



MUSEUM NEWS

Steyning Museum Newsletter

September 2020

Muriel Wright

Chairman

I hope you are all safe and well. It has been a while since our last newsletter. The good news is that the Museum will be re-opening with new days and hours.

Open days = Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday - 10.00am- 4.00pm.

(Closed on Sundays)

We will welcome our first visitors on Wednesday 16th September and have been working very hard to make sure the Museum is Covid 19 safe for our volunteers and visitors.

There will be hand sanitisers in place throughout the Museum.

In the entrance there will be a *Track and Trace* book which visitors will have to sign. Face coverings are required.

We will have to limit the number of visitors to 8. If 8 people are already in the Museum, I'm afraid other visitors will have to wait.

There will be a one way system - "*Follow the footsteps*"

We have some new exhibitions in place:

A wonderful display of Toy Theatres,

Land Girls (part of the Steyning Food and Drink Festival)

A permanent display about Steyning Football Club

We also hope to have an Audio Guide in place soon.

Unfortunately, due to circumstances beyond our control (Covid 19), we couldn't hold our AGM in March. However, the Government Guidance states that all Museums whose financial year ends on 31st December 2019 must hold an AGM before 30th September. As we couldn't hold an AGM due to social distancing measures, the Charity Commission advised me to send our last year's minutes, the Trustees report and financial accounts for the year ending 31st December 2019 and voting slip so members can then return their vote/approval.

We are therefore sending you an abbreviated agenda plus the documents mentioned above. We will also include a voting slip so members can approve the reports and the appointment of the Trustees who are willing to stand again.

The Trustees will then appoint The Management Committee who are willing to stand again, apart that is for Helen Coutrouzas our minutes secretary who has resigned after many years of loyal support. I am delighted to say that Helen will continue to be a Trustee.

We welcome Paddy Robson who has kindly agreed to carry out the role of Minute Secretary. We also welcome Ray Powell as our new Publicity Officer. I am pleased to say that our Social Events team remains

the same.

PLEASE return your voting slip by 26th September as this is now the date of our new AGM.

The Trustees will count the votes on 28th September
PLEASE pop your voting slips in to the Museum post box.

OR you can ring me on 01903 812281. I hope we will be able to meet up soon (socially distanced of course) Thank you for your support.

Murial Wright (Chairman)

Andrew Woodfield

Exhibitions

As you are all aware, the lock down meant that we had to postpone our "Victory in Europe 75" exhibition (and related fun Street Party that Maggie Hollands and her team were organising).

The lock down also meant that the Exhibition Team were unable to do all the necessary research and preparation.

So, having spoken with Muriel Wright, or Chair, I came up with the idea of reversing WW2 with what would have been the Christmas/New Year exhibit. The WW2 exhibition has been renamed "Victory" so that it can cover both the victory in Europe and the Far East. It is now scheduled for mid January 2021 until mid May - BUT HELP IS REQUIRED!

Within the Museum archive there is only one photograph of V.E. Day celebrations. It is of the house opposite Chantry House, showing all the windows blown out by the blast of the bomb that fell on Church Street. Despite this, the house was decorated with bunting!

We have another photograph of a street party in Upper Beeding (with a young Paul Norris in view) that has kindly been loaned by Pat Nightingale and the Beeding and Bramber Historical Society.

SO, HAS ANYONE OUT THERE GOT ANY PHOTOS OF LOCAL STREET PARTIES OR CELEBRATIONS? If so, please contact me via the Museum. It is strange that the archive has a vast quantity of WW1 records of celebrations and none for WW2 - perhaps film for cameras was on ration?

So Christmas has come early to the Museum and we have an extended Yuletide exhibition already installed.

Some of you will know of my passion for model railways, puppets and theatre. Whilst isolating during lock down, I have prepared, at home, an exhibition of my Victorian Toy Theatre collection. Initially, it was going to be a small exhibition for Christmas, but now has extended into the entire available rear area of the Museum. It gives a history from the late Regency to present times. The oldest theatre displayed is circa 1880 and most are illuminated by pressing buttons.

There are some other changes to our exhibits, so please have a good look round.

Joan Denwood

Audio Visual Project

Our year's work has been achieved. We are very pleased that our last piece, Screen 2, is up and running in the museum. We are getting lovely favourable comments too.

'New photo screen much appreciated by many visitors of all ages'

'New screen great success much appreciated by visitors and stewards alike. Family also commented about how good all the interactive activities are for the children'

It all started with Erica Gayler (committee member) achieving a grant for us from Horsham District Council and matching it with money from our own 200 Club. The Oral History team of

Pamela Platt, Vivien Kingston Jones, Jon Young, Lois Roemer have been researching and recording anecdotes and have been very supportive.

With the help of Nick Quinn and Mike Denwood we now have our 4 pieces of equipment up and running.

They are the 2 listening posts (one by the farming display and one by the railway display) and 2 screens (Screen 1 in the entrance hall and Screen 2 near the library books). There is additional information in paper form alongside the listening posts and Screen 2 as well.

That doesn't mean that the project is finished, because we can change the contents of the listening posts and move them to other relevant positions in the museum. The content of the screen in the entrance hall is added to and changed often. Also the content of Screen 2 in the museum can be changed to include other subjects.

So all in all we are delighted to have finished, for now, and hope you will all enjoy the fruits of our labour.

Education

We have had some interesting and varied sessions recently with a visit from Shoreham College year 1 class, topic 'Homes'. The following is an email from their class teacher -

'Many thanks for the wonderful session you ran for Year 1 last week. The children were delighted to speak of the trip and wrote and drew some wonderful ideas from the things they had learnt in the afternoon.'

We had visits from 22 French Students (ages 14,15,16) and 17 German students with their teachers, on an exchange visit with students from Steyning Grammar School.

22 of our local Beaver Scout group (ages 6 - 8) came for a fun evening in the museum.

REQUEST - if you have any Julia Donaldson books, in good condition, that you no longer need, please could I have them for our children's corner. Please leave in The Museum for my attention.

Coronavirus Memories

We have been developing a record in words and pictures of the Coronavirus pandemic to capture the memories of local people about this (hopefully) once in a lifetime experience. This will be useful as a research resource in the future.

Come along and see the display in the entrance containing extracts from local peoples Coronavirus Memories. Please add your own thoughts to our memory cloud.

Social Events.

Maggie Hollands

We are sorry but due to the current situation we are unable to hold the Autumn Coffee morning at the Penfold Hall in October and also the Musical Afternoon Tea at the Steyning Centre which was booked for December.

We are pleased to tell you we will be selling raffle tickets for a Christmas Hamper at the Museum from December 1st. It will be drawn in the Museum on December 24th

If you prefer to receive the Steyning Museum Newsletter by email, please contact the Membership secretary ericagayler@gmail.com

Tony Kettelman (Editor)