



MUSEUM NEWS

Steining Museum Newsletter

February 2016

Museum Diary

- 18.02.02 Children's Activity Day
(for Primary School-age children)
The Museum
10.00 -12 noon
and/or 1.30 - 3.30pm
- 19.03.16 Annual General Meeting
Penfold Hall
2.30pm
- 09.04.16 Spring Coffee Morning
Penfold Hall
10.30 - 12.00
- 12.11.16 Autumn Coffee Morning
Penfold Hall
10.30 - 12.00

200 Club

December Draw:

- 1st prize = Brian Hill (£35)
2nd prize = Maureen Spence (£25)
3rd prize = Jennie Davies (£15)

January Grand Draw:

- 1st prize = Joan Dart (£100)
2nd prize = Jack Campbell (£50)
3rd prize = Jenny Smeed (£25)

Pantocrime

If you didn't manage to come to Pantocrime in early December you missed a treat! Zoe Peate had offered to produce a benefit performance in aid of the Museum with singers from her choirs and other volunteer performers (including Museum members). It proved to be inventive, good hearted, funny and brilliant in its performance. All

had clearly worked very hard under Zoe's direction. There was clever use of new words to fit familiar melodies with Gary Prior providing his usual skilful accompaniment. The audience were encouraged to join in with the traditional pantomime boos and hisses as well as with singing. Costume changes by the choir and other performers went very smoothly. In all, there was a great atmosphere.

The Museum owes its warm gratitude to Zoe for organising everything and also to Gill Kille for liaising on behalf of the Museum and to her helpers on the evening.

Children's Activity Day

Joan Denwood and Muriel Wright will again be offering an activity day for primary-age children during half term on Thursday 18th February. It will be at the Museum from 10.00-12 noon and/or 1.30-3.30. The cost will be £1 per child per session.

Come along with your children or grandchildren and have fun with puppets, costumes and crafts

Annual General Meeting

You will see from the Museum Diary that our Annual General meeting will be held this year on Saturday 19th March in the Penfold Hall starting at 2.30pm. As on previous occasions, we will start with the business meeting to hear reports on the past year at the Museum and elect the management committee for the following year.

Following a break for tea, there will be a talk on local archaeology.

Your official notification of the meeting is attached at the end of the newsletter.

Spring Coffee Morning

You will see from the Museum Diary that the Spring Coffee Morning will be held on Saturday 9th April 2016 in the Penfold Hall

10.30 - 12.00 noon. In addition to the usual stalls (cakes, books, bric-a-brac), there will be a plant stall, so please bring along any plants/cuttings you can contribute. Contributions for the other stalls will be gratefully received as well.

Shop News

From Joan Denwood and Muriel Wright:

Shop update - Ways of Making Money!

1. Christmas Cards

We thought you would like to know the history of our 2 new cards which we sold for Christmas 2015.

Erica Gayler organised a drawing competition at Steyning Primary School to design a Christmas card. There were some great entries and the winner was Poppy Walton (aged 7) who drew a lovely picture of Steyning Church, complete with people and snow. This was sold at the Charity Christmas event in Penfold Hall, in school and at their Christmas Fair, as well as, of course, through our Museum.

Steyning Museum has different local Christmas cards on sale each year and the school competition created a perfect opportunity for the Museum to link with the community and to produce a wonderful Christmas card.

Our other new card on sale in the Museum also linked with the community as a photographic competition was organised in connection with the publication of a new Church Guide earlier this year. The theme

was unusual views of Steyning Church and the winning photo was taken by Hugh Kitson, now printed as another fabulous Christmas card. We are sure you recognized the back view of our Church!

These 2 cards sold really well - over a 1000 were sold. There are a few left for next year so remember to come along early to grab your local cards next Christmas.

2. Second hand books of Steyning.

A new idea for 2016 is to have a selection of second-hand books to sell in our shop. These must be in good condition, given as a donation to the museum and, of course, be about Steyning.

So, if you have suitable Steyning books gathering dust and which you never read, please pop them along to the Museum with a note attached so that we know they are for this cause.

A New Constitution

An important feature of this year's AGM will be an item on a suggested new constitution for managing the Museum. The Museum has until now been run according to the constitution approved when it was established as a charity in 1983. Since that time the law regarding charities has changed, as has the size and complexity of the Museum administration. The committee therefore think that the time has come to consider adopting an up-to-date constitution. In the following two pages you will find a description by Sarah Leigh of what is being considered. This will be merely a start, as the Charities Commission will have to approve any new constitution we are considering.

Tony Ketteyman - (Editor)

A New Constitution for the Museum

The Museum committee have been wanting for some time to update our original 1983 Constitution. Some years ago we became aware that the Charity Commission were working on a new legal form of constitution specifically for small charities and we decided to wait for that rather than amend our existing trust. We are now able to register under the 2011 Charities Act as a CIO (Charitable Incorporated Organisation) and we are recommending that the Friends of the Museum agree to do that.

At present, the Museum is legally an unincorporated organisation, although it describes itself as a "Trust" and the constitution provides that it shall have members who shall be known as "the Friends of Steyning Museum". Under the suggested new constitution it would become a special sort of legal charitable body, like a company. Anyone wishing to understand the detail of the new system can look at the Charity Commission website where the whole system is explained in detail. You will also find a link on the Museum web site at steyningmuseum.org.uk/constitution.htm.

The benefits of being a CIO are briefly summarised as follows:

The members and trustees are usually personally safeguarded from the financial liabilities the charity incurs, which is not the case for unincorporated charities (such as the Museum is at present) and the charity has a legal personality of its own, enabling it to conduct business in its own name, rather than the name of the trustees.

There are two models of CIO.

1. The "association" model we feel is the right one for us, as it will preserve our present structure of having a membership (the current Friends of the Museum) and Trustees (who will be the equivalent of the current Trust Committee).
2. The other model is the "foundation" one, in which only the committee would be the members of the CIO and the committee feel this would not be appropriate.

The committee is now considering a draft of the governing document. In thinking about this, we need to be aware the new constitution may still be in force many years in the future. It should therefore be as flexible as possible. Anything which might change should not be in the constitution but should be in the Rules. These would be protected by requiring a special majority to amend them, and have the same force as the constitution under the law, but wouldn't require any amendment to be approved by the Charities Commission.

We need to bear in mind that times are changing. It seems very likely that in ten or fifteen years we shall be into an era when volunteer labour is much scarcer and more geriatric than it is at present, and probably money is also scarcer. People will be working to a much later age than we have, and it is likely that finding trustees to run the Friends will be much harder.

The basic structure of the organisation would be that the Friends of the Museum are the members of the CIO; there would be strict rules as to how you become and cease to be a member. The members would elect the Trustees, who would be the Committee which runs it. We are suggesting that there should be not less than 3 and no more than 12 Trustees. Other people could attend meetings but would not be entitled to vote. Strict rules would apply regarding people employed by the trust, or deriving a financial advantage from it. Trustees with such an interest would have to declare it and be excluded from discussions about it.

There's a detailed discussion of this in the Charity Commission guidance paper CC11, but this formulation allows us to employ people provided that the majority of Trustees are not employed.

The draft constitution will be revised after a meeting on 8th February, sent to the Charity Commission to start the process off, and be presented to the AGM on 19 March 2016. If the AGM is unhappy with the draft we will have plenty of time to amend it – it's not likely that we will hear from the Charity Commission with their questions and suggestions until later in the summer. When we have arrived at a draft which satisfies both parties we will fix a meeting at which you, the current Friends, will be asked to attend and approve it by a majority of two-thirds of those present and eligible to vote. Unless the process looks as though it will extend until the 2017 AGM, we will probably be calling an Extraordinary General Meeting for some time in the autumn of 2016.

We will be happy to email the draft to anyone who wants to read it and any input will be most welcome. If anyone has suggestions we would like them as soon as possible, please. The draft is very long because it incorporates a lot of law, which is what the Charity Commission try to insist on. There are copious notes available on the Charity Commission website and these explain in every case why each provision should be in, or in some cases, *must* be in. The current draft is on the Museum website with the Charity Commission guidance which it is based on.

Sarah Leigh

Comments to me, please, not on the stewards' mailbox but at sarah.c.leigh@btopenworld.com