



**In Memoriam
Rosie Anton
1959 – 2021**



Self Portrait, Rosie Anton

Rosie Anton was the official photographer of Dover District Chamber of Commerce and Thanet & East Kent Chamber. She was introduced to us at the Blériot Festival in July 2009 when the great and the good and the well monied curious of Kent convened at Dover Castle to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the first crossing of the channel by a heavier than air machine. The highlight of the evening was a fly-past by the Red Arrows and the French equivalent, Patrouille Acrobatique de France. The national dailies were all present together with a myriad of photographers from across the UK and France.

The main difference between Louis Blériot's XI machine of 3 cylinders and 25 horsepower and the BAE Systems Hawk T1 flown by the RAF's Red Arrows was that the Red Arrows were quicker. In fact, they were so quick that many of the photographers present did not manage to get their cameras out of their cases before "woooosh" the Red Arrows had been and gone. There was an audible murmur of satisfaction from the audience when the French Air Force's flight arrived a little later ... in second place.

But, in the competition to produce the best image, Rosie outperformed everyone. It was her image of the Red Arrows above Dover Castle that was the clear winner and was to feature prominently in subsequent publications including those of China Gateway International plc and many others.



Red Arrows over Dover, Rosie Anton

If you read almost any tourism brochure these days, it will claim something along the lines of ‘this wonderful town/resort/city/country is full of unique contrasts’. Rosie really was full of unique contrasts. Her clothes and fashion sense might have owed more to the past than to today, but her camera equipment was the most modern, the best she could afford and always in perfect condition

Trained by the prestigious St Martins College of Art and Canterbury Christ Church University College, Rosie produced commercial photography of the highest order and possessed the technology and postproduction skills to meet the needs and interests of the most demanding clients. She updated her skills at every opportunity and was a huge fan of the EKC Group, the South East’s leading Further Education body that has revitalised business training programmes in East Kent. Yet she would always add her own interpretation to the brief.



Going for a Spin at G Casino Westwood Cross, Rosie Anton



Victoria Cleland, Rosie Anton

When Rosie first submitted her images of a Chamber of Commerce event, it was clear and obvious that she could take some exquisite pictures of key decision-makers which would fit wonderfully well in that year’s East Kent Business Directory. Her image of Victoria Cleland, Chief Cashier of the Bank of England, displaying the new polymer five-pound note at our East Kent Business Conference was a fine example of professional expertise in challenging lighting conditions. Rosie was particularly intrigued by Victoria’s claim that: “*You can spill red wine on the note and it wipes away cleanly*”. When the new notes entered circulation shortly afterwards, Rosie was one of the first to put this to the test and, ever mindful of her duty, continued to do so on a regular basis.



A Generous Serving, Rosie Anton

What was less clear and obvious was why Rosie had taken 20 pictures of baked beans. After three years of working together, we got that down to around 6 baked beans pictures per business breakfast. After five years of baked beans, I gave up and then began to appreciate the significance of her commentary on the human condition; after all, perhaps we should all stop complaining so much, be more thankful and make the best of what we are served in life.

For the last two years, the headline picture on the Rosie Anton Photography website under the title 'Business Galleries Chamber of Commerce' has been a black and white image featuring nineteen empty teacups and saucers arranged in four neat rows. We simply do not know if Rosie had been planning to replace this with her celebrated baked beans. But, if she had done, you can be certain that they would have been presented in a stylish, idiosyncratic pattern.



Chamber of Commerce events, Rosie Anton

Rosie's clients included English Heritage, the Financial Times, Romney Marsh Wools and of course, Royal St. George's Golf Club. For many Chamber members, our next Chamber Charity Golf Day at this distinguished Sandwich venue on 2nd November 2021 will not be the same without the sight of Rosie on the course in her chauffeur-driven golf buggy and in complete command of her subjects in the clubhouse.



Claret Jug with Students & FE College Principal
Rosie Anton

Had it not been for her debilitating illness this summer, Rosie might well have been capturing images at The 149th Open at Royal St. George's last month. After all, in February 2020, she was ahead of every other commercial photographer in taking pictures of the Claret Jug on its first visit to Sandwich since 2011. In previous years she has been delighted to take a promising Further Education student around the course and pass on her knowledge of how to find Henri Cartier-Bresson's 'decisive moment'.

In her submission later that month to the R&A, organisers of golf's oldest major, Rosie wrote with typical candour:

"I specialise in images of people and their reactions. In essence, I can be relied upon to capture the human side of the championship as reflected in the spectators, their emotions and any unusual garment, hats, umbrellas or appendages. As a long-term resident of Sandwich, I am keen for the benefits of The Open to be understood and reflected in the media surrounding the event and the enduring legacy imprinted on the minds of the East Kent community."

Whereas all the other photographers would have been focussing on the fairways and the greens, in unique contrast Rosie would have had her back to the golfers to highlight "the human side".

Rosie loved her work, she loved her art, she loved Sandwich, she loved her job and those of us in the East Kent business community came to love her style and unique personality.

Hippocrates may have been one of the first to declare that: "Life is short, art is eternal" but it is perhaps as true today as it was then. Rosie has certainly left her own enduring legacy which will be imprinted on our minds for many, many years to come.



Chamber Garden Party, Rosie Anton

It is appropriate that the final comment should be from Adrian Ponting of Total Office, a well-established supplier to Kent businesses, who has known Rosie for more than 35 years.

"Whether sharing a drink in a pub garden or behind the lens at an event, Rosie has enriched our lives in and around Sandwich in so many ways. Her cheerful personality and delightfully quirky view of everyday existence will be much missed."

David Foley
Chief Executive
East Kent Chambers of Commerce
12th August 2021

Information

Thanet & East Kent and Dover District Chambers of Commerce provide professional business support to the East Kent coastal business community.

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