

Work Begins on the Horsham/Reigate Project

Work was begun in earnest on the Horsham Shop/Reigate Town House project in the market square during the summer. The foundations are completed, and a start will shortly be made on the modern linking buildings. Meanwhile the timbers of the Horsham Shop have been transported to the workshop of McCurdy and Company near Reading where they will be repaired and assembled prior to re-erection.

The whole project, inclusive of services, exhibitions etc will cost £140,000. Already £20,000 has been granted by the Museums and Galleries Commission and the Museum's fund raising efforts to date have been successful.

So far just over £18,000 has been raised in donations from companies, trusts and individuals. The donors are:

I. V. Askey Trust	£ 250
Birthday House Trust	300
Ernest Kleinwort Trust	1,000
Gleesons plc	500
Rank Foundation	2,000
Rush and Tompkins plc	200
Sale of Gordon Benningfield Prints to date	1,489
Interest-free loan (repayable July 1985)	500
Friends of the Museum	7,173
Country Fair	1,772
Raffle to date	1,000
Individual donations	1,897

The Museum is very grateful to the many individual donors who have supported the project, who are too numerous to mention by name here.

In addition to the donations a great deal of practical help in the form of gifts of materials has been invaluable to the project. Firms which have helped in this way are: Pioneer Concrete (UK) Ltd, Lignacite Products Ltd, Ibstock Building Products, Helpworth Iron

Co. Ltd/Bartol Plastics Ltd, J. G. Snelling Ltd, E. A. Chiverton Ltd, Chichester College of Technology, and the Architectural and Planning Partnership.

The project is proceeding in phases as the necessary money becomes available. It should be realised that the Horsham Shop is a very fragmentary building and the final structure will contain a large amount of new material. It will however be an important example of an urban type of building which is now rare and will give the opportunity to interpret to our visitors an aspect of medieval building style which was important.

The timber by timber analysis of the Reigate Town House has been most encouraging and when this building is repaired there will be only a small amount of new material required.

Peter McCurdy and his brother Martin, who are working on the Horsham Shop have already carried out work at the Museum, including the repair and re-erection of the Wiston Wagon Shed. Their company has been in existence for five years and they have specialised in restoring medieval buildings.

Recent contracts have included the repair and reconstruction of a 15th century house in Watford High Street for the Herts and Middlesex Trust for Nature Conservancy, and the restoration of a 17th century barn to be re-erected for the GLC's Historic Buildings Division at its farm museum in Uxbridge.

Friends Auction

An auction is to be held in Horsham in Spring, 1985 by the Friends as part of their campaign to raise money for the re-erection of the medieval shop, originally from Middle Street, Horsham.

Sotheby's Pulborough Salerooms are generously giving their advice and professional services to the auction, and Friends are asked to help by donating good quality items.

Further information about the auction is enclosed in a separate leaflet circulated with this newsletter.

North Cray Hall House Erected at the Museum Successful Festival of Building

One of the most interesting exhibits to be tackled by the Museum was re-erected on the site in August when the repaired timbers of North Cray Hall House were pieced together on its new corner site in the market square.

The timbers have been repaired over many months by Roger Champion, who with Heather Champion and Simon Harper were responsible for the re-erection of the frame, an extremely smooth and successful operation. The Museum is also grateful to Horley Road Services for their sponsorship in providing the crane.

A film of the re-erection process was made by TVS and details of its showing will be announced later. One of those most involved in the film was Peter Tester, who was instrumental in saving the house in 1967 and who undertook much of the in situ research.

The building is expected to create a lot of interest, not least because of its colour. On page 3 is an article by Richard Harris called "Why Are The Timbers Painted Red."

The re-erection was planned to co-incide with the Festival of Building at the Museum, mounted to mark the 150th anniversary of the Chartered Institute of Building, Southern Region. This too was a great success, bringing together as it did firms from the building industry throughout the region. The Museum made many friends, some of whom have contributed invaluable help to the Horsham/Reigate project. Particular thanks are due to Norman Deval,

the past president of the Institute, Southern Region, and to Derek Hale, current president. Stands in the marquees at the Festival were mounted by a wide range of firms, organisations and associations, including the SPAB, Property Services Agency, Building Con-

servation Trust, the Cement and Concrete Association, a number of firms of architects, Longleys, Redland, Rush and Tompkins, Lignacite, Ibstock, Keymer Brick Co., J. G. Snelling, E. A. Chiverton and Hepworth Iron Co. Ltd.



North Cray during re-erection. Photographs: Richard Pailthorpe.

Busy Summer Season

One of the Museum's busiest summers is over as you read this newsletter – busy not only from the point of view of visitor numbers, but busy also with special events and numerous additional activities, and especially busy for the small staff and ever-willing volunteer stewards.

At the end of August visitor numbers stood at 143,000. The 40,000 total for August itself was the best for that month since 1978. The total compares with 129,000 at the same time last year but we are still about 6,000 short of the 1982 running total. Undoubtedly increased publicity, the special events and exhibitions and good "museum visiting weather" have all contributed to the total. A new record was also set during the season – 5,300 visitors on the Heavy Horse Day.

The season began with the official opening of the West Wittering School by Mr. Kenneth Ball, Chairman of West Sussex County Council's Education Committee. The building is proving a popular attraction for visitors.

At the same time Richard Harris' touring exhibition "Traditional Building Crafts" began its run, housed in the Witley Joiner's Shop.

On Easter Monday, the Museum's heavy horse, William, travelled to London for the

Harness Horse Parade at Regents Park, where he drew the newly restored timber wagon. The Museum's Sussex Wagon was also there, horsed by a pair of Shire Horses owned by Mr. Bob Robinson.

In May the long-awaited Biskupin Exhibition was opened by Professor Barry Cunliffe in the presence of the Polish Ambassador, and began a highly successful stay, attracting a great deal of interest from the archaeological world. The exhibition has now begun its tour of other venues throughout the country.

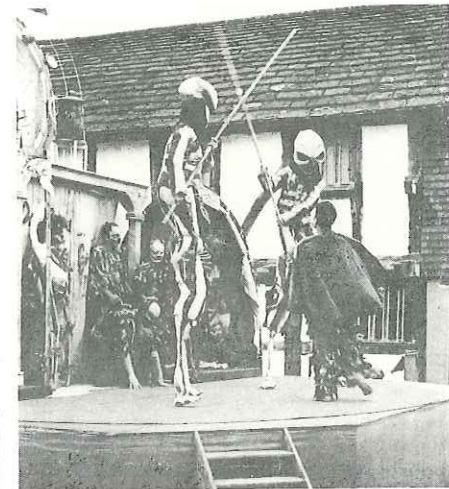
The Country Fair again proved to be a popular special event with the public and on this occasion many Friends who helped stage the day were dressed in period costume.

The Museum Caravan was present at the South of England Show at Ardingly, along with the timber wagon and Albert Peacock demonstrating spar-making. The Museum was invited to the Forestry Commission's enclosure at the event, a relatively quiet haven in the melee! This proved to be an excellent site and a great deal of interest in the Museum was shown by visitors to the caravan.

In June the sun shone for the Heavy Horses day, organised in conjunction with the Southern Counties Heavy Horse Association, which brought more than 5,000 visitors to the Museum, breaking all

records for a single day's attendance. About 25 horses took part in the event, illustrating the wide range of work undertaken by horses on the land. The day ended with a parade in the arena.

Towards the end of June the Museum was host to four days of entertainment by the Medieval Players, a touring company of justifiably high repute, whose evening performances of *The Great Theatre of the World*, were highly praised by all those who saw them. Unfortunately they did not play to full houses, and it is hoped that more people will be attracted to such entertainments in the future. The Players also presented street theatre, including juggling, stilt-walking, singing and music; and a special presentation for schools.



*The Medieval Players
Photo: Louise Adams*

The Timber Festival in July was held on one of the hottest weekends of the summer, and visitors numbers were lower than expected. Those who did come enjoyed a number of different displays concerned with timber utilisation and forestry, including demonstrations by forestry staff of the Edward James foundation.

The summer ended with the exhibition by Gordon Benningfield, and the most important event of the year, the re-erection of the North Cray Hall House and the Festival of Building, both reported separately in the newsletter.

Charcoal and Spars

The good weather this season has once again benefitted the sales of barbecue charcoal and by the end of August all stocks built up during the Spring had been sold. Gary Browning, and his assistant Dale Standing have kept up with the demand, often working in very hot and dirty conditions. During the winter months the charcoal kiln will be moved to West Dean Woods where burning will continue.

Spars made by Albert Peacock have once again been sold to a thatching wholesaler, and Albert will continue to make spars during the winter, also in a part of West Dean Woods which is managed by the Sussex Trust for Nature Conservation.

Why are the Timbers Painted Red?

When the timbers of the North Cray house were examined before being repaired, we found many traces of red paint on their outside and inside surfaces. The paint had survived in places where it was protected from the weather – such as under the eaves and under the jetty.

For several years we have accumulated evidence that many medieval timber-framed buildings had their timbers painted red. People in the Midlands and Yorkshire have found similar evidence – and in a recent restoration of the Woolshops in Halifax the timbers were painted red, as they had been originally.

How do we know that the red paint was not added many years after the buildings were first erected? In the North Cray house, traces of paint were found in places where they could only have been placed before or during the erection of the building. Also, red paint was found underneath the soot

which accumulated from the burning of the fire on the medieval open hearth in the middle of the hall.

We have followed all this evidence, and painted the timbers of the North Cray house red. The original paint used an earth colour as pigment, probably in a size or tallow medium. The paint we have used is a modern formulation, chosen to protect the vulnerable elm timbers and the complex repairs, but the colour is a close match to the original. The infill panels in the building will be finished with cream-coloured limewash, giving a building that is "red-and-yellow" rather than "black-and-white".

Richard Harris

Spring Field Trip to the Weald

The 1985 Spring Field Trip will visit our own catchment area, using the Wellington Hotel in Tunbridge Wells as the base. The trip will start on Monday, April 15 and end on Thursday, April 18.

The likely plan is to visit Charlwood, Bough Beech and Penshurst on Monday; Bodiam, Winchelsea, two Romney Marsh churches and Tenterden on Tuesday; Smarden, Leeds and the new Museum of Kent Rural Life on Wednesday, and Michelham Priory and somewhere else on Thursday. A leisurely and comfortable tour with no stretch longer than 40 miles! It is hoped to arrange for talks each evening after dinner at the hotel and Friends are encouraged to invite their own friends from the neighbourhood to have dinner with us.

One of the advantages of visiting our own catchment area is that it ought to be more attractive to Friends from Kent and East Sussex, and to make it even more attractive it is suggested that some might like to join us at the hotel and come on the two intermediate days' trips.

The cost is likely to be around £90 or £95 for those who come on the whole trip. Walter Greenway of 21 Cavendish Street, Chichester, who is organising the trip would welcome pencil bookings as soon as possible. Confirmation and the money will be required in March.

Letter from the Chairman of the Friends

This will be the first Newsletter received by many new Friends. I take this opportunity of welcoming them.

With this issue are two important enclosures. One is the formal notice of the Annual General Meeting of the Friends to be held at County Hall, Chichester, at 2.30 p.m. on Saturday 10th November. At the meeting I shall try to give an account of Friends' activities in this exceptionally busy season, including the steady advance of the Development Fund Appeal, and I shall extend the scope of the meeting a bit more by describing plans for new initiatives in the future. Also the raffle we have been running will be brought to an end with the draw.

But the point I want to emphasise now is that there are four vacancies to be filled on the Committee. We are always looking for youngish people, and this year we ought to strengthen ourselves by electing members who live in the Horsham and Reigate areas, which we are particularly cultivating. Meetings take place only about three times a year, so travelling need not be onerous; obviously, however, the spread of our activity geographically calls for local knowledge and contacts. So please think about this; and bear in mind that even if we turn out to have more good candidates than we have places, we can find ways of using spare energy by co-opting and otherwise.

The other important enclosure is a preliminary notice about an auction the Committee is arranging in Horsham on Friday 12th April 1985. We know from experience with the auction we held in Chichester in 1981 that we can make a success of an occasion of this kind provided we get properly stuck into the considerable job of organising and publicising it, and especially collecting good and saleable articles. We are very lucky to have the generous help Sotheby's are giving us; and apart from any other consideration we must not let them down.

The special point of going to Horsham is, of course, that the re-erection of the Horsham shop and the Reigate town house is the first charge on the Development Fund. A great many people in and around Horsham are aware of the Museum's contribution to saving the shop, still widely known as "Glasyher's" even though it is some 16 years since it was taken down, and we hope and expect that the publicity we shall give the auction will prompt interested members of the public (in Reigate as well as Horsham) to show their goodwill by contributing articles of value to the auction.

It may prove possible to establish a local group of Friends and others to make the necessary detailed arrangements. For the time being I am attending to them, with the help of Bernard Johnson, Bruce Pailthorpe, John Friar and Carol Hawkins – and, of course, Richard Pailthorpe at the Museum. Suggestions and advice would be welcomed.

In due time, and in the light of our growing experience, we shall set about fostering increased interest in the Museum's work throughout the Weald & Downland area.

Sir James Waddell

Biskupin – A Visit to Poland?

Many visitors to the Museum's Biskupin exhibition were fascinated by the artefacts and the insight they gave into the lifestyle of these early people of central Europe.

Marjorie Hallam, the Museum's Honorary Librarian, is exploring the possibility of arranging a coach tour to Poland to view the site and other places of interest. If there is sufficient support from amongst us, it should be possible to arrange special visits and activities such as English-speaking guides, lectures and visits to open air museums.

This would be a more convenient and rewarding means of visiting a country which, although with many connections with Britain, seems in modern circumstances to be remote to average travellers.

If plans go ahead a likely date is two weeks in June, 1986. Please contact Marjorie at the Museum if you are interested or have any suggestions or questions.

Gordon Benningfield Exhibition

The exhibition of work by Gordon Benningfield and the sale of prints of his paintings of the Museum exhibits have proved a great success.

Some 70 people attended the exhibition preview, which included a talk by Gordon Benningfield and poetry reading by Robert Gittings, who read extracts from Hardy's work.

To date 50 limited edition prints and 600 unlimited edition prints have been sold.

The Museum is most grateful to Gordon Benningfield for staging the exhibition and in particular for enabling the Museum to raise funds through sales of the prints to aid the Friends of the Museum Development Appeal Fund.



Friends busy in Crawley Hall at the Gordon Benningfield Exhibition Preview. Photo: Louise Adams

Children Build Their Own Houses at the Museum

Fifty-five local children at this year's summer school at the Museum had a chance to build their own house using materials produced on the museum site.

The children, led by the Museum's Honorary Education Officer, Elizabeth Newbery, built ten structures between them and had the opportunity of sleeping in them overnight.

The children first examined the different sorts of houses in which people live across the world and through history and arrived at a few basic designs which have been used again and again, to form the basis of the houses they built themselves.

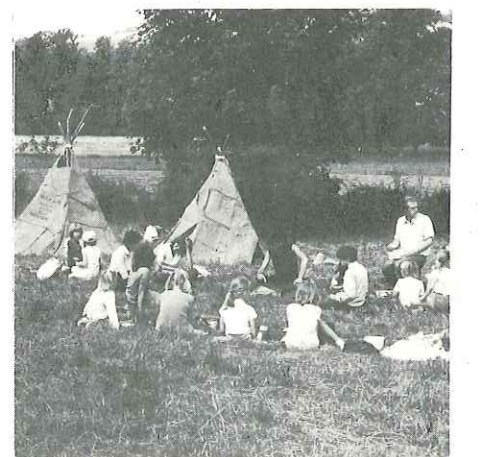
During the two week-long sessions they had to solve problems of design and construction which are relevant even to today's architecture, and they worked with the discipline of having to build something reasonably weatherproof for their night's sleep.

"The children had the opportunity to complete a project in a fairly short space of time and on a relatively large scale which they don't get very often in school," said Elizabeth: "Their experience generated greater interest in some of the exhibits at the Museum."

During the sessions the children were given demonstrations by Museum staff of thatching, tree-felling and hauling timber using a horse.

Thanks are due to the helpers, Neil Wilkins, Brian Phelan, Chris Challen, Jackie Demaus and Nick Hutson.

During the year Elizabeth has been running the Junior Friends Meetings with great success. There are now 70 members. Sessions have included cooking over a hearth, painting and drawing, glueing and sticking, and a video of the Museum and tour of the site.



*Lunch-time at the Summer School.
Photo: Richard Pailthorpe.*

Repairs to Winkhurst

During the winter months Roger Champion will be undertaking some maintenance work on Winkhurst House.

There are two main areas to be tackled. First, he will take off the controversial side sprockets at the end of the rafters under the eaves. It is now generally agreed that these were a wrong interpretation of the evidence. The holes at the end of the rafters are now thought to relate to the setting out of the roof during its manufacture and are to be found on other buildings of similar date.

The building will also be raised about twelve inches in order to ensure preservation of the sole plate in the future. The decaying timber at the base, which is new rather than old, will be replaced.

Advances in the Library

The Library MSC (Manpower Service Commission) team has now been at work for three months under the guidance of Caroline Hallam, turning the Library into an extremely busy and productive place.

Claire Murphy and Paul Damper are completing the classification of the book collection and putting it onto the computer. This will enable the production of a catalogue, thus achieving one of the Library team's major aims. Other members of the team are working on Mr. Armstrong's photographic material. Jim Wilkie is concentrating on mills, while Louise Jaggard and Tricia Semple are producing a catalogue of material on Sussex Churches. Jay Stevenson is working on slides of European Open Air Museums and it is hoped that Irena Morrison's skills in Polish and Russian will help with these.

Together with the Library's volunteers, the team is trying to produce computerized indexes to the unpublished material in the Library and also to articles from journals and magazines relevant to the Museum's interests. The Library would be very grateful for a good English dictionary if anyone has one to spare.

The daily help of so many additional people in the Library means that projects are proceeding at a remarkable pace and enterprises which had formerly been considered for the distant future have become imminent plans. The MSC team has complemented the existing volunteer team and a recently completed task which illustrates the patient dedication of the latter is the translation from German of the introductory chapters of the inventory of European Open Air Museums.

Through the interest of a Museum Friend, the Library has received from Chichester

Branch of NADFAS a grant of £500, which has enabled the purchase of the Royal Commission's English county inventories which are in print, plus the microfilm of the out of print volumes, plus the equipment for reading microfilm.

Marjorie Hallam, the Museum's Honorary Librarian says: "Having such material readily available on the shelves and being able to produce immediately detailed descriptions and drawings of significant vernacular buildings in such places as Salisbury, York or Cambridgeshire is a very heartening experience and bolsters our confidence that we are becoming one of the foremost libraries in this country for the study of vernacular architecture. This feeling has been confirmed by the enquiries and visits we are receiving from a whole range of people - from learned professors and authors, American and German as well as English - to owners of ancient houses and our own museum visitors."

Countryside Education Trust

A welcome link has been forged with the West Sussex Countryside Education Trust, an organisation based at Goodwood, whose aim is to encourage an understanding of the countryside amongst young people, especially schoolchildren.

For the next 12 months Elizabeth Newbery, already involved in developing new educational material for the Museum, will be working for both organisations, exploring ways of expanding the education service for both and examining more closely the most effective methods of serving schools. At a time when schools are suffering severe cutbacks in their budgets it is particularly important for private organisations to continue to provide a good level of service.

Cavalcade of Costume

The Friends is sponsoring a Cavalcade of Costume in the Royal Hall at the Regis Centre, Bognor Regis on Saturday, 23rd February, 1985 at 5.00 p.m.

This will be a dress show of genuine costumes, male and female, from 1600 to 1920 with underclothes and accessories of each period. Mrs. Penny, who has made this unique collection, will give the commentary and the clothes will be modelled by young men and women. The show will be accompanied by music of the appropriate period.

This is an opportunity to see this beautiful collection and to spend a pleasant evening helping the Friends. Tickets will be £3. Further details will be announced later.

Friends Recruiting Campaign

The Friends special recruiting campaign, which has been enthusiastically operated during the season by members has been most successful, resulting in 500 new members. 170 of these have covenanted their subscription or are paying by banker's order.

This will produce £1,500 for the current year and if all re-joined it would produce £2,500 next year.

The Museum would like to extend a special welcome to these new members.

Autumn Activities

This year's autumn activities weekend is planned on October 27th/28th, when there will be demonstrations of ploughing by oxen, horses, and tractors, and steam threshing of the Red Standard wheat, to provide thatching straw and grain.

This year's harvest is the largest produced by the Museum so far and was grown at the Museum, on land owned by the Edward James Foundation opposite the site, and at West Ashling and East Dean.

Wanted!

The Museum is urgently seeking to purchase good quality Horsham Slab roofing material, to complete the south side of the roof of the Crawley Hall, and also to roof over the Horsham shop.

The slab has proved difficult to acquire in the past and any leads for quantities, small or large, would be welcomed by the Museum.

Toll Cottage Garden

Ted Nash and Ann Beaumont have continued their work in the garden of the Toll Cottage this year, which despite the dry weather has been very colourful and well stocked with flowers, herbs and vegetables. Ann has also been developing the herb garden around Walderton House.

WEALD & DOWNLAND



The Weald and Downland
Open Air Museum
Singleton, Chichester
West Sussex.

Chairman: David Biart

Founder: J.R. Armstrong

Chairman of the Friends:

Sir James Waddell

Hon. Secretary of the Friends:

Carol Hawkins, 4 Vicarage Lane

The Bourne, Farnham

Surrey.

Museum Director: Christopher

Zeuner. Telephone: Singleton 348

Research Director: Richard Harris

Newsletter Editor: Diana Zeuner

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