

In brief

Get healthier by taking walk

CANTERBURY: As part of KCA's Feel Good Fridays, tomorrow (Friday) it is your chance to improve your health by going on a walk around the city.

The health walk will begin promptly at 9.45am at the Beaney's high street entrance and will last for an hour before meeting for refreshments back at the Beaney.

For more information call Felicity Caryer and Charlotte Pattenden on 01795 590212.

Round Table

CANTERBURY: The Canterbury and District Round Table is offering two years' free membership for men under the age of 26 and six months' free membership for former or current members of the Armed Forces.

For more information e-mail pin@roundtable.org.uk or visit www.roundtable.co.uk/findoutmore

Bench carols

CANTERBURY: The Save Kingsmead Field campaign will be holding a candlelit carol singing event by the bench on Kingsmead Field at 6.30pm tomorrow (Friday).

It will be the first event of its kind ever to take place on the field and will be followed by mince pies and festive drinks.

Adults, children and dogs are welcome. Participants are encouraged to wrap up warm and to bring a torch - and an umbrella if it's raining.

The last remaining copies of the 2014 Kingsmead Field calendar will also be for sale, priced at £15.

What are the city's strange metal plates?

Way we were



David Lewis
Canterbury
Historical and
Archaeological
Society

THESE odd metal objects are scattered across Canterbury: in Palace Street, on the corner of Watling Street and Rose Lane, outside King's School in The Borough, and two more in Abbot's Barton Walk, the pedestrian lane linking Old Dover Road and New Dover Road. Each plate is of cast iron, standing a little over 18 inches high. Each has a royal crown, the insignia GR, and inscribed "ft" and "in", presumably to denote something so many feet and inches away. But what are they?

Let's start with the clues. G R and a crown suggests King George but which one and why would he want his royal insignia on a Canterbury metal plate?

The obvious candidates of water,



CLUES: The plate in Borough Mint Yard gate

gas, sewage, electricity, etc were normally local services or local private companies, not government

departments.

The feet and inches suggests a pipe or cable of some kind. The arrow looks at first sight to indicate Ordnance Survey - a height marker perhaps. Ordnance Survey insist that the arrow is too narrow to be one of theirs.

The answer lies in the introduction of phone lines to Canterbury around 1900.

Phone services were the responsibility of a government department up until the 1960s - hence the royal crest.

The prospect of phone poles and wires over the centre of the historic



PIECE OF THE PAST: The plate in Watling Street

city, but not in the centre.

A GPO plate duly appeared wherever there was a junction in the main underground phone cables.

It seems that, while GPO plates of this type are interesting and unusual, those with metal numbers under the "ft" and "in" headings are very rare.

As our photos show, in the past two years Canterbury has slipped from very rare to merely interesting.

ie, 1910 to 1936.

If you know of other similar plates elsewhere in the city do please let us know. Perhaps now is the time to seek protection for these links with our past, before they are lost for ever?

For more details please see the CHAS web site at www.canterbury-archaeology.org.uk

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TIMES
To a

TIMES
LAKE GARDA
Departing April to October 2014, flying direct from Gatwick and Manston

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The prospect of phone poles and wires over the centre of the historic city proved unacceptable to the city council, which saw them as a potential eyesore.

A county court hearing in about 1907 resolved matters – phone poles and over-ground wires would be permitted on the outskirts of the



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As our photos show, in the past two years Canterbury has slipped from very rare to merely interesting, as the inserted number one (in the feet column) has been lost. We don't know whether this was through frost, wear and tear, collectors of industrial archaeology, or sheer vandalism. Regardless, we date them to the reign of George V,

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For more tales of Canterbury's past visit our website at

canterburytimes.co.uk

TIMES

Travel

LAKE GARDA

Departing April to October 2014, flying direct from Gatwick and Manston



8 days from
£349
per person

Join us on the magical, sun-kissed shores of Italy's largest and most popular lake. Stay in a wide choice of hotels in some delightful resorts, rest and relax, or join the well-priced optional excursions, which include a Grand Circular lake tour, incomparable Venice, Shakespeare's Verona and the towering Dolomite mountains.

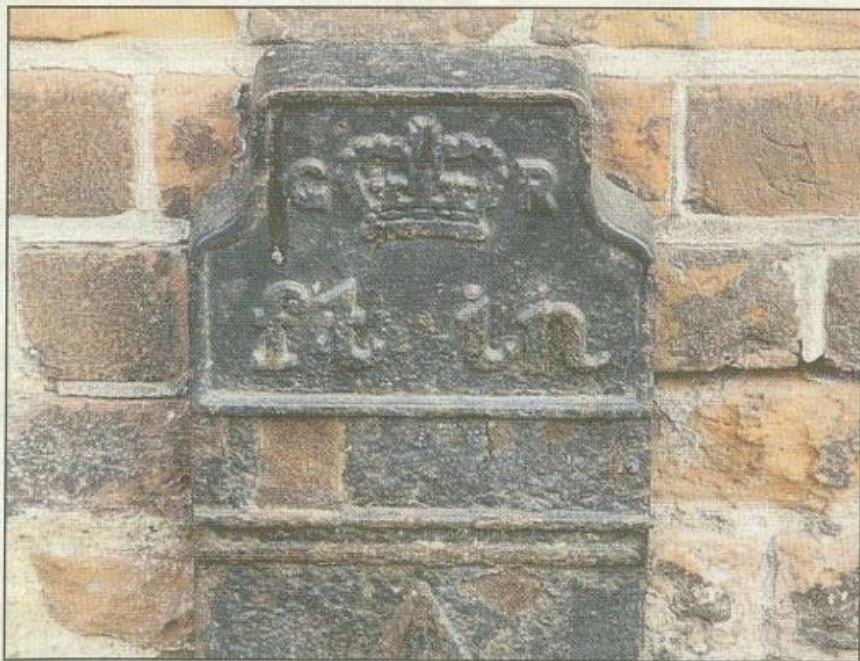
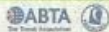
Price includes:

- Return direct flights to Italy
- Seven nights' bed and breakfast at the three-star Hotel Europa, Limone (half-board and a range of upgrade hotels are available for supplements)
- Return airport to hotel transfers
- The services of a tour manager

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HISTORIC: The GPO plate in Palace Street