



Members' Magazine
WEALD AND DOWNLAND
OPEN AIR MUSEUM



The Council of Management is pleased to announce that Lord Egremont has kindly agreed to become President of the Museum, following the death of our late President, the Duke of Norfolk. The Museum is honoured by His Lordship's acceptance.

We look forward to the chance of welcoming him at the Museum.

C O N T E N T S

- Page 2. Museum Report
3. Historic Houses Campaign
4. Singleton Museum - A policy for the future
11. Friends' News.

Cover Illustration.

Lurgashall Mill showing building before demolition. The roof and all internal structures are now in store at the Museum. During this summer we intend to complete the removal of the stone and brick walls.

MUSEUM REPORT

Winter Openings

For the first time, the Museum was open for visitors during winter months, on Sundays only. We called these days "Limited Openings" and reduced the price of admission to .20p for adults and .10p for children. The shop remained closed, while the site was stewarded by only one roving volunteer and by one person in the ticket office. With the considerably lower numbers this system worked well. We see this experiment as a service to local people, who often on fine winter days in the past have leaned over the Museum gate. The Museum is grateful to those volunteers who braved the elements during the winter.

Winter Open Days Statistics

November 1974 - March 1975 - 21 Open Days

Children, Students and OAP's	701 visitors
Adults	1,707 visitors
Total	2,408

Museum Library and Crawley Hall

During this season, we hope to commence work on the Crawley Hall, a building which holds some significance in the development of the Museum. The upper hall will be converted for use as the museum library and will house for reference purposes a growing specialist library. The larger part of the collection will be photographic material, including the collection built up by Mr. Armstrong. Already the Museum possesses a number of volumes mostly related to Sussex and to the study of architecture. It is in the latter area that our collecting efforts will be directed towards. There are a number of collections in the area specialising in local material and our aim is to compliment, rather than to duplicate, these collections.

Already a number of people have donated items to this collection and we are grateful to the Rank Trust for a donation of £100. towards the purchase of new material. In order that we may organise our collection even before the building is erected, Mrs Jenni Leslie has kindly agreed to offer her professional skills to the Museum as Honorary Librarian. We are very grateful to her for this help. If any member comes across material that they think might be relevant, please contact the Museum. The provision of a good reference collection will add a new dimension to the Museum and its work, and is of great importance.

The Building Programme

We have been very badly delayed by the continual wet weather of the last few months. Our craftsmen are not affected by the cold but the wet conditions have made life very difficult. The greatest effort of this has been on the re-erection of Pendean which in turn has delayed the Watersfield Stable. The final landscaping of the lake site has also not been possible. However, given some sunshine, or at least dry weather, we will see faster progress. One result of the bad weather has been that we have undertaken a number of site improvements that we would otherwise not have done.

Workshop Site

The temporary planning permission for the workshop has now expired. The planners are not in favour of the continued use of the site in this way, and we hope to remove the workshop and its stores to the railway cutting. The retention of a small workshop on site, possibly in one of the cattle sheds will be vital. However, the bulk of the material around the present site will be removed. The public will still see the erection of buildings, but not, of course the repair stages.

The Mill and Lakes

During the winter the excavation of the lake site has been completed. The aim for this year is to construct the foundations for the Mill and mill race and to dismantle the stone work at Lurgashall. If funds permit, we may also be able to line the ponds this year.

THE HISTORIC HOUSES CAMPAIGN - By the Earl of March, F.C.A.

As the Chairman of the South East Region of the Historic Houses Campaign Committee I have given a great deal of thought to the effects of legislation on the fate of our Historic House heritage.

I see this heritage as being not only the houses themselves - but the essential unity of houses, contents and surrounding land. The campaign is designed to maintain this unity and to avoid the creation of empty, lifeless architectural shells. That is why the petition, organised by the Campaign Committee, is placed in nearly all historic houses - including National Trust Houses - this summer.

At Goodwood we have placed the petition in a room emptied of its contents. This we hope will alter visitors to what might well happen. We have asked our guides to make the following simple points in the empty room:

- (1) This room had pictures and furniture but they have been removed to show what will be the likely effect of present and proposed legislation.
- (2) The government have stated that they wish to preserve the national heritage: but if that is to happen they must amend the legislation already formed and take more seriously the effects of proposed legislation.
- (3) Members of the public who show great concern should be invited to join the Historic Houses Association as associate members and given a copy of the "Destruction" leaflet.
- (4) We ask each visitor to sign the petition and we ask that his signing of it will be the first - not the last thing they do in this campaign.

Many members will be most concerned about the legislation and its effects. Should you wish to have further information, the "Destruction" leaflet will be available in the Museum office.

THE SINGLETON MUSEUM ; A POLICY FOR THE
FUTURE

Volunteers and Friends of the Museum have often asked for a general statement of the Museum's policy and forward planning. To meet this demand an abbreviation of an article written under the title "The Open Air Museum; Idea and Reality" and printed in the transactions of the Ancient Monuments Society forms the main item in this News Letter. The article was written just two years ago, but the general principles remain valid. It has been brought up to date by the inclusion of five buildings which have since been offered to the Museum; two of these are already repaired and are being re-erected - the stable from Watersfield and the wind pump from the Pevensy Levels, and three are dismantled and in store, - the wagon shed from Selsey, the seventeenth century "Tyndall Cottage" from the site of the future Bewl Valley reservoir and a barn from the Petworth estate.

These recent acquisitions well illustrate the central thesis of the article - the need for a clear and defined general objective combined with maximum flexibility as to details, and the closest possible liaison with other museums and other ventures which might otherwise overlap causing waste of scarce resources. We now have twelve buildings in store which on any count is a fairly heavy responsibility.

Perhaps the most significant change since the writing of the article is that the suggested limit to the number of buildings which could be satisfactorily sited has been increased to forty from thirty-five in the original article. The museum area has also been increased from thirty-five to forty acres, which includes the extension of the car park and other adjustments.

The first Open Air Museum in the British Isles to be open to the public was that of St. Fagan's, near Cardiff. It forms part of the National Museum of Wales, has the status of a national museum, and is concerned with vernacular building and the Welsh way of life. This excellent museum now has nearly twenty buildings, and has been open for nearly twenty years. England has followed tardily, although the need has been present in the minds of a great many of us since the early thirties, but nothing serious was achieved until within the past ten years. During the past four years, museums within this category have been started, and first opened to the public, at Stoke Prior in Worcestershire, at Stowmarket in Suffolk, at Beamish Hall in Durham, at Hutton le Hole in Yorkshire, at Coalbrookdale in Shropshire, at Morwellham in Cornwall, at Stoke Bruerne near Northampton, and at Singleton in Sussex. At least six others are projected or already under consideration in other parts of the country. All these ventures are differently oriented, and some have, to a certain extent, changed their objectives in the course of their initial development. The only feature that unites them is that they are all concerned with groups of buildings, whether restored in situ or moved to within a landscape area capable of accommodating them with a reasonable measure of reality. There is a big difference between a venture

such as Morwellham in Cornwall, where the aim is restoration in situ, preserving the relation of the buildings to a particular industry and an industrial network and, say, Stowmarket, which aims at reconstructing the vernacular buildings and the rural scene representative of three or four regions of East Anglia. To take another example, there is a big difference between the two or three acres of Hutton le Hole, limiting itself virtually to one valley of the Cleveland Hills, and Beamish Hall, aiming to represent three industrial counties, with an emphasis on heavy industry and on a site of over two hundred acres. Aims may also be altered during the initial development. At Stoke Prior the emphasis at the beginning was essentially on buildings and architecture and the name "Museum of Buildings" defined this aim and, within this general framework of intent, buildings as different in size and status as the Guesten Hall roof and a medieval hall from Bromsgrove could be accommodated; nor was there any exact limit to the region or area to be served. Since then local crafts such as nail making and chain making have been included, the buildings becoming essentially ancillary to the crafts they house. This kind of pragmatic adaptation to changing circumstances or needs is understandable and may be necessary in the early stages. This has certainly been true in the case of the Weald and Downland Open Air Museum at Singleton. This pragmatic approach does, however, raise larger issues which will be made clear by recounting some of our experience at Singleton.

It has not been easy to find phrases which define, or to invent any simple formulation of our aims. At the entrance, for example, there is a noticeboard saying, "Museum of Historic Buildings"; on our headed paper appears "The Open Air Museum, Singleton". For those already familiar with those early museums on the Continent, the second of these phrases is probably adequate to indicate very roughly the kind of things they will expect to find in the Museum. When coupled with "Weald and Downland" (its full title), there is a fairly clear indication of the region covered. But this description conveys only a generalized purpose; the other phrase "historic buildings", can, by suggesting some limitation, be misleading. One definition emphasizes the individual importance rather than the generic significance of the buildings exhibited, the other implies a preoccupation with buildings as something apart from their furnishings, as well as the exclusion of traditional crafts, with some of which the museum is definitely concerned. Even the attempt to define exactly the geographical area which the museum covers by the phrase "Weald and Downland" could be considered a little misleading. When a title for the original promotion committee was first discussed six years ago, the name adopted was "The Wealden Open Air Museum"; and it was in the central Weald that a site for the museum was first sought. The title was extended to include the "Downland" only when negotiations for a possible site near Brighton were later under consideration. In the end the magnificent site finally acquired, through the generosity of the Edward James Foundation, lay right at the western edge of the Weald and Downland area. It therefore became logical to include the eastern fringe of Hampshire within the area to be served. Already four buildings from this area - a treadwheel from Horndean, a base-cruck cottage from near Fareham, a market hall with open arcade from Titchfield, and an early granary from near Winchester, have

been acquired. The treadwheel and the market hall have been repaired and re-erected, and the other two are waiting until the necessary funds are available for their repair. This shift to the west means that the eastern Weald is a very long way from the museum, and it may well be that another museum, concentrating on the slightly different traditions of Kent, might some day be established within that area. This is a possibility which we should already take into account in our planning. Considerations of this kind raise very important issues which need clarification at a time when the response of the public, and the general interest which increasing numbers seem to be showing in museums of this type, may lead to their proliferation during the next decade.

If we may return to the question of policy and, for the moment, set aside the question of catchment areas, for all those Open Air Museums where the objective is the removal and re-erection of buildings (rather than the restoration and preservation of an existing complex in situ as in the case of Coalbrookdale and other museums concerned with the preservation of a unified industrial site, or the group, for example, of abandoned crofters' cottages at Auchindrain in the Highlands, or the Waterways Museum at Stoke Bruerne) there is a very real need for a simple, clear and easily understood statement of intent. At the time of writing, the following brief formulation is being considered for Singleton. "Our purpose is to create a museum of representative traditional buildings which it is impossible to preserve in situ, rebuilt with associated crafts and furnishings for enjoyment, research and instruction." This is the kind of brief statement which can be printed even on the back of an entrance ticket or membership card, and it expresses fairly well the priorities as seen by every one of the founding members, but the emphasis, even among those who are in general agreement, can prove to be quite different when it comes to actual detailed policy decisions. Every one of the key words in this apparently clear and simple statement can be differently interpreted, or the emphasis shifted - words such as "traditional", "furnishings", "crafts", "research", "enjoyment" can all be understood in subtly different ways.

There is, nevertheless, agreement that the focus should be on traditional and truly vernacular building of sub-manorial status; that the smaller houses and cottages, which rarely survive from early times, should have precedence over larger and more sophisticated buildings; and that only buildings, which cannot be preserved in situ, should be accepted. Logically this means that the museum must, whether directly or indirectly, be actively "preservationist", ready to give advice and help to any individual society, or local authority concerned with preservation. Already we can say that three important medieval buildings, which otherwise would probably have disappeared without trace, have been preserved and will be restored through the influence and recommendations of the museum. This we regard as an extremely important aspect of the museum's work. But it also follows that the scope of the museum itself must be limited by what buildings may become available, and not by what it might be able to acquire, had it the means, in order to create an ideally balanced and representative collection.

This means that the future content and shape of the museum can be planned at this stage only in fairly general terms capable of adaptation. If, for example, a much more determined effort were to be made at national, or regional level, to preserve in situ all buildings of medieval date at whatever cost, the planning of the museum would obviously require drastic reformulation. Unfortunately this is a very unlikely contingency; and, looking to the future, we anticipate that rather more than half the museum will be devoted to buildings which ante-date the sixteenth century.

The position now is that we have thirteen major buildings, five of these have been re-erected, one is being repaired, and seven in store. Of these one is an aisled hall possibly from the thirteenth century (Sole Street), one is a small farmhouse of about 1400, (Winkhurst), five are from the fifteenth century, three of them farmhouses, (Bayleaf, Little Winkhurst, and the base-cruck cottage from Boarhunt), one an upper storey jettied hall - (the "Crawley Barn" and the shop from Horsham), two are from the sixteenth century, (the Market Hall from Titchfield and Pendoan farmhouse), two are from the seventeenth, (Lurgashall water mill and Tyndall Cottage) and two from the eighteenth or early nineteenth century, (the Hambrook barn and the Petworth barn). This is the range of dating we can anticipate for the major buildings which we hope to accommodate - perhaps twenty in all if we include three or four more barns, if we are to represent each of the main local types.

If we look at the smaller buildings (of which we have fourteen already erected or being erected, and two in store), we find the range of date is rather wider, - from the suppositional "Saxon hut" or the reconstructed Hangleton cottage to the smithy on the charcoal burners' huts. Apart from these, the smaller buildings already standing include the treadwheel of about sixteen hundred, two granaries and four cattle sheds from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, a stable of probably the eighteenth century, and a toll cottage and a windpump of probably the early nineteenth century. In store is the granary from Chilcomb of the late sixteenth or early seventeenth century and a wagon shed from Selsey which is not likely to be earlier than the nineteenth century.

There are two reasons for this wider spread of date in the case of smaller buildings. Firstly any reconstruction of early buildings based on archaeological evidence can be attempted only when they are small and relatively inexpensive, and secondly, there are far fewer farm buildings or buildings accommodating traditional crafts surviving from the medieval period than is the case with houses. Because of this uncertainty as to what size or type of buildings may need to be accommodated, the master plan has had to be conceived in terms which provide maximum flexibility. Provision for farmsteads has been made so that each farm, with or without ancillary farm buildings, can be completely isolated from one another and within its own curtilage, less than it would have enjoyed in practice, but at least sufficient to give a sense of separate identity in time and space. The forty acre site will allow for seven, or perhaps eight, such farmhouses. This involves careful landscaping and anticipatory tree planting.

The rest of the major buildings will be in close association in a nucleus consisting of compact village, or small town, centred on the market hall which has already been erected. The acquisition of the market hall necessitated an early planning decision, fixing the exact site and form this village nucleus should take. Buildings which will form part of the central village complex include the Horsham shop and the jettied upper hall from Crawley. There are also three buildings which could appropriately be situated on the village fringe, although inappropriate to the market square as such. These are, the three storied Tyndall cottage, the aisled hall from Sole Street, and Little Winkhurst, with, possibly, an adjacent barn. At the moment of writing the possibility of an early brick building from Lavant is under consideration. If the Museum agrees to take this building it would certainly be suitable for the market square complex and would be one building representing the early use of brick. At this stage exact planning of the market square lay-out cannot be undertaken as we do not know of what size or shape the individual buildings will be, or how much space each may require. This equally applies to the site as a whole. A building, for example, which is under consideration is a large and substantially built stone and brick dovecot, of possibly the late sixteenth century. Should this be acquired the problem of siting will be a difficult one and might even make acceptance impracticable. The same problem might apply to a building such as an outstanding and important tithe barn. The scale of buildings to one another and to the site must be a paramount consideration. The museum may be faced very shortly with such a problem in a great barn in Hastings. This barn has already been moved once, and reduced by three bays. In spite of its truncated form it is still larger than any buildings we have, and where to put it may present a difficult problem.

The development of the northern part of the site, i.e. from the village group to the A286 is conditioned by Planning considerations imposed by the Planning Authority. Logically the village should straggle down towards the mill and the wheel-right's, smithy, stable, etc., but the Authority prefers that there should be no development north of the existing clump apart from the mill, and the smithy complex. The mill itself will probably be the only building in the local Lower Greensand stone, and the Hangleton the only building in flint. The Upper Greensand may be represented in the dove-cot already mentioned, and early brick in the Lavant house. The bias towards timber-framing is inevitable in an area where in any case ninety per cent of the building up to the sixteenth century was in wood and not merely on grounds of practicability and ease of dismantling, repair and re-erection.

The master plan thus envisages some forty buildings altogether, thirteen or fourteen within the village nucleus, seven or eight farms with, perhaps, an equal or slightly larger number of farm buildings, a mill, and some six or seven buildings accommodating traditional crafts. When, in the early days of the project, a list of representative types of vernacular building from the earliest times to the eighteenth century including reconstructions and crafts within the region served by the museum was prepared and considered in the early stages it included nearly eighty suggestions, even after excluding all

secondary variations of plan or structure. If this kind of programme were to be adhered to, the site would obviously need extension. My own view is that forty acres and a limit of about forty buildings is desirable for a number of reasons. An enlargement of the site would, of course, be welcome to give greater elbow room, and curtilage to buildings of very different periods, status and use, as well as for the better landscape possibilities afforded, but not for any increase in the number of exhibits. The arguments for limitation are that, firstly, the experience of more than half a century on the Continent with museums such as that at Arnheim, has convinced many administrators that there is a certain size which, if exceeded, leads to frustration, fatigue or simply boredom; that it is in fact desirable to restrict museums both as to their range as well as to their size, if the public is to get most out of what is provided. Secondly, Parkinson's law begins to operate with alarming acceleration beyond a certain limit, and size also induces an element of impersonality, unavoidable in any large-scale organization, destroying those qualities of informality which we are particularly anxious to preserve at Singleton; and it leads inevitably to the need for greater restrictions. The third reason is in a different category, it is simply the need, of which planners are now much more conscious, to disperse the amenities available to the public as widely as practicable. Apart from obvious problems of car parking, traffic congestion and overpressure on public facilities, the desirability of spreading interest to include residents and static holiday-makers as well as weekend tourists, is in itself an important consideration.

If limitation, then, is accepted as desirable, it can be achieved in two ways. The first is a reduction in the size of the catchment area, as has already been suggested, the other is the elimination of anything which can be as well done in another museum, and by close liaison with such museums. This can be illustrated by three examples within the three years since the museum was first committed to its site at Singleton. Since then, a museum, concentrating on rural life and agriculture, has been developing at Winchester, only twenty miles to the west. This museum will be able, when it is open to the public, to deal far more adequately with a great deal of agricultural history, particularly that of the last hundred and fifty years, than we should ever be able to at Singleton. To that extent, therefore, we can limit our aims. The second instance, is the establishment, only ten miles to the north-west, of a research centre for the study and reconstruction of Iron Age farm economy, including all the building associated with an Iron Age farmstead, so that again, something which had featured in our original programme, would now be quite unnecessary, since it will be far more completely realised in a venture concerned with that and that only. Lastly, a promotion committee has recently been convened for the creation of an industrial museum devoted to the industrial history of the area. This should relieve us of any responsibility for the early Wealden iron and glass manufacture, and so enable us to concentrate more fully on the vernacular architecture of the region which from the beginning has been our central preoccupation.

Finally, a word should be said about the educational and

research aspects of the Museum. It is difficult to say which is more important, but both are vital and are to a large extent complementary. Thanks largely to Mr. Kim Leslie, the foundations for an extremely efficient educational service for schools is being established. The principal desideratum is an adequate under-cover hall for school parties, lectures, visual-audio aids, and other adjuncts really essential to such a service. The fact that over fifty thousand school children and students visited the museum last season, that many were unable to make bookings, and that the demand seems to be expanding in the current year, indicates the very real importance of this side of the Museum's activities, provided it can be adequately serviced. For older and more responsible students, research facilities will soon be provided by the erection of the "Crawley barn", this will contain a library and students' room in which material relevant for the recording and study of vernacular building will be housed. By the time these two objectives have been realised the Museum will really have "come of age" and deserve a place as a major educational and cultural centre in the south-east.

J.R. Armstrong

29th April 1975.

Members will notice the new format of the Newsletter, an amalgamation of the old Newsletter and the Volunteers' News. Partly because of rising costs, particularly postage, but more because it was felt that information contained in the two separate publications was of interest to both Friends and Volunteers, the two have been brought together and in future will be published in the spring and in the autumn. In this way we hope that everyone will be kept better informed about the activities of the museum, and will enjoy the feature articles on subjects relevant to the museum. Comments and criticism are always welcome and should be sent to the Director.

Obituary

We record with deep regret the death of His Grace the Duke of Norfolk, Earl Marshall, K.G., G.C.V.O., P.C., President of the Weald and Downland Open Air Museum since its foundation.

An Honorary Treasurer for the Friends

Following suggestions made at the last Annual General Meeting urging that we find an Honorary Treasurer to save the fees at present being paid to a professional accountant, the Friends' Committee have discussed the matter at several meetings, and considered some offers to take on this work. The Committee, while seeing the obvious advantages of an Hon. Treasurer, feel that as a charity our financial affairs must be managed with perfect efficiency and that any Hon. Treasurer must have considerable experience of this kind of work. The search has gone on for several months. The Committee is most grateful to Mrs. Kessler for her offer to undertake this important job. Mrs. Kessler has considerable experience of this work, and the Committee is pleased to accept this kind offer. At the same time I am sure the Friends would wish to offer their thanks to Mr. John Hill who has looked after our finances so well during the last three years, and his generous spirit in doing all in his power to help the Committee to find an unpaid successor.

Recent Seminars

The Saturday afternoon seminars organised at West Dean College for the Friends and Volunteers continue to be very popular, and further seminars are being organised for next autumn and winter after the museum has closed, so that our volunteer stewards will be free to attend. Attendance has to be limited to fifty people and all seminars are heavily oversubscribed. We strongly advise you to book your place as early as possible.

The Annual General Meeting, 1974. - John Lowe

By courtesy of the West Sussex County Council, the well-attended Friends' A.G.M. was held at County Hall. After the business of the meeting had been dealt with, Mr. Christopher Zeuner, Director of the Museum, gave an excellent lecture comparing the aims and achievements of the Open Air Museum with a wide variety of open air museums he had visited on the continent during the summer. After the lecture, Mr. Hugh Baddeley, showed two extremely interesting films; the first of a charcoal burn at the museum; the second a study of Roman building. Members may like to note that the next A.G.M. will be held at County Hall on Saturday, 22nd November, 1975. Full details will be circulated nearer the time.

Marriage

All the Friends and Volunteers will wish to send their warmest good wishes to Christopher Zeuner and Diana Sharp who were married on Saturday, 15th March, 1975.

Life Membership and Deeds of Covenant

We would once again urge members to consider taking out a Life Membership of the Friends as this is of considerable financial advantage to the museum. The subscriptions are:-

Members under 50 years of age	£25.00
Members over 50 years of age	£20.00

It has been decided that in future any Deed of Covenant to the Friends must be at least £5.00. This does not effect covenants already made. Deeds of Covenant involve considerable administrative work and under recent legislation the benefit to the charity is decreasing. Covenants of £5.00 and over bring a real financial advantage to the Friends and hence to the Museum.

The Friends' Committee

Members might like to be reminded of those people now sitting on the Friends' Committee. These are:-

- Major General L.A.Hawes (Chairman), Miss C.E.Barson,
- Roy Armstrong, Kim Leslie, John Kessler, Pam West, Peter Minet,
- Diana Zeuner, Carol Hawkins, Bernard Johnson, Chris Zeuner,
- John Lowe (Hon. Secretary).