



Museum News

Steyning Museum Newsletter

February 2012

Museum Diary

- 25.02.12 Steyning Showcase
Steyning Centre
10.00 - 4.00
- 24.03.12 Annual General Meeting
Penfold Hall
2.30 pm
- 28 .04.12 Spring Coffee Morning
Penfold Hall
10.30 - 12.00
- 29.09.12 Clothes Swap Event
Penfold Hall
2 - 5 pm
- 27.10.12 Autumn Coffee Morning
Penfold Hall
10.30 - 12.00

(N.B. Not as in the last newsletter)

200 Club

December Draw:

- 1st prize = David Dryden (£35)
2nd prize = Joan Drew (£25)
3rd prize = Jacquie Buttriss (£15)

January Bumper Draw:

- 1st prize = Jean Meanley (£100)
2nd prize = Dawn Newman-Shelley (£50)
3rd prize = Mavis Macdougall (£25))

Steyning Showcase

On 25th February the Museum will again mount a display at the Steyning Centre as part of the Steyning Showcase. Our purpose will be to encourage people to visit the Museum. The event starts at 10.00am, so if you are there come and say hello and tell other people what a fine experience they will have on a visit.

Garden Coffee Morning

As it is always so popular, we will be holding another summer Garden Coffee Morning in August. The exact date has still to be settled, so we will keep you posted. Sarah Leigh has again kindly offered to open her garden for us.

Ideas for Fund Raising

From Gill Kille

We included in the last newsletter an appeal for any ideas for a fund raising event along with an afternoon

tea. We have not received many ideas yet, so please do have another think. You can leave a note in the Museum for the attention of Gillian Kille, Social Sub-committee, or, send an email to gill.k@mapletreesolutions.com

Solar Panels

In October last, the Museum had an array of solar PV panels installed on the south-facing roof of its building. As the Museum is self-funding and does not charge for admission, the installation is an attempt to offset the ever increasing cost of heating and lighting.

It is hoped that the cost of the installation will be recovered within 10 years by benefiting from the Government's Feed in Tariff, which will reimburse us for every unit of electricity generated. If we don't use all of the power produced by the PV panels, we can sell it back to the grid and earn even more. The scheme is guaranteed for 25 years, index-linked and tax free.

Steyning's Greening Campaign has been working closely with Steyning Museum to support them in raising funds for their Solar PV installation. There has been a real pick-up in solar installations in the Steyning area since the Campaign's Awareness Drive.

For every system installed by one of the Campaign's recommended suppliers as a direct result of the Awareness Drive, the supplier makes a contribution of £250 towards a local community project. At the moment Steyning Museum is the beneficiary of the scheme and they are most appreciative of the commitment of the suppliers - particularly their own supplier, Solar Advanced Systems of East Grinstead - and the support of the Greening Campaign. For more details of the Steyning Greening Campaign contact Geoff Barnard at 01903 813232 or on their website: www.1010steyning.org

It is early days, but has it paid off? Well, it is very comforting to see the meter ticking away to show how much free electricity we are getting from our panels. So far they have generated 308 kilowatts.

Local History Course

(A message from Sarah Leigh)

The joint Museum-WEA Local History Courses have been very popular and are now more than fully booked so we regret to say that no one else can be admitted. Normally WEA courses can be joined by turning up and paying on the day without booking, but in this case that won't be possible. We are sorry to disappoint people and hope to run the courses again next year.

Half Term

(message from Joan Denwood)

At a loose end this February half term?

Why not bring your children/grandchildren to Steyning Museum 11th - 19th February. We have displays and information which may help them with school topics and it will all be of interest, as it is about the town where you live. We have a children's corner where they can do a brass rubbing, create a mosaic, have a go at a tricky cube puzzle and try on hats. We also have a number of pocket-money toys which can be bought from our shop. Remember that admission is free and we are open - Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday: 10.30-12.30 and 2.30-4, Saturday: 10.30-4 Sunday: 2.30-4. We look forward to welcoming you at your Museum.

What's New

From Chris Tod

Among the things reaching us recently are three which are totally different from each other – but are each intriguing additions to the collection.

First of all, at the end of last summer, we were able to obtain a poster dated September 1855 which was promoting a race meeting. All the horses – 44 of them – had their names, the names of their sires and dams and the names of their riders listed in full. It was only after looking closely at them that we began to suspect that some or all of these names had been created out of thin air – that it showed signs of being a spoof. But, why? It is a genuine Victorian document, but whether it was for an actual race meeting we don't, for the moment, know. We hope to get to the Record Office to examine newspapers of the time in the hope that they will shed some light.

Then, not long before Christmas, we received a box of almost 300 photographs of activities taking place in Steyning between 1961 and 1966. They were proof copies of photographs taken at that time by the Shoreham Herald. We are now looking for people to identify some of the faces in these photographs. Two of our stewards, Ros Golds and Cathy Ballard, were immediately able to

point to members of their families and others – but there are loads still to be identified.

The third, which we would pick out, is a tiny Bronze Age gold plated bronze ring which apparently was used by the more important ladies of Bronze Age society, some 3000 or more years ago, to thread a braid of their hair through. It is known as a tress ring. It had been found by a metal detectorist on a Steyning farm. It was declared to be treasure trove and we have been able to acquire it from the British Museum.

Each of these three items – and many more – will get an airing in an exhibition of Recent Acquisitions which we are planning for July this year. Meanwhile we will very soon be putting on a display on the archaeology of the area to link in with the WEA study days on the subject.

AGM

The Annual General Meeting this year takes place in the Penfold Hall at 2.30pm on Saturday 24th March. After the usual business part of the meeting to receive reports and hold elections for the committee, we will follow our usual custom of having tea then listen to a speaker.

This year, we have been able to book Lady Mary Teviot who may be known to some of you as one of the stars of the BBC 'Heir Hunters' programmes over the past few years. She is a professional genealogist and probate researcher, holding many offices, including President of the Federation of Family History Societies. She has been involved in family history research for nearly forty years and runs her own company 'Census Searches' in Burgess Hill (www.census-searches.co.uk). She has regularly featured as one of the select group of genealogists on 'Heir Hunters', researching difficult family history cases to identify beneficiaries of those who have died.

In her talk 'One Day I Will', Lady Mary will provide us with an anecdotal overview of her family history research experiences over the years. She will tell us about the filming of 'Heir Hunters' and other recent developments, as well as giving some excellent advice to anyone doing or contemplating their own family history. Hence the title of her talk - 'One Day I Will'.

You will find attached your official notification for the AGM meeting.

Tony Kettelman (Editor)