



Autumn 2001

## WEALD & DOWNLAND OPEN AIR MUSEUM

*The Gridshell takes shape . . .*

### After the Big Dig, the Great Bend

**L**ast year we had the Big Dig, as the basement of the new Building Conservation Centre and Museum Store was dug into the Museum's terraced car parks, and this year we have had the Great Bend.

Most people think of buildings as being made of piles of things – bricks, stones, blocks, earth or concrete. Traditional carpenters made buildings out of prefabricated two-dimensional frames – flat frames forming rectangular buildings. But the Gridshell is based on an entirely different principle: a grid of

slender timbers formed flat then *bent* into a complex double-curved shape to form a rigid shell.

In January all that could be seen was a great cube of scaffolding, looking like an aircraft carrier marooned in the South Downs. Eight weeks later the team of carpenters had laid the grid of oak laths on top of the scaffold – each lath 120ft (36m) long, but just 50 × 35mm in section, spaced at one metre centres, the grid connected at the intersections by over a thousand specially designed (and patent-applied-for) bolted steel plate assemblies. The weather remained wet,

*With the Gridshell structure in place the roof goes on, to be covered with a new material called Roofkrete.*



*A carpenter from the Green Oak Carpentry Company scales the Gridshell to adjust the intersections where the 120ft (36m) long oak laths meet.*

keeping the moisture content, and therefore the flexibility, of the oak high.

Then the bending operation started. On 2 March Diana Zeuner performed the ceremony of lowering the first jacking point by a few centimetres. The flat grid obediently deformed, without so much as a creak, and the carpenters scattered over the scaffold platform to lower all the other jacks by precisely predetermined amounts. Every day this was repeated. The engineers entered the dimensions into their spreadsheets to check progress, and the carpenters anxiously watched for cracks and splits in the laths. When the jacks reached the bottom of their 'throw' the operation was interrupted while the carpenters

### Furnishing Pendean Farmhouse

Museum carpenter Roger Champion carving the back of an oak chair as part of the Pendean Farmhouse furnishing project. Pendean has now been furnished as it would have been in 1609, its construction date. The work is being carried out with the support of the Designation Challenge Fund, finance made available by the Government for museum collections of outstanding national importance (see pages 4/5).



## ➔ After the Big Dig, the Great Bend

turned into scaffolders and removed another layer of scaffold to make room for the grid to be bent further. Each day a photo and video clip were taken from a fixed camera position on top of the special tower, and the resulting timelapse sequence was posted on the scaffolding company's website ([www.peri.de](http://www.peri.de)) and the video was eventually shown on BBC's *Tomorrow's World*.

On 19 April, after seven weeks of bending, the edges of the grid at last touched down on the perimeter of the timber deck which forms the ceiling of the basement store – the eagle had landed! Three months of worried frowns gave way to delighted smiles, and the team of carpenters, led by Stephen Corbett for the Green Oak Carpentry Company, celebrated in the traditional manner, down at the pub.

After final adjustments to the shape – the carpenters had again been transformed, this time into sculptors – the next operation was to apply the additional laths that triangulate the grid and give it its stiffness. At the lower level these run horizontally (at 180 feet long they are probably the longest pieces of



Volunteer Alan Wood has given daily guided tours of the Gridshell site for visitors.

about the project, but by the time they have listened to the explanation given by Alan Wood, our volunteer guide, they almost all have become excited, interested and inspired – the Gridshell has that effect on people! Until now the gridshell has been fully exposed on the outside, but shortly it will be covered with its cladding so will only be fully visible by going inside. But the guided tours will continue, and will be the way that the great majority of our visitors will see and experience the building.

Once the cladding is complete the contract moves into the final stages of joinery, internal fittings and services. The latest estimate for practical completion is 5 March 2002, and then at last we will be able to put into operation our plans for moving in and bringing the building into use.

The Gridshell has been a complex and innovative project, and it is greatly to the credit of those involved that the structure has been successfully completed. Congratulations to the Green Oak Carpentry Company team for this achievement, and to Mike Wigmore, of main contractors E A Chiverton Ltd, for supporting them through the long construction process. Richard Harris, of Buro Happold Engineers, poured time, energy and computing power into plan-



Stephen Corbett, right, who leads the Green Oak Carpentry Company team, checks the position of one of the many jacks used to lower the grid of oak laths into place.

ning the structure, and Steve Johnson, of Edward Cullinan Architects, brought architectural distinction and the disciplines of sustainability to the building. Howard Ball of Peri was on site almost permanently overseeing the use of the specialist scaffolding, and Paul Comins of Boxall Sayer has acted as quantity surveyor and project manager, and steadying nerves and controlling the costs. All involved would agree that the spirit of adventure and co-operative teamwork has made this, in every sense, a project to remember.

Richard Harris

## Chris Zeuner Memorial Appeal

One of the many tragic aspects of Chris's death was that he did not live to see his great project, the Downland Gridshell, completed, so it was a natural and obvious idea to create this appeal, which will cover the final funding gap in the Gridshell project, in memory of him.

The response to the appeal has been remarkable. There have been nearly

500 individual donations, and the total raised so far is just over £60,000. We are now making applications to trusts and foundations for help in meeting the remaining £40,000. The Museum is deeply grateful to all those who have contributed.

The proceeds of the appeal will be used to equip the building and bring it into use.

## Richard Harris appointed as new Museum director

Richard Harris has been appointed as the new Museum director, succeeding Chris Zeuner, who died in January. As part of a new management structure, his role will include overall responsibility for the Museum's policy and strategy.

Gail Kittle, formerly marketing officer, has become operations director with responsibility for daily management of the commercial and administrative functions of the Museum.

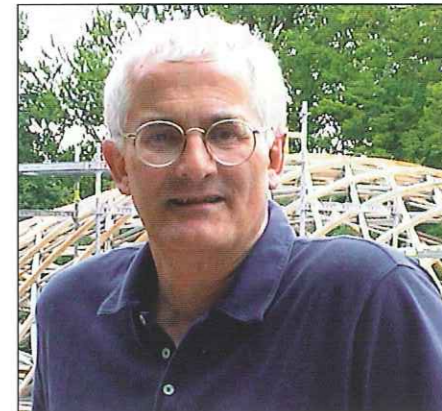
Richard Harris, who comes from Worcestershire, has for 23 years been responsible for developing the research and interpretation of the building exhibits at the Museum. After reading economics at Cambridge, Richard studied at the Architectural Association,

Tunnel Terminus site, in 1992-94.

Richard has played a major part in developing the Museum's building conservation training programme – a leader in its field – and introduced the MSc in Timber Building Conservation taught at the Museum and validated by Bournemouth University. He has also been instrumental in developing the Armstrong Library at the Museum, one of the biggest libraries devoted to vernacular architecture in the country.

Richard will continue to live in Primrose Hill, London, with his wife, Judy, and 17-year-old son, William, staying at West Dean for three-four-day periods.

Gail Kittle joined the Museum two years ago as marketing officer. She holds a Master's Degree in Business Adminis-



Richard Harris.

tration from City University Business School and previous posts have included the founding directorship of a firm of bespoke furniture makers and self-employed consultancy in strategy, finance and marketing. Her husband, Grahame, farms at their home in Storrington, West Sussex and they have two daughters aged six and eight.

## New faces

This summer has seen a number of new faces at the Museum as well as a re-organisation in the office.

Janet Sandys-Renton has left and we wish her all the best for the future. Julie Aalen was appointed in June as office administrator after helping in the Longport office as a volunteer. Born in Chichester and brought up on a farm, Julie worked for over 20 years for Barclays Bank, finally as financial services unit manager.

Christine Standing has moved from a desk in Longport farmhouse to one in the building from Lavant but continues to work as the school and group bookings secretary: being close to the heart of the education department is definitely a help for this task. Carol Smith, who was most helpful in the office, has now reverted to her volunteer role.

To enable staff to fulfil their roles efficiently and as an aid to improving the availability of information the Museum is planning a new computer network between Longport farmhouse, the Goodwood granary, the Downland Gridshell, the Library and the building from Lavant. Computers will also be upgraded. To help improve our customer service voice mail facilities will be built into the existing phone system. An investment in technology is needed, especially with the Gridshell shortly to come on stream.

Other new faces at the Museum include volunteer Doug Green, who was appointed earlier this year as relief



Gail Kittle, photographed for the Mother's Day event.

receiving the AA Diploma. In 1975 he became part-time assistant to Roy Armstrong, the Museum's founder, and three years later took over Roy's title as research director.

In 1978 his book *Discovering Timber-Framed Buildings* was published by Shire Publications: it remains in print as an indispensable introduction to the subject and is one of Shire's best-selling titles. His other published output ranges from exhibitions on aspects of traditional buildings to academic articles.

Over the years the Museum has developed a national reputation for the quality of its work in the building conservation field and has pioneered new techniques in dismantling and re-erecting historic vernacular buildings. Richard Harris' first important project at the Museum was the dismantling and re-erection of the house from Walderton in 1980-82, which was the subject of a BBC *Chronicle* programme. Other ground-breaking projects were the furnishing and equipping of Bayleaf farmstead, which opened in 1989 and the dismantling and reconstruction of Longport farmhouse from the Channel



Clockwise from top left, Julie Aalen, Guy Viney and Doug Green.

duty officer and works as warden every third weekend and at special events.

Carol Brinson's husband Malcom has taken a sabbatical as a music teacher at a school in Kuwait and Carol is accompanying him on the 10-month trip, causing her to relinquish her position as duty officer. Guy Viney has been appointed in her place. Guy also works part-time with Mike Wall in cataloguing and organising the Museum's collection prior to its transfer to the Downland Gridshell.

● The Museum office is seeking volunteers who would like to help regularly with telephone answering, post opening, photocopying, preparation for events and projects such as cataloguing photographs etc. Please contact Julie Aalen or Gail Kittle on 01243 811363.



HERITAGE LOTTERY FUND

oak ever produced) and will be used to fix the vertical boards which form the cladding, while at the top of the gridshell they run 'vertically' – over the top of the shell.

The gridshell was finally 'signed off' by the engineers on 1 June, and the carpenters then started to build the roof. Universally known as the 'ribbon roof', this is formed of sheets of plywood bent to follow the undulations of the gridshell. At the time of writing, in early September, the roof covering has been applied (an extraordinary – and little-known – material called Roofkrete), and the carpenters and main contractors (E A Chiverton Ltd) are beginning to apply the cladding boards and building the clerestory glazing strips.

Every day since 1 April there has been a guided tour to explain the construction, usually attended by 15-20 people. Many of them start by being sceptical

## Special needs children to benefit from new initiative with Barclays Bank

**M**ore children with special educational needs than ever before will benefit from visits to the Museum thanks to support from Barclays Bank.

The Museum will be able to extend its current educational provision to these children following a £17,800 grant from the Barclays Special Educational Needs Programme.

The children, from the Museum's region of Sussex, Kent, Hampshire and Surrey as well as London and the Home Counties, will enjoy five special event days exploring medieval and Victorian life through role-play, storytelling, music making and rural crafts. Specially trained and experienced educational staff led by the Museum's education officer, Diane Walker, will work with the children, whose visits are subsidised to help reduce the costs of the high children-to-adult staff ratio. Part of the funding will include travel bursaries to

enable schools from further afield to take advantage of the project.

The Museum's site and exhibits offer a rich mixture of opportunities for learning through experience, with the sights, sounds and smells of rural life engaging children's imagination and turning the acquisition of knowledge into an adventure of discovery. "Children with special educational needs respond particularly well to activities at the Museum," says Diane.

A key feature of the project is the involvement of Barclays staff in working alongside Museum staff and education volunteers during the children's visit.

**Further information on the Museum's programme for children with special education needs can be obtained from Diane Walker or Christine Standing on 01243 811459.**

● Collections review proceeds

## Designation Challenge Fund projects continue

**W**e are now in the third year of projects financed by the DCF, and the benefits are beginning to be visible. The three-year programme, with a budget of over a quarter of a million pounds (80% funded by DCF, 20% by the Museum), has been in two parallel streams, the collections review on the one hand, and research and re-interpretation of exhibits on the other.

For the whole period Mike Wall has been employed as collections manager to lead the review of our collections prior to their being moved into the new store in Gridshell. Mike is currently assisted by Jon Roberts, Guy Viney, Alison Bunning, and a newly formed team of conservation volunteers. The review has made excellent progress, and Mike will remain at the Museum until the move into Gridshell is finished next year.

● Pendean re-interpretation completed

● Winkhurst move planned this winter

The research and re-interpretation projects have been different in each of the three years. The first project was to commission research into the background of some of our major exhibit buildings. Last year we undertook the changes to Pendean Farmhouse and furnished its interior, and in this financial year we will be moving Winkhurst to its new site near Bayleaf, scheduled to start in late October.

At present the future of DCF is unclear. Resource (the Council for Museums, Archives and Libraries) has indicated that the DCF is likely to continue for two more years, but what form it will take and what projects will be eligible is as yet unknown. We feel that the fund has been a great success, well administered and targeted, and we very much hope to continue to obtain benefit from it.

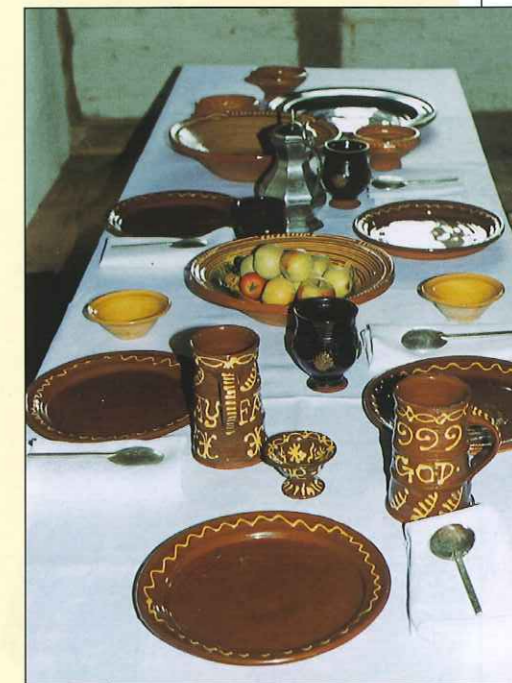
### Furnishing Pendean Farmhouse

**S**ince the changes made to Pendean Farmhouse last winter – the new chimney and staircase and painting the brickwork, documentary research and beginning the new garden – we have completed our interior furnishing project and visitors have been enjoying the results during the summer.

Our consultant for interior furnishing was Victor Chinnery, who helped the Museum with the Bayleaf project and more recently has been involved in changes to Shakespeare's Birthplace in Stratford-on-Avon. He produced an inventory of furniture, textiles, ceramics, glass, metalwork, treen, leatherwork, cooperage and basketwork needed for the house – a daunting list of some 200 items. We eventually produced a slightly shorter list, but still very challenging for Roger Champion, who made all the oak furniture, and Ian Pearce, who agreed to do research to refine the specification and to find people to produce and supply all the other items. With the help of Jon Roberts, Ian has achieved what we believe to be an extremely accurate interpretation of the interior of an early 17th century yeoman's farmhouse.

One of the most rewarding moments of the project was the discovery of an article in Sussex Archaeological Collections about the site of the Graffham Pottery, a thriving and productive pottery working within a short distance of Pendean in the 17th century. After Pendean was dismantled the site was dug by archaeologists: unfortunately no report of the dig has survived, but the Museum does have the 'finds', and many of the sherds have been identified as having come from the Graffham pottery. In consultation with John Hudson, an expert in the replication of historic ceramics, the plates, bowls and pots that once graced the table in Pendean have been recreated and placed in their rightful positions.

The treen was commissioned from Robin Wood who has produced wonderful bowls, spoons and platters. The basketware was woven by P H Coate & Son of Taunton and includes back-packs, apple baskets, egg baskets and even an eel trap.



The table setting in Pendean Farmhouse, using replica pottery and pewter.

The ironwork has been recreated by Tom Harrison, a local blacksmith, who approached the project with great enthusiasm and skill. Roger Champion created beautiful furniture (and some very comfortable fireside chairs) as well as the coopered ware which gives such a good sense of the house being lived and worked in. The soft furnishings – linen sheets, bed hangings, pillows, mattresses and cushions – have been hand-sewn by a stalwart group of volunteers.

Two final parts of the project will take place this winter. The oven in the kitchen inglenook will be re-built to make it usable and authentic, and a timber-framed pigsty with a hen loft and adjoining privy will be built at the back of the house. Pendean will then be fully equipped as an early 17th century farmhouse.

The project took place with a great deal of help from many people, and with finance from the Designation Challenge Fund via Resource, the Council for Museums, Archives and Libraries. We are keen to have feedback from visitors, so please let us know whether you think that it helps you to understand the house.

## Museum wins another Sandford Award for its 'outstanding' education service

**T**he Museum has won yet another award for its education service, a full Sandford Award from the Heritage Education Trust.

A full Sandford Award is given when, in the opinion of the judges, an outstanding contribution to heritage education is being made. The Museum, England's leading museum of historic buildings and rural life, has received a number of education awards in its 34-year history, including previous Sandford Awards and Interpret Britain Awards.

This year the judges commended the museum for its 'extensive range of experiential and hands-on activities.' In the Museum's re-erected historic buildings children meet costumed guides and use original and replica artefacts to carry out tasks which would have been familiar to the original inhabitants. There are also workshop activities and an 'impressive' interactive centre. "The best qualities of heritage education are on show at the Weald & Downland Open Air Museum," said the judges. "Balancing the needs of conservation



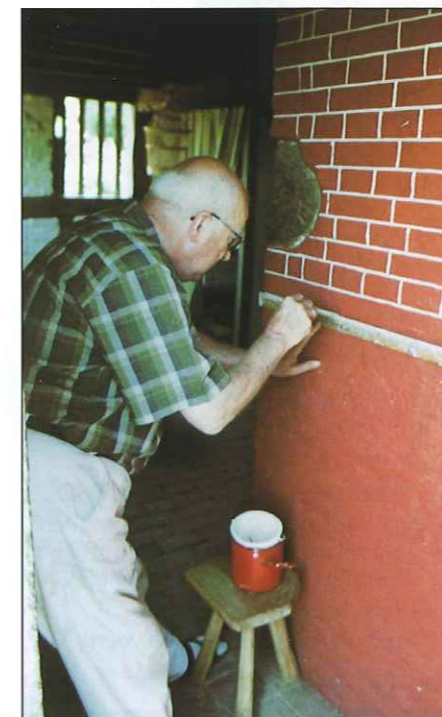
Learning about spinning and carding wool in Poplar Cottage with Sally Murdoch, one of the Museum's education volunteers.

and interpretation, the Museum has succeeded in putting children in touch with a unique and vanishing heritage – and bringing it to life."

The Museum's education service caters for some 30,000 schoolchildren each year with an extensive programme of activities. Most of these are designed specifically to fit teachers' needs for all the key stages of the National Curriculum. Key stage 2 pupils (the biggest school audience) can take

advantage of programmes relating to the Tudors, Victorians and local history, with science requirements met through work related to building materials and technology by exposing children to the way in which problems were solved in the past.

"Whilst meeting curriculum needs, the Museum has a healthy appreciation of its unique integrity and recognises that its educational role is primarily to stimulate minds," added the judges.



Keeping up with the Joneses. Wilm Huning 'pencil' the brickwork forming the chimney at Pendean Farmhouse. 'Ruddling' (painting with red ochre) and 'pencil' (adding white lines) to make the brickwork appear more uniform and of higher status than the reality was frequently carried out in houses of this period. The work is part of the re-interpretation of Pendean carried out with Designation challenge funding.

# 2001 – The year in pictures

Volunteer Reg Knight helps a young visitor tackle daubing with traditional materials during the Children's Activity Weekend.



Visitors learn about traditional coppice work during the visit of the History Re-enactment Workshop in August.



In an exciting project this August a dug-out boat was made from an oak log and launched on the Museum's top mill pond. A team of volunteers worked under the direction of ancient woodwork specialist Damian Goodburn for seven days, creating a great deal of interest among visitors. The large oak log was donated by Lord Egremont of the Leconfield Estate, Petworth in memory of Chris Zeuner. Modelled on an Anglo-Saxon example excavated from the River Arun at Amberley, the log was split and converted using traditional axes and adzes.

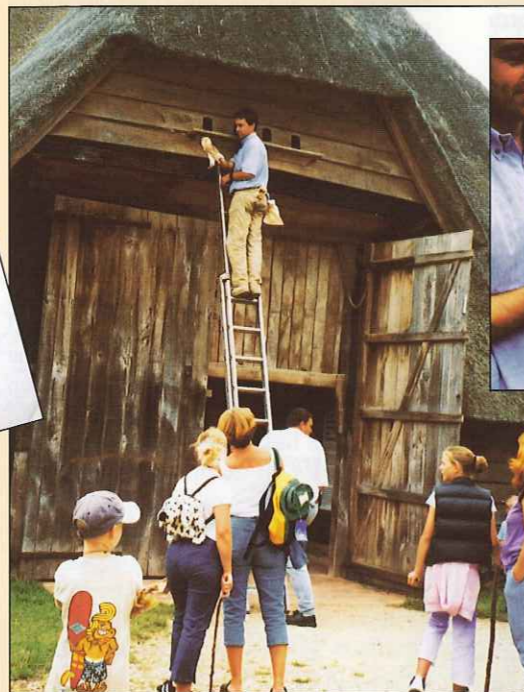


Clockwise from left, the boat is paddled around the island, Jonathan Roberts begins to shape the stern and the craft becoming very boat-shaped.



Duke, the Shire x British Percheron colt born to Museum Shire mare Rosy in May, was a great attraction all year.

Time to cook – Friends' secretary Jean Piggott teaching some pastry basics to a group of school children in Walderton House.



Three waggons have been conserved and displayed in the Charlwood Waggon Shed. The waggons have been chosen to represent the main areas of the Museum's region, one from Sussex, one from Kent and one from Surrey. In the photograph conservation specialist George Monger is busy working on the waggon made for the Rev. Lionel Corbett, of Hockley, Surrey. The work is financed by The Science Museum PRISM Fund.

West Sussex County Council ecologist Graham Roberts checks one of four young Barn Owls who hatched in the pigeon loft at Court Barn during the summer. Each of the birds was ringed and distinguishing features recorded by Graham, who is licensed to handle owls. Nick Conway, the Museum's site manager first noticed the owl activity around the barn. The parent owl has been seen by staff, volunteers and sometimes visitors throughout the summer flying to the young birds with food.



Learning to weave – mother and son tackle the craft at North Cray hall house.



The Museum's working Shires busy haymaking on the hill above Poplar Cottage with horseman Rob Dash (left) and collecting the sheaves for the harvest of thatching straw with Rob Dash, Ron Betsworth and volunteer Alan Wood (right).

Archers loose their bows during the Storm of Arrows, a new event in August which explored the history and modern sport of archery.



Museum gardener Bob Holman is interviewed in the Bayleaf medieval garden during the making of Tudor Times for Channel 4 Schools.



# COURSES PROGRAMME 2001-2002

## BUILDING CONSERVATION AND RURAL TRADES AND CRAFTS

### NOVEMBER

- 3 Introduction to coppice management: **John Booker, Paul Pinnington & Chris Baldwin**
- 10 Corn dolly workshop for beginners and improvers: **Verna Bailey**
- 11 Introduction to ploughing with heavy horses: **Rob Dash & Derek Hilton**
- 21 Timber decay and its treatment – causes, treatment and monitoring: **Brian Ridout**
- 22 Repair of timber-framed buildings, lectures and workshop session: **Richard Harris & Roger Champion**
- 25 Introduction to ploughing with heavy horses: **Rob Dash & Derek Hilton**
- 28 Joinery by hand – sash windows, historical background and practice: **Ged Gardiner & Charles Brooking**

### DECEMBER

- 4 Herbal Christmas gifts and decorations: **Christina Stapley**
- 12 Traditional timber-frame construction, principles and systems: **Richard Harris**
- 14 Herbal Christmas gifts and decorations: **Christina Stapley**
- 14 Rag-rug a Christmas angel: **Linda Burden**
- 16 Ploughing with heavy horses, taking it forward: **Rob Dash & Derek Hilton**

### JANUARY

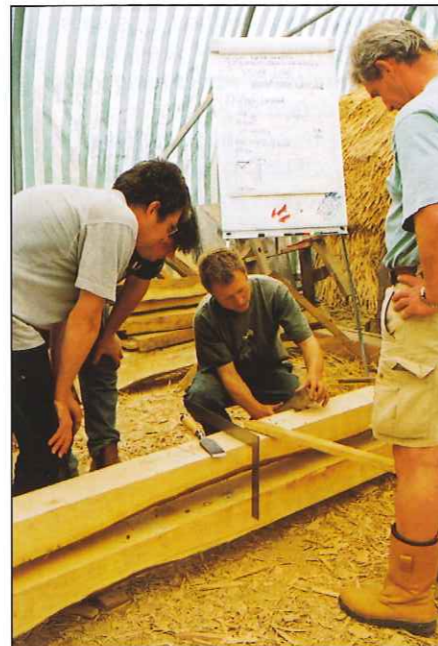
- 12 Ploughing with heavy horses, more practice, more confidence: **Rob Dash & Derek Hilton**
- 16 Continuous hurdle fencing: **Bob Holman**
- 20 Care and management of heavy horses: **Rob Dash**
- 24 Recording vernacular buildings for conservation, day one, observing and sketching: **Richard Harris**
- 30 Specialist science and crafts for the conservation of historic buildings: **James Strike**

### FEBRUARY

- 4 English brickwork: Tudor to Edwardian: an introduction: **Gerard Lynch**
- 6 History of English domestic architecture, day one 1400-1625: **James Strike and other visiting speakers**

Students studying tiling during the *Traditional Roofing Methods* course.

- 9 Practical and ritual marks on buildings, lectures and on-site tour: **Richard Harris and Timothy Easton**
- 17 Introduction to driving heavy horses: **Rob Dash & Derek Hilton**
- 20 History of English domestic architecture, day two 1625-1830: **James Strike and other visiting speakers**
- 28 Recording vernacular buildings for conservation, day two, imposing a grid: **Richard Harris**



Joe Thompson leading the *Timber-Framing From Scratch* course.

### MARCH

- 3 Introduction to driving heavy horses: **Rob Dash & Derek Hilton**
- 11- Jointing and pointing historic brickwork, a practical course with supporting lectures: **Gerard Lynch**
- 13 Recording vernacular buildings for conservation, day one, observing and sketching: **Richard Harris**

- 14 Recording vernacular buildings for conservation, day two, imposing a grid: **Richard Harris**
- 15 Recording vernacular buildings for conservation, day three, studio techniques: **Richard Harris**
- 25 Introduction to chain harrowing with heavy horses: **Rob Dash & Derek Hilton**

### APRIL

- 26 Willow workshop, weave and wale a basket: **Deborah Albon**
- 11/ Design and specification of leadwork, a one day course: **Nigel Johnston of the Lead Sheet Association**
- 20 Pole lathe turning, turn a simple object the traditional way: **Chris Smith**
- 21 Heavy horses – shaft and pole work: **Rob Dash & Derek Hilton**
- 22- Timber-framing from scratch. A practical
- 28 7 day course: **Joe Thompson**
- 26 A dowsing experience, explore this ancient craft: **David Russell**

### MAY

- 1 Repair of timber-framed buildings, lectures and workshop session: **Richard Harris & Roger Champion**
- 2 Timber repair workshop, a practical hands-on day including resin repairs: **Roger Champion**
- 3 Roof geometry, theory and practice of 'cut and pitch' roofing: **Joe Thompson**
- 13- Introduction to gauged brickwork, theory and practice: **Gerard Lynch**
- 15- Introduction to drawing in a variety of media and techniques: **Gordon Rushmer**
- 17 Dawn chorus walk with breakfast: **Bob Holman**
- 18/ Bronze axe and silver workshop, the craft of the ancient metalworkers: **Neil Burridge**
- 19 Home owners' day with **Jackson-Stops & Staff**
- 22/ Traditional painting and decorating techniques: **Joy and Wilm Huning**
- 31 dtba Leaded light stained glass workshop: **Tricia Christian**

## Course news in brief

■ A highlight of the Building Conservation Courses programme this year was *Traditional Roofing Methods*, a course of four linked days covering the wide variety of roofing used on traditional buildings. Four students came from Historic Scotland and were impressed with the way the Museum courses combined solid historical research and background with the opportunity to get hands-on practical experience with the appropriate materials and tools.

■ Two much-requested day schools run this year were *Lime Plasters & Renders* and *Wattle & Daub*. Ian Constantinides of St Blaise at Dorchester provided the lectures,

ably supported on the practical side by George Terry of Highbury College and master carpenter, Joe Thompson. The *Wattle & Daub* day made use of one of the mini-timber-framed buildings constructed during the *Timber-Framing From Scratch* course, which has been sited behind Longport House for use as a charcoal store for the Museum shop. An *Advanced Framing* course in October led by Joe Thompson will complete another frame for use as a pigsty in Pendean Farmhouse garden.

■ *Wilm and Joy Huning's Traditional Painting and Decorating Techniques* course attracted two of its students from Dublin, eager to take back what



The *Lime Plasters & Renders* course under way.

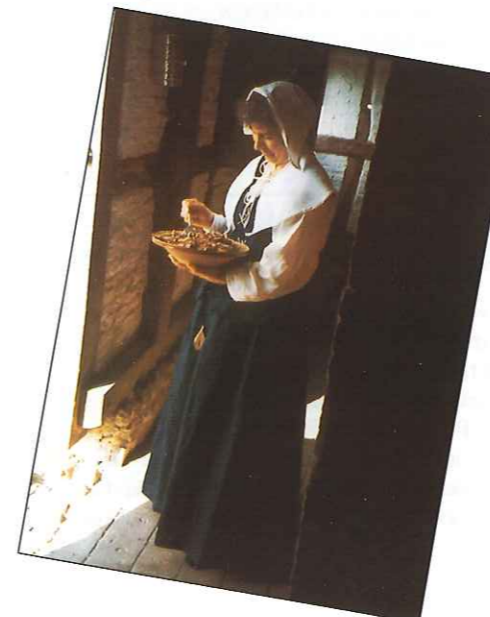
Further information  
on all Museum Courses  
Diana Rowsell on  
01243 811464 / 811363

they learned for specific projects in the city. The course is equally suitable for interested amateurs wishing to tackle the decoration of their own homes.

■ The *Millennium of Herbs* day schools have been full of interest again with Tina Stapley teaching in her authentic period dress and gardener Bob Holman encouraging participants to explore the Museum's gardens. Next year will see a different format, concentrating on the 15th, 16th and 17th centuries, with one day each on cookery and another on cultivation and medicinal uses.

■ The woodland craft courses have expanded. A *Willow for the Garden* weekend took place this Autumn by popular demand from people who have been on the basket-making course. The *Introduction to Coppice Management* day school is a joint venture with Paul Pinnington and Chris Baldwin who have developed the *Woodland Craft Centre* and *Charcoal Camp at the Museum*. This will be a practical day with historical background provided by John Booker.

Tina Stapley at Pendean Farmhouse during the *Millennium of Herbs* course.



## How the Museum coped with Foot and Mouth Disease

Foot and Mouth Disease (FMD) struck like a bolt from the blue. The first outbreaks in Essex were confirmed on 20 February, and at 5pm on 23 February restrictions were placed on livestock movements over the whole country. At that moment the Museum still had livestock on site, and we were stuck: we couldn't move the livestock without breaking the law, but we couldn't allow visitors on site for fear that they would bring the infection with them. So we closed.

After a week or two the scale of the disaster gradually became clear. A quick calculation indicated the possible scale of our losses: 2-3,000 visitors a week, £30,000 by the end of March, £100,000 if we had to stay closed after Easter. Crisis was not too strong a word, and the scale of the epidemic rose to frightening proportions.

Friends and neighbours saw our difficulties and generously stepped in to help. The Goodwood Estate kindly agreed to rebate our rents for three months, and many individuals sent donations and very welcome letters of support. Chichester District Council was unable to help with the FMD losses but gave a very generous donation to help with the Downland Gridshell project.

The first signs that we might be able to rescue the situation came when MAFF introduced local movement schemes for livestock, and eventually we managed to get licences to move our pigs, cattle and sheep off site. By this time the government had backtracked on its disastrous initial attempt to close down the entire countryside, and public opinion was ready to support attempts to get things moving again. Eventually we decided to re-open on 1 April, and the season got off to a marvellous, if



Foot and Mouth Disease precautions in place at the Museum entrance in February.

belated, start.

The Fine Food Fair at Easter was cancelled at the participants' request, but was re-scheduled for 29-30 September. The Rare Breeds Show also had to be cancelled, but will return with new vigour next year. The net result is that our visitor numbers up to early September were about 8,000 down on last year, entirely due to FMD closure, but we hope to narrow this to 5-6,000 by the end of the year.

So what of the future? The farm livestock is an integral and much-loved part of the Museum's work, and we intend to bring them back as soon as it is safe to do so, which seems to be at the end of a quarantine period of three months after the end of the epidemic. This may possibly be in March or April next year, but nothing will be certain until the epidemic is officially and finally over.

Richard Harris

## Visitor numbers hold up well

In spite of the Museum's five-week closure we have had very encouraging numbers of visitors this year. Extra special effort in marketing and promotion has helped keep the Museum buoyant in what has been a particularly difficult year.

Of course the closure has reduced our visitor total compared with this time last year. However, comparison of the daily visitor figures from 1 April (when we re-opened) with last year is

very satisfying and shows a 4% increase. At the time of going to press the Fine Food Fair was still to come in September, removed from its normal Easter date, and with some luck, we hope to make up the deficit.

This year's new event, *A Storm of Arrows*, was a great success. The weekend attracted around 3,800 visitors despite rain on Saturday. Participants left requesting that the event be repeated in 2002 and many favourable comments were received from visitors.

## FRIENDS NEWS

**SPRING TOUR 2002 – 25-30 April.** Shropshire is the destination for the Friends' tour next year. Stopping off on the way to visit Blenheim Palace, the programme will include a guided walking tour of Shrewsbury focusing on the Medieval and Tudor period and visits to Attingham Park (NT) with its magnificent Regency interiors, Hack Green Secret Nuclear Bunker built at the height of the Cold War, and in complete contrast, the Dorothy Clive Garden – intimate and informal embracing a variety of landscape features. Sunday will be busy, as we head for the Ironbridge Gorge Museums, including the Coalbrookdale Museum of Iron, the Museum of the Gorge, Blists Hill Victorian Town and the Coalport China Museum. On Monday the tour moves to Ludlow with its beautifully-preserved historic buildings and streets and on to Stokesay Castle, followed by a visit to Avoncroft Museum of Historic Buildings at Bromsgrove on Tuesday.

The group will stay at the Albrighton Hall Hotel on the outskirts of Shrewsbury. Set in a 15-acre garden with ornamental lake this 1630 ancestral home with a sympathetically designed modern extension has a health and fitness centre with an indoor pool. All rooms are en suite. The cost will be in the region of £340, including entrances and lunch at the Dorothy Clive Garden, half board at the hotel, coach travel and driver's gratuity. Participants are strongly advised to make their own insurance arrangements.

Bookings are on a first come, first served basis and a limited number of single rooms is available. For a booking form please send a stamped addressed envelope to Jean Piggott (address below).

• **Membership subscriptions.** Subscriptions for the friends of the Museum from 1 January 2002 will be: Family (2 adults and children or grandchildren) £38; Adult £17; Joint adults £34; Senior citizen (60) £15; Joint seniors £30; Child/student £9; Corporate – full rate £125, reduced rate £45. The subscriptions enable the Friends to maintain a relationship to the Museum entrance charges and help the Friends provide a significant source of grants to the Museum's development of new projects and pro-

grammes as well as maintaining very high standards of existing exhibits and core activities. The subscription represents excellent value, being the price of just two-and-a-bit visits to the Museum! Friends can take advantage of the varied programme of special events planned annually as part of the free admission that members enjoy. Members who pay their subscription by direct debit will receive a letter with this magazine with details of revised payments, under the terms of the direct debit guarantee.

• **Christmas gift.** Why not give a year's membership of the Friends as a Christmas gift? Write to, or phone, the Friends' office for an application form. Completed forms should reach us by the first week in December so a membership pack can be sent before Christmas. Please make sure you let

### Volunteers' activity day

**D**etermined to maintain a positive attitude in the face of having to cancel the Rare Breeds Show, a special day was organised to celebrate the creative talent and specialist collections of the Museum's loyal army of volunteers.

Bob Easson initiated the event and led a team of helpers in organising almost 30 volunteers showing paintings, model soldiers, steam and hot air model trains, cross stitch embroidery, model houses, dolls houses and much, much more. Many of the volunteers' interests are related to buildings and rural life and skills.

The support of volunteers is crucial to the continued success of the Museum. The day ended with a beautiful summer's evening and a lamb roast enjoyed by 164 volunteers, staff and partners – a token of the Museum's gratitude to all involved for their hard work and time.

## Out in the garden...

us know if you want the membership to be mailed to an address other than that of the new member. If you apply by December you can take advantage of the 2001 subscription rates (Family £33, Adult £15, Senior citizen £13, Child/student £8).

• **AGM.** The Friends' Annual General Meeting will take place on 13 April at West Dean College, beginning at 2.00pm.

• **Contacting the Friends.** If you have a membership query please contact our office at Friends of the Open Air Museum, Singleton, Chichester, West Sussex PO18 0EU. Membership secretary is Lisa Neville and the hon. treasurer is Maurice Pollock. For telephone enquires call 01243 811893. The Friends' office is not staffed full time but please leave a message and we will call back as soon as possible. For information about Friends' events please contact Jean Piggott, hon. secretary, at Westwood, Pine Close, West Lavington, Midhurst, West Sussex GU29 0EW. Tel 01730 813126.



*A young visitor admires the skill of Beryl Armstrong who makes and furnishes dolls' houses inspired by the Museum's buildings, during the Volunteers' Day. More than 30 volunteers displayed and demonstrated their skills at a wide variety of crafts.*

**A**t the close of the growing season it's interesting to reflect on how well different varieties have done, compared with previous years.

The star of the lettuces this year was a variety called Fat Lazy Blonde, grown in the Poplar and Walderton gardens. It was an outstanding success, as was American Curled, also grown there. Of the root vegetables green-topped white

## Obituaries

**BERNARD JOHNSON**, who has died aged 89, was a great supporter of the Museum from its early days. He belonged to the Sussex Archaeological Society and became interested in the study of vernacular architecture and the plans for the Museum through his friendship with Roy Armstrong, the Museum's founder.

Bernard and Roy were neighbours and both played a leading part in the Sandgate Preservation Society which was formed to support the preservation of the sandy heath pinewood environment where they lived just outside Storrington. Bernard assisted Roy in organising and carrying out volunteer work at the Museum for many years, and was much appreciated by many people for his kindly and patient enthusiasm in encouraging others into some of the Museum's enterprises.

One of his projects was the dismantling of a small timber-framed outhouse from Knepp, the timbers of which are regularly used in training workshops at the Museum. He was a member of the Wealden Buildings Study Group and wrote a paper on 'rafter holes' in the Vernacular Architecture Journal. Bernard also played a leading role in the Friends, serving as its secretary for many years.

**PETER GRAY**, who was a trustee of the Museum from 1992-9, died in early September. Peter worked as a building surveyor in London, but lived in Surrey and was a long-standing member of the Domestic Buildings Research Group (Surrey), a one-time president of the Wealden Buildings Study Group, and a keen member of the Vernacular Architecture Group, taking part in most of the group's conferences.

His knowledge of Surrey houses was both wide and detailed, but he was particularly interested in developing an analytical approach to the data. He compiled on behalf of Surrey County Council a selective catalogue of *Farmsteads and Farm Buildings in Surrey* as a contribution to the information available for local government officers. In recent months, during his illness, he had worked very hard to complete a

publication about medieval timber-framed houses in Surrey, and it is wonderful to know that this work had been completed at the time of his death.

**CON AINSWORTH** was a gifted amateur archaeologist who played an important part in archaeological investigations in Sussex. From his base in Worthing, he met the Museum's founder, Roy Armstrong, through their mutual lecturing activities with the WEA (Workers Educational Association) and served on the archaeology sub-committee established at the Museum in the early 1970s. In 1967 he had discovered and excavated the medieval kiln at Binsted, West Sussex, and his experience was put to use with the clay and pottery group at the Museum whose members carried out a number of experimental kiln firings in an attempt to replicate the actual firing conditions used by medieval potters. Con, who was a leading authority within the Worthing Archaeological Society and became its president, was awarded an honorary MA by Sussex University.

**NIGEL WESTACOTT**, former Museum volunteer, has died suddenly at his new Devon home. Nigel and his wife Rosemary ran a particularly good heavy horse show at their home at Dunton Green, Kent for many years which the Museum horses regularly attended. When he retired he donated a large proportion of his collection of historic agricultural implements, especially hay-making equipment, to the Museum. He and his wife moved to Singleton, where he joined Ray Ashdown in a project to streamline the cataloguing of artefacts in the collection under the leadership of the then curator, Bob Powell.

**DAVID BRIGGS** of Tonbridge, Kent, also died in September. He and his family were stalwart supporters of the Museum and its work, bringing their Ardennes horse, Scarlet to every Heavy Horse Spectacular and Autumn Countryside Celebration for many years. Most recently he came with the Working Horse Trust, with whom he became involved at the trust's working farm at Eridge Green, Kent.

carrots have done very well: they are the size of small parsnips and have a mild flavour.

The onions at Bayleaf failed miserably, partly due, I'm sure, to the poor quality organic setts we had this year. They never really got going despite some TLC from the gardening team. The marigolds were in short supply as well, and as these two plants do particularly well together this may have had

something to do with it. However, all is not lost as both Walderton and Pendean gardens produced good crops, so we will have plenty to string.

The Carling peas, 16th century variety, did very well at Bayleaf and we've saved a lot of seed, hoping to grow them at Poplar Cottage next year. We may find ourselves having to net the young brassicas next year. In the last couple of seasons pigeons have descended on them

## News in brief

• **Maintenance work is taking place on the Littlehampton Granary this autumn.** Roger Champion is replacing the sill beam on the west wall of the building, which takes the brunt of the weather. The granary was one of the first buildings to be re-erected at the Museum, and in the early days was used as the Museum shop.

• **The Museum is seeking four or five metal agricultural implement seats to replace a number that were stolen recently.** These items are prized by collectors, hence the theft which has left the Museum without some on hay turners etc. If anyone has any that they would like to donate to the Museum, please contact the office on 01243 811363 or Rob Dash on 01483 200571 (evenings)

• **Demonstrators of a wide variety of rural and building crafts and skills have had a busy season.** Special thanks are due to those who attended the Children's Activity Weekend, which always requires everyone to go up a gear! The forge is now in use on two weekdays and most weekends. The blacksmiths are very responsive to our requests to make things for the Museum, including most recently, a 'dog and chain' to moor the dug-out boat. (See page 7)

• **Education officer, Diane Walker,** would be most grateful for offers of help with lantern and mask making on Tree Dressing day, Sunday 2 December. Please contact her if you can spare the time on 01243 811927/811459.

• **Trustee Michael Burton negotiated the purchase of a new Mazda pickup from Richard Brooks of Nyetimber Garage at a very favourable price. The garage sponsored the signwriting of the Museum's logo on the vehicle and delivered it in June. We look forward to a continuing relationship.**

• **Another new vehicle on the Museum site is the yellow road roller, donated earlier this year by volunteer Alan Wood, which has been put to work on the back road, tracks and surfaces of the site. We are all – especially Nick Conway, Ron and Mick Betsworth – grateful for this very generous donation.**

in the early morning and despite our best efforts to protect them, most have been decimated.

• *We would welcome new volunteers to the garden team. Other commitments and holidays often leave us below strength, particularly during the summer months. Anyone who is interested, please contact Bob Easson at the Museum office on 01243 811481.*

**Bob Holman**

## Museum helps new woodland craft enterprise start up

The new Woodland Craft Centre in the woods near Pendean Farmhouse has had a busy year, with coppice workers Paul Pinnington and Chris Baldwin now well-established and providing a variety of products for a wide range of customers. They make hazel hurdles, besom brooms, thatching spars, charcoal and garden products and furniture from their new base.

Paul and Chris are running their own independent business on the Museum site. In return they are providing interesting demonstrations of the skills involved in turning underwood into many useful things. As part of the initiative they will care for the Museum's charcoal burning camp. This year they have completely refurbished the camp which illustrates the construction of a traditional earth charcoal kiln and features a reconstructed charcoal burner's hut complete with furniture. A modern metal kiln is used to produce charcoal for the barbecue market during the summer season. A new exhibition interprets the camp for visitors.

Paul and Chris's products can be bought through the Museum shop or direct from them on 01243 811553 or 01243 779796.



Chris making besom brooms in the workshop.



Paul and Chris loading the modern metal kiln to produce charcoal for sale to customers and through the Museum shop.

## Winter at the Museum

Winter days are beautiful in the Museum's 19th century parkland setting, and warming fires provide a glowing welcome in some of the 46 historic homes and workplaces which form the Museum's main exhibits.

The Museum's annual tree dressing events takes place on Sunday 2 December offering visitors the chance to join in this festival whose origins go back to ancient times. Visitors can take part in the lantern-making workshop (bring a jam jar and a night light!), watch morris

dancing, listen to fireside story telling, plays and songs, and finally, join in with the lantern procession and spiral dance around the tree as it is dressed. Mulled wine and mince pies will be served.

The Museum's annual carol-singing in North Cray hall house will take place on Monday 17 December at 7.00pm, and in Christmas week (26 December-1 January) come and see Bayleaf farmhouse decorated for the festive season, as it may have been 400 years ago, and enjoy sweetmeats and drink.

The new Museum Christmas card features Bayleaf Farmhouse in the snow, photographed early this year by Diana Zeuner: the cards are 40p each (£3.50 for 10). Another new item on sale in time for the festive season is an attractive mug featuring Richard Harris's drawing of the market square: these are £5.95 each. Both are available from the Museum shop.

## Diary 2001-2002

### Winter opening -

Wednesdays and weekends

1 November 2001 - 28 February 2002  
(10.30am - 4.00pm)

### Christmas and New Year -

26 December 2001 - 1 January 2002  
(10.30am - 4.00pm)

### Schools half-term -

11 - 15 February 2002  
(10.30am - 4.00pm)

### 2002 season - Daily

1 March - 31 October  
(10.30am - 6.00pm)

### DECEMBER

2 **Tree Dressing** - celebration of the life-giving properties of trees. Dancing, lantern making, singing, story telling, plays, mulled wine

### FEBRUARY 2002

11-15 **Half-Term Activities**

### MARCH

10 **Mothering Sunday** - free entry and a bunch of daffodils for mothers and grandmothers, traditional children's games and lots of fun!

31- **Easter Fine Food Fair** - superb opportunity to buy regional food from makers throughout south-east England. Brass band entertainment and cookery demonstrations

### APRIL

27/28 **Sustainable Building Event**

### JUNE

3-7 **Half-Term Activities**

### ADMISSION CHARGES

Including VAT at current rate (until 1st March 2002)

Adults £7.00 Over 60's £6.50 Children  
£4.00 Family Ticket, 2 adults & up to 3 children £17.00



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