

WEALD & DOWNLAND OPEN AIR MUSEUM

NEWS UPDATE

Successful Launch for Bayleaf Medieval Farmstead

The Bayleaf Medieval Farmstead and the associated History of Farming Exhibition, the most extensive project yet undertaken by the Museum, was opened in May by Sir Derek Barber, Chairman of the Countryside Commission.

The Farmstead has attracted enormous interest from the visitors who have appreciated the detail of the furnishings and from schools who have been able to use the Farmstead to give pupils a better idea of medieval rural life. The History of Farming Exhibition is particularly relevant to secondary schools.

The new project also attracted considerable publicity in the local and national media which was a valuable aid to a highly successful year in terms of visitor numbers.

Items are continually being introduced to Bayleaf, and during the summer Roger Champion has made a wide variety of small items of equipment, which have helped continue the furnishing process. Roger has shown particular skill in teaching himself how to cooper buckets and barrels. Garden and orchard produce have also aided the "lived-in" feel to the house, and spinning and hand-dyeing demonstrations have helped illustrate the extent of self-sufficiency necessary for the occupants of medieval Bayleaf.

Thelma Jack, the Bayleaf Interpreter, has tackled the task of communicating information to visitors and "keeping house" in an appropriate way extremely competently. She and her team of volunteers have had to cope with new patterns of visit to the house, intense use by school parties and thousands of questions.

The practical operation of Bayleaf Farmstead as a historical unit has been most encouraging. Next season an audio tape system and a booklet supporting the exhibition will be available to visitors wanting further information about the Farmstead, and new items will continue to be introduced periodically.



The hall at Bayleaf Farmhouse, furnished as it would have been in medieval times.

An Award under the Government's Business Sponsorship Incentive Scheme was made to the Seaward Group for their sponsorship of the Petersfield Brick-drying Shed, which will house an exhibition being sponsored by the Redland Brick Company.

The Company, based in Chichester, has given £9,000 towards the re-erection of the building which will be completed next year. The money is matched by a further £9,000 from the Incentive Scheme, which is administered by ABSA (Association for Business Sponsorship of the Arts).

In the picture are, left to right, Alan Watt, Seaward Public Relations Officer, Nigel Fee, Managing Director of Seaward Homes, Richard Luce, Minister of the Arts, who presented the Award, Chichester MP, Anthony Nelson, and Museum Director Chris Zeuner.



Museum Shows Steady Increase in Visitors

Visitor numbers to the Museum at the end of August show an increase of 15.5 per cent over the last two years — a substantial achievement. By the end of August this year they stood at 152,015 compared with 140,614 last year and 131,511 in 1987.

This season the Museum received 2,000 fewer children and students, but there was an increase in elderly visitors of nearly 3,000. The introduction of a family ticket

has worked well and 8,000 families have taken advantage of it.

A reduction in the number of school parties is influenced by the confusion over payments for school visits following the Education Reform Act. The increase in visitors is due at least in part to the combination of good weather and the Bayleaf Farmstead project, and is at variance with the experience of many museums which have seen a downward turn this year.

Holloway Hill Cottages

The dismantling of the Holloway Hill cottages, in the way of a road scheme at Godalming, begins this month, following delays to the start of the scheme.

The structure, in the High Street, was built originally in the 17th century as a timber-framed house of three bays, with a rear

chimney stack. An extension was added at one end and in the early 19th century the building was re-fronted in local Bargate stone.

The dismantling is expected to take about eight weeks. The cost of the rescue operation is being borne by Surrey County Council.

Bayleaf Pewter Collection

The Bayleaf Pewter Collection of good quality hand-made pewter platters and porringers would make ideal Christmas presents for Museum supporters to give to friends, and is on sale in the Museum shop.

All the items are well researched and carefully made and their equivalents can be seen on display in Bayleaf Farmhouse.

The Collection also includes pewter spoons, and horn spoons and mugs.

The Museum Shop also stocks a comprehensive range of books on buildings and countryside subjects which would make good Christmas presents.

John Chattaway

The Museum welcomed John Chattaway to the staff in June in the new post of Horseman/Stockman, vital with the increase in livestock on the site particularly since Bayleaf Farmstead opened with its complement of farm animals.

John is responsible for the care of all animals on the site and with working the horses regularly, providing visitors with additional interest (and keeping the horses fit).

John and his wife Jean have moved into Gonville Cottage on the site. Andrew Hodby and his wife have moved to Whitelands Cottage on the West Dean Estate.

News Update

Friends and supporters of the Museum receive a magazine each Spring containing news and features on a wide variety of subjects relating to the work of the Museum. It has now been decided to upgrade the Autumn mailing to this News Update, which will include short items of news and information about events and activities planned in the Winter and Spring of next year.



Mr J. Swallow of the Nationwide Anglia Building Society presents John McDermott with the new trophy for the timber-snigging competition during the Heavy Horse Day in June. The competition tests the skill of horsemen driving their horse drawing a log through a slalom course, much more difficult than it looks!

of people, and distributed even more thousands of leaflets. In this picture Keith Bickmore is in the foreground, with Beryl Bickmore just behind him and Clare Nicoll on the right.

One of the busiest days for Museum staff and volunteers during the year, but this time off-site — the Museum's stand at the Festival of Food and Farming in Hyde Park. During the three-day show staff and volunteers talked to thousands



Bernard and Betty Rush, with Carol Hawkins (centre) draw the winning tickets for the raffle in August. It raised £2,970 towards the Bayleaf Medieval Farmstead project. A list of winners is available in the Office on request.

Christmas Carols

The Christmas Carols at the Museum will this year take place on Monday, December 18 at 7pm in North Cray Hall House in the Market Square. This is a specially atmospheric evening with a glowing fire and torchlight and mince pies to follow the carols.

Our Volunteers — A Magic Ingredient

During the year we were pleased to welcome a number of new volunteers to join the team at the Museum. As the Museum grows we require more helpers and in order to ensure that visitors' experience is a rewarding one we need to have volunteer stewards in as many of the buildings as possible.

Friends and supporters will realise the importance of special events in attracting people in the museum and as enjoyable occasions in their own right. Those who are not directly involved in running the special days may not realise the very large number of people required to make the day a success. Those volunteers who look after the car parking arrangements receive the least public appreciation.

Even when an event is over there is still work to be done and there is always a core of dedicated volunteers who help clear the site at the end. These volunteers also include members of staff and very often their wives and families, who put in extra effort on these occasions.

This season has been especially involving and all members of the staff, those working on site and those in the office, have put in a tremendous effort particularly at the beginning of the year to help launch Bayleaf successfully.

We are particularly keen to encourage new volunteers for next year and if you would like to assist the Museum in this way or know of friends who would be interested you would be most welcome. Please contact the Museum Office for further information.

January Quiz

Brigadier Walter Greenway is arranging a quiz on Sunday January 14 next year at 2.00pm in Crawley Hall. The questions will be based on "What? Where? Why?" photographs taken mainly at the Museum and after tea Walter will give the answers. A small entrance fee will be charged for this lighthearted and sociable event.

Christmas Cards

The 1989 Christmas cards are for sale from the Office or shop at 20p each, and can be bought in packs of five. The view is of Bayleaf Farmhouse in the snow.

Journey to Northern India

Richard Hunt, one of the Museum's Trustees and an experienced overseas tour leader, has offered to organise a special interest tour to look at traditional building, arts and crafts in villages and towns in Rajasthan, together with some of the greatest monuments of ancient and modern India.

The tour will last for about 26 days in February 1991, and will cost approximately £1,500. This will include international and internal flights, trains and coaches, accommodation with breakfasts, all entrance fees, guides and tuition. Extras will be: insurance (£42), visa (£20) and other meals and incidentals (currently about £5 per day) and single room supplement.

Firm arrangements will not be made until we know that there is sufficient interest. Please give an indication of your support in principle by contacting Carol Hawkins at the Museum or Richard Hunt directly: Halnaker Park Cottage, Chichester PO19 0QH. Further details are available from them.

Everest Marathon

Alan Waters of the Museum staff has been selected as one of 50 from Europe to take part in a marathon run at the base of Mount Everest in November. The marathon is in support of Nepalese-based educational, medical and environmental charities. Alan would be very grateful for sponsorship from people concerned with the Museum. Further details from Alan or Carol Hawkins.



John Ruffell of West Dean driving a Marshall tractor drawing a threshing box and elevator in the main arena during the South of England Show this summer. This was one of the exhibits taking part in a History of Farm Machinery Pageant organised by Museum Director Chris Zeuner for the South of England Agricultural

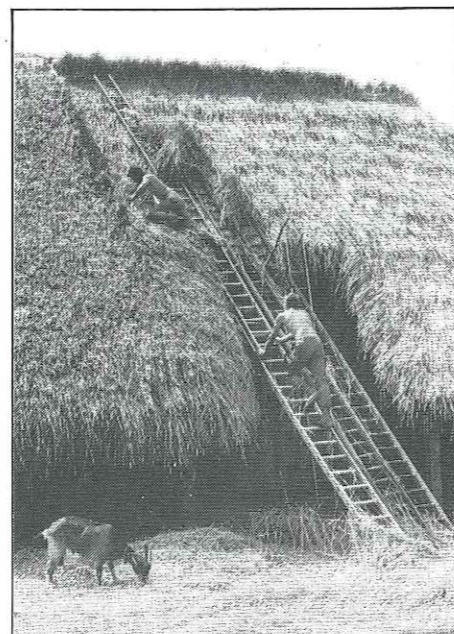
Society as one of their celebrations of British Food and Farming Year at the Show. John Ruffell undertakes a variety of tasks during the year for the Museum, including transport to and from shows of the publicity caravan and Sussex Waggon.

Busy Autumn Activities Weekend Planned

This year's Autumn Activities Weekend on Saturday and Sunday, October 21 and 22 promises to be spectacular and busy — with a further visit by a pair of steam ploughing engines, giving an opportunity to see them working properly ploughing a substantial section of field.

There are four ricks to be threshed by

contractor Bert Dibben, with Arthur Thompson's immaculate steam engine again providing the power during the weekend. There will be teams of heavy horses and also vintage tractors ploughing and cultivating the ground, and a variety of craft skills demonstrated throughout the Museum site.



Thatching of Cowfold Barn in progress, with one of the new occupants of the farmyard in the foreground.

FRIENDS OF THE MUSEUM VISIT TO HEREFORD & THE WELSH BORDER

Thursday 19 - Monday 23 April 1990

The 1990 "Spring Tour" will be based in Hereford, offering the chance to explore the crucks and castles, countryside and city, of the England/Wales border land. We will be staying at the Green Dragon Hotel (Trust House Forte) in the centre of Hereford.

THE ITINERARY is not firm yet — ideas are welcome — but it will feature a day in Hereford with a guided tour and the chance to visit the cathedral of Mappa Mundi fame. Also on the 'possible' list are the Cider Museum; the Big Pit coal mining museum at Blaenavon (visitors are taken down 300 ft to the coalface by guides who have worked the mines themselves); Penhow Castle "the most enchanting Knights' Castle on the Welsh Border"; Stokesay Castle; Lower Brockhampton (14th century moated manor house); Leigh Court Barn — "largest cruck built structure in Britain"; Tretower Court & Castle "a group of medieval buildings demonstrating the transition from castle to domestic residence", and the National Waterways Museum at Gloucester. *Evening activities:* local speakers and perhaps a theatre visit or concert.

THE COST to include the coach (Fleet Coaches Ltd as for the last 2 years) from Singleton and return (cars may be left at the museum), its use during our stay, bed, breakfast and evening meals in the hotel, all admission charges, and speakers' costs will be £178 per person in a twin or double room or £198 for a single room. The only 'extras' (optional) are likely to be lunches, the possible evening theatre or concert, and of course, personal spending.

TO APPLY to join the trip please complete the slip below and return it with a deposit of £25 per person (refundable if you have to cancel and we can fill the place). The number is limited to 50. All applications will be held until 8th November. If we are oversubscribed by then the applications (with priority for members of the Friends) will be drawn "out of a hat" on that date. Everyone will be notified as soon as possible thereafter. The unlucky ones will be put on a waiting list. Deposits will be returned if we are unable to offer you a place.

If you have any queries ring Carol on Farnham (0252) 726195 or at the Museum on Wednesdays.

To: Miss Carol Hawkins, Hon. Secretary, Friends of the Weald & Downland Museum, Singleton, Chichester, West Sussex PO19 0EU

I/We would like to join the Hereford visit 19-23 April 1990

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Title

First name(s) by which you like to be known

Surname

Address

..... Telephone

Accommodation required: DOUBLE/TWIN/WILLING TO SHARE TWIN

I/We enclose cheque £..... payable to Friends of the Weald & Downland Open Air Museum, being £25 per person for deposit

Sheepdog Trials

A Nursery Sheepdog Trial is planned as an unusual Christmas week activity, for Sunday, December 31. Of course it will be weather-dependent! For further information contact Richard Pailthorpe at the Museum office.



The Weald and Downland Open Air Museum, Singleton, Chichester, West Sussex.
Telephone: (0243 63) 348

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