



# Museum News

Steyning Museum Newsletter

October 2010

## Amazing News

Earlier in the year I wrote about the need for the Museum to examine our financial situation so that we would be prepared for any challenge facing us in the present atmosphere of financial cuts. Apart from good housekeeping to reduce expenditure, the management committee felt it was important to increase the number of Friends, who are our main source of income. Our stall at the Showcase event in the Spring aroused much interest, but didn't encourage many to become Friends. Recently, it was suggested at a committee meeting that we explore the possibility of taking a stall at the farmers' market to publicise the Museum and recruit new Friends. We were generously offered one of the community stalls at the Market on 4<sup>th</sup> September.

I thought we might, at most, recruit 20 new members, but the amazing news is that we signed up 77 new Friends who all paid their £5 on the spot. As these new members read their first newsletter, I would like to welcome them to the Friends and thank them all for supporting Steyning's Museum in this way.

## Museum Diary

30.10.10	Autumn Coffee Morning Penfold Hall 10.30 - 12.00
12.11.10	Big Autumn Clothes Swap Penfold Hall Doors open 6.30pm
08.01.11	Stewards & Helpers Social Penfold Hall 11.30am
05.03.11	Benefit Concert St. Andrew's Church 2.00pm followed by tea at the Steyning Centre
26.03.11	Annual General Meeting Penfold Hall 2.30pm

09.04.11	Spring Coffee Morning Penfold Hall 10.30 - 12.00
29.10.11	Autumn Coffee Morning Penfold Hall 10.30 - 12.00

## 200 Club

### June Draw:

1 <sup>st</sup> prize	= Daphne Carter-Shaw (£35)
2 <sup>nd</sup> prize	= Mr NC Davis (£25)
3 <sup>rd</sup> prize	= Mary Townsend (£15)

### July Draw:

1 <sup>st</sup> prize	= Phyl Rowntree (£35)
2 <sup>nd</sup> prize	= Val Bullen (£25)
3 <sup>rd</sup> prize	= Ken Stotesbury (£15)

### August Draw:

1 <sup>st</sup> prize	= Neil Jones (£35)
2 <sup>nd</sup> prize	= Norman Checkley (£25)
3 <sup>rd</sup> prize	= Joan Lawson (£15)

### September Draw:

1 <sup>st</sup> prize	= Betty Loader (£35)
2 <sup>nd</sup> prize	= Erica Gaylor (£25)
3 <sup>rd</sup> prize	= Helen Lewis (£15)

## Social Events

Earlier in the year, Gillian Kille took over the running of the social events sub-committee, and the group has been busy planning money raising occasions.

Below, Gillian reports about past and future events:

### *Garden Coffee Morning*

We couldn't have had better weather for this year's Summer garden coffee morning, held, by kind permission of Sarah Leigh, in her lovely garden at Rosebank on Saturday 3rd July. It truly was a beautiful, sunny summer's day. The event did clash with one or two other events locally, reflected by only 42 people coming

along, but in spite of a reduced attendance this year, we still managed to make a net profit, after expenses, of £198.42, which was an increase on last year's summer event. Everyone was seen to be enjoying the morning, relaxing with friends in the garden over coffee and enjoying the ambiance. There was the usual cake stall and raffle which both did very well, but the cake makers must be especially congratulated on the superb quality of the cakes, which were delicious and were snapped up. Thank you also to those who responded to our plea for extra cake makers and we do hope you will support us again.

Finally, a thank you to all those who came along to support the event and a very big thank you to all the helpers and those who donated items for the raffle prizes.

We always need to find other central Steyning venues for future garden summer coffee mornings, (there is one being planned for August next year) so if any of you have any ideas for a venue (bearing in mind that we would need use of the kitchen and to have permission to hold the event indoors if it rains) please do drop a line to Gillian Kille c/o the Museum, or send an email to [gill.k@MapletreeSolutions.com](mailto:gill.k@MapletreeSolutions.com)

Our next coffee morning will be on Saturday, 30th October in the Penfold Hall, as usual, and we look forward to seeing you there. Please do try to support the Museum by coming along- and tell a friend!

#### ***Other Fundraising Events***

As it is becoming increasingly important, in view of rising costs, to raise more funds for the Museum, two extra events are being organised.

**The first** is a clothes swap evening at Penfold Hall on Friday 12th November this year. The doors will open at 6.30 pm. and clothes swapping will start at 7.30pm.

We fully appreciate that this evening will appeal mainly to those ladies in the 20 to 50 something age range (!) although everyone is welcome and the event should attract a wider clientele. It is essentially a fund raising event and provides an opportunity to recycle some of those unwanted 'best' wardrobe items and gain new items. Entrance will be £5 on the door and up to 10 items of clothing and accessories are

allowed. There will be free coffee and cake available throughout the evening. Any clothes items not swapped will be donated to a Steyning charity.

**Our second** event is an afternoon concert to be held on Saturday 5th March, 2011 at St Andrew 's Church, featuring two very popular choirs, Kaleidoscope and Cantatrice, directed by Zoë Peate. Tea and cake will be served at The Steyning Centre immediately after the concert. More details about the concert will be given in the December Newsletter. Tickets for the event will be available at the end of December 2010 from The Steyning Bookshop. The concert promises to be most enjoyable and we hope as many of you as possible will come along, so please make a note of the date in your diaries.

#### **Joint Christmas Supper**

This year sees the fourth joint Christmas supper between The Steyning Society and the Museum Friends on the evening of Friday 17<sup>th</sup> December in the Steyning Centre. As before, the evening will start with pre-supper drinks in the Saxon Room at 7.00pm with the three course supper with wine following at 7.45pm in the man hall.

An inclusive ticket will cost £15.00 and can be obtained from Peter Harris, using the form in the invitation enclosed with this newsletter. Cheques should be made payable to The Steyning Society. There will be a raffle, and a short talk at the end of the supper by Geoff Barnard of the Greening campaign.

#### **The End Piece**

Janet Pennington has kindly provided the first part of an article for us this month which traces the history of the George Inn in Steyning. Changes of name and ownership complicated the task in a way which might seem familiar to those of you who have delved into your family history.

The concluding part of the article will follow in the December newsletter.

Tony Ketteman (Editor)

The name *George Inn* will cause many Steyning residents to think of the former pub at 138 High Street, at the north-west end of the town, which closed in 1958.



The house named the *King's Head* on the left,  
& the former *George Inn* on the right, Horsham Road/High Street, Steyning

The medieval building is situated on the steep bend where the Horsham Road begins, opposite the entrance to Mouse Lane, and seems to have become an inn in the first quarter of the 18<sup>th</sup> century. After its closure in 1958 the name became Georgein House for several decades, eventually changing to George Inn House, a pleasing reminder of a former Steyning hostelry. A later northern range which had been added to the *George* was named the *King's Head* in the latter half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. That name really belongs to a building at the other end of the High Street, as this article will explain.



The Old Workhouse in Mouse Lane, with  
the *George* inn buildings to the right, c.1820 (picture in private hands)

An inn called the *George* was situated between 44 High Street (the present Post Office) and 56 High Street (now Bunce's Home Hardware) as early as 1627. It was known as the *Swan* before that. The authors of *The Timber-Framed Buildings of Steyning*, in their section on 44 High Street, unfortunately mention the latter's '...reported use as an inn'.<sup>1</sup> This story dies hard in Steyning, but research shows that 44 was never an inn; it was certainly a mercer's shop in the 17<sup>th</sup> and early 18<sup>th</sup> centuries,<sup>2</sup> but the inn was its neighbour. The Revd Ernest Cox and Frank Duke's splendid book *In And Around Steyning* clarifies the situation: 'The deeds of this Post Office house, No. 44, state that in 1674 it was "situate between a messuage heretofore called the Swann and now known as the George on the West", (that is, on the site now occupied by the three shops, Nos. 46-50) "and by the messuage of John Fletcher, gent., on the East".<sup>3</sup> The article on Wood's the butcher's shop in Steyning Museum Newsletter, October 2007 indicates that John Fletcher's messuage and John Wood's shop were one and the same.



The former *Swan*, later *George* & then *King's Head*, 46-50 High Street.  
The Post Office, 44 High Street, is to the right of the inn range.

The Charity Shop, 52 High Street, to the left of The Sussex Produce Company in the above illustration, does not seem to have been part of the inn, though the inn yard can be glimpsed through the archway next to it. By 1726 a deed refers to the property (46-50 High Street) as "late an Inne known by the name of George." It can then be proposed that the *George* inn sign moved to the building at the bottom of the High Street opposite Mouse Lane before 1726.<sup>4</sup> Innkeepers moved around, and in this period frequently took the inn name with them, in such a way taking the 'goodwill' of the business, and advertising the fact that they had moved to another site.<sup>5</sup> There

<sup>1</sup> H. M. Lacey & U.E. Lacey, *The Timber-Framed Buildings of Steyning*, (1975 reprint), 74

<sup>2</sup> J. Pennington & J. Sleight, 'Steyning Town and Its Trades 1559-1787', *Sussex Archaeological Collections*, 130 (1992), 176-177

<sup>3</sup> E. W. Cox & F. Duke, *In and Around Steyning: A Historical Survey Made in 1953*, (1954), 93-94

<sup>4</sup> Cox & Duke, 94

<sup>5</sup> See J. Pennington, 'The Inns and Taverns of Western Sussex, 1550-1700: A Regional Study of Their Architectural and Social History', (unpublished PhD thesis, University of Southampton, 2003), for more information on inn history. A copy is available at Steyning Museum

would not have been two inns of the same name operating at the same time in a small town.<sup>6</sup>

The earliest reference found to the *Swan* in Steyning is in 1609, when Richard Farnfold died. At his death he owned Gatewick House, the water mill there, Jarvis farmhouse, the building now called the Stone House, and much else besides. One of his properties was described as ‘...the messuage called Le Swann in the tenure of Robert Cox or his assigns...’.<sup>7</sup> Readers of *Steyning Scandals* will know just what went on in the inn yard of the *Swan* in 1610, when a youth called Thomas Starke was caught in the stable with his breeches open (rather than pulled down) in the company of a grey mare.<sup>8</sup> John Baulcombe, one of the witnesses in the ensuing court case, was the son-in-law of Robert Cox who in 1624 was the landlord of the *White Lion Inn* at Bramber (now the *Castle Hotel*).<sup>9</sup>

By 1627 the *Swan* had been renamed the *George*, now owned by Richard Farnfold’s son, Sir Thomas, who had been knighted in 1621. He owed the enormous sum of £4,000 (the equivalent of about £360,000 today) to Sir David Watkins of London, and it looks as though he had to pass numerous properties over in lieu of this debt, including Gatewick House.<sup>10</sup> Perhaps the renaming of the inn happened when Cox left the *Swan*, and a new landlord called it the *George*; this could also have happened after Cox’s death if he had been sub-letting the *Swan*. In 1646 and 1656 the inn is described as a ‘tenement and 5 acres of land in Steyning Borough called the *George* in occupation of Henry Barnes’.<sup>11</sup> All the other documents refer to three acres of land, not five, and there could have been two acres in Steyning’s common fields.



The *Swan/George/King's Head* at 46-50 High Street is at the bottom of the 1897 O/S map, and the later *George* at the top left. Highland Crofts has a footpath running diagonally across it.

<sup>6</sup> J. Pennington, ‘The Inns and Taverns of Western Sussex etc.’, 297: the only example of this I have seen in Sussex was at Chichester in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, with two inns called the *White Horse*, though one was within the city walls, and the other without.

<sup>7</sup> W. Powell Breach, ‘Farnfold of Steyning’, *Sussex Archaeological Collections*, 59, (1918), 97,99

<sup>8</sup> J. Pennington, *Steyning Scandals: Secrets of a Sussex Market Town, 1547-1947*, (2009 revised edn), 64-68

<sup>9</sup> J. Pennington, ‘The Inns and Taverns of Western Sussex etc.’, 206

<sup>10</sup> Breach, 102. It is interesting to see that Sir Thomas Farnfold refers to the High Street as ‘...the Heye, Chefe or Market Streete...’ in 1622.

<sup>11</sup> West Sussex Record Office (hereafter WSRO), Wiston MS 2485

In 1666, the year of the Great Fire of London, the 'Messuage and inn called the *George* in the High Street of Steyning, with two closes of meadow and pasture (3a)...' was being sold. The three acres of land was Highland Crofts, to the north of the inn, which name still survives. Inns frequently had land attached, useful for grazing horses and cattle or growing crops. It has to be remembered that much of what is now built on behind the north side of the High Street was farmland in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, with narrow ways to and from these holdings, which can be seen on earlier maps. The *George* was occupied by John Parsons '...or his Assignes...' in 1666, and it is not certain whether he was actually the landlord at this time. Some of the Parsons family in Steyning were brewers, and John may have been supplying beer to his own inn, but not actually running it.

As Cox and Duke reveal, the inn's former sign of the *Swan* was still remembered in a deed of 1674, when the *George* was mentioned as being next to what is now the Post Office, at 44 High Street. The *George* was of some importance in the town, as depositions of witnesses in a lawsuit were taken there in 1699 and the Adur River Commissioners used it for a meeting in 1714. Mary Burnett, a widow, was the innkeeper on both occasions and she will be mentioned in more detail in Part 2 of this article. The name *George* is an ancient one in inn terms, emerging during the medieval period as the Patron Saint of England, and continuing through the turbulent times of the Reformation. St. George represents one of the most powerful English inn names, together with the *Crown*, symbol of the monarchy, and the *Swan*, symbol of the Virgin Mary.

A document dated 1652 states that the *George* was opposite the Market House, on the north side of the High Street.<sup>12</sup> It was therefore right in the heart of the market area of Steyning, with the old market house (demolished in 1771 to make way for an improved road system - see Steyning Museum Newsletter, October 2005), more or less in front of it and standing in the middle of the street. On the south side of the High Street were the *Crown* and the *Blue Anchor*, situated between the *White Horse* and the *Chequer*; to the east of the *George* there was the *Spread Eagle*, later the *King's Arms*, on the corner of Bank Passage. At one time the *George* may have been the leading town inn, as its name suggests, but it gradually slid down the social hierarchy of drinking establishments in Steyning.

*With thanks to the following for access to their properties:-*

*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*

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<sup>12</sup> WSRO, Wiston MS 6152