



Museum News

Steyning Museum Newsletter

December 2010

Museum Diary

- 08.01.11 Stewards & Helpers Social
Penfold Hall
11.30am
- 05.03.11 Benefit Concert
St. Andrew & St Cuthman
Church
2.00pm followed by
Tea at the Steyning Centre
- 26.03.11 Annual General Meeting
Penfold Hall
2.30 pm
- 09.04.11 Spring Coffee Morning
Penfold Hall
10.30 - 12.00
- 13.08.11 Garden Coffee Morning
Jarvis, Jarvis Lane
10.30-12.00
- 29.10.11 Autumn Coffee Morning
Penfold Hall
10.30 - 12.00

200 Club

October Draw:

- 1st prize = Gillian Downham (£35)
- 2nd prize = Vivien Lythe (£25)
- 3rd prize = Norman Checkley (£15)

November Draw:

- 1st prize = Annette Taylor (£35)
- 2nd prize = Brian West (£25)
- 3rd prize = Pat Blackie (£15)

The Big Draw

On Saturday 9th October 2010, the museum opened its doors to the fifth Big Draw art workshop. Event organiser, Jacquie Buttriss, has provided the following account for us.

The theme for the Big Draw this year was 'Farming through the ages'. The aims of this annual event are to encourage Steyning residents of all ages to:

- o visit and enjoy Steyning Museum,
- o explore, understand and interpret Steyning artefacts,

- o create a joint artwork for display in the museum,
- o have fun

From the outset, members of our community, many of them in family groups, came to the museum, sketched from what they observed there and brought their sketches through to the Penfold Hall, where a wide variety of drawing, painting and collage materials were set out for them to choose from and use. People of all ages, from one to ninety-one enjoyed having a go at a piece of artwork that could be cut out and incorporated in the joint mural, now on display in the foyer of the museum. As they sat around their tables, painting or pasting, they talked amicably with one another and made new friends. The aims of the Big Draw were successfully met and the whole day had a very positive feel as some of the participants, both adults and children, explained:

"Very therapeutic ... It's the chance to get so many materials to make things ... We've been to the Big Draw every year ... you can do anything you like with any resources you like ... we like having different themes ... It's a good chance for people to get to know the Museum and it makes you look at things more closely so that you can paint them ... It's a great way to spend the afternoon ... It's good to see all the different age-groups working together ... " and from a particularly elderly Yorkshire visitor, as he left: *"That's made me forget all my aches and pains!"*

The organiser of this event would like to thank all those who helped to make the day such a success. In particular she would like to thank our local artist Katie Sleight for her generous expertise and support in preparing and co-leading the day and mounting the community artwork. Others whose help and support were greatly appreciated include Joan Denwood, Gill Kille, Chris Tod, Liane Watt and the stewards who were on duty throughout that

day, one of whom kindly stayed on well beyond her time to help in the Hall. We also thank Tony Kettelman for his striking posters and Jill Kemp for handling the publicity (and taking round all the posters) so efficiently.

Last, but not least, we record our appreciation of the Co-operative Community Fund, whose grant enabled us to provide such a great array of art resources and met all the other costs involved.

Events

I reported in the October newsletter that we had a very successful response to our recruiting stall at the September Farmers' Market. On that day we signed up 77 new Friends whose membership subscriptions will help with the task of boosting our income as a safeguard against possible financial difficulties ahead in an age of cuts.

The Social Events sub-committee under the direction of Gill Kille have had further success with other events as Gill reports below.

Autumn Coffee Morning

We had a lovely, bright sunny day on 30th October and it was one of our most successful coffee mornings ever. 74 people came along to the Penfold Hall and were happy to chat with friends, old and new, whilst enjoying the refreshments, etc. All the usual stalls did exceptionally well, helped in no small way by several jars of some excellent marmalade kindly donated by one of the Friends. The raffle also did very well and overall we made a net profit, after expenses, of £449.

Our next coffee morning will be our Spring one on Saturday 9th April 2011 when we look forward to another successful and enjoyable coffee morning. Please come and join us.

The Big Autumn Clothes Swap: Friday 12th November 2010

This was mainly a fund-raising event for the Museum and a completely new venture, which turned out to be very successful and attracted approximately 50 people, including a few Friends of the Museum. We may even have attracted a few more people if the evening had not been rather drizzly and wet. Doors opened at 6.30 pm at the Penfold Hall and at 9pm on the dot we were able to close up the Hall. There was a raffle with some super prizes donated by local shops in Steyning which helped boost the takings. The event would not

have run so well without the help of several helpers, including some Friends of the Museum who deserve a big 'Thank you' and others who were all very efficient, helpful, worked so well as a team and whom I have already thanked.

There was a very happy atmosphere throughout the evening and when asked, many people said they had thoroughly enjoyed the event and would we do another one!! A lot of clothes just disappeared off the rails and although there were some clothes left at the end to give to our local St Barnabas charity shop, a lot must have found new owners! We made an overall net profit of £256.48 after expenses. So, I think we may well do another clothes swap event sometime!

Forthcoming Benefit Concert

As promised in the last Newsletter, here are the final details about the concert to be held at St Andrew & St Cuthman Church on Saturday 5th March 2011 at 2 p.m. The title is '*Feel the Spirit*' and features both the Kaleidoscope Singers and Cantatrice Voices, directed by Zoe Peate and accompanied by Laura Skuce. The concert will be followed by complimentary tea and cake at The Steyning Centre. Tickets are £7.50 adults, £3 for under 18's and will be available from 20th January 2011 at Steyning Museum and from the Steyning Bookshop in the High Street, Steyning.

The concert promises to be a truly uplifting event to celebrate Spring and warmer days ahead, so please do try to support it and make a note in your diaries.

Opening Times

The Management Committee have been looking at the figures for visitor numbers, and it looks as though we should attract sufficient numbers to make it worthwhile to open all day on Saturdays. As from 8th January, therefore, the Museum will be open all day on Saturday from 10.30am until 4.00pm. Sarah Leigh has already drawn up a list of stewards who are willing to be on duty at Saturday lunchtime and will inform all stewards about arrangements for the key.

End Piece

This month, Janet Pennington concludes her piece on the George Inn.

Tony Kettelman (Editor)

Part 1 of this article ended with the *George* (not at 138 High Street, but an earlier *George* to the west of the present Post Office), formerly the *Swan*, sliding down the social hierarchy of drinking establishments in Steyning. From having been one of the prime town inns, situated on the north side of the market area, it was poised for another name change in the first quarter of the 18th century, this time to the *King's Head*. A William Burnett had been running the *White Horse* inn, dying in 1690 and by 1699, Mary Burnett, probably his widow, was running the *George* on the other side of the High Street. She was there when depositions of witnesses in a law suit were taken and in 1714 when the Adur River Commissioners met. Mary died in 1720 and in 1726 the building was 'late an Inne known by the name of *George*'.¹

A probate inventory survives for all the goods and chattels that belonged to Mary Burnett at the time of her death.² Two neighbours listed and valued all her movable belongings on 25th July 1720, a legal necessity to prove the will. The inn had four bedchambers, a kitchen, a shop and a hall, the latter a room rather than an entrance hall. There was a cellar, with a room over it, a garret (attic room), with a stable and brewhouse in the yard. The kitchen-cum-drinking room contained a large table, a dresser, a cupboard, four joined stools (made by a joiner), a settle, two benches, six bullrush-bottomed chairs and shelves for the pewterware. The hearth had three spits, ten iron skewers, a toasting iron, various fireirons, a frying pan, a basting ladle and an egg spoon, the latter being a much larger spoon than we use today. There was a jack with its weight and lines for turning the spits, together with two brass chafing dishes for keeping food hot, and an iron kettle. A kettle was an open pan for boiling water, not a tea kettle, which would have been described as such had Mary owned one. There was a cruet and a pair of tobacco tongs, the latter for taking a glowing ember from the fire to light the tobacco in a clay pipe. A well bucket and rope were listed too.

The lighting equipment was gathered in the kitchen for the appraisers to list, comprising 17 iron candlesticks, with one of pewter and two of brass. There was also a lantern for trips to the inn yard. The drinking equipment was divided into two sections, one for beer and the other for wine. Mary had 14 beer glasses, five pewter quatern pots (a fourth part of a pint) and 11 pewter pint pots. There were two pewter basins and a punch bowl. For the wine drinkers there were two pewter wine quarts (each with a two pint capacity), five pewter wine pints, two pewter half pints, two quaterns and a half quatern. She also had a coffee pot, seven knives and a dozen forks. Travellers usually carried their own knives and spoons. There were plenty of pewter plates and dishes, together with a cheese plate, a pie plate and two salts (dishes holding salt). She had 43 table napkins and 11 tablecloths, revealing that catering was important at the inn, especially on market days.

¹ West Sussex Record Office (hereafter WSRO) EP1/29/183/146 – probate inventory for William Burnett, 4th November 1690; E. W. Cox & F. Duke, *In and Around Steyning: A Historical Survey Made in 1953*, (1954), 94. Unfortunately there are no footnotes to this splendid book, and I have not been able to find the original documents to which they refer here.

² WSRO, EP1/29/183/199 – probate inventory for Mary Burnett, 25th July 1720; much of the following comes from this document, and also J. Pennington & J. Sleight, 'Steyning Town and Its Trades 1559-1787', *Sussex Archaeological Collections*, 130, (1992), 179-180.



Left: 'Copy of Map used in obtaining the Act for the turnpike Road from Horsham to Steyning in 1763'. Note that Church Street has been omitted. Right: Close-up of 1763 map, showing the Market House (demolished in 1771) in the middle of the High Street. The *George* inn was in the area above the 'n' and 'g' of 'Steyning Town'. WSRO, Add. MS, 37,521.

Much of the eating and drinking would have taken place in Mary Burnett's first floor 'Great Chamber' which doubled as a meeting room with its leather, bullrush-bottomed, ash and alder chairs, together with various tables. The inn also served coffee, which would have been an expensive and fashionable drink at this time. The cellar contents at Mary's death in 1720 are typical of many country town inns in the early-18th century. She had five hogsheads (51-54 gallons of beer in each), eight half hogsheads, three keelers (shallow tubs), four stallages (stands for casks), three butts (the equivalent of two hogsheads each), three pipes (usually for wine, casks of c.105 gallons each), seven firkins (a cask of nine gallon capacity), two powdering tubs for salting meat and nine dozen bottles for decanting the wine. No spirits are mentioned, but the punch bowl hints at them. The inn had a brewhouse containing two furnaces, a mash tub, a malt stirrer, coolers, sieves and buckets.

The bedchambers could sleep 16 people or more and her inn servants probably slept in the garret. There were feather beds with plenty of sheets, blankets and coverlets, looking glasses and window curtains. The shop is a bit of a mystery, containing a bed, table, bench, flasket (a long shallow basket) and window curtains, so was doubling as an extra guest chamber, though what business, if any, was carried on there is unknown. Often innkeepers had another occupation, butchery, baking and barbering being some of the linked trades. The stable at the rear of the inn contained horse cloths, three halters, a curry comb and other related equipment, but also two bowls and nine pins, as well as six pairs of slippers. So 'skittles' would have been played, and the slippers were for riders to change into, taking off their muddy boots as they entered the inn.

In 1722, two years after Mary's death, the *George* was sold to Thomas Swain, tallow chandler, for £250 (about £20,000 in modern terms) with its '...barns, stables, outhouses, orchards, gardens and 2 closes of meadow or pasture land with 3 acres in Steyning ...[now] in occupation of William Burnett and Edward Young or their assigns.'³ William Burnett was probably the son of the deceased William and Mary,

³ WSRO, Wiston MSS, 2485, 6632.

and it sounds as though the building was in two tenancies. Swain was soon in trouble, owing at least two year's arrears of rent to the Duke of Norfolk, who owned the inn until 1869.⁴ Swain took out a mortgage of £100 from a Brighton mariner in 1733, dying two years later. Thomas Swain junior borrowed more money and finally sold off the three acres of land, Highland Crofts, in 1749 for £120 (about £10,000 today) and in 1750 assigned the mortgage to a Hailsham yeoman. In 1752 '...the *George* inn, now the *King's Head*...' was sold to James Tilly, another tallow chandler, for £99 12s. 6d. (about £8,500 today), at a considerable loss. So between Mary Burnett's death in 1720, and James Tilly's purchase of 1752, the inn's name had been changed from the *George* to the *King's Head*. A 'new' *George* then presumably opened up in the medieval building at 138 High Street and readers may remember it closing in 1958.⁵

The last known reference to the *King's Head* on the 46-50 High Street site is in 1805. 'Tenement formerly called the *George* inn, afterwards the *King's Head* inn, with all stables, outhouses, buildings, etc. belonging, purchased by James Tilly, late father of John Tilly, a grocer, from Thomas Swain'.⁶ The selling and mortgaging of the building between 1722 and 1752 is complicated to say the least, and anyone interested can read the details at Steyning Library or Museum.⁷ The building eventually became three separate shops and dwellings, no doubt connected with the corrupt voting practices in the town. Steyning was a 'Rotten Borough', one of the many English towns that returned Members of Parliament on a small number of votes. Steyning usually returned two MPs on less than 100 votes.⁸ Amongst other criteria, voters had to live in houses built 'on old foundations' and many of the older houses in the town were gradually split up. This was known as 'faggot voting', each dwelling supposedly containing a chimney with an oven, which was frequently not the case. The main property owners in the town, the Dukes of Norfolk of Arundel, the Honeywoods of Horsham and the Gorings of Wiston, used this disgracefully corrupt system to return their own chosen MPs, at least until the Reform Act of 1832. Split buildings became more valuable to their owners as voting assets. Often just one part of a building continued trading as an inn, which is what probably happened to the old inn in which the *King's Head* became just one of the several tenancies.⁹

It is difficult now to imagine an imposing timber-framed inn next to the Post Office, with the market house outside in the middle of the street causing problems for horse-drawn traffic coming through the town. The former *Swan/George* would have

⁴ Many properties were copyhold, which meant that though owned by the lord of the manor, tenants paid an annual rental to him, and a fee when transferring copyright ownership. It is a rather complicated subject, abolished by law in 1926. WSRO, Wiston MSS 2764-2825, Henry the 15th Duke of Norfolk sold his Steyning properties to the Revd John Goring of Wiston in 1869.

⁵ WSRO, Wiston MSS, 2688-2691; J. M. L. Booker (ed.), *The Wiston Archives: A Catalogue*, (1975), 179.

⁶ WSRO, Wiston MS 6649-6650.

⁷ S. Freeth, (ed.), *The Wiston Archives: A Catalogue*, Vol. 2, (1982), 41.

⁸ W. A. Barron, 'Sidelights on Election Methods in the Eighteenth Century', *Sussex County Magazine*, Vol. 24, no.3, (March 1950), 78.

⁹ As far as I am aware, the name *King's Head* was given to the building on the north side of the 'new' *George* inn at 138 High Street in the late-20th century, the *George* and the *King's Head* names having been seen in the Wiston Archive Catalogues. It was not realised that these names had formerly belonged to buildings at the other end of the High Street. Any information about the 'new' *George* history would be most welcome. A 19th-century drawing (which should have been dated c.1840, not c.1820, see Part 1) shows the inn's entrance in the later addition of the *George*.

originally taken up the whole range of 46-50 High Street, with an entrance somewhere into the stable yard.

The shopkeepers kindly gave me access to their buildings during the summer of 2010. I was able to look into the roof of Morgans (no.48), and to go into the adjoining cellars of Morgans and Steyning Pet Shop (no. 46) which are well-built in brick, with a big relieving arch under no. 46 that would have made good storage for wine bottles. These were usually stacked on their sides one above the other. The Sussex Produce Company (no. 50) does not have roof access, neither does the Pet Shop, though timber-framing can be seen on the ground floor of the latter. The Charity Shop (no. 52) has plenty of timber-framing, though it was not possible to access the first floor or roof.



52 High Street on the left of the former George inn, with an entrance to the former inn yard

The Charity Shop was probably part of a medieval house that extended over the area of what is now Bunce's (no. 54), and was later joined to no. 50. When the timber-framing is analysed, the shop at 52 High Street stands at an angle to the inn range, which has been much rebuilt. Part of the roof of no. 48 has a ridge board, showing that it was built in the mid-18th century or later, though many of the re-used roof timbers are much older. The Laceys considered that the 'three shops...have been reconstructed from an earlier 3-bay building by including the space next Aubreys [now the Charity Shop] even though the two buildings were not in line. The original structure remains unknown'.¹⁰ And so it does. While the documents speak volumes, the buildings remain silent. Interestingly all four shops are still in one ownership.

There is a timber-framed section at the back of no. 48 that must be part of the 17th century inn, and an even older section remains in the former inn yard, which has not yet been examined. So, hopefully there is more to discover. I could ask myself which part or parts of the present building's footprint might have been the inn before and after it had been split up. It is hard to say, and I think all one can do is to continue to shop in all parts of the former *Swan/George/King's Head* and listen out for the clink of pewter pint pots.

Again with many thanks to:- Mrs. Kate Barton, Steyning Pet Shop, 46 High Street; Chris Morgan, Fishmonger, 48 High Street; Nick Hempleman, The Sussex Produce Company, 50 High Street (and Ben who carried the ladder); Rachel, the relief manageress of Cancer Research UK Charity Shop at 52 High Street.

¹⁰ H. M. Lacey & U. E. Lacey, *The Timber-Framed Buildings of Steyning*, (1975 reprint), 135