in witty but harsh personal criticism and has provided us with some memorable moments. David Cameron first came to the attention of many as a future Prime Minister when he introduced himself at Question Time with the following description of Tony Blair, "He was the future once". The Conservative Party has a record of delivering its most damning verdicts on itself, as illustrated by Thanet's erstwhile MP, Jonathan Aitken, who described his leader, Margaret Thatcher thus, "She probably thinks Sinai is the plural of sinus". All jolly good stuff. The Labour Party has had some stars in its ranks nevertheless. Denis Healey's remark on debating with Geoffrey Howe as "like being savaged by a dead sheep" has passed into contemporary folklore. Sweetness and light was not much in evidence between the Liberals and Tories in Victorian times, as evidenced by Disraeli's indictment of Gladstone, "He has not a single redeeming defect". Although the great Winston has been somewhat unfairly criticized for spending the best years of his life in preparing impromptu speeches, he remains the master of the English Language as his Nobel Prize for Literature rightly recognised. We leave the final comment to our greatest leader and parliamentary orator and his portrait of that most modest of Prime Ministers, Clement Atlee, as "A sheep in sheep's clothing". It doesn't get much better than that.

11. Our Sponsors

Girlings Solicitors has been managing the managing the legal affairs of commercial and private clients for over a century. Twenty-six partners and one hundred and twenty members of staff ensure a comprehensive range of services from the local offices in Ashford, Canterbury, Folkestone, Herne Bay and Margate. Offices in France and Spain complement specialist departments for charities, individuals and companies. For details, telephone 01843 220274. Express By Holiday Inn took on the daunting task of restoring the former Prospect Inn at Minster. The result is a spectacular hotel that combines the best of Oliver Hill's 1930s design with ultra modern facilities and technological support. Conveniently located for business guests and holiday makers in East Kent, the meeting rooms and 105 bedrooms are available at competitive prices throughout the year. For details, telephone 01843 820250. Adecco is the world's largest HR solutions company offering a comprehensive service of temporary and contract staffing, permanent recruitment, outsourcing, outplacement, career services, training and consulting. Officially designated as a 2009 British Superbrand, Adecco is represented in Thanet and Dover by its Broadstairs office, tel: 01843 609292. CARISS design, install and support education and business computing systems as East Kent's leading specialist company in Open Source Software. To lower your carbon footprint, reduce your power consumption and adopt a thin client system, call CARISS, tel: 01843 823724. Mach Associates are the high-fliers in providing Internet technologies and specialist software solutions with a particular expertise in servicing the travel industry. A Microsoft Gold Certified Partner and with ISO9001 accreditation, Mach Associates also offers reduces telecom operating cost through VOIP/PBX phone systems. tel: 0870 321 9986. Sota Connect offers a comprehensive IT service covering best-value voice, data and Internet services for companies of all sizes as well as public sector organisations. The company operates two state-of-the-art data centres of over 10,000sq ft. Sota Connect owns and operates a unique 200km fibre network from London to Ramsgate with high bandwidth Internet access giving superfast Internet connections, tel: 0800 072 2420.



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It's happening now, it's happening in Thanet & East Kent.
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