

# WEALD & DOWNLAND OPEN AIR MUSEUM

## NEWS UPDATE

### VISITOR NUMBERS DIP MID-SEASON

#### *Works Proceeds on Two Building Projects*

At the mid-way point of the summer season visitor numbers were approximately 15 per cent down, compared with last year's record total. However this year's figures are very much in line with other years at the same time.

Last year was an exceptional one because of the additional publicity attracted by our involvement with British Food and Farming Year and the opening of the Bayleaf Medieval Farmstead. It was perhaps inevitable that 1990 would be a less buoyant year!

Richard Pailthorpe explains that other contributory factors to the slight downturn have

been the current economic climate and its effect on family budgets, the loss of one week's school visiting due to changes in summer term dates, and ironically, in another good year for weather, a cold and wet Easter. The exceptionally hot weather in August was also reducing visitor numbers quite dramatically.

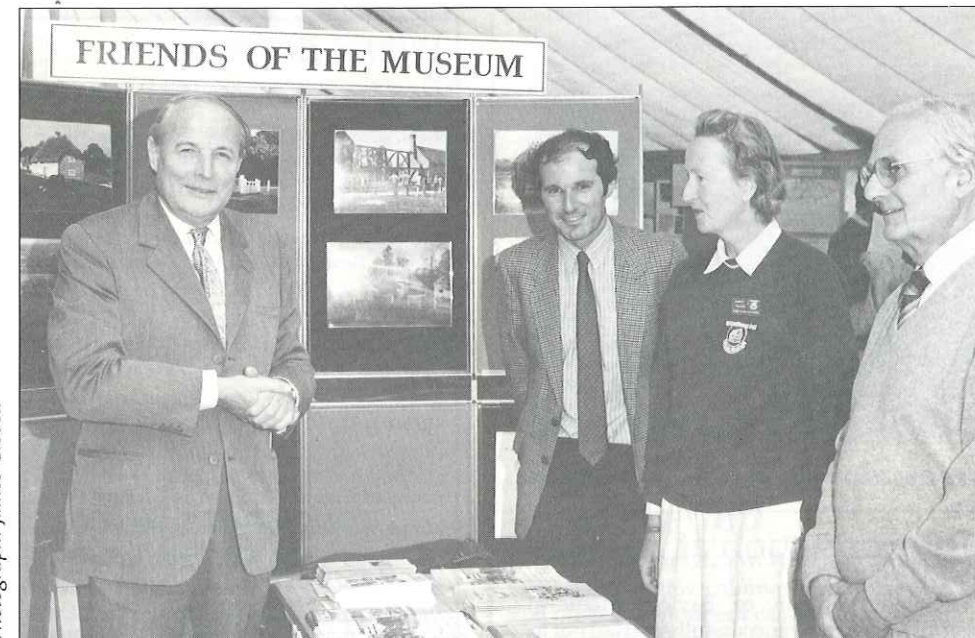
Attendance to special events have however generally been good. We have also for the first time undertaken some television advertising during August, and its effect on attendances will be monitored with interest.

The main building project in progress on site during the season has been the re-erection of the **Petersfield Brick Drying Shed**. This has been undertaken by Paul Russell and John Winterbottom, who completed tiling the large expanse of roof in June. The drying shed, together with the Redford Pug Mill House, forms the beginnings of a brick yard, and was partly funded by Seaward Homes.

Work is now in progress towards the construction of the exhibition which will be sited inside the building, written by Richard Harris and sponsored by the Redland Brick Company. Paul and John are making the display boards and the handling tables, which will be used for special exhibits which visitors will be able to handle. Later in the year a specialist bricklayer from Redland will construct the first of the exhibits. The project will be open for the new season.

Roger Champion has been working on the timbers of the **aisled hall from Sole Street** at the Museum's workshops at Charlton. The main hall is expected to be ready for re-erection in the later part of the year. The building, which is very fragmentary, is to house an enlarged refreshment facility, replacing the temporary marquee used for the past few years. The schedule is tight because of the need to meet the completion target in time for the beginning of the new season. Plans for the building have been developed by Charlie Hughes, of Miller Hughes Associates, Chichester.

During the coming winter **Lurgashall Mill** will require considerable attention. Robert Demaus will be returning to undertake maintenance work on the machinery and we expect the Mill to be closed for milling for up to one month. Robert is also repairing the machinery of the Pevensey Windpump, which was severely damaged in the storm at the beginning of the year.



Photograph: James Clevett

The Duke of Richmond, far left, at the Friends stand at the opening of the Building Conservation Exhibition in June, with, left to right, Richard Pailthorpe, Assistant Director (Visitor Services), Virginia Lyon, Chairman of the Friends and Museum Trustee, and Dr Bruce Pailthorpe, Vice Chairman of the Friends.

### Creating New Friends

One of the best ways of helping the Museum for Friends is to create new ones, and a gift membership of the Friends of the Museum can also be an ideal Christmas present for a relative or acquaintance.

To make the gift a little special the Friends' have made up smart gift packs including a gift card to contain a message, the latest Museum Magazine and News Update, the Museum Guidebook, the current leaflet giving opening

times and dates of special events and a form for one year's membership of the Friends (£10 for an individual membership or £18 for a family one). The packs are available from the Museum Shop.



# The Wilson Collection

Earlier this year the Museum was offered a very fine opportunity to select items from the possessions of the late Mr. Dick Wilson of East Dean. The house itself was of interest: from the outside the signs indicate a 17th century structure, but inside can be seen a timber frame of much earlier origins. Richard Harris was able to inspect and record the building, and the collection of items was removed and is now in store at the Museum. Mr. Wilson's house in East Dean was one of the last houses in the village to remain unaltered and now that it has been sold it will inevitably be modernized.

One unusual item was the Game Larder which stood in the garden outside the house. This was used by a Gamekeeper of Goodwood Estate to store pheasants and partridge after shoots.

*Bob Powell describes the collection:*

With the Museum's recent acquisition of the house contents of the late Mr. Dick Wilson of East Dean it has been possible to add to the collection a number of interesting and useful items.

A bachelor all his life, Dick Wilson was born in Hurstpierpoint, near Brighton, in 1923. Soon afterwards the family moved to East Dean, and Dick, apart from World War II service in the Marines, spent his working life on local estates and for the County Council.

Many of his effects had belonged to his parents, and they have provided the Museum with a supply of late 19th - 20th century furniture, bedding, ornaments and other household goods suitable to aid the future interpretation of a turn of the century cottage.

Additionally there are several other items of interest. These include an 18th century oak chest, bottles of straw hat dye, sheep bells and several cattle hooves (four of which have been made into an ornament!). Obviously a hoarder for much of his life, Dick Wilson threw little away, and this has provided a useful source of period hinges, etc for use on the Museum's buildings. It has also provided much documentary evidence of local interest which will be passed on to the Chichester Record Office.

Several other interesting acquisitions have been made by the Museum in recent weeks. A collection of cobblers' tools and fittings (such as hob nails), once used in Surbiton, was collected from Chichester. The acceptance of an old well head from Forestside resulted in the acquisition of well buckets, tools, harness, and more late 19th century household furnishings, including a child's rocking chair.

In the Autumn there is the prospect of acquiring a horse-drawn mower, wooden harrows, harness and other agricultural sundries suitable for display from near Cowfold.



*Museum Horseman and Stockman, John Chattaway came first in the two-wheeled section of the skills trial at Chatham Dockyard's Heavy Horses Event on August 12. John is pictured above giving a demonstration of harrowing with William outside the Museum's publicity caravan at the ICI Open Day in June.*

# Welcome To New Staff

We are pleased to welcome to the Museum Staff our new Assistant Curator, Bob Powell, who took up his post in July. Bob's primary responsibility is the acquisition, documentation and care of the Museum's supporting collections, i.e. those used in the interpretation of the buildings and site. His first task has been to sort and start documenting the material recently acquired by the Museum from the estate of the late Dick Wilson of East Dean.

Bob considers himself a Fenman, having been brought up in Peterborough, Cambridgeshire. In 1975 he graduated from Sheffield University with a degree in



*Bob Powell*

archaeology, and spent several years excavating. In the early 1980's Bob worked for the forestry/countryside sections of both Cambridgeshire and Bedfordshire County Councils inspecting and designing tree planting schemes. In 1983 he returned to

historical work when he took up the post of Assistant Curator for Moray District Council, based at Forres in the Scottish Highlands. One of his museums was in the village of Tomintoul, which claims to be the highest village in the Highlands.

Bob's personal interests revolve around the countryside, and in particular the history and practical application of rural crafts and skills. He enjoys woodworking and repairing old harness, the latter arising from a life-long interest as a heavy horse enthusiast. Bob's wife, Faye, a Canadian, has taken up a new post at the College of Estate Management, Reading. Together they have regularly visited open air museums in Canada, and now they look forward to joining in the work and activities of our Museum.

Welcome also to the new Assistant Warden, Frank Knights. Frank has joined us mid-season having approached the Museum to enquire about the possibility of working for us. Frank has spent his career in the field of display and exhibitions in the Domestic Appliance Industry. He lives in Emsworth and will be working for the Museum during the summer season and throughout the winter.

Whilst the new Assistant Warden was being sought, following John Williams' retirement, we have been most grateful to Dickie and Ray Finucane and Stan Snow for so kindly stepping in to help out on a number of busy days during the summer.

# New Officers for the Friends Committee

Sir James Waddell retired as Chairman of the Friends at the annual meeting as we reported in the Magazine last year. At the Museum's annual meeting he was appointed Vice President in recognition of his tireless work over ten years with the highly successful Friends' organisation. His mantle has passed to Virginia Lyon, a Trustee of the Museum and volunteer steward of long standing, who has been one of our greatest supporters.

Virginia has undertaken many tasks for the Friends and the Museum over the years in addition to basic voluntary stewarding, including

guided tours for booked groups and assisting with the organisation of special events.

Dr Bruce Pailthorpe is the new Vice Chairman of the Friends.

The Hon. Secretary remains Carol Hawkins, and the Hon. Treasurer, Mike Doran. Members of the Friends Committee are: Peter Vincent, Ted Toseland, Kathryn Gunns, John Hutson, Bernard Rush, John Eyre, Mary Hum, Stan Snow, Ethel Buwyer, Ann Allen and Colin Sharman. Brig. Walter Greenway, Richard Pailthorpe and Keith Bickmore are co-opted members, and Chris Zeuner is ex-officio.

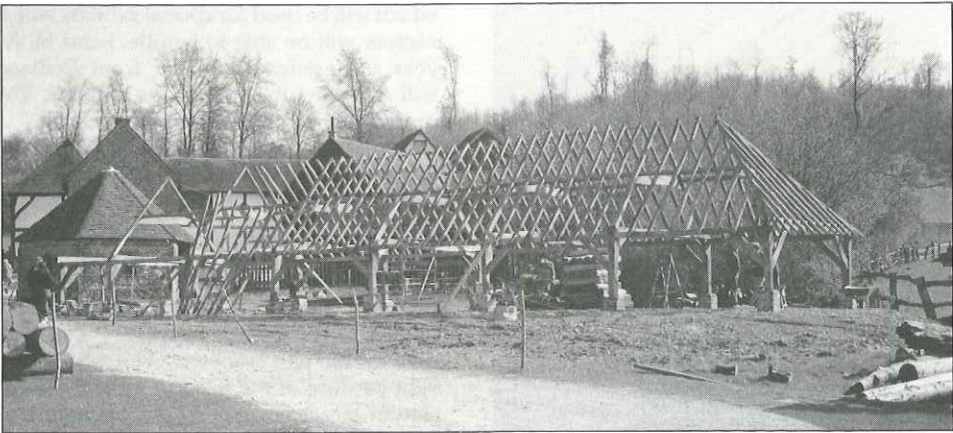
# Charcoal Production

The dry summer has once again put pressures on the demand for barbecue charcoal and Alan Waters is to be congratulated on more than keeping up with supplies.

He has also managed to find time to give the Charcoal Burners' Camp, assisted by Chris Orchard, a much-needed refurbishment, and ran an earth-kiln burn in August.

# All Creatures Great and Small

A new event planned for the August Bank Holiday weekend next year will bring together in a large marquee craftsmen working to produce items in a variety of media representing animals and birds.



*The long low timber frame of the Petersfield Drying Shed taking shape at the Museum earlier in the year.*

# Open House

Friends and friends of Friends spent a most enjoyable sunny afternoon in May visiting the home of Martin Caroe, a Trustee of the Museum - Vann, at Hambledon, Surrey. Vann is a 16th century open hall which was extended by W.D. Caroe, the architect, Martin's father. With the help and advice of their neighbour and friend, Gertrude Jekyll, the grounds were transformed, including the creation of a woodland water garden with four small ponds surrounded by exotic planting.

On the same day Friends were able to visit one of the National Trust's smallest properties, Oakhurst Cottage, situated close to Vann.

# Interpretation at Bayleaf

The interpretation of Bayleaf Medieval Farmstead is most successfully carried out in person by Thelma Jack and her assistants. Visitors who are particularly interested in this section of the Museum can expand their experience in two ways. An audio tour of the Farmstead presented by The Time Machine can be bought for 50p to give a more in-depth vision of medieval rural life as it would have been lived at Bayleaf. Also, following popular demand by visitors, a booklet, based on the exhibition in the service chamber in Bayleaf, is now on sale, price £1.00 (£1.30 by post).

# Winter Activities Programme

**Tuesday, September 25** *From Moscow to Kubishev - An anecdotal account of a journey down the Volga.* Chris Zeuner, Museum Director. 7.30 p.m. in Crawley Hall.

**Saturday, October 6** *English Brickwork.* Dr R.W. Brunskill OBE, Vice President of the Museum. 2.30 p.m. in Crawley Hall. (Fully booked)

**Saturday/Sunday, October 27-28** **Autumn Activities Weekend, with Steam Threshing and Ploughing.**

**Tuesday, October 30** *Other Times, Other Places: Ploughing, Threshing and Related Events in Different Parts of Britain and Canada.* Bob Powell, Assistant Curator. 7.30 p.m. in Crawley Hall.

**Monday, November 12** *Annual Volunteers Party and Museum Jubilee Celebration.* 7.30 p.m. at West Dean College.

**Wednesday, December 5** *Sole Street and Scadbury Manor: Aisles and Base Crucks.* Richard Harris, Research Director. 7.30 p.m. in Crawley Hall.

**Thursday, December 20** *Christmas Carols.* 7.00 p.m. in North Cray House.

**December 26 - January 1, 1991** *Special Christmas Opening.*

**Sunday, December 30** *Nursery Sheepdog Trial.*

**Sunday, January 13** *Quiz in Crawley Hall.*

**The Exhibition on European Open Air Museums originally planned for September, has been cancelled.**

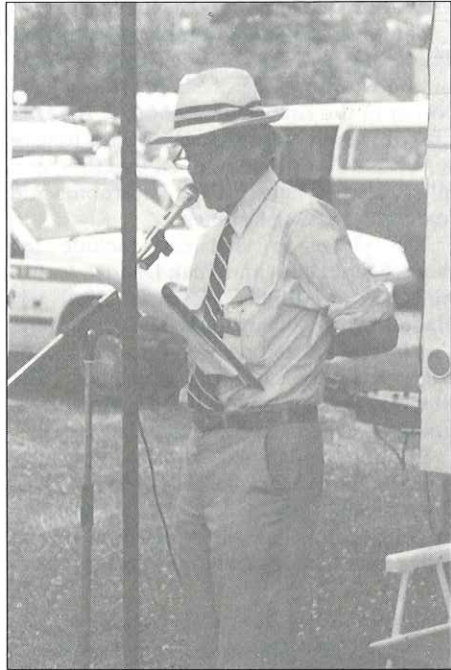
# CHANGES ON THE MUSEUM'S EXECUTIVE BOARD

A number of changes occurred among the officers of the Executive Board at the beginning of the season and following the Museum's annual meeting.

Jimmy Woollings retired as Hon. Secretary and Treasurer, after a total period of five years during which his sterling work and constant encouragement was crucial in consolidating the operation of the Museum Trust and providing comprehensive backing to the operation of the Museum. He has now been elected Vice Chairman.

His place as Hon. Secretary was taken by Mike Roberts, a chartered surveyor, and former partner in Wyatt and Son of Chichester. He joined the Trustees in 1988.

Derek Bandey has been appointed to the post of Hon. Treasurer. Mr. Bandey, who also lives in Chichester, and became a Trustee last year, was Managing Director of MPA, a firm which specialises in pensions.



*Neil MacGregor-Wood, a Trustee of the Museum, offered to do the link commentary at this year's Rare Breeds Show, a task he performed all day, plied with periodic refreshment to deter the effects of the extremely hot weather.*

# Christopher Zeuner, Awarded The OBE

In June the Museum was honoured that its Director, Christopher Zeuner, was awarded an OBE for services to the museum world. In addition to his work at the Open Air Museum Chris is President of the European Association of Open Air Museums and Chairman of the Association of Independent Museums.



# Friends Make Record Donation to Museum

The Friends of the Museum exists for two reasons: to promote enjoyment of the museum and to provide financial support. It was officially formed on 29th August 1970 but had been gathering members for at least two years before then.

Donations to the museum have varied each year but reached a record £22,610 last year. £22,500 of this plus £6,000 this year was for the Bayleaf farmstead project and in particular was linked with the re-erection of Cowfold Barn.

The next target is to give a further £19,000 by the end of this year towards the new refreshment building to be erected in place of the marquee which has been used for the last three seasons. The building will be

based on the few surviving timbers of a medieval aisled hall, with its slightly later crosswing, from Sole Street in North Kent. Work will start on 1st November and must be completed by the end of March for the new season.

Most of the Friends' income comprises subscriptions, topped up with additional donations, tax refunds from Deeds of Covenants, and the results of fund-raising activities. Therefore, the more members there are, the more money can be donated to the museum for the rescue and display of more buildings. Recruitment of new Friends is vital and all existing members and supporters are urged to encourage others to join – please!

## FRIENDS' SPRING TOUR

11 – 15 APRIL, 1991

### The Middle Shires of England

The Friends' Spring Tour next year takes place in the Middle Shires of England – Derbyshire, Nottinghamshire and Yorkshire – with Sheffield as the base.

This area contains a number of surprises. The group will stay in **The Rutland Hotel**, on the western edge of Sheffield in a leafy corner of the suburb of Broomhill. It began life as seven separate Victorian houses which have now been linked together, and all rooms will have private bathrooms and tea/coffee making facilities.

The **places to visit** can include the magnificent Dales and Peak District, water-mills and windmills, Hardwick Hall and Haddon Hall, the National Stone Centre, canals and limestone caverns, and many lively industrial heritage museums. The itinerary is not yet fixed, but the difficulty is going to be in deciding what to leave out.

**Evening activities** – theatre, speakers, quizzes, time to chat and relax? All are possible. Would anyone be willing to help organize the evenings? A discount on the tour cost is a possibility for the volunteer.

To: Miss Carol Hawkins, Hon. Secretary, Friends of the Weald & Downland Museum, Singleton, Chichester, W. Sussex PO18 0EU

I/We would like to join the "Spring Tour", 11 – 15 April 1991.

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Title ..... Surname .....

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

Address.....

..... Telephone: STD Code ..... No.....

Room required: DOUBLE/TWIN (couples)

TWIN (sharing with ..... who has booked separately)

SINGLE

WILLING TO SHARE TWIN (if unlucky in draw for a single)

I/We enclose cheque £ . . . payable to the Friends of the Weald & Downland Museum, being £30 per person for deposit.

## Making Wattles in London

The Museum has been assisting the Museum of London make a suitable arbour for roses in its new courtyard exhibition on *The History of Gardening in London*. Alan Waters spent several days there constructing the arbour and a wattle fence from hazel.

## Fund-Raising Lunches Planned

The Friends' Committee is to organise a series of fund-raising lunches with guest speakers to be held in the Coronation Hall, Slindon. The first will be held this Autumn. The cost will be £7.50 for a hot meal including wine. The lunches will be open to members of the public as well as Friends. Please contact the Museum office if you are interested in attending the first, which will probably have an early October date.



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

**Chairman**  
Nigel Stephens  
**Vice Chairman**  
Jimmy Woollings  
**Hon. Secretary**  
Michael Roberts  
**Hon. Treasurer**  
Derek Bandey  
**Founder**  
J.R. Armstrong

**Museum Director**  
Christopher Zeuner  
**Research Director**  
Richard Harris  
**Assistant Director (Visitor Services)**  
Richard Pailthorpe  
**Magazine Editor**  
Diana Zeuner

**Chairman of the Friends**  
Virginia Lyon  
**Hon. Secretary of the Friends**  
Carol Hawkins  
**Hon. Treasurer of the Friends**  
T.P. (Mike) Doran