



## Rose Cottage: a piece of old Ventnor

In February 1932, the *Isle of Wight Mercury* recorded on its front page the disappearance of one of the oldest and most picturesque of the town's landmarks. *Rose Cottage*, on the central part of Ventnor's High Street, its old world thatch always a delight for visitors, had been demolished. It was making way for the march of commercialism. The Isle of Wight Electric Light Company had purchased the site for new showrooms.

For local readers struggling to identify the position of the building, it occupied 17 and 19 High Street, the site immediately to the east of the Pet Shop, now occupied by a long and tall brick-built block incorporating a sequence of retail businesses on the ground floor.



The cottage was around one hundred years old and had once vied for 'old world' character alongside *Vale Cottage* that stood diagonally opposite, to the west, on the site of what is now Clarence Buildings. For much of the Victorian period, *Rose Cottage* was run as a lodging house by the Palmer family. In 1903 and again in 1909, it was put up for auction at the Royal Marine Hotel and described as a fine site for new business premises with its 41-foot frontage. However, it was

finally bought by Henry Linington of Wroxall and the cottage retained. It was sold again in 1920 and in 1927, in the last instance leading to the setting up of a new tea garden, the cottage itself being re-thatched and renovated inside.



It is not clear how successful the tea garden proved, but the re-sale of the premises for development just four years later would imply that it was limited, perhaps compounded by the impact of the Depression from 1929. The picture adjacent shows the new frontage as it appeared in 1932. For some, the little thatched oasis had been 'lost to a desert of bricks and mortar'.

*Ventnor & District Local History Society*: Michael Freeman, from files in Ventnor Heritage Centre



Ventnor & District Local History Society is a registered charity, working to preserve and record the history of our area and make it available to the public in the Ventnor Heritage Centre.

The Society and Heritage Centre are run and managed by volunteers.

[www.ventnorheritage.org.uk](http://www.ventnorheritage.org.uk) / telephone 855407

[Ventnor & District Heritage Facebook Group](#)

