

# MUSEUM NEWS

Steyning Museum Newsletter

June 2006

## Garden Coffee Morning

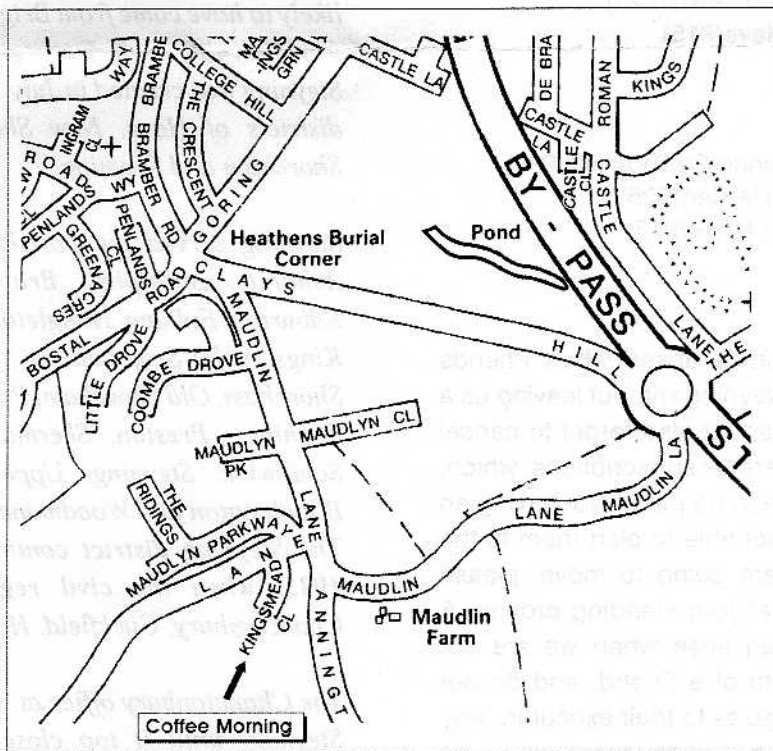
The Spring coffee morning in April was well supported and there was a magnificent show of cakes. As a result, we raised almost as much as in last October when we beat all the records and took over £300. Your support is much appreciated, especially by the Social Events Sub-Committee who put in a lot of hard work in organising the event.

We are now arranging a Summer Garden Coffee Morning. After much juggling of holiday dates, this will be on Saturday 19<sup>th</sup>

August from 10.30am, at 8 Kingsmead Close, the home of Peter Lee. You will find it off Maudlin Lane (see below)

This will be our second visit to this spacious garden. In 2004, in spite of the threatening weather, we had a very enjoyable and profitable morning, so we are very pleased to be invited again by Peter.

The cake stall always does well, and we welcome contributions on the day. Raffle prizes would also be most welcome.



Parking in Kingsmead Close is limited, so car-sharing where possible would help. Otherwise it will need to be a matter of parking a bit further away for the fit and mobile.

## Museum Diary

- 19.08.06 Garden Coffee Morning  
Jarvis, Jarvis Lane 10.30 - 12.00  
28.10.06 Autumn Coffee Morning  
Penfold Hall 10.30 - 12.00  
20.01.07 Stewards and Helpers Social  
Penfold Hall 11.30 am

## Beeding and Bramber Local History Society:

- 06.09.06 Sweet Chestnuts - a Sussex story  
04.10.06 The medieval and manorial sites  
of Stretham and Ovingdean  
01.11.06 The flint miners of Cissbury

All meetings will be in Beeding & Bramber Village Hall. Details from Pat Nightingale on Tel: 812847

## 200 Club

### April Draw:

- 1<sup>st</sup> prize = Anthony Allan (£35)  
2<sup>nd</sup> prize = Helen Lewis (£25)  
3<sup>rd</sup> prize = Vi Hays (£15)

### May Draw:

- 1<sup>st</sup> prize = Suzanne Conboy-Hill (£35)  
2<sup>nd</sup> prize = Alec Harden (£25)  
3<sup>rd</sup> prize = Gwen Lowe (£15)

## Standing Orders

A problem sometimes arises when Friends move away from Steyning without leaving us a forwarding address, but also forget to cancel bank standing orders for subscriptions, which, of course, continue to be paid. Not having an address, we are not able to alert them to the problem. If you are going to move, please remember to cancel your standing orders. A similar problem can arise when we are not alerted to the death of a Friend, and do not have any knowledge as to their executor. Any information in these circumstances would be very welcome.

## Web Site

The Museum web site has continued to attract attention, with an average of 25 hits per day. 82% of these are from the UK, 11% from the US

and 7% from elsewhere.

The history page is the second most popular section for people visiting the site, and Lynda Denyer continues to add articles of interest. The latest addition is an article she has written about Parnell, the Irish MP who led the Home rule campaign in Parliament in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. Surprisingly, he has a link to Steyning, as he was married to Kitty O'Shea at Steyning registry office in June 1891. Why was this?

Lynda Denyer has provided the answer for us in the following piece:

## Steyning Registration District

*Many of our Stewards have noticed that family history enquiries often relate to people who seem to have no local connection. Why is this?*

*One reason is that births, marriages and deaths occurring in the registration district of Steyning between 1837 and 1935 could relate to any one of 25 different parishes. In fact more people are likely to have come from Brighton or Hove than from Steyning itself. The registration district of Steyning was created in July 1837, with its sub-districts of Hove, New Shoreham, Preston, Shoreham and Steyning.*

*Steyning served the parishes of Aldrington, Ashurst, Botolphs, Bramber, Coombes, Edburton, Fulking, Hangleton, Henfield, Hove, Kingston by Sea, Lancing (from 1870), New Shoreham, Old Shoreham, Patcham, Portslade, Poynings, Preston, Shermanbury, Sompting, Southwick, Steyning, Upper Beeding, West Blatchington and Woodmancote.*

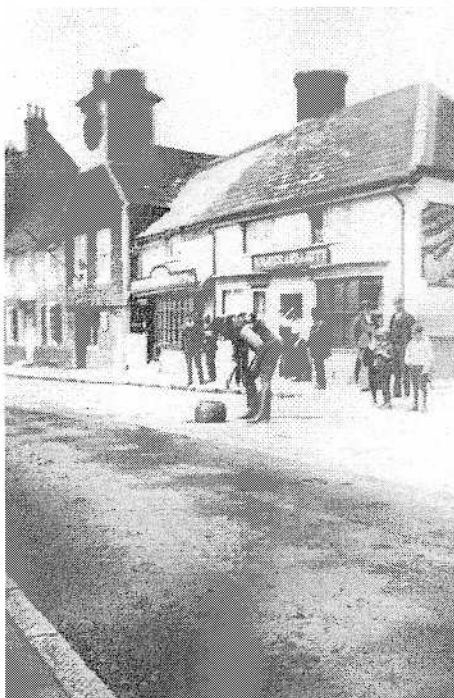
*The Steyning district continued until March 1935, when the civil registers moved to Chanctonbury, Cuckfield, Hove or Worthing.*

*The Chanctonbury office at Storrington served Steyning until it too closed in 1974. Civil registration for Steyning residents then moved to Worthing. The former Steyning District registers are now divided between Worthing, Brighton & Hove and Haywards Heath districts.*

## Picture Puzzle

I mentioned last time that we had been given documents and photographs from Colin Garlick's collection. You may have seen in the local press that David Haseldine has used two of the more puzzling pictures in a press release along with the question as to what people think was happening. We have had quite a few replies from the public, and the general consensus is that one photo shows the man looking at a bee "skep" lying in the road and the second picture is probably of a group of bees who had settled nearby. A "skep" was a bee hive made from straw, but what it was doing on the road is a matter of conjecture. One likely explanation put forward is that it had fallen off a cart and the queen bee had settled on the road to be followed by others which had escaped from the fallen skep.

The photos date from the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and provide an illustration of how quiet the High Street was at that time. The slow pace of life in Steyning in the past was a matter of comment from more than one visiting writer at the time. In "High and Byways in Sussex" (dated 1904), E.V. Lucas quoted a passage from Louis Jennings' book "Rambles Among the Hills" where the author says, "One day as I passed through the town, I saw a man painting a new sign over a shop, a proceeding that so aroused my curiosity that I stood for a minute or two to look on. The painter filled in one letter, gave a huge yawn, looked up and down two or three times as if he had lost



something, and finally descended from his perch and disappeared. Five weeks later, I passed that way again, and it is a fact that the same man was at work on the same sign. ....There is plenty of time for everything in Steyning."

Later (1909), writing in "The Spirit of the Downs", Arthur Beckett commented, "There appears to be a lack of entertainments in Steyning, for on the evening of our arrival I was attracted to a crowd of about twenty persons standing on the kerb and in the roadway by the quaint old post-office. I expected a street accident at least, but on going to ascertain the cause of this assembly, I found that the crowd was merely amusing itself by watching a passing cyclist inflate a tyre on his machine!"

## Next Newsletter

A great many hours are being put into fitting out the extension, so that by the official opening on 1<sup>st</sup> June, you will get a good idea of Chris Tod's scheme for the layout. Unfortunately, this newsletter needs to be printed before the official opening of the Museum extension on June 1<sup>st</sup>, so I will report on that day's events next time.

Please note that, as is our custom at this time of year, the next newsletter will not be published until the beginning of October.

Tony Kettelman - Editor

