



Members' Magazine WEALD AND DOWNLAND OPEN AIR MUSEUM

Autumn 1978

No. 12

A LOOK AHEAD by ROY ARMSTRONG

HONORARY RESEARCH DIRECTOR AND FOUNDER

In future years it may well seem that 1978 has been a turning point in the development of the Museum. It will have seen the completion of three major buildings each of which marks an important stage towards the realisation of our original aims. The Lavant House and the Crawley Hall, both of which in different ways were incomplete and the original purpose conjectural, have been effectively adapted to serve essential needs. From now onwards buildings such as the Littlehampton Granary can be restored to its correct form and the same should also be practicable, before too long, for the Toll Cottage. The Market Hall, for so long isolated, will soon be given additional meaning with the repair and re-erection of the house from North Cray and the medieval shop from Horsham, - which together with the Crawley and Lavant buildings will provide a focal point for the Museum. Lastly, the completion of the Crawley Hall means that the research and educational work, which has, up to now, been hampered by lack of accommodation, or its expression in any building can now be developed.

From the beginning a main objective has been to try to create public awareness and interest in what still survives of the work of previous generations of builders and craftsmen in the hope that these may lead to a greater respect for, and hence a wish to protect and conserve where we can, what still remains. There are two sides to this:- first, research, which entails finding out what there is (and it is surprising how much is still hidden or unrecognised), recording what is discovered and then trying to work out the many varying forms of structure or decoration which have been slowly and carefully evolved, together with the intricate pattern of outside influences. To trace this long and continuous process of change and adaptation to which we are the heirs is important. Because of the rapidity of change today - new technologies, new materials, and so on, many find themselves increasingly without roots and in an environment without standards or any sense of continuity. Others are becoming aware of what is being lost, but also of how much still remains to be discovered and would like to be able to do something about it. It is here that the Museum by organising lectures and

training courses can increase the number of those able and willing to help in interpretation and recording. There are many at present who are anxious to help but do not feel qualified. We should also be able to provide general lectures and organise conferences as well as to establish a centre where recorded material can be stored, and is known to be stored.

But we need also to look further ahead. The time will come when all the research which can be done has been done; when we shall have records of all the early buildings of interest in the area and all the written material that can shed light on their history or purpose. All this must be filed, correlated and made accessible and this is not something that can be done quickly. However many contribute to this work, we are likely to continue to be in the kind of crisis situation we have been in ever since the war, with buildings of great interest still disappearing without trace and without any adequate record being made.

Such records and such knowledge however are only incidentally valuable unless they help us to answer some fundamental questions. How, and to what extent should we try to preserve such traditional buildings as still remain? How are we to judge the value of such conservation? There are several ways of looking for answers to questions of this kind. For instance, how far are we concerned with conservation because we see it as part of an historical process of which the present is the product; and feel that our consciousness is enlarged (or diminished) by our awareness (or unawareness)? In this view, anything which provides some link whether it is the yew tree in the church yard, the village stocks, or a milestone on a turnpike road, is valuable. But there is another way of looking at the matter - how far should our concern be with aesthetic considerations, with good design and craftsmanship - in the hope that such consideration might have some effect on contemporary sensibility? These, I think, are both aspects with which the Museum is concerned and it should work as closely as possible with other bodies involved with either of these aspects of conservation - Civic Trust,

amenity societies, archaeological societies, as well as the statutory authorities.

These aims of the Museum - education and communication - should now be able to expand; but there is still one other long-term aim we need to think about - that of practical involvement in conservation and preservation. The time will come when the Museum has filled its site with as many buildings as it can accommodate - a fairly representative collection of traditional buildings, some of them furnished so far as is practicable, and with some appropriate crafts and a centre for research and information. By that time one hopes that the Museum will be sufficiently integrated with, and accepted by, the community which it serves for it to be much more actively concerned with the practical care and preservation of buildings outside its site. This could take various forms, from the giving of technical advice or the training of craftsmen to the actual repair and custodianship of buildings.

Personally, I have no desire to see the Museum grow beyond the scope of the master-plan as a guide to development. The plan was drawn up several years ago to serve as a general guide to future planning and more specifically to indicate to the Planning Authority the kind of growth we envisaged. To allow for every possible contingency this plan erred on the side of over rather than under development. Increase of area is another matter as this would give much more opportunity for farmsteads to have an adequate curtilage. But it should not become so large that its defeats its purpose by overwhelming the visitor by its size and complexity. It is not too soon to start thinking about what we should be; planning for the years to come. Already a move in this direction has been made by our participation in the Salvington Mill Trust established this year, and by the exciting proposal for a complex of farm buildings at Charlton which our Director refers to in another part of the Magazine. These seem to me to be pointers in the direction we should be taking. Although we have many buildings in store to which we must devote all our resources at present, and in the immediate future, it would be a mistake if we neglect the desirability of playing a very much wider role of influencing the environment as time goes on.

BUILDING PROGRESS CHRIS ZEUNER

Crawley-Hall is now completed and in use, with the exception of library fittings. Lavant House is operating as a shop on the ground floor and on the first floor, facilities are available for temporary exhibitions and for educational use. A special note of appreciation is due to Roger Champion, assisted by Dennis Wingham and Eddie Bell, for the successful completion of Crawley.

In addition to these major projects, a number of smaller buildings have been dismantled by volunteers. A row of pig sties, wood sheds and earth closets from West Dean are now in store, as is a carpenter's shop from Windlesham in Surrey. The latter will be repaired and re-erected during the winter by a team of volunteers and will be furnished as a village carpenter's shop.

This project is being aided by a donation from the Worshipful Company of Carpenters, to whom the Museum has reason to be very grateful for support in the very early days.

Every aspect of the project seemed to work against the craftsmen and its success is very largely due to their ability to overcome difficulties. Geoff Kent who undertook the re-building of Lavant also deserves thanks. He has returned to the Museum after a long illness and very competently organised the labour and materials for this project. In December, Geoff retires from full-time work and will be taking responsibility for the maintenance of the buildings on a part-time basis.

The Mill has also made progress - John Friar completing the stone work and Peter Stenning working on the restoration of the machinery.

Berrylands

During the summer a barn and a cattle shed has been dismantled and brought into store. The barn was previously called Fountains Farm, but it is now to be known as Berrylands Farm. It is a later barn of a type that should be illustrated in the Museum eventually. The building was given to the Museum by Mr. Howe of Sheffield Park.

John Friar, aided by a team of volunteers, dismantled the building and cleared the site.

Court barn

The next project to be undertaken is the repair and re-erection of Court Barn, which will house an exhibition illustrating the development of plumbing. This project is being sponsored by the Worshipful Company of Plumbers.

Many thanks to those who put in long hours of hard work.

Charcoal camp

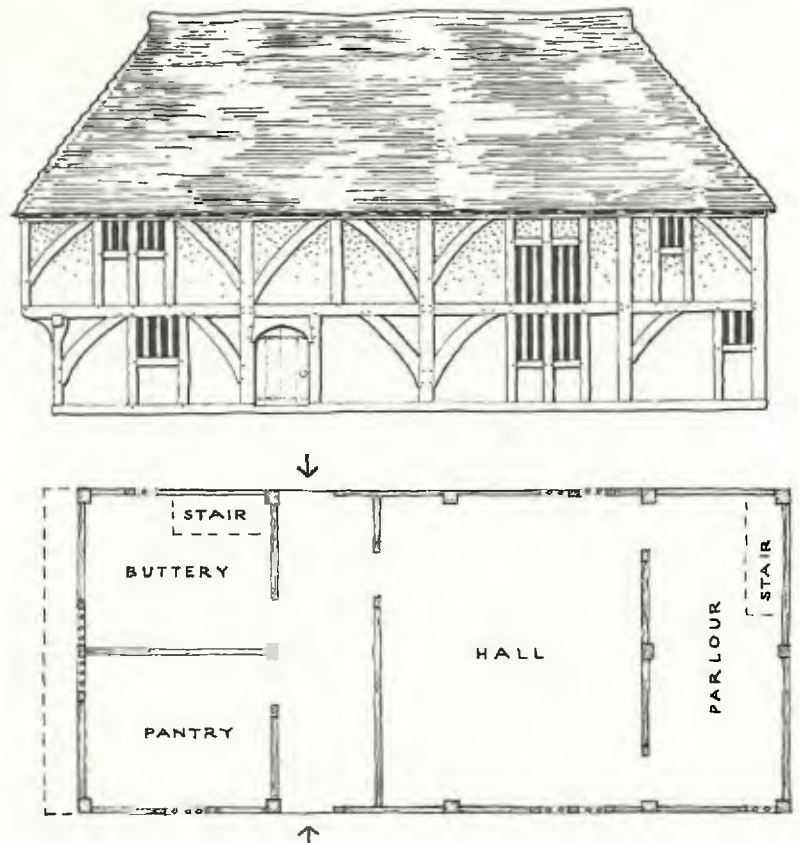
Volunteers Mike Coviello, John Warr, Phillip Burchett and Roy Plummer aided by other friends, have re-built the Charcoal Hut - Mark 4. This popular and instructive exhibit will need constant maintenance in order to keep it in a suitable condition.

Horsham shop

On the completion of Court Barn, the staff will turn their attention to the Horsham Shop and following this, to the North Cray Hall House (Bexley). Some of you will have seen the North Cray timbers laid out for analysis during the Summer.

North Cray House

Drawing by Richard Harris after P. J. Tester



ARTS COUNCIL EXHIBITION

by Diana Zeuner

Richard Harris, who has been a prominent member of the Museum's building research team for two years, prepared an Arts Council exhibition on "Traditional Farm Buildings" this year.

The exhibition, which is on tour to museums throughout the country, came to the Open Air Museum at the end of July, and was set up in the newly-completed Crawley Hall.

Mr. Harris, who has undertaken a considerable amount of work for the preservation of important traditional buildings in various parts of the country was commissioned to write the text and prepare drawings and photographs for the travelling exhibition by the Arts Council.

The exhibition illustrates the construction and use of farm buildings such as barns, cattle sheds and granaries in England, setting them in the context of the farms they serve and the processes they house.

The traditional farmstead is fixed in peoples' imaginations as an unchanging feature in the English landscape, Mr. Harris explains.

But its buildings have undergone a long evolution because of new agricultural methods. Today few older farm buildings can be used for their original purpose and the result is widespread dereliction and often unavoidable demolition of all types of traditional farm buildings, he says.

Mr. Harris, who is 32, is a graduate of the Architectural Association and has been responsible for a number of reconstructed buildings at the Singleton Museum and the Avoncroft Open Air Museum at Bromsgrove, Worcestershire.

At Singleton he has carried out the research and architectural work on the early 17th century brick building from Lavant, which now houses the Museum's shop.

He has also been involved in the interpretation of the early 15th century base cruck hall from Boarhunt in Hampshire which the Museum is to re-erect, and has advised on the repair work.

Mr. Harris, who comes from Worcestershire, has undertaken a great deal of research into traditional buildings which the Museum has been involved in saving from demolition.

He has carried out detailed analysis of timber frames before their re-erection and this has involved surveying, drawing and photographing buildings in danger and using his considerable knowledge of building history to determine dates and facts about the structures with which the Museum is dealing.

In this way the work Mr. Harris is doing is supplementing that of Roy Armstrong, the Museum's founder, Mrs. Marjorie Hallam and Mr. John Warren, who have been involved with building research for the Museum since it began.

His contribution to individual building projects at the Museum is important to the integrity of the Museum's work in the field of building preservation.

Mr. Harris was instrumental in forming the Hereford and Worcester Architecture Record Group in his home area, which aims to collect records of buildings in the county.

It is a similar body to the Wealden Building Study Group in Sussex with which Mr. Armstrong, Mrs. Hallam and Mr. Warren have been deeply involved.

Recently, Mr. Harris completed a book called "Discovering Timber Framed Buildings" for Shire Publications and he is soon to begin two more major books on farm buildings and timber framed buildings. He is preparing illustrations for Mr. Armstrong's current book on vernacular buildings which are open to the public, to be published soon.

Mr. Harris became interested in vernacular architecture in 1967 when he was working on a medieval building in Coventry. His work for the Avoncroft Museum, with which his family has been closely connected has included the re-erection of a cruck barn and a cruck hall from Wrexham, Wales.

A SCHEME FOR CONSERVATION WORKSHOPS and MATERIALS BANK

The Museum is currently considering a major new project off the Museum site. Recently, the opportunity arose to acquire on a Lease a large farm complex in the village of Charlton, one mile from the Museum. This 19th Century complex is now unsuitable for modern farming needs and has become redundant. The Museum is considering establishing its permanent workshops within the complex (see plan) and also providing up to three units for letting to related activities. Discussions are being held with a millwright and with an agency concerned with the conservation of a wide range of historic material.

It is proposed to use the barn as the Museum's store for folk life material and other collections and thereby enable the Museum to consolidate its storage into one complex, instead of the three currently in use.

The yard situated to the East is being considered as a site for the establishment of a Materials Bank for materials to be re-used in the area.

Although not concluded, joint consideration has been given to the scheme by the Chichester District Council and the Museum. Materials Banks have been established in a number of

areas and in different ways. They aim to rescue materials suitable for re-use in historic buildings, from the dump. A large amount of material recirculates through the normal commercial channels and it is not this material with which the Bank would be concerned. It would restrict its activities to materials that are being lost for re-use and would aim to cover its costs by careful co-operation. At present the scheme is in a very early stage, no commitments have been made and many difficult decisions still to be taken - not least of these is deciding how best to finance the scheme.

Annual accounts

The accounts below are published for your information. A full copy of the Annual Report and Accounts may be inspected at the Museum Office by prior appointment.

WEALD AND DOWNLAND OPEN AIR MUSEUM (Limited by Guarantee)

INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st March 1978

	1978
INCOME	
Entrance Fees	54,236
Surplus on Sale of Publications etc.	6,001
	<u>60,237</u>
EXPENDITURE	
Salaries and Wages	24,651
Building Reconstruction	49,230
Buildings, Maintenance and Site Expenditure	27,594
Publicity and Exhibitions	4,573
Auditors' Remuneration	200
Administration	4,785
Interest Payable	3
Depreciation	1,241
	<u>112,277</u>
Operating (Deficit) Surplus	(52,040)
Less:	
Grants and Donations	35,118
Subscriptions	18
Income on Investments	<u>2,110</u>
	<u>37,246</u>
(Deficit) Surplus for Year	<u>£ (14,794)</u>

The Museum is in urgent need of funds. The Crawley project has been a major drain on resources and every possibility for increasing income must now be sought. Any ideas or contacts would be welcomed. If you work for a company who has a policy of charitable giving, perhaps your influence might be used on behalf of the Museum. A number of companies already give support.

An increasing number of people have generously arranged legacies in favour of the Museum. Perhaps you may feel the project deserves your support this way.

The Museum continues to need large sums of money to expand its growth.

Please help if you can.



FRIENDS and VOLUNTEERS

GROUP STEWARDING

Have you considered joining with friends or neighbours in your village or town and coming together to the Museum to act as Stewards? This is done in at least one locality, neighbours taking it in turns to use their car and coming usually on a set day a week or at other intervals. True, not all come on each week or occasion but when travelling together it saves petrol and there is the opportunity to discuss a variety of topics on the way to the Museum and on the return journey, to recount the interesting and often amusing incidents of the day's stewarding.

MEETING THE VISITORS

What a variety of interesting people one meets when stewarding at the Museum. There are the craftsmen - blacksmiths, brickmakers, wood carvers, the retired wheelwright, the rope maker and the man whose father produced oak shingles. There is the visitor who swears that he used to live in Hangleton Cottage and the more plausible couple who describe their house in Devon which is made of cob. One meets the farmer who admits to having let a barn fall into decay, but who may now be converted to the path of conservation for his other buildings.

Questioning a knowledgeable visitor, he eventually admits he is the author of a well known book on vernacular architecture. The gentleman in riding boots and a hacking jacket is engaged in conversation on the merits of the kiln drying of timber and then discloses he is the only maker in England of spinets - or was it harpsichords? So, if you would like to meet all these interesting people and many others, please come along as a steward and when you are stewarding, an interjection of "have you noticed" or "what is your opinion -" or "in your part of the country do they -" will soon discover to you what a multitude of interesting visitors which the Museum attracts.

Bernard Johnson.

EXCURSION '79

Plans are in hand to arrange a visit to the Open Air Museum at Arnhem, Holland in the late Spring of next year. This will possibly be of three days - Friday, Saturday and Sunday, in which case the trip will include another site. As before, the coach will start from and return to Singleton.

The fare will be kept to a minimum with all contingencies included.

Full details will be included in the Spring issue of the Magazine.

TRAINING A BUILDING SURVEY TEAM

During May of next year a course will be organised to train a team of volunteers in the recording of buildings. The course will concentrate on farm buildings. It is hoped that a small team can be organised to record farm buildings on behalf of the Museum and is therefore, aimed at members who can offer some continuing commitment.

If you would like to be involved, please contact Chris Zeuner as soon as possible. An advance meeting will be held in The Autumn.

The course will be led by Richard Harris.

EUROPEAN CONFERENCE

During September, the United Kingdom was host to the European Association of Open Air Museums. This organisation meets in a different country every two years. The last conference was held in Sweden, based on Skansen.

This year, the 8th Conference of the Association, met first at the Welsh Folk Museum and from there, travelled to Ironbridge, Avoncroft and finally, to Singleton. The Association provides a useful exchange of experience between Museum Directors and Curators of similar institutions throughout Europe, both East and West. Through the biannual conference we have made a number of lasting contacts.

Delegates visited the Museum, where they were entertained to a buffet lunch. They spent the night at West Dean College after the final conference dinner, held at Goodwood House.

Excursion '78

The second of the visits organised by Bernard Johnson has led one to hope that it may have been one of a long series.

It was as full of events and interest as one could possibly expect, the chilly damp weather being scarcely noticed.

The four tithe barns - Tisbury, Bradford-on-Avon, Ashelworth and Great Coxwell, three of them still in use, showed many comparative points of interest.

The site restorations at Cogges Manor Farm were of absorbing interest. The various problems presented there differed from those at Singleton, being in the main, those of site restoration, grew in interest as the visit proceeded.

The enthusiasm of Mr. Steine of the Oxfordshire Museum Service brought the site and the work going on there really to life.

On the way to St. Fagan's, we found the extensive restoration undertaken at Tretower full of points of interest, some of which matched those here at Singleton.

The visit was enlivened by the competent commentary supplied by our guide.

The highlight of the weekend was, quite properly, St. Fagan's Castle and the Folk Museum - a visit that merits an article to itself. Suffice to say that here a great deal of interest lay in comparison with Singleton, the main difference being that ample finance made possible very generous staffing and full furnishing of houses, plus a very great variety in the exhibits.

The Castle itself, with its gardens set the seal on a very fine exhibition.

The whole week-end was made all the more enjoyable by a comfortable hotel with a very pleasant staff.

The evenings were filled literally with live illustrated talks, one by Mr. Hurley, a local architect with a deep interest in conservation and the other by Mr. Allnutt, a member of the party with a practical interest in restoration work on Mills at Petworth and Burton Park.

Congratulations to Bernard Johnson, whose organisation and ability as host were impeccable.

A.C. Hubling.

Hon auditor

Some three years ago, considerable concern was expressed by various Friends of the Museum as to the expenses for the administration of the Friends' donations: this was on account of the necessity to employ a salaried treasurer to carry out the necessary accounting and to make the applications to the Inland Revenue in order to recover the covenanted portion of the donations. So strong was this feeling of dissatisfaction that donations or subscriptions were being dissipated that some Friends were disinclined to renew their subscriptions. Happily, however, this situation has now changed completely. First we have an admirable Honorary Treasurer in Mrs. Elsie Kessler and in the present financial year, we have been most fortunate to obtain the services of an Honorary Auditor - Mr. Brian Magness, who is a Chartered Accountant.

Friends of the Museum can now be assured that their entire contributions will go to the benefit of the Museum and that there is no administrative expense to be deducted other than a contribution towards the printing of the Magazine and the postage

for the same. It is to be hoped that any Friend who allowed their subscription to lapse will now re-consider the matter and that others may be encouraged to increase their subscription. Please consider also making a Banker's Order which again, saves on reminders being sent as regards postage and last of all, covenanting your subscription, which enhances its value by nearly fifty per cent.

WEEKEND COURSE

This will take place at Dunford College near Midhurst from Friday evening 17th October until Sunday afternoon, 19th.

The subject will be 'Farmsteads and Farm Buildings'. Speakers will include Dr. R. W. Brunskill from Birmingham University.

Full details of the course are available from the Museum Office.

CAROLS

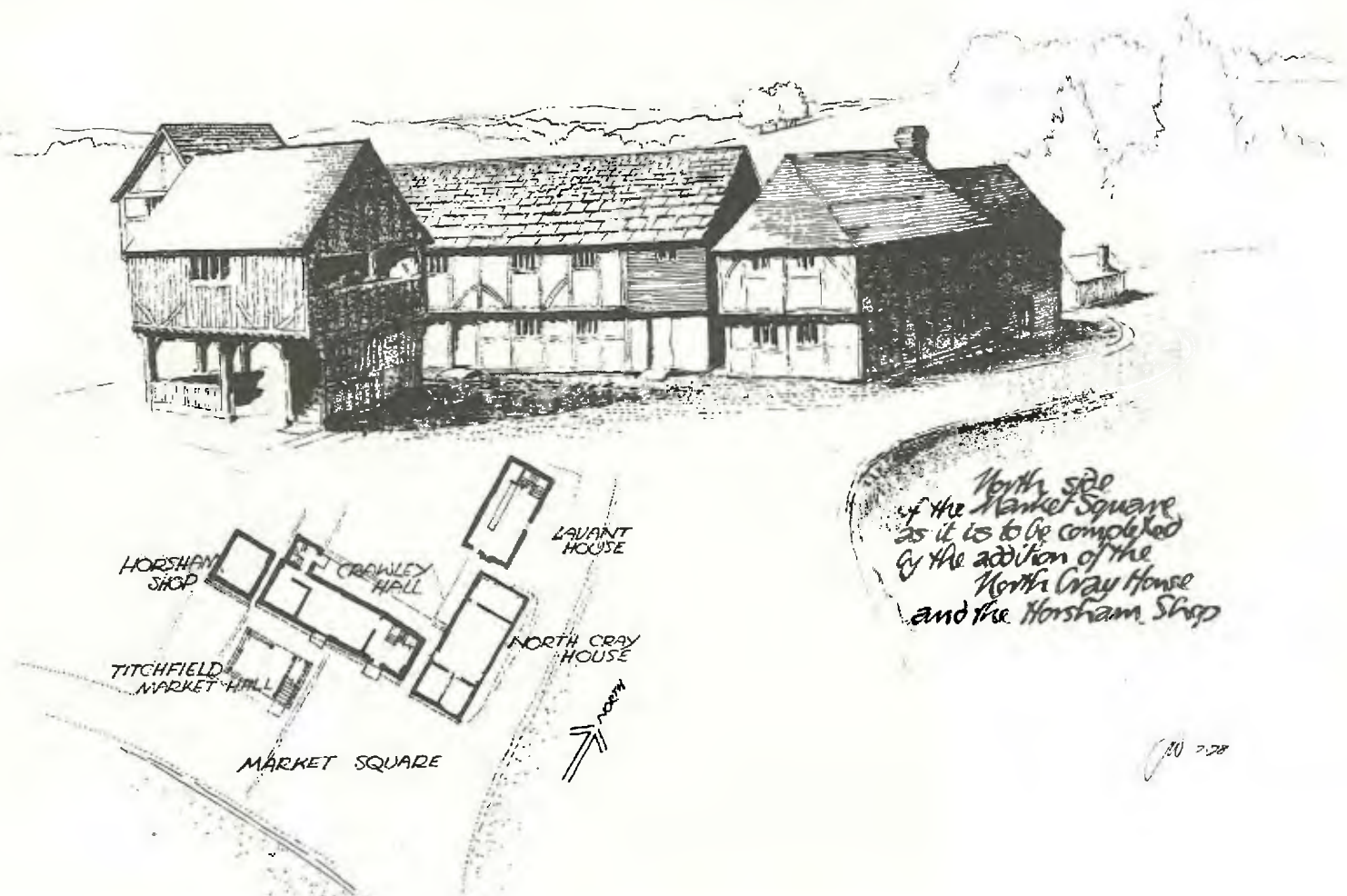
The annual Carol Service will take place in Bayleaf Farmhouse on Thursday, 21st December at 7.00 p.m.

Those wishing to attend are asked to contact the Museum Office by the 11th December, 1978.

A.G.M.

The 9th Annual General Meeting of the Friends of the Weald and Downland Open Air Museum will be held in the Council Chamber, County Hall, Chichester on Friday, 20th October at 7.00 p.m.

Agenda, Minutes and Annual Accounts are enclosed.



BERRYLANDS FARM

SEE FRONT PAGE



WINDLESHAM CARPENTER'S SHOP

SEE FRONT PAGE



CHARLTON BARN S

SEE PAGE 2

