

Show of pictures and piano

THE secrets of Folkestone's past are being brought to light by new project Navigating History.

Folkestone library and museum was one of three institutes in the south east chosen to take part in the scheme, aimed at promoting local history collections by commissioning artists to create projects from them.

In the fourth part of this weekly series, **KATHRYN TYE** focuses on the work of artist **BOB SMITH**, entitled 'Day Out'.

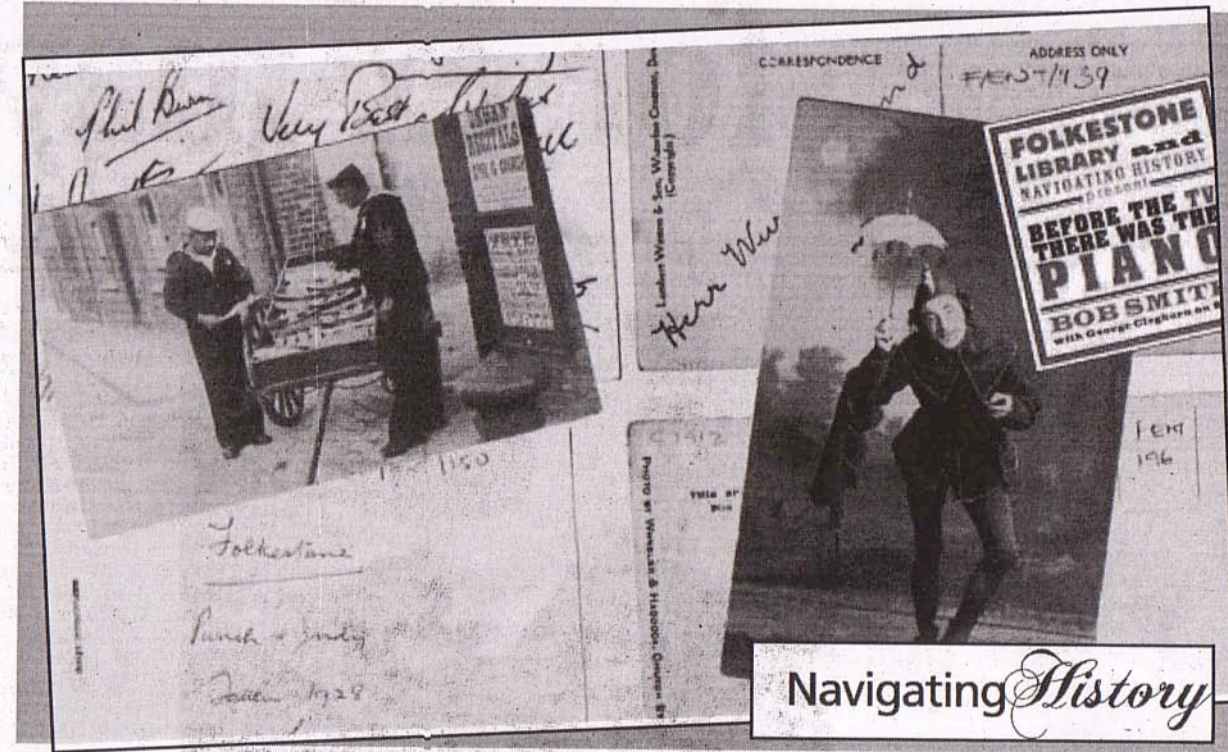
OUTRAGEOUS satirical posters and bizarre photographs of seaside entertainers were the inspiration for Bob Smith's new project.

Surrealist artist Bob was delving through the Folkestone archives, looking for unusual images, when he came upon the work of Lord Charlie Banks, who lived in Folkestone in the 1900s.

Bob, 41, said: "Lord Banks was a great fundraiser and political fundraiser who created spoof election posters, gently attacking local councillors with bizarre suggestions such as making wealthy East Cliff residents swap places with the fish market.

"As I make my living by creating unusual artwork, it seemed a perfect starting point for my project."

In response to Lord Banks' work, Bob has created a series of zany posters inviting the electors of



Navigating History

Folkestone to vote for him to build five new museums devoted to Art and declare Folkestone as City of Youth.

Bob has also learned to play the piano during the past six months, to accompany a number of new satirical songs about the town.

The project has been particularly relevant for Ramsgate resident Bob,

following the recent arson of the town's local history collection during the summer.

Bob said: "It was a real tragedy, and gave me a whole new focus and interest in my project, as it demonstrated the importance of making the most of our facilities before they're gone."

Bob will be appearing in

Folkestone this Saturday, holding a series of absurd events on the beach from 2pm, including a vegetable portrait bust competition.

A selection of comedy songs will then be performed by Bob in the Grand Hotel from 5pm.

For more information visit www.navigating-history.net