

Laying the basis for the Museum's future

Museums are continually evolving and developing and need to meet the aspirations of their visitors whilst remaining constant to their objectives and themes. They also have to ensure they comply with increasing and complex legislation, as well as preparing for the unknown demands of the years ahead. Recent reports and discussions have led us to consider how the Museum is positioned to meet these factors, and we are now considering a way forward which we hope will lay the basis for our development into the future.

The need for an Orientation Gallery

The Museum's Forward Plan, adopted in March 2003, recognised that our collections and site provide learning opportunities within a wide diversity of interconnected themes centred on traditional buildings. *History, Archaeology, Science, Technology, Conservation, Community, Regionality* and *Creativity* are examples of the many ways in which the Museum's resources can be explored, and visitors need guidance to help them pursue themes relevant to their own particular interests.

This recognition of diversity led to the decision to establish an 'Orientation Gallery' which visitors would be able to use before and during their visit. The gallery would offer help at many levels and in many different areas of interest, from an introductory presentation to specific and detailed information on a wide variety of topics, using a combination of Information Technology and objects from the collections.



An aerial view of the Museum site looking west towards West Dean and Kingley Vale, with Chichester Harbour top left. The view emphasises the fact that the Museum is part of West Dean Park and shows the broad sweep of the Lavant Valley as it turns south towards Chichester. The photograph was taken shortly after the Rare and Traditional Breeds Show in July. The Museum's proposals will take full account of the exceptional beauty of this landscape.

The need for improvement in visitor facilities

The Museum has been highly successful in its key aims, reflected in its high reputation and 'Designated' status, but the Forward Plan also recognised an urgent need for improvement in our basic facilities for visitors, especially our car parks and refreshment facilities. The Museum's retail and refreshment facilities should reflect its collections and thematic focus, which are also the subject of the Orientation Gallery. No existing building on the site can satisfy these needs. The conclusion we have reached is that the Museum needs new car parks, and a new building to house all these functions under one roof.

The brief

Following lengthy discussions, the Museum commissioned Edward Cullinan Architects (who designed the Downland Gridshell) to carry out a feasibility study to appraise options for siting the new building and car parks in three different areas of the Museum. The brief

emphasised the importance of paying close attention to the landscape impact of the proposals in relation to the Museum site, West Dean Park and the Lavant valley in the short, medium and long term. Three sites were considered, including the hillside site between Longport House and the Gridshell and a site in the woods behind and to the west of Catherington Treadwheel. However, their conclusion was strongly in favour of siting the new facilities on the northern edge of our site, centred on Gonville Drive, heavily screened by trees.

A vision for the new building

The feasibility study examines the issue of siting without considering the design of the building in any detail. However, some ideas have been put forward which will, if adopted, inform the design and building process:

- **Sustainability:** the development must be deeply and thoroughly sustainable as well as being architecturally excellent.

➔ Laying the basis for the Museum's future

● **Low cost:** the Museum must lead by showing that excellence can be achieved at modest cost.

● **Inspiration:** the building must delight and inspire visitors.

● **Access:** all the facilities of the building must be available to all visitors, regardless of disabilities.

● **Gallery:** the Orientation Gallery will use advanced digital access methods, as well as real objects. All the Museum's digital resources will be concentrated in the building, so that the exterior site can be kept as a natural domain.

● **Diffusion:** the orientation function will be diffused through the building, including the refreshment and retail facilities.

The way forward

A great deal of preparatory work needs to be done, both in design and fundraising, but as a first step we are preparing an outline planning application for submission later this year. If that is successful we will put the project into top gear and aim for completion in 2008-9. The Museum is 35-years-old this year, and this project will lay the basis for our development for a long period in the future.

Richard Harris
Museum Director

Magazine changes

From next year the format of the Museum magazine is to change. We will continue to publish one in the spring and one in the autumn, but they will be similar in format, with some 24 pages and a full page colour picture on the front. Diana Zeuner will continue as editor.

Both will contain advertising – currently only the spring issue holds adverts. This has two main aims – to help pay for the costs of the magazine and promote products and services relevant to our Museum themes of traditional buildings and rural life. There will be an introductory special offer to all our advertisers who take an advert in both issues.

For further information please contact Julie Aalen in the Museum office on 01243 811363.

Visitor Numbers and the 'Gridshell effect'

Visitor numbers this year remained similar to last year until Friday, 13 August! In 2003 we had experienced the sunniest summer on record (beating the previous 1995 record) and the second driest since 1766. This exceptional weather had a most beneficial effect on our visitor numbers.

Despite the rather indifferent weather in 2004, our numbers were up 2% by the middle of August with 1,663 more people through the site than in the previous year. This was partly due to strong attendances at the special events, which continue to be very successful.

Then in the middle of August it started to rain, and comments about harvests being ruined and the wettest August on record appeared in the press. This had a fairly catastrophic effect on our visitor numbers and by the end of the month we were 2% down. In that 18-day period at the height of the summer season we were 3,172 visitors down on the same period in 2003.

A phenomenon that has affected our admissions revenue has been the change in the composition of our visitors. In 2003 the percentage of adult visitors had risen to 27% and as they are the highest value category, the revenue showed a significant increase. The reason for this change is unclear, but it may have been a 'Gridshell effect' with an increase in adult visitors coming with the main purpose of seeing the new building. Whatever the cause, our visitor profile has now reverted to the pre-2003 pattern, with the resultant drop in admissions revenue.

The Wednesday activity days were a great success with better numbers than last year and the Museum continues to attract a huge number and wide cross-section of visitors. There is no doubt that the Museum is a wonderful place to visit and will continue to go from strength to strength despite the vagaries of the British summer.

Henry Warner
Head of Operations

Artefact Update

● Last winter's project – recording the locations of all items in the Gridshell Artefact Store – was completed in early spring and the collections team has spent time over the summer months performing the same task for those items displayed across the Museum site. This is now almost complete and as a result, we have accurate locations in our records for some 85% of the artefact collection on display.

● The Museum has recently acquired another wheeled vehicle which again is in excellent condition for its age. This rare item was kindly donated to us by Mr Furse who owns a farm near Turner's Hill, East Sussex. It comes with excellent provenance, from its purchase in 1911 from the Loxwood makers and its use on Mr Furse's farm, to its current position at the Museum. This is another item, like the caravan, which we hope to quickly conserve, repair minor problems and display on site with a view to using it occasionally.

● Around this time last year the Museum acquired a superb example of a Romany 'Reading' caravan. We are currently examining the caravan with a view to its repainting and carrying out minor structural repairs. The aim is to complete the work ready for next season when the caravan can be displayed on site; it is also sufficiently robust that we should be able to use it on occasions.



The cattle transporter from Turner's Hill awaiting conservation in the Gridshell.

In April the collections team began a major £70,000 two-year storage and access project funded by the Designation Challenge Fund which aims to address the problems of the Museum's remaining off-site stores. Part of this funding has enabled us to employ a new member of the team for the two-year period, Katy Elliott.

The recent transfer of the Museum's artefact collections from the Charlton Barn complex to the new Gridshell Store enabled easy, organised visitor access to about 80% of the Museum's artefacts for the first time. Another 5-10% of the collections are also accessible to visitors as they are displayed across the main site. The remainder, however, remain inaccessible due to their off-site storage.

The bulk of these inaccessible artefacts are housed off-site at West Dean. These are mostly larger items: agricultural machinery and vehicles, other wheeled vehicles, building parts and timber samples, dismantled historic buildings and site materials.

The state of the storage facility is not quite as problematic as at Charlton and the numbers of artefacts involved are less. However the facility itself is bigger and the items individually larger. The overall aim of the project though, is the same: improved access for the general public, volunteers and staff.

Unlike the artefact transfer from Charlton, the items at West Dean will for the most part remain there once the project has been completed. A number of smaller items that are inappropriately stored in the present building will be brought back and housed in the Gridshell Store, but most items will remain where they are.

Being an off-site store, it will not be feasible to afford daily access to visitors in the same way as the Gridshell, although an appointments system will be in operation for pre-arranged, supervised visits. A greater emphasis will therefore be placed upon digital access to these artefacts, to be viewed either from the main site or on the Museum's website.

The artefacts, along with the majority of other materials in the store, will be reorganised into clearly defined areas affording simpler access. The lean-to shelters which form the bulk of the storage infrastructure will be repaired and given improved weather protection where necessary. Items will be cleaned and given simple conservation. Their documentation will be improved and brought up to date, and specific locations allocated. All items will be digitally photographed.



Curator Julian Bell at work in the store for timbers and other large objects.

Museum tackles off-site large objects collection

All documentation and images will be input on to a new database system which is user-friendly and compatible with other similar institutions. A computer terminal will be located in the Gridshell foyer area with this database so that while visitors are able to directly access the collections in the Gridshell Store and across site, they will also be able to remotely access those held in the off-site store.



Julian Bell
Curator

● The Designation Challenge Fund is administered by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) and is intended to help with the care of collections that are designated by the Government as being of national importance. The Weald & Downland Open Air Museum is one of some 60 museums in England holding designated collections.



Guy Viney and Katy Elliott are repairing the building exhibit and wheeled vehicle stores.

● The database will ultimately be linked to the 'distributed national collection' being pioneered by the Museum of English Rural Life at Reading University. This will provide a single point of access to information about collections of agricultural machinery and rural life throughout England. The Museum will also be working closely with West Sussex Past, a web-based project which aims to link together the county's heritage resources.

Nigel Stephens

Nigel Stephens, a vice-president of the Museum and past chairman, died at his home in Cornwall in August. He was 75.

Nigel chaired the Museum trustees twice, from 1987-1993 and again from 1994-1996. In 1998 he retired from the Museum board, remaining as a trustee, and in Autumn 2000 he retired from trusteeship and was appointed a vice president.

A qualified chartered surveyor and auctioneer, Nigel was senior partner and chairman of Whiteheads estate agents, based in Chichester, until 1986. Until retirement in 1988 he was

director of General Accident Property Services and at Stewart Wyse and Ogilvie (Edinburgh). An honorary fellow of the College of Estate Management, he had a special interest in education and training. He was a former chairman of Chichester Round Table and secretary and then chairman of the Friends of Chichester Hospitals.

Nigel was an enthusiastic and wise chairman at the Museum, and despite some illness during his chairmanship, led the trustees with dedication, energetically promoting the Museum and its ever-broadening activities.

He leaves a widow, Maggie, who continues to live at their Boxgrove home, and a son and daughter.

Diana Zeuner

New Head of Operations

Henry Warner was appointed as Head of Operations during the summer and began work in August.

Henry, 48, comes to the Museum from Sussex Archaeological Society, for whom he worked for 10 years. He began as commercial manager based at Fishbourne Roman Palace and for the last four seasons ran Michelham Priory, near Hailsham. When he took over running the site in 2001 it was in serious danger of being closed as a visitor attraction because it was losing money. "I was very proud when Michelham produced a profit in 2003, which was probably the first time this had happened since the dissolution of the monasteries!" he says.

Henry was born in Emsworth where he now lives and has always regarded the Sussex/Hampshire border area as his home. He has two children, Richard, 16 and Stephanie, 10, who both go to Portsmouth Grammar School.

Henry, who has also worked in the marine, telecommunications, tourism and brewing industries, says there are many similarities in the operation at Michelham and that of the Weald & Downland Museum. Both sites are owned by self-financing charities, raising much of their income from admission fees and secondary spend derived from site visitors.



Henry Warner

At the Museum Henry will be responsible for financial planning and control, administrative systems, marketing, retail and catering, human resources and the Museum operation and visitor services.

"I am fully aware of the complicated and delicate balance involved in running commercial-type enterprises in a museum environment," he says. "I have always enjoyed my visits to the Weald & Downland Museum but am finding working at the Museum even more stimulating, and look forward to contributing to its continuing success and development."

More help in the office and out on site!

This year we are pleased to welcome Susie Jardine and Katie Hunwicke to the staff.

Susie Jardine (right) has joined the visitor services department and works as a duty officer and helps Bob Easson co-ordinate the volunteers. Susie worked for the BBC in London on the then new concept of local radio before moving to British Airways where she worked as cabin crew on VC10s, 707s and Comets and latterly 747s. More recently she has been busy working in the tourism industry in Rye, Brixham and Chichester.



Katie Hunwicke is assistant office manager to Julie Aalen. She grew up at Lancing College where her father was chaplain, head of the divinity department and a classics master. She was

New cooks in Winkhurst kitchen

After more than two years as our 'Tudor cook', Dawn Stevens has left us to pursue further academic studies. Winkhurst has been an enormously successful exhibit and our thanks are due to Dawn for having set very high standards of presentation.

We are currently recruiting for a new post at the Museum, the Head of Interpretation, who will be responsible for the development of all our interpretive work for the general public. In the meantime we have appointed two people as 'interim Tudor cooks' – Annie Keys and Liz Ramsdale.

Annie has worked in schools and is also a member of the History Re-enactment Workshop. She has been coming to the Museum for a couple of years as a volunteer, and has worked with HRW also at other sites. Liz Ramsdale comes from a catering background, having trained and worked as a chef. Visiting the Museum in August she was intrigued by the possibility of working in Winkhurst, and has been undergoing intensive training in the historical side of the operation from Ian Pearce.

Annie and Liz will 'job-share' Winkhurst, so that we can maintain activity there seven days a week. Building up their team of volunteers will enable them to also develop domestic interpretation in our other historic building exhibits.

educated at Christ's Hospital and Lancing College and went on to study ancient history at London University. Since then she has had various jobs including periods as a travel agent and a financial consultant. She has been round the world twice, in 1995-96 and 1999-2000, both times for a year!

Heather's honey

Expect you are all aware of Heather's proclivity to bee-keeping. I looked up 'proclivity' in the dictionary: it says 'a tendency towards action or habit, esp. a bad one.' Well, Heather didn't have any bad habits, except me. They were all good ones, be it bee-keeper, bell-ringer, wife, gardener, sailor,

cook, rambler, insomniac. Even the latter was a good habit as it provided her with time for all the others. Whilst I never shared Heather's proclivities, we did share many other interests. These included arguing, dogs, dislike of ironing, swimming in the cold sea (I watched) and mutual amnesia regarding the quantity of gin to tonic consumed during the course of an evening.

I digress. To soothe my conscience over parting with Heather's beloved colonies of bees and bee-keeping equipment (not to mention her last honey harvest of 1½ tons) I decided to raise what money I could by its sale and to donate this to St Wilfrid's Hospice. In February this year I set myself the hypothetical target of £10,000 by 13 December 2004 (12 months after Heather first



entered the hospice).

To my surprise, at the time of writing, I have raised £10,460, £9,000 of which the hospice has already received. My thanks to all who marketed Heather's honey – the Museum shop; West Dean visitor centre; the WI markets of Chichester, Worthing and Storrington; The Studio, Singleton; West Dean village shop; Thomas Eggar, Chichester; Worthing

New event for local community on Mother's Day

Are you a member of one of the many clubs or societies based in the Lavant Valley? The Museum is planning a new and exciting event for the local community on Mothers' Day on 6 March next year.

Local organisations will be invited to 'set out their stall' in one of the many historic buildings at the Museum and promote their aims and interests to other local people. Sports clubs, horticultural societies, music groups, arts societies and other local groups are all invited.

Schools Services

The Museum has had a thriving education department since its earliest days and many innovative projects have taken place over the years. Annually we have served up to 30,000 school children. It has been decided to rename the education department *Schools Services* to more accurately reflect the scope of the activities we provide for schools.

We are pleased to welcome the full-time appointments of Jennie Peel as Schools Services Manager and Rachel Neville as Schools Services & Interpretation Support Officer. They will be working to broaden the range of the curriculum that teachers can cover on visits to the Museum, including more science, maths and creative arts. Jennie Peel, who lives near Petworth, was headmistress of Conifers School, Midhurst for 20 years until July and is a governor of Seaford College. Rachel Neville, who was educated at Bishop Luffa School, Chichester, has a degree in Natural Resources and has had administrative experience working with various organisations. Most recently she has been working as a volunteer at London Zoo.

Christine Standing, who has been the mainstay of the education department (with Sally Murdoch and Dawn Stevens) since Diane Walker's departure last year, has left the Museum after many years' service. She began working in the general office then specialised in school and group bookings. Christine will continue to come to the Museum as a

The event falls on Mothering Sunday so all mothers and grandmothers will be able to visit free of charge and receive a bunch of daffodils. In addition the Museum is offering entry at a flat rate of £1 per person to everyone living in the parishes of Singleton, East Dean, West Dean, Cocking and Lavant.

We hope this new event will help to cement the Museum's position as a centre in the community. If you would like to take part please contact Henry Warner in the Museum office on 01243 811016.



Jennie Peel, right, and Rachel Neville

volunteer and we wish her well for the future.

The Museum's successful workshops, developed to chime with the National Curriculum, continue. And, in response to a direct request from a Sussex school this year, we have put on four days of workshops with a Stuart theme featuring the Great Fire and the Plague. Evaluation returns from schools show an enthusiasm for loan boxes and the Museum is planning to re-introduce these under an outreach service.

The Barclays Special Educational Needs project has enjoyed another successful year with 17 special days attended by children from special and mainstream schools, with many Barclays volunteers assisting us as support staff. The project was nominated for a Charity Award organised by Charity Finance Magazine and we came second and were highly commended in the Arts, Culture & Heritage category at the ceremony in London.

Diana Rowsell
Head of Learning

Department of Social Services; Dan O'Leary, the veg. man and Heather's uncle, Stanley. My thanks also to approximately 4,000 individual buyers of 1lb and ½lb jars. Enjoy it whilst you've got it because soon, Heather's honey, like her, will be a distant memory.

Thanks again from Roger, who had a proclivity towards being Heather's husband.

Roger Champion

Museum shop moves towards local products

... and a special offer!

This year we have some exciting new gifts for sale in the Museum shop. Our emphasis in stocking the shop is moving towards specialising in locally-made products, and there has been a concerted effort to locate and purchase items from talented crafts people who work in the Museum's region.

The process is evolutionary but we already have some really good ideas for Christmas presents. We now sell pottery from Amberley, glassware from Partridge Green, as well as our renowned selection of buildings and countryside-themed books, the Gransfors range of axes and many other unique gifts. This year's Christmas card is a snow scene of Walderston House available in five-card packs (see back page).

The shop is open every day and proceeds go towards running the Museum. This year we are pleased to make a special offer for Christmas – hand in the coupon below when you make a purchase of more than £20 and you will receive a 10% discount.



SPECIAL CHRISTMAS OFFER!

Hand in this coupon to receive a 10% discount in the Museum shop when you spend more than £20

Valid until 24 December 2004

News in brief

■ For the fourth year running the Museum's resident pair of barn owls has reared a brood of four owlets. As usual they have been checked and ringed by Graham Roberts, West Sussex County Council ecologist. Before next spring he is planning to set up an infra-red camera in their roost to enable visitors to observe the owls' family life on CCTV and maybe even on the web. From this year's roost we were able to harvest a box full of owl pellets, 70 of which were dissected as one of the activities on a Children's Activity Wednesday in the Summer! Children, parents and grandparents found it fascinating to be able to identify at least six different species of rodents which inhabit the Museum site. Each family took home the bones and an identification chart for further research.

■ The future of Gift Aid on visitor entry to museums such as ours was threatened at the beginning of the year when the Government decided it wanted to close the 'loophole'. Museums which have introduced this scheme have done so entirely legally with the help

Peter Vincent, David Jeffrey and April Chandler

Peter Vincent died aged 81, not long after his retirement from many years' service as a volunteer at the Museum. With his wife, Heather, he operated the watermill for 20 years, running the machinery, selling the stoneground wholemeal flour and giving much advice to visitors on bread-making. They became representatives of the Museum at the meetings of the Traditional Cornmillers Guild. After war service in the Royal Navy, Peter followed a career with Barclays Bank. Peter's ancestors had lived in the Lewes area for generations and with his affinity for Sussex they decided to move to Chichester in 1983 for what was to become a busy retirement. Peter was an active member of the Southdowns Art Group, enjoyed reading and music and instilling in his grandchildren involvement in many of his favourite subjects and activities.

David Jeffrey, who died suddenly aged 64, was a miller for most of his time at the Museum, milling with his wife Julie on Mondays and helping her to make a wide range of jams and chutneys for sale at our special events. They had lived for many years in India and Hong Kong while David was in the employment of the Government. Since retirement they travelled extensively. They were both keen gardeners and had two allotments where they grew fruit and vegetables used in their home-made products.

April Chandler, who died aged 73, had been a volunteer since 2000, and contributed greatly to the smooth running of the shop. A retired school teacher with a great love of country

and advice of the Inland Revenue and a variety of museum and cultural organisations, including the Association of Independent Museums, have mounted a campaign to retain the scheme. The Museum expects to reclaim some £57,000 this year, representing an additional 14% of income. It seems the Government had not anticipated museums' entrepreneurial attitude to making use of the Gift Aid scheme in this way, entirely consistent with the Government's objectives to help charities. The Museum's treasurer, Maurice Pollock, says: "The ability to claim Gift Aid on donations for admission was welcomed, particularly for an independent museum where we are almost totally dependent on visitor income to meet our operating costs. The proposed withdrawal of this capability does appear mean-spirited in the light of the Government's Gift Aid campaign, the Inland Revenue's clear and detailed help on implementation and the (relatively) small sums involved for the Treasury." The scheme is thought to be benefiting cultural charities to the tune of some £10 million.

■ During this year the Museum has taken the first steps towards establishing a separate Interpretation Department. Josephine Sharpe spent six months here as Interpretation

dancing, her stepmother was the late Daphne Chandler, another of our volunteers, who many of our older volunteers at the Museum will remember well.

All three will be sadly missed.

Joan Harding

Joan Harding, one of the Museum longest standing and most loyal supporters died on 10 June, aged 93.

Joan's interest in archaeology, which she pursued in the 1960s, developed into a preoccupation with vernacular architecture, and in 1970 she founded the Domestic Buildings Research Group (Surrey) which was dedicated to the systematic study and recording of vernacular houses and associated buildings in the county. The group has flourished, and is now as active as ever in recording and analysis, including a dendrochronology project that promises results of great interest, and has recorded over 3,800 buildings in Surrey.

Joan was one of the original founding group of the Museum, and remained a trustee and, latterly, vice president. On her last visit here she was able to see the reconstruction of Poplar Cottage, with its 'smoke bay', a feature which she was the first to recognise in houses and cottages in Surrey. In 2002 she donated her collection of pottery scale models of houses to the Museum, for which we are to build a special display cabinet for installation in Crawley Hall. She was elected a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries in 1971 and appointed MBE in 1991 for services to the national heritage in Surrey.

Joan was a good friend both to me personally and to the Museum, and we will miss her very much.

Richard Harris

Development Officer on a variety of tasks. She has created inventories of the replica furnishings in the furnished houses, lists of suppliers and up-dated the house steward files, now available in Bayleaf and Pendean farmhouses and Poplar cottage, along with a file of recipes for Winkhurst kitchen. Replacement pottery has been delivered for these buildings and new housekeeping boxes installed to provide volunteers with equipment to help keep the houses clean. Josephine Sharpe has now moved on to a new job with the National Trust in Norfolk, and we wish her well for the future.

■ Diana Zeuner, the Museum's part-time stables manager, has written a book, *Heavy Horses*, published by Shire Publications in its extraordinary range of volumes on heritage subjects. The book covers the history and development of the British breeds of heavy horse, working horses in their heyday during the horse era and the current heavy horse scene. It can be purchased in the Museum shop at £5.99, along with Diana's other title, *The Working Horse Manual*, and the current *Heavy Horse World* calendar. Diana is publisher and editor of *Heavy Horse World*, the only magazine in the UK dedicated to working draught horses.

Bob Copper

Bob Copper, who entertained thousands with his Sussex folk songs and stories, helping keep alive an important but fast-disappearing rural tradition, died on 29 March. He was 89.

Bob and his family had made many appearances at the Museum over the years, enjoying the appropriate setting of the South Downs and our historic buildings. But Bob's energy ensured that this unique singing tradition received a world-wide audience.

For more than 400 years the Copper family lived in and around the village of Rottingdean, working as shepherds, carters, publicans and farm workers in the Downs. For at least 200 years the family has been renowned as country singers, singing their songs at sheep-shearing suppers, harvest homes, family parties and pub sing-songs.

In 1950 Bob and his father sang on BBC Radio, then at the Royal Albert Hall in London, and numerous broadcasts, concerts and recordings followed. Bob Copper wrote three books, *A Song for Every Season*, *Songs and Southern Breezes* and *Early to Rise*. His children, John and Jill, inherited their father's love of the songs and they were joined by Jill's husband, Jon Dudley.

We hoped Bob would be with us for the Copper family's appearance planned at the Museum in August, but sadly it was not to be. The rest of the family carried on though, singing the songs Bob had helped keep alive, and accompanied by the fine voices of his grandchildren, now in their early twenties – the Copper family tradition is set to continue.

Diana Zeuner

Weald & Downland Open Air Museum Autumn 2004

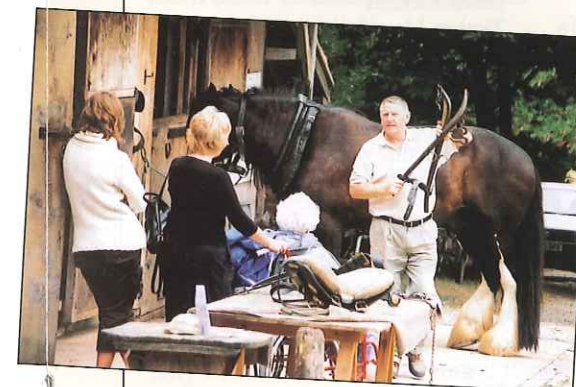
2004 – The year in pictures



Our special events again attracted huge crowds: above, visitors are enjoying the Food Fair, held at Easter – next year the Food Fair will be slightly later in the year, on 1/2 May, and a new range of events is being planned for the four days of Easter (details will appear in the Spring magazine).



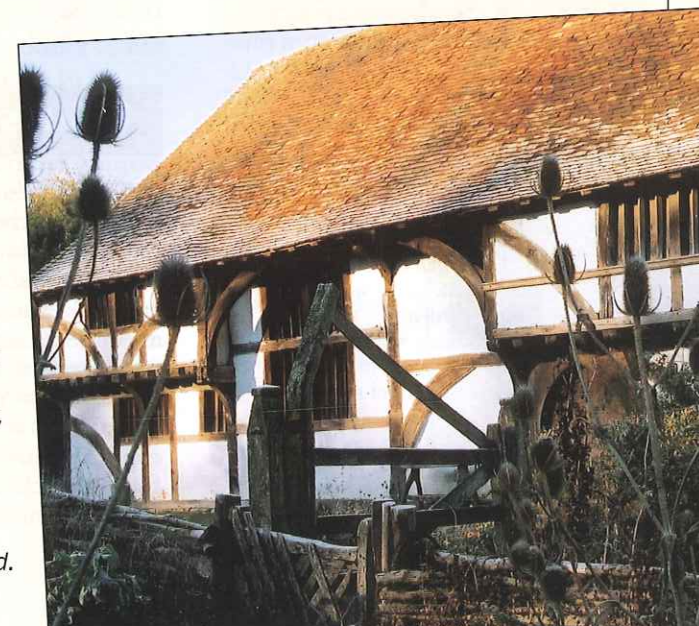
Left, the Museum's working horses had another busy year, providing enjoyment and interest for visitors. Top, stables volunteer Ros Hart, grooming for Museum horseman Derek Hilton at the Heavy Horse Spectacular, with Donald and Gym, and below, Terry Brookes unharnessing Donald outside the stables while visitors watch.



Above right, Chris Baldwin continues his training programme with our young working oxen and attracts crowds during a sunny day in the summer. Earlier in the year, the Museum received a visit from some of the world's most prominent working cattle specialists, in the UK for a conference on working animals, Cozette Griffin Kremer from France, Jörg Bremond from Germany and Dr Drew Conroy from the University of New Hampshire in the United States.

Left, visitors especially love the pigs! Here Tamworth pigs in the care of Paul Pinnington grow plump in the Bayleaf medieval farmstead yard.

Autumn was upon us once again as the Museum magazine went to press and with it the prospect of sharp frosts, like the one in this picture of Bayleaf farmhouse with the stately skeletons of teasels in the foreground.



One of our busiest days of the summer – the Rare & Traditional Breeds Show. All hands were on deck again for the event, organised by John Bushrod with Carol Brinson. Top, museum volunteer and ex-farmer Brian Weekes judging the young handler's class and, left, John Dunlop's magnificent bull in the ring again.



COURSES PROGRAMME 2004-2005

BUILDING CONSERVATION AND RURAL TRADES AND CRAFTS

NOVEMBER

- 2 Construction and repair of timber-framed buildings
- 7 Learn to plough with heavy horses
- 8-12 Intermediate timber framing
- 10 English furniture-making trades of the 16th & 17th centuries
- 11-12 The painted house: 15th-19th centuries
- 13 Christmas stained glass decorations
- 13-14 Woven hurdle making
- 15 Joinery by hand: sash windows
- 17 How to be a house detective
- 17-19 Strength grading of oak certificated course
- 18-21 MSc Timber building conservation Unit 1
- 21 Learn to plough with heavy horses
- 22-25 Masterclass in timber building conservation
- 24 An appreciation of early oak furniture
- 26 Christmas rag rugging
- 26 Green refurbishment
- 29 Timber decay and its treatment
- 30 Repair of timber-framed buildings

- 11 Superstition, myth and magic: 15th-19th centuries
- 13 Learn to drive heavy horses
- 23 The Georgian tradition – a day school on Georgian buildings
- 24 Recording vernacular buildings for conservation: Day 2
- 25 Length & breadth: specialist tools for measuring
- 27 Learn to drive heavy horses
- 28 Tapestry weaving workshop

MARCH

- Dtba Introduction to gauged brickwork
- Dtba English brickwork – Tudor to Edwardian
- 3 Tree to timber: hewing and sawing workshop
- 4 Rag rugging
- 5-6 Living willow workshop
- 9 Victorian developments in building design
- 10 Recording vernacular buildings for conservation: Day 3
- 11 Basic woodworking tool skills workshop
- 12-13 Make a bentwood chair
- 13 Learn to drive heavy horses
- 14 Wattle and daub
- 15-16 Beyond the green baize door
- 17-20 MSc Unit 3
- 22 From crown post to king post
- Dtba Horse logging
- 24 Wild flower walk – spring

APRIL

- Dtba Repair of traditionally constructed brickwork
- 2 Willow workshop
- 3 Driving heavy horses for those with experience
- 11-12 Practical flint walling
- 12 Building stone in the Weald and Downland region
- 13 Design and specification of leadwork
- 14 Practical leadwork
- 14 Small farm animals: poultry handling
- 20 WEA creative writing day
- 21 Traditional timber-frame construction
- 25-29 Timber framing from scratch
- 29 A dowsing experience

MAY

- Dtba Advanced gauged brickwork
- 5, 12, 19 & 26 Letters in stone

- 5 Small farm animals for smallholders
- 7 Corn dolly workshop
- 9-11 Leaded-light stained glass workshop
- 13 Oak and Iron
- 13 Tree identification walk
- 14 Dawn walk with breakfast
- 14 Charcoal burning
- 14 Pole lathe turning
- 14-15 Willow for the garden
- 16 Joinery by hand: sash windows
- 16-20 Intermediate timber framing – roofs
- 18 A home-owner's day
- 18 The 16th century dairy
- 19-22 MSc Unit 4
- 21 Bronze flat axe workshop
- 22 Green stone axe workshop
- 24 Timber repair workshop
- 25 Strengthening timber with steel
- 26 Repair of timber-framed buildings
- 27 The cottage herb garden for beginners

JUNE

- Dtba Jointing and pointing of historic brickwork
- Dtba Lime mortars for brickwork
- Dtba Nightjar walk
- 7 Felting for fun
- 8 Cob walling – history, theory and practice
- 9 Potage to peacock
- 10 Bees for beginners
- 10 Conservation of historic ironwork
- 11 Felt bag workshop
- 12 Plaiting and show preparation
- 13 Flint buildings, their history, repair and restoration
- 15 Timber frame repairs and reconstructions
- 16 Timber: Identification of species
- 21 Aromatic waters
- 22-24 Three day advanced leadwork course
- 24 Bees for beginners
- 25 Bronze rapier workshop
- 26 Gold sun disc workshop
- 27-28 Traditional lime plasters & renders

Course enquiries should be made to **Diana Rowsell, Head of Learning**, on 01243 811464, fax 01243 811475, e-mail courses@wealddown.co.uk. Website www.wealddown.co.uk

Course news in brief

■ The Museum continues to enlarge and enrich the range of courses we offer in building conservation, building crafts and rural trades and crafts. In the new programmes there are repeats and variations on many popular topics and the introduction of some new themes. Following on the success of the Sustainability events we are launching a series of four-day schools which focus on ways in which we can have a greener

lifestyle by incorporating quite simple things in our homes and gardens. These are equally suitable for enthusiasts and professionals.

■ Participation in one of our day schools makes an excellent and unusual Christmas present for family and friends. You may know someone with a particular interest in one or more of the many subjects we offer, who would thoroughly enjoy finding out more about it under the tuition of distinguished



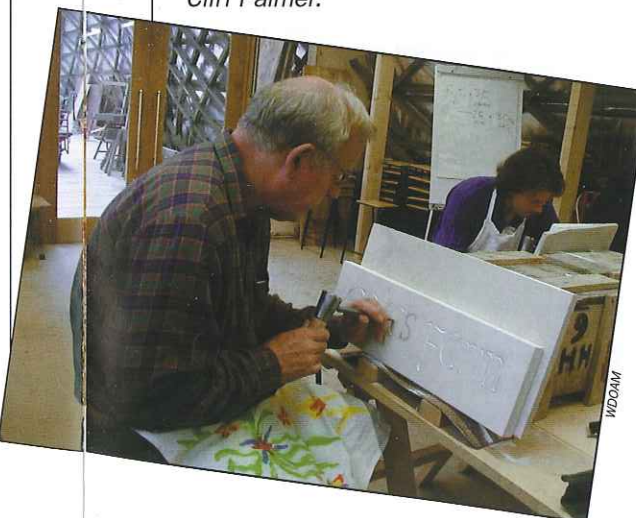
Joe Thompson, left, teaching students on the Museum's flagship course, Timber framing from scratch, which takes place in the Downland Gridshell and involves students constructing a small timber-framed building starting with the raw oak.

people in their fields. Or, to put you in festive mood, why not come on one of our Christmas courses yourself: *Carve a spoon for Christmas*, *Christmas stained glass decorations*, *Christmas herbal gifts and decorations* or *Christmas rag-rugging*.

■ In the coming months there will be several new courses in the historic building conservation programme. Historic furniture specialist Victor Chinnery has agreed to lead three days which will give a fascinating insight into the furniture-making trades, particularly oak furniture. His third day focuses on the replication of interiors in museums and historic houses and we expect this to be of great interest to staff and volunteers from other museums and houses open to the public.

■ Dr Ray Riley, an authority in industrial archaeology, will be taking a day school exploring industrial buildings of the 18th and 19th centuries, entitled *Mills, furnaces, breweries and bridges*. The day will include a close look at some of the Museum's industrial exhibit buildings, such as

Staff and volunteers attend courses too! Here, Ken Rowsell, one of our duty wardens, takes part in the new Letters in Stone course, tutored by Cliff Palmer.



Lurgashall Mill and the carpenter's workshop from Windlesham. Another new course, *Length & breadth: specialist tools for measuring*, will take place in February, led by Jane Rees. It will look at the way in which different trades developed their own tools as a result of their need to measure in specific ways.

■ In 2005, our most popular course, *Timber framing from scratch*, and its follow-on course *Intermediate timber framing*, will take on a new look. Course leader Joe Thompson will now run four *Timber framing from scratch* courses per year, each five days in length, where the posts, cills, plates and tie beams of a 10 foot square timber frame will be made. The two *Intermediate timber framing* courses will each concentrate on a different aspect of framing; roofs in May and walls in November. This will provide a very structured approach, allowing students to progress and gain experience as well as providing one completed frame per year, along with three 'principal timbers only' frames.

■ For people who would like to gain more confidence in using woodworking tools, Nick Parker will be teaching the new *Basic woodworking tool skills* workshop in March. This will be of special benefit if you are planning to book on Nick's *Make a bentwood chair* course.

■ Other new courses in the traditional rural trades and crafts programme include a leather-working workshop in January, where leather-worker Emma O'Driscoll will teach participants how to use the tools of the trade to make their own horse brass holder to adorn their heavy horse or their mantelpiece. In February, local textile worker Hilary Charlesworth will be running a tapestry weaving workshop, where a frame loom will be used to produce a sampler using a variety of traditional and more modern techniques. In March, Deborah Albon will be adding to her range of willow workshops by leading a living willow workshop. Students will be able to take home and plant in their garden the unique living willow structure they have made, and watch it grow.

■ A new course for 17 November is *How to be a house detective*, with Penny Olsen, a building historian, who has worked on structures from urban terraces to moated manor houses. The course will give participants an opportunity to trace the history of their home, by looking at the house itself, visiting the county record office and by working with maps and archive materials.

MSc course re-validated

The MSc in Conservation of Timber Buildings has been successfully piloted through its re-validation by Bournemouth University this summer, and the course is now set to run for another six years. It was originally validated in 1994, and re-validated in 1998.

Diana Rowsell, Head of Learning, and Museum Director Richard Harris put in a great deal of work to meet the demands of the University's Academic Development and Quality Department, and the Review Panel met on 5/6 July at the Museum.

The conclusions of the panel, which included three professors, was that the programme should continue, subject to review in 2009/10, and they specifically commended the following points –

- The innovative and unique programme meets a clear need and attracts highly motivated and enthusiastic students
- Excellent timber building resources are available on site
- The successful blend of practical and theoretical aspects of the discipline within the programme curriculum and delivery
- The enthusiasm and commitment of the teaching team to the programme
- The strong cohort identity and support fostered on the programme

We have had very strong demand for places on the course this autumn, with 25 applicants, and are very much looking forward to running the course again.

Golden wedding

Two of our longest-standing volunteers, Peter and Ruth Stock celebrated their Golden Wedding with a party in the Gridshell in June.

Until their recent retirement the Stocks were two of the most experienced members of the Museum's team of millers, who run the mill every day to produce stoneground wholemeal flour.



FRIENDS NEWS

Friends 2005 Spring Tour to the Bath/Bristol area, 21-26 April

- The 2005 Friends Spring Tour will be based on the Bath/Bristol area and will take in a wealth of historic attractions.

The tour leaves Singleton by coach to Wilton where we will stop for the Wilton Experience, beginning with a tour of the Wilton Carpet Factory. Since 1835, luxurious Axminster and Wilton carpets have been produced here and we will be able to see how they are made. Then we will go to Wilton House, where we will have lunch. Once a 9th century nunnery, since Tudor times this has been the home of the successive Earls of Pembroke. It includes magnificent state rooms designed by Inigo Jones, including the famous Double Cube room; paintings by Van Dyck, Reynolds, Bruegel, Lely and Rubens, and the gardens, the Old Riding School, a recreated Tudor kitchen and Victorian laundry.

In the afternoon we travel on to our hotel, the Grange, a Ramada Jarvis hotel at Winterbourne, near Bristol. The hotel is an elegant country house located in 18 acres of attractive grounds. Each of the bedrooms has an en-suite bathroom and the usual facilities and we will be able to use the Poolside Leisure Club, which includes indoor pool, sauna, solarium, spa bath and exercise equipment.

On Friday, we will visit Bath, beginning with familiarisation of the City with a guided tour by Blue Badge guides. The rest of the day will be spent individually, exploring the many attractions that Bath has to offer; the choice will be yours.

On Saturday we will visit Berkeley Castle, the oldest castle in Britain and the home of the Berkeley family for nearly 900 years. We will have guided tours round the castle, after which there will be plenty of time to stroll round the garden, visit the Butterfly House and get some lunch in the tea rooms. The energetic may even pay a visit to the Jenner Museum in the adjacent village. We will leave in the early afternoon for tea with the birds at Slimbridge, the Wild Fowl and Wetlands Reserve founded by Sir Peter Scott in 1946.

On Sunday we will return to the outskirts of Bath to visit the American Museum, a spectacular series of diverse and authentically furnished rooms, tracing the American way of life from Colonial times to the mid 19th century and including the finest collection of American Quilts outside that country. We will have guided tours, but there will be the opportunity to revisit the rooms afterwards and to have lunch before moving on to The Peto Garden at Iford Manor. This is a Grade 1 Italian-style garden world famous for its tranquil beauty and was the home of architect and landscape gardener, Harold Peto. This unique and

romantic hillside garden is characterised by steps, terraces, sculpture and magnificent views. As teas are not served at the gardens until May, on the way back to the hotel, we will call into Stowford Manor Farm for a cream tea.

Monday sees us in the dock area of Bristol to visit the SS Great Britain, the Matthew and the Maritime Heritage Centre before embarking on the Flower of Bristol for a cruise around the docks area, with a buffet lunch on board. In the afternoon we will have the opportunity to visit the Red Lodge and the Georgian House, which are close to the dock area.

On our way home on Tuesday, we shall be spending some time at Stourhead, the celebrated landscaped garden designed by Henry Hoare II and laid out between 1741 and 1789. Built in the 1720's the Palladian mansion, with magnificent interior, was the home to the Hoare Family, owners of Britain's only independent private bank surviving to the present. The house now belongs to the NT. There will be plenty of time to stroll round the grounds before leaving about 4.00pm for home.

The cost will be £365 per person, to include coach travel, bed, breakfast and evening meal, entrances and tours, cream tea on Sunday, buffet lunch on Monday and coach driver's gratuity.

It does not cover insurance (participants are advised to take out your own), lunches other than on Monday, drinks and other incidental expenses at the hotel.

For an application form, please ring Michael Piggott on 01730 813126 (leaving your name and address on the answerphone, if I am not in) and a form will be sent by return. As usual, there are a limited number of single rooms available.



Friends Norfolk tour

Forty-eight of us left the Museum in April for the annual tour, this time to Norfolk. In the capable hands of Richardson coach driver Michael Harfield, we arrived at Audley End, Hertfordshire for lunch and a very interesting guided tour of the house. It was a bright, sunny day and we enjoyed the Capability Brown parkland before continuing our journey to Norwich. Yellow cowslips covered the roadside banks on our approach to the city, where the football club has adopted yellow and green as its colours.

In the morning we met near the Cathedral and in three groups enjoyed Blue Badge guided tours, eventually meeting up again at the Forum, which includes *Origins*, an interactive journey through East Anglian history. Sunday found us at Somerleyton Hall and Gardens, near Lowestoft, home of Lord and Lady Somerleyton, whose family founded Crossley carpets. The gardens were full of interest including a yew hedge maze, where some members of our party endeavoured to get lost.

On Monday we visited the historic South Quay at Great Yarmouth, and explored the unique houses and layout of the early town. Lunch was taken at the Bell Inn, near St Olaves, reputed to be the oldest inn in Norfolk, and then we travelled to the Otter Trust at Earham, a delightful place to spend a warm, sunny afternoon.

Tuesday took us to the Roots of Gressenhall, the Museum of Norfolk Rural Life, near Dereham. Housed in a 19th century workhouse, it explores the lives of the people who lived there and in rural Norfolk, while across the road was a pre-war working farm, where we spent an enjoyable and evocative afternoon.

After five days of glorious sunshine we left Norwich in the rain but were fortunate to arrive at the Suffolk village of Lavenham in the dry. We were made welcome by the Guildhall's National Trust property manager who provided us with a brief history of the town, before a guided walk of the streets, which proved particularly interesting.

Before we departed we took the opportunity to express our appreciation to our driver, and to Jean and Michael Piggott for their hard work in organising such an enjoyable and varied tour. A special presentation was made to Jean in acknowledgement of her 10 years organising the Friends tours.

Eileen Webb

Left, Friends gather in the historic streets of Norwich during a Blue Badge tour.

Museum becomes set for plague play

The Museum's working horse and cart took part in the play *The Roses of Eyam*, performed at the Museum during the summer and involving a large cast of local people. Produced by Crooked Rose Theatre Productions, the play centred on the dramatic and true story of a village infected with the plague in Derbyshire in 1665. It

chronicles the way in which two clerics forge an alliance to combat the terrifying disease which ravages the population and was brought there in cloth transported by horse and cart from London. The play moved around the Museum, making use of different locations.



Karen Bennett Photography. Photography for outdoor and indoor events. 01730 815199. karenbennett68@aol.com

- **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. Tel: 01243 811893. Email: friends@wealddown.co.uk. When phoning, you may need to leave a message, as the office is not staffed full-time, and we will call you back as soon as possible. For information about Friends' events (with the exception of the 2005 Spring Tour for which the contact is Michael Piggott - (see opposite page) please contact Sarah Casdagli, Little Yarne, Singleton, Chichester, West Sussex PO18 0HA. Tel: 01243 811726.

- **Honorary membership.** At the Friends AGM in April, Jean and Michael Piggott, Joan and Godfrey Shirt and John Herniman were elected honorary members of the Friends for their outstanding contributions to the Museum and to the Friends over many years. Congratulations to them all.

Sarah Casdagli was appointed honorary secretary to succeed Jean Piggott, who has retired from this post after 10 years of excellent service but was elected, together with Diana Zeuner, to serve on the committee.

- **Events in 2005 - can you help?**

The Friends committee is currently planning fundraising and social events for 2005. If you have ideas or suggestions, or feel you can help in any way with, for example, organisation, catering or fundraising support, please contact Sarah Casdagli on 01243 811726.



Surprise someone special this Christmas

Give a year's membership of the Friends of the Museum

Share with your family and friends the pleasure that membership brings through visiting the Museum and the satisfaction in contributing to the development of this unique heritage project.

Write to, phone, or email the Friends office for a gift membership application form. The completed application should be returned to us by 1 December.

Annual subscriptions are:
Family (a household of 2 adults and their dependent children, or grandchildren) £45, Adult £18, Joint adults £36, Senior citizen (60) £15, Joint seniors £30, Child/Student £9.

Friends of the Weald & Downland Open Air Museum
Singleton, Chichester, West Sussex PO18 0EU
Phone: (01243) 811893 Email: friends@wealddown.co.uk

Volunteer Support Project

As reported in the spring magazine, the Museum received a major grant from the Designation Challenge Fund to produce a series of videos to support the work of our volunteers and staff in talking to our visitors.



Volunteers Jackie Murray and David Hinge taking advantage of the books and DVDs available in the new Volunteers Resource Room.

As planned, 24 titles were produced, including seven lengthy archive interviews with people who have made a significant contribution to the Museum's long-term development.

The videos can be borrowed as VHS tapes, or watched on a television in the newly-established Resource Room in the lower room of the building from Reigate, where there is also a lending library of books and shelves of other background papers on relevant subjects that have been prepared by Jon Roberts and Lara Band.

Work is continuing on further additions to these resources. We have nearly completed a video about *Talking to the Public*, using the experiences of our volunteers themselves, and hope to produce further material over the winter.

Take a look 'under the surface'

History enthusiasts will again have the chance to discover more about the lives of our rural ancestors at the Museum with the special interest *Under the Surface* tours every Wednesday throughout the winter. They will be led by Museum director, Richard Harris, who is one of the country's leading authorities on timber-framed buildings.

The tour offers an insight into the construction traditions and techniques of buildings in the Museum's collection dating from the late 17th to the late 19th centuries. A new element this year is the chance to find out more about domestic interiors, including furniture, furnishings and household utensils. Participants will enjoy a delicious and authentic Tudor lunch prepared by the costumed cook in the working Tudor kitchen.

The final part of the tour brings visitors into the 21st century with a visit to the spectacular Downland Gridshell, home to the Museum's conservation centre and rural artefacts collection. Visitors will find out about the new design and construction processes that have established the gridshell as a



method of construction for covering large open spaces, and see the Museum's extensive collection of rural artefacts.

The remainder of the day can be used exploring the Museum's other exhibits, including Bayleaf medieval farmstead, the working 17th century watermill and the Victorian schoolroom.

Tours run every Wednesday from 3 November until 23 February 2005 (excluding 29 December and 16 February). Places cost £25 and should be booked in advance with the Museum office on 01243 811363 or office@wealddown.co.uk.

Enjoy winter at the Museum

Winter days are special in the Museum's downland setting, with warming fires providing a welcome in some of the 46 historic homes and workplaces which form the Museum's main exhibits.

The annual Tree Dressing event takes place on 5 December from 12.30pm 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 night light), watch morris dancing, listen to story telling, plays and songs and finally join in with the

lantern procession and dance around the tree as it is dressed. Mulled wine, mince pies and roasted chestnuts will be served.

The Museum's annual carol-singing in North Cray hall house takes place on 13 December at 7.00pm. In Christmas week (26 December – 3 January) come and enjoy a Tudor Christmas in Bayleaf medieval farmhouse and Winkhurst Tudor kitchen: both will be decorated as they would have been 400 years ago and visitors can enjoy sweetmeats and seasonal drinks.

This year's new Museum Christmas card features Walderton House in the snow, taken by Paul Maxted, and is available in five-card packs, both with Christmas greetings and blank. They cost £2.49 per pack and are available from the Museum shop or by post.

Diary 2004-2005

Winter opening –

Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays –
1 November 2004 – 28 February 2005
(10.30am – 4.00pm)

Wednesdays – Special Interest tours of the Museum for pre-booked parties

Christmas and New Year –

26 December 2004 – 3 January 2005
(10.30am – 4.00pm)

Schools half-term – 12 – 20 February 2005
(10.30am – 4.00pm)

2005 season – Daily 1 March – 31 October
(10.30am – 6.00pm)

Daily tours of the Downland Gridshell are available at 1.30pm when the Museum is open. *Special group visits by appointment.*

DECEMBER 2004

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

26 Dec- **Tastes of a Tudor Christmas** – enjoy festive sweetmeats and drink in Bayleaf farmhouse and Winkhurst kitchen

FEBRUARY 2005

12-20 **Half-term activities** – with a Country Crafts theme

MARCH 2005

6 **Mothering Sunday & Community Event** – free entry and daffodils for mothers, plus stalls from local organisations

25-28 **Easter Festival**

MAY 2005

1-2 **Food Fair** – great opportunity to buy regional food directly from the producers: in association with A Taste of Sussex

15 **Sustainability Event**, centred on the Downland Gridshell

28 May- **Half-term activities** – with The

4 June Natural World as the theme

JUNE 2005

5 **Heavy Horse Spectacular**

19 **Father's Day** – try your hand at traditional countryside activities

JULY 2005

3 **Early Music Afternoon**

24 **Rare and Traditional Breeds Show**

ADMISSION CHARGES until 1 March 2005
Adults £7.50 Over 60's £6.50 Children
£4.00 Family Ticket, 2 adults & up to 3 children £20.00. Under 5's free

Photographs in this issue are by Diana Zeuner, Editor, unless otherwise stated.



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The Weald & Downland Open Air Museum Magazine is mailed bi-annually to 8,000 people and organisations with an interest in historic buildings and countryside skills.

Promote your product or service in both Spring and Autumn issue magazines 2005. To advertise contact Julie Aalen at the Museum office.

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