

WEALD &
DOWNLAND

OPEN AIR
MUSEUM

MAGAZINE

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A pair of freshly painted 19th century cottages took their place among the imposing timber frames at the Museum in July when they were opened by Michael Garston, trustee of the Leopold Muller Estate, which funded their restoration and reconstruction.

The two cottages have been treated differently by the Museum. One is to be furnished as it would have been in the 1880's - Joy and Wilm Huning, traditional paint specialists, have completed the interior and curator, Julie Massey, is currently working on the furnishings. The other cottage is left unfinished inside to show the structure. A steel and glass stairway takes visitors through the cottage from ground floor to roof, with interpretive panels and an audio tape explaining how the building was constructed.

Outside, a series of exhibits shows how the timber was converted by sawyers and timberwrights, how the site was prepared by surveyors and how the lime was made ready for the bricklayers. The sawpit will be used to prepare timber for a fence around the furnished cottage.

Last year the cottages became the first complete building to be treated with a new environmentally friendly method of eradicating pests from timber, and next year will be the subject of an interactive monitoring research project which has attracted funding from the Carnegie UK Trust.



Whittakers Cottages show what they're made of

Clockwise from top - guests at the opening of Whittakers's Cottages listen to Richard Harris, the Museum's research director, describe the background to the reconstruction.

Richard Harris explains the workings of the sawpit exhibit to Michael Garston, trustee of the Leopold Muller Estate and David Tomlinson, Museum chairman.

Inside the unfinished cottage a visitor climbs through the structure using the steel stairway.

Museum supporters studying a surveyor's chain, the basic measuring tool used in land surveying in the last century, strung along the fence outside the cottages.

Children contemplate water accessibility for the 19th century inhabitants of Whittaker's Cottages.



Two Lottery awards for Museum projects

The Museum was successful with two Lottery awards during the year - the Heritage Lottery Fund approved £69,750 towards project development for the planned building conservation centre and store and £36,000 towards Poplar Cottage, which is to be rebuilt as a memorial to the Museum's founder, Dr Roy Armstrong.

The first award was 75 per cent of the total £93,000 cost of architectural and engineering work on the building conservation centre, to be housed in an innovative greenwood timber structure designed by Edward Cullinan Architects and engineers Buro Happold. The museum already has the matching funding in place for this. Once development work is complete the Heritage Lottery Fund trustees will consider the £1 million scheme for further Lottery funding. Work on raising some £250,000 needed for matching funding for this stage is already under way.

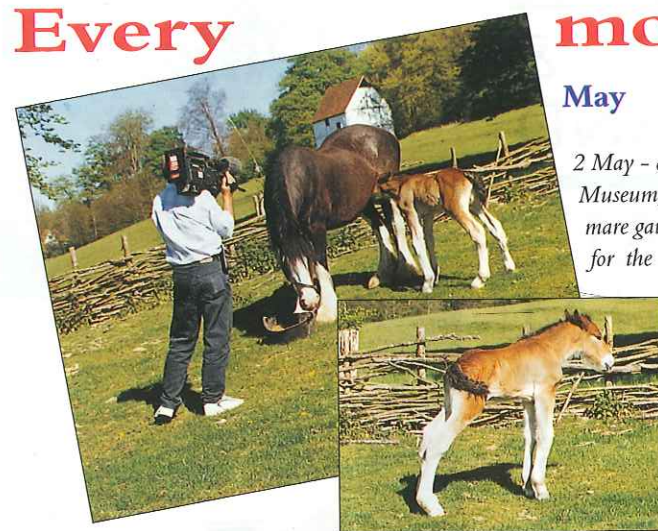
The Poplar Cottage project is now fully funded and work is expected to start this winter. The 16th century timber-framed smoke-bay house from the Wiston Estate at Washington will be an important addition to the Museum's building exhibits, as it provides the missing link in the story of house development and technology - demonstrating the transition between houses with an open hall and those with chimneys.

More information on both these projects will be included in the March 1998 magazine.

News in Brief

Curator Julie Massey is busy gathering together furnishings for Whittaker's Cottages - the aim is to depict the home of a late Victorian agricultural labourer and his wife and children. The Museum already has many objects in its collections in store, and others have been donated by volunteers. Julie hopes readers may be able to help with outstanding items - a small kitchen table and dresser, chest of drawers for the parents' bedroom, a simple pine chest for the children's bedroom and a baby's cot.

Every



May

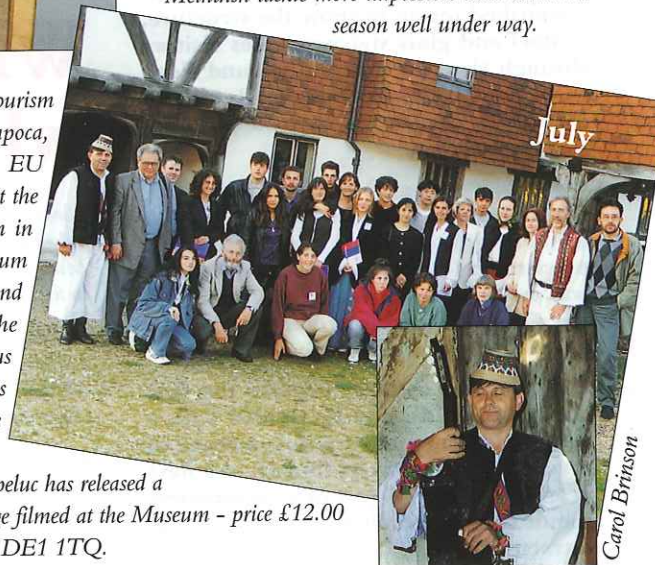
2 May - a new Government . . . and at the Museum, a new horse. Rosie, our Shire X mare gave birth to a strong colt foal, named for the day - Blair. His father is the Ardennes stallion, Fayard, from Sissinghurst, Kent. Meridian TV came along to record his first moments in his grassy paddock, with Winkhurst in the background.



June

Behind every open air museum is a team of unsung workers! The office is rarely photographed but is the hub of activity throughout the year. Most recently the museum has introduced the computerised Vista bookings system, which handles bookings of space and personnel. Also installed at the Victoria and Albert Museum, Vista is now in use at Singleton for all types of bookings, including schools, adult parties, courses and conferences. Heads down, Karen Searle, left and Pat Melhuish tackle more impossible tasks with the season well under way.

The Museum is host to geography and tourism students and staff from Cluj-Napoca, Romania, on a three-month exchange EU Tempus programme. They were based at the Chichester Institute of Higher Education in Bognor Regis. The Ethnographic Museum at Cluj and the Weald and Downland Museum played a major part in the exchange. The students were with us during one of the Museum's Dovetail arts programme performances - from the Romanian/English folk trio Popeluc, who played in North Cray House. Popeluc has released a new video of its concerts, including footage filmed at the Museum - price £12.00 from Popeluc, 190 Burton Road, Derby DE1 1TQ.



July

science of building materials. Jon Roberts, Brian Weekes and Peter Hawes have been involved in planning and running the courses under Sue Shave's direction.

The largest donation to the Museum's collections this year was the contents of D J Bayley's builder's yard at Lodsworth. The firm had been operating from the yard for more than 50 years and has moved to a new site. The old yard yielded a treasure trove of building materials, from 1920's art deco fireplaces to asbestos guttering. The Museum's team of helpers collected

month a new challenge!



August

The children's activity weekend - left, bricklaying is in progress as assorted children and their parents receive some tuition from Alfie Pilcher and John Herniman behind the Plumber's Workshop. The rare breeds show - another spectacular show under the guidance of new show secretary John Bushrod. Centre, Sylvia Stone of show sponsors, the West Sussex Gazette, gets another chance for a close encounter with the beef interbreed champion, Sussex bull Trotenden Premier 14th owned by CE and W S Milson. Mr Milson's son holds a handful of cups.

Below left, in the pig ring, super interbreed champion pig Exfold Josephine 104th is still for just long enough for a photocall with owner David Overton, right and Museum chairman David Tomlinson. Mr Overton also took the reserve prize.



September

Bob Holman and his team of gardeners have planned well for Halloween! The newly planted 17th century garden at Walderton House produces some very respectable pumpkins.



SUPPORTING THE WEALD AND DOWNLAND MUSEUM

We are most grateful to the following for their generous assistance to the Museum during 1997.

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Horseshoe Fund
John Herniman

Court Barn Fund
Richard Murdoch

Legacies
Wilhemina Minet
Virginia Lyon

Further information about making a donation, gift aid or sponsoring projects at the Museum can be obtained from the Museum director at the office.

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examples of as many different kinds of materials as they could carry, along with hand tools, window and door frames and fittings and a pipe-bending machine. Much of the material is intended for display under the Witley Joiner's Shop. This area is devoted to the building trade, already including the painter's workshop in the Reigate house extension, the plumber's and joiner's workshops and shortly the builder's yard in between. The Museum is interested in talking to other building firms in the area to add to this collection of material, some of which will be used for maintenance

work on site. Contact Julie Massey at the Museum office if you can help.

In July the Museum joined in Singleton Cricket Club's celebrations of the 250th anniversary of the first women's cricket match by staging its own exhibition, *From Cheerleaders to Champions* and offered visitors the opportunity to have a go at a variety of traditional sports. The exhibition included rare photographs and loans of sporting equipment and clothing from Worthing Museum and Wimbledon Lawn Tennis Museum among others. Local stoolball clubs came to play at the

Museum during the weekend. Some honorary life members of the English women's lacrosse association attended and were thrilled to see themselves in photographs which were 80 years old!

After last year's success of the Bayleaf and science workshops the Museum's education service is offering a similar but extended programme to schools this year with additional workshops on building construction. Sue Shave is busy recruiting more volunteers to help. Please contact her at the Museum office if you would like to join the team.

Friends news

□ The Friends annual spring tour next year will take them to *South Wales* on 23-27 April. Staying at the four-star Swansea Marriott Hotel in the maritime quarter, they will visit two fine historic houses, Lydiard Park and Tredegar House, the Welsh Folk Museum at St Fagans, Cardiff Castle, the exotic Castle Coch, and Penhow Castle, furnished with replicas to a medieval date and interpreted through the aid of a walkman. A leisurely morning exploring Swansea and a tour of the spectacular Gower peninsula are also included. The cost is £250 per person for a double/twin room, breakfast and dinner at the hotel and admission and coach travel. Some single rooms are available. To book please send the enclosed application form to Jean Piggott, Friends secretary, as soon as possible. Places will be on a first come, first served basis. Fleet Coaches are dealing with the bookings and will send a reservation form and deposit request.



□ New oak pictorial finger posts are to be commissioned for the Museum as a useful and fitting memorial by the Friends to its immediate past chairman, Virginia Lyon. The posts, examples of which were on view at the Out of the Wood Show, will be hand carved by wood sculptor Ted Vincent, with some ready for the new season in March. Each will cost £250-£300. Anyone who would like to contribute towards this memorial to Virginia is asked to send their donation to Jean Piggott at the Museum office, cheques to be made payable to The Friends of the Weald & Downland Open Air Museum.

□ The Friends office now has its own telephone number - 01243 811893 - for queries about membership or any other aspect of the Friends. This office is not staffed full time but there is an answerphone service.

□ 1997 has been a busy year for Friends visits - parties set off for the Chiltern Open Air Museum, Michelham Priory and Firle Place, Bateman's and Great Dixter, Highgrove and the River Wey for a horse-drawn narrow boat trip. The spring tour to Durham and Northumberland was a highlight and included a day at Beamish, the North of England Open Air Museum.

□ Advance notice - the Friends annual general meeting will take place on 21 March 1998. Full details will appear in the Spring magazine.

□ The annual subscriptions for 1998 were approved at this year's AGM and will be effective from 1 January 1998. Family - £30, adult - £14, senior citizen - £12, junior - £8, corporate - full rate £100; reduced rate £35. This is the first increase since 1994.

□ A night in the woods... More than 20 Junior Friends on the museum's annual summer camp spent four days exploring physical and historical aspects of their environment, with a night in the woods sleeping in their home-built shelters as one of the highlights, writes Lizzy McCann. Pottery, animal husbandry, tie dying, shelter building, candle dipping, felt making, chalk carving and story telling held the attention of the children aged eight - 13, who were fascinated by the different processes and enjoyed the opportunities to make things of their own. The Museum's Junior Friends meet once a month throughout the year. Enquiries for membership should be made at the Museum office.

Volunteers needed!

The need for volunteers grows as the Museum expands!

The last two years have seen exciting opportunities for volunteers to join the new specialist groups, including education, gardening and practical work. But there is an ever present need to boost the main stewards group, who staff the buildings while the Museum is open to the public and man the visitor reception and shop.

"Volunteers are our backbone," says

Museum director Chris Zeuner. "As we continue to grow, so does our need for new volunteers. The stewards group is the one with most contact with our visitors, and for anyone keen on communicating with people and interested in the story we have to tell at the Museum this can be a most rewarding occupation."

Current volunteers are urged to encourage their friends to join them! Anyone interested in becoming a volunteer should contact Keith Bickmore at the Museum office.

Lectures and courses

Building conservation practical/theory courses for professionals and others with an interest in the subject.

29 Oct - 11 Nov *The Woodshed Workshop:* Henry Russell

2/3 Mar *Repair of Traditional Brickwork:* Gerard Lynch

18 Mar *Timber: Identification of Species:* David Woodbridge

19 Mar *Timber: Strength Grading:* David Woodbridge

1/2 Apr *Building Stone in the Weald and Downland:* Tim Tatton-Brown and Bernard Worssam with Anne and David Bone

13 May *Timber Decay and its Treatment:* Brian Ridout

Sussex University Centre for Continuing Education day schools at the Museum. Details and bookings: 01273 678926.

8 Nov *The Sussex Landscape:* Geoffrey Mead

14 Feb *Timber-framed Buildings of East Sussex:* David Martin

14 Mar *East Sussex/West Sussex: A Divided County?:* Chris Hare

21 Mar *History Begins Today:* Elizabeth Doff

28 Mar *Understanding Historic Farm Buildings:* Gwen Jones

Saturday morning illustrated talks

15 Nov *Honey Bees in a Changing Landscape:* Ruth Tittensor

29 Nov *Sussex Churches:* John Vigar

31 Jan *Applesham Farm - three centuries of farming to the present day:* Christopher Passmore

Heavy Horse Working Experience Days. Courses planned this autumn and winter are already fully booked. Tutors include Rob Dash, Peter Albon, Chris Zeuner. Please contact the Museum to add your name to the mailing list for future courses.

Charcoal Burning. One to one charcoal burning instruction/working experience with Alan Waters can be arranged through the Museum office.

Further details on the Museum's lectures and courses from Carol Brinson at the Museum office.



First Out of the Wood Show

The new two-day Out of the Wood Show in glorious sunny September weather produced a wonderful response from visitors with many positive comments about the quality of the event and the variety of things to do and see.

The show was intended as a festival of all things made of wood, from buildings, furniture and tools to timber production, conservation and conversion. Organised by Carol Brinson, it was sponsored by Chichester timber merchants D Cover and Sons and promoted in association with *Traditional Woodworking Magazine*. The show spread out from a large marquee to the market square and into the woods where charcoal burning was demonstrated.

Top, Museum carpenter Roger Champion pulls a fascinated crowd as he puts together his one-third scale model of North Cray House in the market square.

Pit sawing demonstrated in front of a large audience at Whittaker's Cottages.

Children trying their hand at drilling with an auger under the guidance of the Museum's education department.

In the marquee Windsor chair maker and West Dean College lecturer Jack Hill from Midhurst chats to visitors.

Building Conservation MasterClasses

The English Heritage MasterClass programme in practical building conservation developed at Fort Brockhurst is now to be run by West Dean College in collaboration with English Heritage, and with the Weald and Downland Open Air Museum.

Courses will be residential and will complement the full time post graduate training and other professional development courses in specialist conservation already run by the College. The Museum has already established practical building conservation courses, specialising particularly in timber.

The practice walling and ruinettes which were the focus of the masonry conservation course are to be rebuilt at West Dean in a large workshop converted from the former dairy. Work is expected to be completed by Spring 1998 when the new programme will begin.

The fully-equipped workshop, including a laboratory, will enable the intensive practical training established by English Heritage to continue and develop. The buildings of the Museum and the West Dean estate will provide a further range of training and study opportunities.

Legacies offer opportunities

In May the Museum received an unexpected and most welcome legacy of £250,000 from the estate of Mrs Wilhemina Minet.

Wilhemina Minet and her late husband Peter were long-standing supporters of the Museum from the early days and assisted financially through their trusts, the Peter Minet Trust and the Idlewild Trust.

The legacy has presented the Museum with the opportunity to establish the beginnings of an endowment fund, something which has been lacking and is most desirable for the future stability of the Museum. A small proportion may be allocated to pump prime the fund raising required to match the Heritage Lottery Fund award for the Museum's new building conservation workshop and stores.

The Museum also received £40,000 from the estate of Museum trustee and Friends chairman, Virginia Lyon.

Reigate fireplaces reveal 17th century painting

Details of 17th century painting on the stone fireplaces of the Reigate town house emerged during September as conservators spent six weeks carefully consolidating the fragile surfaces.

Deborah Carthy and Elizabeth Andersson uncovered four layers of paint on the upstairs fireplace - the earliest 17th century scheme applied at the same time as the wall paintings found in the house, a black layer and two marbling schemes applied in the late 17th/early 18th century. On the downstairs fireplace, pigments reflecting colour applied to the beams of red and yellow ochre and black were revealed. Above that were three layers of wood graining.

Deborah Carthy, who is stone consultant to the Dean and Chapter of St Pauls Cathedral, will be assisting the museum team in the reconstruction of the fireplace surround when other interior work is completed in time for next season.

Above right, Deborah Carthy (foreground) and Elizabeth Andersson conserving the painted surfaces of the Reigate house fireplaces.



Christmas shopping and tree dressing

The Museum shop will be specially stocked for Christmas and opened for a festive shopping weekend on Saturday and Sunday 6/7 December.

Many of the museum's most popular items will be on sale, along with a host of other gifts with a buildings and countryside theme, ideal for unusual Christmas presents. The Museum shop has a reputation for its wide

range of books, continually changed and expanded, and many visitors and museum supporters make a special visit at this time of the year with their relations and friends in mind.

The annual tree dressing day is taking place on the Sunday, including lantern-making - participants should bring a night light and jam jars at 12 noon.

Thatching Boarhunt Hall

Master thatcher Chris Tomkins was back with us this year to re-thatch the hall from Boarhunt, Hampshire. Using long straw specially purchased from Yorkshire the process took six weeks, providing visitors with an excellent demonstration of the craft at the same time as making the

building weatherproof. Boarhunt dates from the 15th century and is a particularly small base-cruck hall, a rare type in the weald and downland region. In the picture Chris ascends the ladder with another load of straw. West Dean College is in the background.



Winter Diary

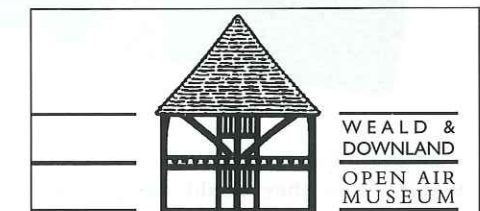
21-31 Oct. Half Term Opening. Children's Activities. 10.30am-5pm.

7 December. Tree Dressing and Christmas shopping at the Museum Shop.

15 December Carols at North Cray House. 7pm.

26 Dec-4 Jan 1998 Christmas and New Year Opening. Daily 10.30am - 4pm.

16-21 February Half Term Opening 10.30am - 5pm.



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