

WEALD & DOWNLAND OPEN AIR MUSEUM AUTUMN MAGAZINE

REIGATE TOWNHOUSE PROJECT RECEIVES £20,000 GRANT FROM MUSEUM IMPROVEMENT FUND

The Museum received a considerable boost for its Reigate Townhouse Project this Summer with a £20,000 grant from the Museum Improvement Fund. This fund was set up last year as a partnership between the Wolfson Trusts and the Government to assist museums and galleries.

A further £3,000 each was recently earmarked for the project by the Minet and Idlewild Trusts, which have assisted the Museum on several occasions before. The Friends of the Museum are to contribute some £10,000 to the project. Further funds are continuing to be sought by the Museum with the aid of The Worshipful Company of Painters and Stainers.

The Reigate project includes the

completion of the restoration work on the 17th century town house, already re-erected at the Museum; the conservation and exhibition of the Museum's collection of domestic wall paintings and of painters tools and equipment and their interpretation in the context of the Museum's theme. The project will also include the installation of an environmental control system developed by the Bavarian State Museums Service, which is particularly applicable to historic buildings.

The sections of wall painting found on the walls and timbers of the Reigate house during dismantling have recently returned to the Museum following conservation by specialist restorer Ann Ballantyne.

FRIENDS' FUND RAISING DINNER IN NOVEMBER

A fund-raising dinner will be held in the Coronation Hall, Slindon on Friday, November 1 at 7.30 for 8.00 p.m., when the speaker will be Ross Wood (Rosemary McGregor Wood, wife of our Trustee, Neil McGregor Wood). She will read some of the poems from her first volume *A Pen Dipped in Some Ink*.

Copies of the book will be on sale, with the profits very kindly being donated towards the next stages of development for the Reigate Townhouse Project at the Museum.

The evening promises to be an enjoyable and memorable occasion – please apply early as numbers are limited.

Tickets are £8.50 including wine and can be obtained from Virginia Lyon, Chairman of the Friends on the form enclosed with this magazine.



Robert Daws performing in "The Education of Little Tree" by the lake during the Penny Royal Theatre's season at the Museum.

VISITOR NUMBERS UP DESPITE RECESSION

Visitor numbers for the first half of the year are considerably up on 1990 – by the end of August 7,500 more people had visited the Museum than the corresponding period last year. Attendance stands at 135,000 compared with 127,500, so far this year.

One interesting change however is that the number of schoolchildren is greatly increased, following two uncertain years for school parties, whilst the number of adults has decreased, probably due to indifferent weather in the Spring. This does of course have an effect on revenue from the gate.

The Museum is particularly pleased and not a little relieved at these figures, particularly at a time of recession. The figures compare exceptionally well with other museums and tourist attractions.

Richard Pailthorpe reports excellent attendances at special events, notably an all time record for any occasion at the Museum, when 5,500 people came to the Rare Breeds Show. Considerable effort was made to improve our August numbers, hit particularly hard during last year's very hot summer, by organising a daily programme of demonstrations and activities. Publicising these was a major task, and included appearances by the Museum's publicity caravan at a number of local venues – Chichester, Midhurst, Petworth, Selsey and the Witterings.

The Natural World Craft Fair, organised by Virginia Lyon at the end of August, was very successful, attracting more than 7,500 people over the three days it was held and raising £2,300 which will go towards the Reigate Townhouse Project.

Brick Exhibition Opened in June

The Brick Exhibition in the Petersfield Drying Shed opened in June and is proving a success with visitors.

Written by Richard Harris the displays deal with the use of bricks in building and include mock-ups illustrating different techniques and a furnished first bay showing how the building would have looked when in use. Several hands-on exhibits teach

visitors about bricks through practical handling sessions. The exhibition infrastructure was designed and built by carpenter John Winterbottom.

We are most grateful for generous sponsorship of the exhibition by the Redland Brick Company, and to Seaward Properties for the re-erection of the building.



Building projects at the Museum are always accompanied by some special finds – Cecil Waters, aged over 80, was one of these! He was foreman at the Causeway Brick Works, Petersfield, the original site of the drying shed. He was invited to the exhibition launch and spent a long time with the Museum's Research Director, Richard Harris, explaining in detail how different parts of the brickyard functioned. His information was most interesting and useful, and he was able to solve for us one or two outstanding queries regarding the horse engine house.

ANY OLD SHEETS?

Bob Powell, the Museum's Curator, has welcomed the slight lull in acquisitions during the Summer to catch up with the backlog of cataloguing. He has dealt with two collections of dairying and cobbling items and is soon to start on a donation of craftsmen's and agricultural tools.

Among the few items which have arrived during the Summer are a fine horse-drawn lawnmower made by Green and Son Ltd of London, and a roller mill made by Hunt of Earles Colne in superb condition, which with suitable power could roll oats for our livestock. An interesting set of carthorse harness

dating back from 1900-1910 had also been donated through Alan Waters, our charcoal burner.

Following contacts Bob made with staff at Colonial Williamsburg in Virginia this Summer the Museum has been able to build up links with the person in charge of their brick yard, and co-operation in developing research and displays will be possible.

Readers may be able to help Bob with one of his most vital current needs – old sheets and blankets in good enough condition to be used for wrapping items in the collection. Please contact Bob at the Museum office if you can help.

Spreading the Flour Message

Volunteers to help the Museum deliver its stoneground wholemeal flour farther afield are urgently being sought.

We have built up good local outlets, but are now seeking new ones further away from the Museum – farm shops, village stores and health food shops. The cost of transportation can rapidly erode the profit as delivery distances increase, because the quantities are relatively

small.

Volunteer stewards Ruth and Peter Stock have worked extremely hard this Summer to establish new outlets, and we need further assistance to build on their good work. If any volunteer could help by collecting flour on their duty days for distribution near their homes please contact Richard Pailthorpe at the Museum office.

VITAL SPONSORSHIP

The Museum is most grateful for the continuing sponsorship of Carrindale Garage, Bognor Regis, Volvo agents, who have supported our special events at the Museum for a number of years. This help has been vital in ensuring that the events, so important for the Museum, can go ahead smoothly.

Another, rather different, form of sponsorship has been the support by P & O for travel to Europe by Museum Director Chris Zeuner during his presidency of the European Association of Open Air Museums. The company has sponsored ferry crossings enabling him to attend meetings in Europe at considerably less cost.

NEW VICE PRESIDENTS

The Museum Trust elected two new Vice Presidents at its annual meeting.

Marjorie Hallam was one of the founders of the Museum and a guiding light in the early days, working alongside Roy Armstrong in the dismantling and recording of the first buildings to be brought to the Museum. She is a prominent member of the Wealden Buildings Study Group and has made detailed surveys of many traditional buildings in the weald and downland area. Her involvement with the Museum, through committee membership and advice, has continued through to the present day, and includes a period as the Museum's first Librarian.

Geoffrey Godber, former Chairman of the Museum's Council of Management and President until early this year, has been a dedicated supporter of the Museum for many years, seeing its development from its early days when he was Clerk and then Chief Executive of West Sussex County Council, and becoming more closely involved since his retirement. A resident of Singleton, he and his wife Nora have been regular visitors to the Museum.

At the annual meeting two Trustees retired and did not seek re-election, Nigel Talbot Ponsonby and John Warren.

We welcome onto the Museum staff, Gill Clifton as our Bookkeeper, following the retirement of Percy North, who had looked after the Museum's accounts for many years. We wish him a peaceful and healthy retirement following his operation and hope Gill will find her work in this very vital role happy and rewarding.

Museum Hosts The Penny Royal Theatre

The Museum was a busy place in the evenings this Summer with the six-week long professional repertory season of the Penny Royal Theatre taking place in the courtyard behind Crawley Hall.

Two plays were performed, Alan Ayckbourn's *Confusions* and Sir John Vanbrugh's *The Provok'd Wife*, both directed by Ken Parrott. "Fringe" theatre was also produced, with Robert Daws acting in the world premiere of the hour-long *The Education of Little Tree*, directed by Amanda Waring and set most appropriately among the silver birches by the lake. This production went on to London, which was most gratifying for everybody!

The Museum was a very different venue to the Theatre's previous home, the garden of its founders, John and Maggie Pollock. Some teething problems were inevitable, and poor weather caused a little difficulty now and again. The season flowed well once under way and front of the house arrangements worked smoothly, together with the pre-show suppers offered by our caterers at Sole Street Aisled Hall, and the opportunity to picnic at the Museum.

Thanks are due to all those involved in the presentation of the Theatre at the Museum, and to senior Museum staff who were responsible for closing the site at midnight every day for six weeks, particularly Carol Hawkins.

The gala evening in aid of the Winkhurst Project was well supported and raised £2,500. A presentation was made by Friend's Chairman, Virginia Lyon, to John and Maggie Pollock for their most generous offer to stage the evening.

EAOAM CELEBRATES SKANSEN'S CENTENARY

The European Association of Open Air Museums, of which our Museum Director, Chris Zeuner, is currently President, held its conference in Sweden in September to celebrate the centenary of the world's first open air museum, Skansen, founded by Artur Hazelius.

Chris Zeuner, who was accompanied on the conference by Curator Bob Powell, presented Skansen with an engraved pewter plate from our Museum to mark the anniversary.

Richard Pailthorpe, Assistant Museum Director (Visitor Services), who is currently Chairman of the Chichester Visitors Group, has been elected to the South East England Tourist Board Executive and Commercial Members Group Committees.

BUSY SOUTH OF ENGLAND SHOW

The Museum was particularly busy at the South of England Show this year. In addition to a new enlarged display about the work of the Museum, we also hosted the launch of the new book *The Southdown Sheep* by Valerie Porter, written to mark the centenary of The Southdown Sheep Society.

The Museum's display at the South of England Show, with carpenter Paul Russell in the foreground taking a break from demonstrating traditional carpentry skills to talk to a visitor.



FRIENDS' SPRING TOUR IN LINCOLN AND SOUTH HUMBERSIDE April 9-12, 1992

The 1992 Spring Tour will be in Lincoln and South Humberside, based at the Forte Crest Hotel in the centre of Lincoln, next to the Cathedral. The aim is to explore Lincoln and the area to the north of the city.

Ideas for the itinerary include: a day in Lincoln, with its Cathedral (look out for the imp), Castle, Museum of Lincolnshire Life, National Cycle Museum, and attractive hilly streets: a day out to the medieval Gainsborough Old Hall and the National Fishing Heritage Centre in Grimsby to experience life on board an arctic trawler, with sounds and smells recreated: a garden centre in the area famous for its bulbs and Spring flowers: a windmill or two: and a surprise on the way back in Bedford.

Carol Hawkins would like to hear from anyone willing to take on the

organisation of a speaker or other evening interest for one or two of the three nights.

The cost is £180 per person, including the coach to and from Singleton, its use during the trip, bed, breakfast and evening meals in the hotel, admission charges and speaker's costs. There is no single room supplement, but, as always, the number of single rooms available is limited.

To apply, please complete the form enclosed with this magazine, and return it with a deposit of £30 per person. Applications will be held until October 30. If over-subscribed, the applications will be drawn on that day, with priority for members of the Friends and those who were unlucky in last year's draw.

Any queries to Carol Hawkins on Tel: 0730 816101 or on Wednesdays at the Museum.

NORMANDY IN 1993?

Marjorie Hallam has kindly offered to lead a tour of Normandy in 1993, to include buildings ranging from chateaux and timber framed manor houses to small farmhouses, and taking in historic towns including the port of Hornfleur, Lisieux and possibly Alencon. Local skills such as lace making may be included. Mrs Hallam has recently made a study of the vernacular buildings of this part of France.

The trip would probably take five days by coach with sea crossings between Portsmouth and Le Havre and one hotel as the base. The cost would be in the region of £250.

Although 1993 seems a long way ahead Carol Hawkins, would like to hear from those interested in the idea: it could take place as the Spring Tour for that year. Please see the 1992 Tour booking form, enclosed with this magazine.

To Market . . . To Market!

This Summer's Junior Friends Activities Week brought out the very best of the many talents available at the Museum. Geoff King, our Education Officer, chose the theme *Going To Market*.

Thirty-seven children began their week in Chichester where they learned about buying and selling, and with the help of Chichester District Museum found out about the markets which were once part of everyday life in the city.

For the first time for 120 years sheep were back in the streets of Chichester – the Museum penned several of its own

flock under the Council House portico in North Street, and Stride and Son auctioneer Derek Bowerman held a mock auction. This created a good deal of public attention, and the children put up some spirited bidding!

In the following five days the Junior Friends were actively involved in producing goods and rehearsing entertainment for their own market day. Twenty-one different types of goods were made by them using mostly traditional materials. The children were allowed to keep the proceeds – about £1.60 each!

CHRISTMAS LUNCHES AT THE MUSEUM

The Museum is offering another innovative idea as the festive season approaches – special Christmas lunches in the unusual setting of the new refreshment facility, the 14th century aisled hall from Sole Street, Kent. The lunches are offered to companies and organisations and can cater for 15-35 people.

The final phase of the building was completed during the season, with the crosswing added following repair by Roger Champion. The new catering arrangements, under the direction of the Ellis family, have been running well, particularly during the Penny Royal Theatre repertory season when pre-show suppers were served.

Anyone who would like to take advantage of the Christmas lunches should contact the Museum office Tel: 0243 63 348 for further information. In the meantime here is the menu to whet your appetites!

CHRISTMAS MENU

Tomato and Orange Soup
Local Smoked Trout Pate

served with home baked bread

Roast Turkey
with Chestnut Stuffing, Bacon Rolls, Bread
Sauce, Sloe and Apple Jelly

Raised Chestnut and Apricot Pie
with Port Wine Sauce

Grilled Porterhouse Steak
Stuffed with Mushrooms
and Ginger Wine

Roast Potatoes
Seasonal Vegetables

Home Made Christmas Pudding
With Brandy Cream

Old English Trifle

Sussex Cheddar with Biscuits

Coffee with Mince Pies

Price: £22.50 inc VAT ex drinks.

Tim Heymann Retires

Tim Heymann, agent with the Edward James Foundation on West Dean Estate retires this Autumn. The Museum has enjoyed a close and fruitful relationship with him since its inception, and we would like to take this opportunity again to wish him and his wife Angela a happy retirement. Tim was made an honorary member of the Friends at the annual meeting this year.

We welcome Simon Ward as his successor, together with his wife Jo and two young sons from Norfolk and hope they will have an enjoyable life in West Sussex.

What? Where? Why?

Brigadier Walter Greenway's entertaining quiz returns to the Museum this winter. Come along on Sunday December 29, any time between 2.00 and 3.30 to test your knowledge of the Museum from photographs to be displayed in Crawley Hall.

PRIMROSE DRAWS THE CROWDS



Bayleaf Primrose was cut out to be a star at the Open Air Museum! Born to our Shire x mare Layston Bluebell (better known as Rosy) on April 30 she arrived for the beginning of the season, and quickly drew a loyal local following. Primrose, whose sire is Shire stallion Ruskington Edward, loves people (just as well!) and spends much of her time at the fence enjoying their company.

MUSEUM SHOP

CHRISTMAS SPECIAL DAYS
Sunday, November 24 and
Wednesday, 27 November
11 a.m. — 4 p.m.

*You are invited for a
glass of mulled wine*

*SPECIAL DISCOUNTS ON
SHOP GOODS*

*FOR MEMBERS OF THE FRIENDS,
VOLUNTEERS AND STAFF*

CAROLS IN NORTH CRAY HOUSE

The Museum Carols will be taking place in the North Cray Hall House on December 19 at 7.00 p.m. Accompaniment will be provided by musical supporters of the Museum.

This is a wonderful, informal and popular occasion for members to get together to sing carols around the open fire, with a hot drink and mince pies to round off the evening.

WEALD & DOWNLAND



SINGLETON SUSSEX

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