

Press Release from **The Grand**, Folkestone. **June 2011**

Subject: **Kentish Hero Dr. Syn, at The Grand**

Syn at The Grand

A permanent Micro Exhibition of the Art of Kentish Anti-Hero, *Dr. Syn*, in aid of a local Children's charity



Looking up at the Micro Exhibition in its full glory

The Reverend Doctor Christopher Syn is the smuggler hero of a series of novels by Russell Thorndike. The first book, *Doctor Syn: A Tale of the Romney Marsh* was published in 1915. The story idea came from smuggling in the 18th century Romney Marsh, where brandy and tobacco were brought in at night by boat from France to avoid high tax. Minor battles were fought, sometimes at night, between gangs of smugglers, such as the Hawkhurst Gang and the Kings Revenue Men, supported by the army and local militias in the South of Kent.

*"Oh, here's to the feet that have walked the plank –
Yo-Ho! for the dead man's throttle;
And here's to the corpses afloat in the tank;
And the dead man's teeth in the bottle"*

- Excerpt from Doctor Syn: A Tale of the Romney Marsh,
1915 by Russell Thorndike

In yesteryear those words would have permeated the mysterious beauty of Dymchurch and the Romney Marsh, but nowadays you're equally likely to hear them in and around **The Grand** on The Leas, **Folkestone**, which in 2010 was the location of **Folkestone's first** and the **world's largest** exhibition of the legendary Kentish series of novels about the character Dr. Syn, as penned by author Russell Thorndike between 1915 and 1944.

The 2010 exhibition, *Syn at The Grand*, was held as a charity initiative with over £750 raised and donated to the East Kent Child Witness Service to support their ongoing work with children in and around the local area. *Syn at The Grand* also benefited from sponsorship by Kent Life Magazine.

Artist Terry Anthony, who has made a career out of painting the Marsh Phantoms, produces the majority of the Dr. Syn art found today and has developed quite a following with his atmospheric take on the stories.

The Grand, as a supporter of all things Kentish, found Dr. Syn the perfect fit for its charitable activities and has plans for another "**Syn at The Grand**" Charity Initiative to take place soon. However in the interim The Grand is



"Upon the Running Tide" depicts the Scarecrow by the sea



A beautiful Dymchurch sunset in "The Guardian Ghost"



Aside the exhibition



The Management of The Grand have an unexpected Visit from Dr. Syn and his gang.
 (L – R) A Marsh Phantom, either side of Dr. Syn himself, Robert Richardson- General Manager of The Grand, Ramesh Babu- Food & Beverage Manager of The Grand, Aimee Langley- Weddings & Events Coordinator, Mark Nixon- Deputy Food & Beverage Manager of The Grand and a lone look out for the Marsh Phantoms.



(This Photo- Courtesy of The Folkestone Herald)

The Grand's Michael Stainer & Robert Richardson present a cheque for £750 to the East Kent Child Witness Service, following on from "Syn at The Grand: 2010"

proud to become the home for a permanent Micro-Exhibition of Dr. Syn prints, under the "Syn at The Grand" banner, also in aid of our chosen charity. Nine Dr. Syn pictures have been chosen to not only honour the Kentish legend of Dr. Syn but to celebrate the beauty of the mysterious Romney Marsh for the over **240,000** people that visit The Grand every year. The Prints chosen are:

- "The Arrival"
- "The Landing"
- "Moonlight"
- "Upon the Running Tide"
- "The Night Rider"
- "Phantom of the Marsh"
- "The Phantom Rides"
- "The Guardian Ghost"
- Concept Sketches of "The Landing"

All are by Mr. Anthony and are set against beautiful hand made pine frames.

Again using Dr. Syn as an excuse for charitable acts The Grand will offer portions of the Exhibition for sale and will make a donation to our charity for each one sold.

The novels of Dr. Syn, now being reprinted, have been of great pride to the coastal areas of Kent, with many gift shops and restaurants in and around the Marshes highlighting what the author and character have to offer. Dr. Syn has also been adapted for film on three occasions by studios including **Walt Disney** and **Hammer Horror**, starring such stalwarts as Peter Cushing, George Arliss and the Prisoner himself Patrick McGoohan. Recently BBC Radio also adapted the books as a series of radio plays with Hollywood star Rufus Sewell taking the starring role.

Robert Richardson - General Manager - The Grand
 For further details: rr@grand-uk.com / (01303) 222 205