



The Roaming Pen... New Brighton

A very good friend who now lives 2,000 miles away recently asked me what I remembered of Brighton of the 1980s. She has written a book based in the Brighton of 30 years ago. She lived here then but wanted to check her memory.

I must confess to having to think quite hard, it's an interesting question, what do we remember of those far off days, not that far off at all actually. Of course the world has changed in many ways but has Brighton? Someone has commented on the web that the town in those days was a shabby, run down seaside resort still resembling the Brighton of Grahame Green's Brighton Rock. But he was a 'blow in' just arriving from Essex at the age of 18. Most of us that have been here for quite a few years would strongly disagree, of course all major urban centres will always need improving and today possibly the town does look a little smarter than it did then. But I could list a whole number of places that are badly in need of some TLC.

My first reaction was to comment on the explosion of 'youth binge culture' that we suffer from on weekends in the centre of town, not forgetting the entirely recent hideous phenomenon of the stag and hen parties that trot around wearing silly outfits and getting extremely drunk. But on thinking about this and talking to friends of my generation, has it changed that much? Probably not. West Street was always regarded as an extremely boisterous street even as far back as the 1950s and in the 1980s as bad as it is today.

So what else has actually changed? Thirty years ago we had the elm trees surrounding the Level and Preston Park. Remember them? We lost a lot in the hurricane in 1987 and Dutch elm disease has done for most of the rest. Admittedly we still have some and the council are doing what they can to look after them.

There are a lot more entertainment venues today than then, many will have fond memories of the Zap Club, the radical art, dance club. It opened in 1984 and closed just 13 years later. Today we appear to have dozens more small clubs and entertainment venues as in the Komedia, The Latest Music Bar, Audio and Concord 2. There are several new theatres, the Old Court House, the Marlborough for example. In 1985 the Marina was bought by Brent Walker and they set about re-developing, well yes thank heavens it was re-developed a few years ago and today there is another re-development on the cards.

We had the West Pier then, not open of course but it was still there and looking quite good.



There was the Palace Pier too, now up for sale and rumour has it that it will once again be restored to its original name.

Does anyone remember the department stores Hanningtons, the large Co-op in London Road even Hills of Hove? All gone now. The Open Market was a relatively thriving hub of interesting stalls, now a shadow of its former self. We only had one university now we have two with a total of 22,000 students and let's not forget the thousands of overseas students attending the half a dozen or so English colleges. These days we just have more of everything, cars, buses, people, shops, supermarkets, pubs and clubs. And it appears we have all got bigger too, in 1985 there were three or four gyms, today there are 25 and

counting. The roads are still being constantly dug up, particularly during the summer months. The nudist beach was opened in 1980, seems like only yesterday. But to answer the overall question, what has changed in the past 30 years, the answer is not a lot. Our tastes may have changed, our perception of life in the city (of course we were just a common or garden town then) has altered, but all opinions change with age. Of course Brighton has changed, but so has the entire world, but only in small ways. Any city that lives has to change and adapt to the modern world, I welcome change, without it we would become a tired run-down seaside resort.

Take it easy out there and enjoy yourselves while you're still in the pink!



**Nudists
draw the
crowds**

roger@kemptonrag.co.uk



The stars are out - August 2011

★ LEO: The Lion (23 July - 23 Aug)

Ease off on the accelerator pedal this month Leo, the stars are telling you to just coast. Murphy's Law is in full force for you this month and the constant hiccups will become very wearing if you let them. Sunday will bring respite – enjoy the rest!

★ VIRGO: The Virgin (24 Aug - 23 Sept)

'Accidentally' leave your phone off when others come calling for you to volunteer this month. You are already under quite enough pressure and the signs are the load will increase. Pace yourself and stall if you have too. A midweek decision is well-starred.

★ LIBRA: The Scales (24 Sept - 23 Oct)

Friends are a cause of concern for you at the moment; not all of them have your best interests at heart. It may be hard for you to accept but you may need to face the facts and move on. Someone with the initial S will need watching.

★ SCORPIO: The Scorpion (24 Oct - 23 Nov)

That verbal sting of yours is more upsetting to others than you realize at times Scorpio. You will need to keep it in check or risk emotionally painful retaliation. Although you may feel yourself to be the victim, others won't see it that way. The numbers 4 and 30 may be significant.

★ SAGITTARIUS: The Archer (24 Nov - 21 Dec)

I will add my voice to those who are telling you to think bigger this month. You are capable of so much more than you think you are. It is time to ignore that little voice in your head telling you that you can't. YES, YOU CAN!! Someone with blue-grey eyes will be giving you good advice – listen to them!

★ CAPRICORN: The Goat (22 Dec - 20 Jan)

The full moon on the 13th will be to blame for pressure to make a tough decision. It may feel like make-or-break but there is still some wriggle room. The decision will need to be taken however so give it your best shot. Weekends are well-starred. I see the letters D A T linked to your sign.

★ AQUARIUS: The Water-Bearer (21 Jan - 19 Feb)

Last month's planetary realignment of Uranus and Saturn heralded the possibility of a second bite at a particularly contentious cherry. You will have bought yourself some space. This time take more care to get it right. I see you opening the second of three doors.

★ PISCES: The Fish (20 Feb - 20 Mar)

You are feeling particularly sensitive right now and the longing for greener grass may seem overwhelming. Even if you can't act on that longing immediately, keep it in mind for the future. A chance encounter with a pet may signal a new friendship.

★ ARIES: The Ram (21 Mar - 20 April)

Aries are always among the sharpest tools in the astrological box and you will find yourself being especially perceptive this month when it comes to knowing what needs to be done and how to do it. You will however need to stay focused. The letters L & W will have significance

★ TAURUS: The Bull (21 April - 21 May)

It's all about positive thinking this month for you Taureans. The stars are setting up an opportunity for you but you need to believe. Dare to dream bigger than you ever thought possible and just wait for the magic to begin. Decisions should wait until the end of the week.

★ GEMINI: The Twins (22 May - 21 June)

Your smooth tongue will stand you in good stead this month as others accept your wisdom and authority without feeling threatened. Beware you don't let this ability go to your head however; know when to ease off and give others their moment in the spotlight.

★ CANCER: The Crab (22 June - 22 July)

Enjoyment is the keyword here Cancer. With Venus in your sign the feel-good factor will make you popular and in demand. Let your best face shine through, you will be looking your best and spoilt for choice! Keep an eye on friends as one of them is about to make a poor judgement call.

MAGUS the Oracle can be contacted on
magustheoracle@yahoo.co.uk