WEALD&DOWNLAND
ENAIR MUSE

Members' Magazine

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1983

March

A Look At the Year Ahead -

Opening of West Wittering School and a lively programme of events

Last year's record season at the Museum will be hard to beat in 1983. A great deal will depend on good publicity. Two factors were important to 1982's success – the excellent weather and national television coverage – the latter will not be repeated this year and the former is doubtful.

The most important building project to be completed on the site during the year will undoubtedly be the West Wittering School – which will be finished and furnished in time for an official opening in the middle of the summer season. The School is an exciting new exhibit for the Museum and will hold considerable interest for the public. The Friends contributed a substantial amount to its rebuilding – £4,000 from last year's Grand Draw.

Out of view of the public Roger Champion will be working on the repair of the North Cray Hall House, to which the Friends have contributed some £9,000. This building when reerected on its site at the corner of Crawley Hall will have a significant impact on the appearance of the market square.

During the season the Toll Cottage will be completed on its new site and work will be proceeding on the Witley Joiners' Shop behind the shop. The furnishing of rooms in the Walderton House will be completed and the audio presentation installed by the beginning of the season.

The Museum is aiming to capitalise on its great success with special event days and a lively programme has been planned for 1983. They include the Country Fair on May 14, an Activities Weekend and a Heavy Horse Day on June 12 run in close association with the Southern Counties Heavy Horse Association.

The Museum's own livestock will be much in evidence during the year. William, who is now well-established with the public will be undertaking many tasks on site. Visitors will have the chance to see for the first time the two oxen performing some jobs including grass maintenance such as harrowing and rolling. The Southdown sheep will continue to be folded across the site for most of the year.

The Museum's entrance arrangements will be improved. Two new well-designed entrance boards are planned to replace the present ones. New signs have also been fitted on each exhibit building.

In the shop a number of new publications will grace the counter and shelves – a board game about the Museum, the new Woodland Trail booklet, and new postcards.

The catering facility has been improved with a new paved area beneath the wagon shed and an outshot for storage. On the site itself maintenance work has included fencing and coppicing of over-mature hazel and other small trees by Winkhurst. The first phase of maintenance on exhibit buildings has been completed over the winter with repair work to Tichfield Market Hall and Bayleaf Farmhouse.

A team of West Sussex County Council's Manpower Services Scheme "Youthforce" is working on the site carrying out a variety of tasks and has already made a substantial contribution to a number of projects.

Country Fair

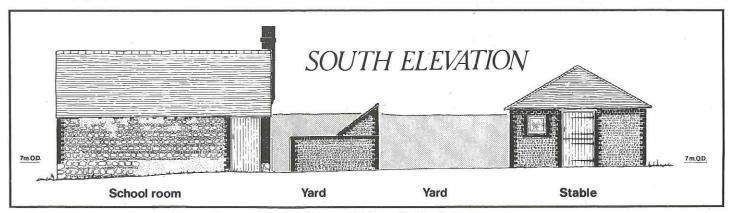
A country fair will be held on May 14 at the Museum to launch the new season and raise money for the West Wittering School project. The fair will follow a similar pattern to the one held so successfully three years ago.

The event will consist of a number of demonstrations of crafts, special fair stalls and fund raising activities.

One of the major features will be the Produce Stall, run by the Friends. As explained by Sir James Waddell in his letter elsewhere in the newsletter the intention is to hold a number of these stalls throughout the year at special events.

The produce stall run last year was very successful and it is hoped that a substantial amount of money can be raised in this way.

The stall is being run by three members of the Friends – Joan Brooks, telephone Chichester 527332, Ethel Buvyer, telephone Bognor Regis 863653 and Mary Hum, telephone Chichester 781357. They would very much appreciate hearing from anyone who would like to contribute home made produce, including jams and cakes, or vegetables and plants.



Drawing of the School from West Wittering by County Archaeologist Fred Aldsworth. (See Page 4)

Record Season

1982 was a record season for the Museum, with 176,374 visitors between April and October, an increase of 22 per cent on the previous season.

There were two main factors behind the increase, firstly the weather and secondly, the BBC Chronicle programme shown at the beginning of the season.

The best weather came in the early half of the season, which with its bank holidays is always a critical time. The Chronicle programme is thought to have brought some 10,000 visitors to the Museum.

For 1982 publicity expenditure was increased and 12 per cent of

visitors came as a result of seeing the Museum leaflet compared with 4 per cent in 1981. The open weekend in July and the ploughing and threshing demonstrations attracted large crowds.

One of the encouraging signs of 1982 was the 25 per cent increase in the number of adult visitors. During the year the Museum received about 240 pre-booked party visits, other than school children, which remains fairly constant. By far the greatest number of these were from local history groups and universities and technical colleges. Clubs and societies and brownies and scout groups also figure highly. The highest percentage of visits were made during May and

Staff Changes

In the coming year three people who have given long and loyal service, and without whose presence the Museum would not seem the same place, will be reducing their commitments at the Museum.

DOUG BRYANT has ceased his duties as senior warden but will continue to be responsible for opening to the public for one day a week during the season. Marjorie Bryant will be continuing her unstinting work in the shop as before.

Doug has been on site at the Museum practically forever. He first appeared in the very early days as a volunteer and at a time when the Museum most needed all the help it could get he volunteered to open the site to the public. He was appointed as Warden in 1972. He has been doing it ever since, and has watched the Museum grow from small beginnings to one of the most popular tourist centres in the region with amongst the highest visitor numbers of provincial museums in the country.

ALF BRYDEN was forced to stop his wardening duties in the winter due to ill health. Fortunately he is now much improved and although he will not be able to undertake the rigorous duties of wardening in the future he will be operating the carpenter's shop as a demonstration at least once a week.

Grants 1982-1983

grants for current projects.

The Idlewild

Trust

legacy

Trust and the

Peter Minet

Barbara Klein

Midland Bank

The Museum has received the following

5,000

3,000

North Cray Hall

Walderton House

furnishing

project and exhibition

House

5,000 Unallocated

Alf, who is a trained carpenter, will no doubt be manufacturing a number of items for museum use.

Alf has given immensely loyal service to the Museum over many years and was vital to the success of the winter season in particular. He showed himself willing always to do the less glamorous tasks, such as the winter work, with the same enthusiasm he had for assisting with a bank holiday.

GEOFF KENT will be retiring from the staff this year after spending a year as the Museum's cleaner, a post which he took up following his illness and operation on his heart. However Geoff will continue to come in as a volunteer to undertake occasional maintenance jobs.

Geoff was one of the very early members of staff, who started as a volunteer. He brought to the Museum the much needed skills and experience of a building tradesman, in his case those of a bricklayer. His wife, Dorothy, has also worked at the Museum for many years and will continue to look after the Friends' membership lists and give general assistance in the office.

Geoff has shown exceptional dedication to the Museum over the years, always ready to give extra assistance where needed, and Dorothy has always been ready to come in to the office at short notice if someone is ill. As a couple they have shown complete devotion to the Museum, its future and its wellbeing.

English Tourist 3,000 New overflow

Board

Area Museums

Service for

South East

Area Museums

Service for

South East

England

TVS

England

car parking

West Wittering

School

600 Walderton House

audio

600 West Wittering

School

presentation

arrangements

New Appointments

Senior Warden

Keith Bickmore of Chichester has been appointed Senior Warden and will start in his new post at the beginning of the season. He will be working full-time during the season and on Wednesdays and Sundays during the winter season. He will be responsible for opening the Museum to the public, liaison with the volunteer stewards and for day to day running of the shop.

Mr. Bickmore, who is married with two children, recently retired as Police Inspector with West Sussex Police Force. Since 1968 he has been based at Chichester. For the past 14 years he has been a member of the Chichester Combined Charities, organiser of the Chichester Gala, and for the past three years was the organising secretary.

Mr. Bickmore is a member of the British Red Cross Society and holds First Aid and Nursing Certificates.

During his police service Mr. Bickmore has been a Divisional Training Officer responsible for training Probationer Constables and other officers studying for promotion; a Civil Defence Training Officer; Special Constabulary Liaison and Training Officer; the Prosecuting Inspector in charge of a Courts Office and the Licensing Inspector.

Caretaker/Handyman

Jim Hampshire will be starting work at the Museum in this new post at the beginning of the season. As the Museum grows ever larger the necessity for a caretaker has grown. Mr. Hampshire has taken part in a number of special events at the Museum with his steam sawing equipment. In addition to this he has recently been coppicing some woodland to provide fencing material for the Museum.

Mr. Hampshire and his wife will live in Gonville Cottage. The Museum Director and his family are moving to Park Cottage, leased by the Museum from the Edward James Foundation, situated within sight of the Museum near the main Chichester-

Midhurst road.

Letter from the Chairman of the Friends

The main event in Friends affairs since the last newsletter was the annual general meeting in November, 1982. This was well-attended as befits an organisation in a thriving way of business with a membership (now) of something over 1700.

As announced on the back page the AGM approved increases in minimum subscription rates. Any increase must be matter for regret, especially as our financial position is quite healthy, but it seemed important to keep the minimum rates reasonably in line with admission charges to the Museum and also to ensure that all subscriptions are high enough to cover the expenses of membership (mainly supply of the newsletter) which now come to over £1 year for each subscriber. Let us hope no further increase will be needed for some time. Mrs. Kessler, our Hon. Treasurer, will be sending individual letters as subscriptions fall due in the course of the year.

Discussion at the meeting prompted the Committee to look at our rules. Plainly they need revision on a number of points and proposals for amendment will be circulated in good time for consideration at

In the short time available immediately after the meeting Chris Zeuner and Richard Harris gave a stimulating account of developments at the Museum over the previous 12 months. Richard Harris took the opportunity to describe work done at Avoncroft on conservation of a post-war prefabricated house. Construction with the help of detailed drawings dating from the 1940's and early 1950's is a very different proposition from the sort of reconstruction he has been supervising at Singleton:

The Committee has meanwhile confirmed financial support for the North Cray house and West Wittering school projects, as forecast in the last newsletter. We are also financing a board game designed by Museum staff, which will be sold in the shop and, we hope, in

bookshops and toy shops. A new application form for Friends membership will be paid for by us, and there are one or two other schemes under consideration for assistance - e.g. purchase of a new duplicating machine and provision of prizes for a photographic competition based on the Museum site.

As announced elsewhere in this newsletter the Museum will be organising a Country Fair on Saturday, May 14. Friends will doubtless find themselves helping in various ways, but our main collective activity will be running a produce stall. When we tried out this idea last year it proved highly successful, and the intention now is to run the stall on a bigger scale, and to repeat the effort on the Activity Weekend, July 23 and 24, and maybe also at the ploughing weekend at the end of October.

The members of the Committee responsible for the stall on May 14 are Miss Brooks, Miss Buvyer and Mrs. Hum. A lot of work will be involved and they will be glad to receive offers of help.

Ploughing and Threshing

The two major events at the Museum in the autumn, the threshing and ploughing through the ages demonstrations, were a great success with the public despite the threat of bad weather.

The ploughing attracted 3,000 visitors, many of whom had not visited the museum before. They had a rare chance to see cattle ploughing, demonstrated by a pair of Dexter cows from Butser Hill Iron Age Farm, using replica ploughs of the period. Equally unusual was the steam ploughing demonstration by Vic Mitchell and his two Fowler BB1 ploughing engines, together with a plough loaned by Captain Baldock of the Hollycombe Steam Museum, Liphook. Between the two, chronologically, came the horses. Two teams, Bob Dash with Jimmer and Ben and Bob Lomas with Harvey and Queenie, aided by ploughman Ernie Scott, showed how the skill of ploughing had evolved since the early days of farming. Finally four vintage tractors owned by D. Rowe and Son of Chichester demonstrated how mechanisation speeded up the process considerably.

Between showers the threshing of the crops of Red Standard and Marris Widgeon grown in the central field attracted a great deal of attention from an interested public. The threshing box was provided by Bert Dibben of Dorset and a Foden steam engine by Arthur Martin. Many of the Museum's own staff were involved, and volunteer Ted Nash put in his usual unstinting effort to help ensure the work was completed while reasonably dry weather prevailed.

The threshing provided a good demonstration for the public and most of the thatching straw was sold, returning a profit to the

The Foundation, has again assisted for this year's crop which has been sown in the lower field alongside the River Lavant, and in the central field at the Museum. Part of this field is down to grass this year to provide extra grazing for the Museum's animals.

Weekend Trip To Tamar Valley

A trip to the Tamar Valley is being organised for the weekend 22nd to 24th April. The principal object is to visit Morwellham Quay and Cotehele on Saturday 23rd April. The plan is to go by coach leaving the Museum at 9.30 a.m. on Friday and returning to Singleton at about 6.00 p.m. on Sunday. If there is sufficient demand there will be pick up and set down points at the Southern car park in Midhurst (behind the Post Office) and possibly in Winchester or Ringwood.

The cost is hoped to be limited to £68, but this may prove to be a bit too sanguine. About forty pencil bookings have already been made, but there are still a few vacancies. Will those people who have made pencil bookings please confirm them and pay their £68 by mid-March and will anyone who wants to get on the list please make an immediate booking with their money. All correspondence should be sent to Walter Greenway, 21 Cavendish Street, Chichester: Telephone Chichester 783057.



Cleft chestnut posts stacked in traditional manner by Jim Hampshire, who has been coppicing a section of coppice leased by the Museum from the Goodwood Estate. The material will be used on site for fencing and wattling.

West Wittering School

Work began on the West Wittering School in winter and by midsummer the building is expected to be completed and furnished and ready for the official opening.

The little school, which catered for only six pupils, is being built by J. Booker and Son. The project received a boost in January with the news that the Television South Charitable Trust had agreed to give a grant of £600 for the building. The friends have raised £4,000 towards it from the grand draw held last year.

Initially the Museum had some difficulty in matching the stone and mortar of which the school was built. The stone is of a type found in two varieties along the coast of the Manhood Peninsula, south of Chichester. The stone was pointed with grey beach sand of a very fine quality, and builders merchants, Hall and Co. went to a great deal of trouble to locate a supply, finally matching the original sand almost exactly from sand dredged offshore.

Heather Champion has been accumulating furnishings for the school over a period of

some months. Schools have been particularly helpful and the items collected include several early iron framed school desks, including a four-seater from Sutton Valence School, an early teacher's desk from Rotherwick School, a globe, and several biblical pictures.

Mrs. Champion would be interested to hear from anyone who could help the Museum acquire a pre-1900 wall map of Great Britain and the world, and an early picture or print of Queen Victoria.

North Cray Hall House

Roger Champion has started repair work on the timbers of the North Cray Hall House, which will be a further addition to the market square. The Friends have raised a total of £9,000 towards the re-erection of the building.

Many problems are expected to

occur during the repair as the house was built of elm, and there will be wide use of epoxy resins for consolidation. There is evidence that the exterior of the building was painted with red ochre all over and this evidence continues inside the hall itself.

Repairs to Bayleaf

After the Museum closed for the summer season work began on extensive repairs to Bayleaf Farmhouse. These included changes to the foundation wall on the weather side to prevent penetration of water around the sole plate.

Roger Champion repaired a number of timbers elsewhere in the building and Brian Boseley was responsible for re-wattling and daubing a number of panels. The building has also been given a new floor, which will substantially reduce the dusting which was such a problem with the previous surface.

Extensive work on the gable end of Tichfield Market Hall to prevent rain entering the building failed, and the Museum has resorted to the traditional solution to the problem – tile-hanging. In the next major phase of maintenance work on buildings re-erected on site Winkhurst will be tackled.

Toll Cottage

During the season the Toll Cottage interior will be completed, including a new exhibition on Turnpikes and Toll Cottages by Kim Leslie.

This exhibition will be housed in one room of the cottage. The other will be furnished to give an idea of the sort of furniture which would have been used in such a small simple structure.

Outside the garden is being developed. The vegetable garden is being tended, fruit trees planted, a hedge established, and a brick path constructed. An earth closet from the Goodwood Estate is being rebuilt. The bees have been re-sited in the garden in their present housing, but this will be replaced by straw skeps.



Cattle Poun

The Pound

The Museum has acquired an article of "village furniture" in the shape of a Pound, still surviving in remarkably good condition on the Common at Walton Heath in Surrey.

Pounds were once an established feature of communities and were used to impound stray animals for collection by their owners. This particular example, surrounded by undergrowth and small trees stands right beside the route of the planned M25 extension, and was given to the Museum by the Walton Heath Golf Club to whose ownership the Pound had transferred.

The Pound was dismantled by Heather Champion, and volunteer Ted Nash and is now in store awaiting re-erection, probably in the summer.

Witley Joiner's Shop

The foundations have been prepared for the re-erection of the joiner's shop from Witley in Surrey on its new site behind the shop in the backyard.

The pillars, which formed the undercroft of the building allowing timber storage, were removed complete and are now in place. Work on the timber structure above will be carried out during the year.

The joiner's shop is being re-erected in association with the carpenter's shop to form the beginnings of a small traditional builders' yard.

Publicity Caravan

The Museum's publicity caravan is already booked for a number of shows and events during the 1983 season. These include the Surrey County Show, Cranleigh and South Eastern Agricultural Society Show, the South of England Show at Ardingly and Salvington Windmill open day.

Visitor Questionnaire Survey

During the first half of 1982 a questionnaire survey was carried out at the Museum by Isobel Richardson, a post graduate student at Reading University. During the second half of the season the survey was continued on a monthly basis by the Museum itself.

Its purpose was to assist the Museum management with certain factual information about visitors to the Museum.

- 1. The Chichester and Portsmouth areas are and will naturally be our biggest catchment areas. It is rewarding to discover that a reasonable number of visitors have come from the Worthing area where publicity has been increased. The response from the Arun District was disappointing.
- 2. 56 per cent of visitors travelled from home. Of the rest 23 per cent were staying with friends. 15 per cent of visitors in June and July were foreigners.
- 3. It is encouraging to note that we are still attracting a high percentage of first time visitors (62 per cent). A total of 72 per cent came for the first time to the ploughing weekend. Of those on a return visit 35 per cent had last been between two and five years ago.
- 4. The high percentage of visitors (52 per cent) coming from personal recommendation proves that the best advertising is word of mouth. 15 per cent came mainly as a result of the Chronicle programme. A reasonably large percentage came as a result of advertising and the museum leaflets.
- 5. A large percentage of visitors planned their visit well in advance. 17 per cent decided to come on the day of the visit itself.
- 6. It is interesting that the age range of visitors is evenly spread. At the ploughing weekend the vast majority were in the 16–30 age bracket.
- 7. Most people stayed at the Museum for the length of time they had intended to. It is a little discouraging that 40 per cent of visitors expecting to stay for 3–4 hours did not stay that long. We could conclude that three hours is the optimum length of stay.
- 8. Visitors were asked to rate the Museum's facilities, poor, reasonable or good. 62 per cent thought parking was good, 44 per

- cent thought signposting good, 50 per cent thought refreshments were reasonable, 52 per cent thought lavatories good, and 68 per cent thought explanation of exhibits was good.
- 9. 97 per cent of visitors found the Guidebook commendable and easy to follow. A small number thought it too technical and had clearly missed the point of the supplement and the bolder print introducing each exhibit. Perhaps visitors should have this better explained.
- 10. Visitors were asked to comment on anything they disliked at the Museum. 72 per cent replied "nothing". The main dislikes included lack of furnishings in buildings; a number of minor complaints about refreshment facilities; poor signposting on site; uneven paths; the mill closed or not working, insufficient or lack of knowledge by stewards, badly behaved school children, plastic covers over hay stacks, and dogs fouling paths.
- 11. Visitors were asked for additional comments on the Museum. The more constructive included more publicity about special events, better information about the exhibits, especially social history, more livestock, and more craft demonstrations.
- 12. Visitors were asked to name their favourite exhibit. The most popular building was the mill, with Bayleaf and Walderton next on the list. It is clear that people want to see something happening, hence the popularity of the mill. Similarly the forge and charcoal camp were popular and on the days when they were working were more popular than Walderton. People also liked the fires in the buildings, and the shepherd's hut, once again reflecting the public's desire to see exhibits brought to life.

New Acquisitions for the Collections

Since the last newsletter a number of historic artifacts have been donated to the Museum and have been stored and conserved at Charlton by Heather Champion.

An important acquisition is a wooden lattice window from Warbleton, East Sussex, made in the 17th century, with the frame and laths made of oak.

The binder used on the Museum site at this year's harvest was donated and also a horse worked haylift used for building hay and straw stacks. Five iron staddles used to keep damp and vermin away from the stacks were also given.

Other items are:

A public house settle of the early 19th century and an oak dresser; a lead tank found in the loft of a 19th century house and used to store water; woodworking tools from various sources; livestock items including calf collars, milking stools and buckets, sheep retaining yoke and a fleam; three woodworking benches from the Witley workshop, one of which was used solely for coffin making and various domestic items including a chimney crane and pot hanger, pans, wine containers and earthenware jugs.

Overflow Car Parking

During the winter a track has been constructed behind the lake giving access around the perimeter of the Museum to overflow car parking in the lower part of the central field. This has been achieved with the aid of a grant from the English Tourist Board, and should give much-needed relief to the Museum site itself from large numbers of cars during peak days in the open season.

Photographic Competition

Each year Friends and volunteers take thousands of photographs of the Museum. This year the Friends are organising a photographic competition for all amateur photographers to enter.

The competition will contain two entry classes, one for adults and one for young people under the age of 18. Entries must relate to the general theme of "something seen at the Museum" and be taken during the 1983 main season.

Prizes include photographic equipment and accessories. The winning entries will be printed in the Southdown Observer Series and it is hoped it may be possible to organise an exhibition of entries during 1984.

The competition will run from April 1st until November 30th and entry forms will be available from the Museum during this period. The Competition is primarily for fun but in order to cover costs a small entry fee will be charged for those entering the adult class.

New Publications

Enclosed with this newsletter is an order form for a number of new publications which the Museum will be offering for sale this year.

Visitors will this season be able to follow a new **Woodland Trail**. A colourful and informative booklet has been produced, written by Ruth Tittensor and designed by Bruce Williams, which is intended to expand the theme of the Woodland Exhibition in the Coldwaltham Cattle Shed.

The trail begins here and follows a track up the hill behind the coppice in a loop returning past the Charcoal Burners Camp, on past Hangleton Cottge and ending at Boarhunt.

Visitors will see on their way round a modern woodland hut of the sort used by woodsmen working on nearby estates, and a traditional woodland shelter of chestnut poles based on a local photograph of the 1930's, both containing examples of tools used at the two different periods.

The Friends are sponsoring a colourful new **board game** about the Museum which has been devised by Richard Pailthorpe. Suitable for all age groups "**Time Trek**" is played with dice and counters and follows the same principles as "Snakes and Ladders".

The game takes players on a tour of the Museum, and en route various penalty or

advantage points are encountered as each exhibit building is visited.

In addition to being fun to play the game has been designed to be educationally instructive. The rear of the board contains a "Time Chart" relating the Museum buildings to various dates and reigns in British history.

Other new publications are the Woodland Exhibition poster, featuring the illustrations of the Lavant Valley down the ages which are part of the Woodland Exhibition; a new children's guide to the Leadworking exhibition in Court Barn and a number of new postcards.

Offprints of the report by Fred Aldsworth and Richard Harris on the dismantling and excavation of Walderton House, published in Sussex Archaeology are also now available.

Subscriptions

Regrettably, but necessarily, the Friends subscription rate is to rise from April 1st this year. From that date the rates will be as follows – individual membership, £4; family membership, £7; OAP and junior membership (under 18), £2; corporate membership, £7 for up to 15 tickets or multiples.

The increase is explained by the Chairman of the Friends in his Letter elsewhere in the newsletter.

Members are reminded of the advantage to the Museum of covenanting their subscription. Covenants can now be taken for as little as four years. The relevant forms can be obtained from the Museum office.

Catherine Barson, OBE

For many Friends of the Museum, and a lot of other people, one of the saddest features of 1982 was the death of Catherine Barson, in November.

She had strong links with Chichester, which she maintained throughout her London working life, first as a schoolmistress and then, from early in the war, as a civil servant. Remembering her brisk and no-nonsense manner, many might have thought her a rather unlikely civil servant. In fact she was a huge success in the Water Division of what had become, by the time she retired, the Ministry of Housing and Local Government, now the Department of the Environment. Water engineers up and down the country, especially in the north, regarded her with respect from the outset, as much for her command of the business in hand as for her unconventional approach to it. Latterly she was regarded with considerable

Her retirement and move to Chichester came in the early days of the Museum and she devoted immense energy to its affairs, as volunteer steward and member of the Friends Committee and of the Council of Management. Even so she found time to take an active part in Cathedral affairs and in a variety of good causes, as well as to maintain any number of personal friendships and keep them in good repair.

Despite acute pain, suffered over several years, Catherine's sense of humour and her determination to be of service to others did not desert her. We shall all be the poorer for want of her lively wit and her brave spirit.

The Weald and Downland Open Air Museum Singleton, Chichester West Sussex. Chairman: David Biart

Chairman: David Biart
Founder: J.R. Armstrong
Chairman of the Friends:
Sir James Waddell
Hon. Secretary of the Friends:

Ion. Secretary of the Friends: Bernard Johnson, Pinecroft Bracken Lane, Storrington West Sussex. Telephone: Storrington 2350

Museum Director: Christopher Zeuner. Telephone: Singleton 348 Research Director: Richard Harris

Oxen Try on Their Yoke

Since their arrival last year the Museum's oxen, Hearty and Heedless, have settled down well to their somewhat unusual life, responding usually helpfully to their training programme.

Alan Waters and Martin Bossom must be congratulated on their success in handling the pair, particularly in view of the lack of information on traditional methods of training.

During the winter Hearty and Heedless were taken on long walks around the site to acclimatise themselves to their life with humans, and soon after the New Year they were introduced to their yoke, made by Roger Champion to the design of an original yoke in Worthing Museum.

They accepted it extremely well and on the first day pulled a log along the track for a long way before stopping! Alan and Martin are continuing the training daily. In time it is hoped they will pull harrows and rollers and will be seen doing tasks on the site.

The oxen are being housed in a traditionalstyle fold yard based on the Lurgashall cattle shed near Bayleaf. During the day they are often tethered around the site.

For Friends' information Hearty lives up to his name and is the one to watch for! Heedless, the larger of the two, is the quieter, although he disapproves of hoof trimming.



Hearty and Heedless, yoked together for the first time contemplating the next move.

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