

winter6263

Click on a picture and use the navigation tip to progress forwards or backwards. METEOROLOGICAL CONDITIONS EASTBOURNE WINTER 1962-63 The winter of 1962-63 is given by the Meteorological Office as the coldest since 1740. The very cold period lasted from 22 December 1962 to 4 March 1963 and, in Eastbourne, East Sussex, had periods of blizzard conditions and sea temperatures below 0°C. Snow began on 26 December 1962 giving 150 mm in Eastbourne. A blizzard on the evening 29 December 1962 with NE to E gale Force 9 winds gave 300 mm of snow by the morning 30 December 1962 with snow drifts up to 1000 mm in parts of the town. East Dean Hill was blocked by snow and the village of East Dean cut off. By 23 January 1963 the sea temperature had fallen so low that a stretch of sea was reported as being frozen some 30 m off the Eastbourne coast. During this period numerous colour slides were taken of the conditions (I was 18 years old at the time). These have been scanned and are included below. After nearly 45 years some of the colour has deteriorated but the pictures do provide a record of a most notable winter period. The Lottbridge Drove snow scenes were taken on black and white film and then home developed to provide positive images. In 1962 Lottbridge Drove was a small lane across the Eastbourne Levels (the current dual carriageway being constructed at a much later date). No doubt further work could be performed on the images using suitable photo handling software to remove the marks and blotches. But for the moment they are provided 'as scanned'. The first slide gives a plot of the Eastbourne maximum and minimum and grass minimum temperatures (Eastbourne Borough Council Wilmington Square site) together with the Pier Head sea temperatures for the period 1 December 1962 - 31 March 1963. My own record for the period comprised an extract from a thermograph trace that corresponds very well with the Wilmington Square record and is given in Slide 2. Slide 3 gives rainfall totals recorded at the Eastbourne Wilmington Square site. More details from my weather diary to cover this period are given below the gallery together with a gallery of the thermograph records from 25-11-1962 to 31-03-1963. Note these are in °F and run from Sunday to Sunday. Times are set to UTC.

{gallery}winter6263{/gallery} Extract from weather diary regarding snow conditions in Eastbourne December 1962 - March 1963
 26 December 1962 - Snow began in the afternoon at Eastbourne giving 150 mm snow depth.
 27 December 1962 - Main roads being cleared of snow, others very icy. East Dean cut-off.
 28 December 1962 - Intermittent slight snow all day.
 29 December 1962 - Slight snow in morning with NE Force 3 wind. 1930 UTC blizzard with NE to E Force 9 gale.
 30 December 1962 - Intermittent slight snow all day. Snow depth 300 - 375 mm with drifts to 1000 mm. East Dean Hill blocked.
 31 December 1962 - Slight snow. Wind now NE to N Force 2 or 3.1 - 6 January 1963 - Slight snow showers. Snow remaining uncleared now very hard. Main roads clear. Snow being taken away and dumped in the sea.
 6 - 13 January 1963 - Any snow not cleared now solid ice. Black ice on roads.
 14 - 17 January 1963 - Moderate snow shower 1100 - 1200 UTC
 16-01-1963. About 25 mm of fresh snow. 15/16-01-1963 wind N to NW bec E again Force 4.
 18 January 1963 - Most main roads cleared, side roads being cleared. Large piles of snow along side roads up to 800 mm high.
 19 January 1963 - Snow from 1200 to 1700 UTC blowing in E wind Force 6 - 8. 50 - 75 mm snow with drifts to 300 mm. Small heaps of ice at high water mark on Eastbourne beach with frozen sea water on beach groynes.
 20 January 1963 - Freezing rain, ice pellets and snow from 1000 UTC. Soft snow on hard ice being blown in the wind. Freezing rain at 2300 UTC and evening. Glaze everywhere on all roads and pavements.
 23 January 1963 - report in Daily Telegraph that a two mile stretch of sea was frozen off Eastbourne front about 30 m from the shoreline.
 26 January 1963 - Slight thaw with temperature to +4°C.
 28 January 1963 - Becoming cold again.
 28 January - 24 February 1963 - Remaining below +2° to +3°C. Snow clear in Eastbourne town by 24-02-1963 but remaining on South Downs and in fields.
 25 February 1963 - Temperatures becoming +5°C each day. Snow remaining on South Downs and in ditches until the first week of March 1963.
 6 March 1963 - Temperature +12°C at 1500 UTC Eastbourne. THERMOGRAPH RECORDS FOR DUDLEY ROAD, EASTBOURNE 25-11-1962 TO 31-03-1963 {gallery}thermo6263{/gallery}