

## STEYNING MUSEUM TRUST

The Museum, Church Street, Steyning, West Sussex. BN44 3YB

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Registered Charity Number: 1169540



### Newsletter May 2024

#### Message from the Vice Chairman – Muriel Wright

I hope everyone had an enjoyable Easter. Hopefully the weather will continue to improve.

As you are all aware the Museum is still looking for a new Chairperson. I really feel it's time for me to step down, so I would like you all to consider the following proposal.

If 1 or 2 people would consider taking on the role of Vice-Chair and work alongside me in order to get to know what the role of Chairperson entails.

Everyone who is on the Management Committee has their own role. At the moment I cover Education [with the help of a small team] and look after the Shop so hopefully someone may be interested in one of those roles.

If you would like more information or are interested in either of those roles, please don't hesitate to contact me either by email or phone.

**01903812281** or [ian.wright\\_smoke\\_steam@btopenworld.com](mailto:ian.wright_smoke_steam@btopenworld.com)

We are always looking for more volunteers so if you have 3 hours a month to spare, please come along to the Museum. You can be assured of a warm welcome.

Muriel Wright [Vice chair]

#### Message from Jacquie Buttriss

Muriel has given me permission to add to her message above.

As you all know, she works very hard and with great success in her various museum roles. Indeed, she has served as chair, over the past 7 years, taking only one year off in between for vital medical treatment.

Despite her serious illness she came back as soon as she could. However, she is still under medical supervision and has been advised that her blood-pressure is too high and she must take care not to do too much.

Steyning Museum is blessed with a large team of enthusiastic and very capable volunteers.

Can you step up and help Muriel?

If so, please contact her direct or leave her a note in the post drawer behind the counter.

#### Exhibition news – Andrew Woodfield

The new **CHURCH EXHIBIT** is now installed by the Norman Arch.

#### ART TRAIL - May 26th to June 2nd.

Work by our local talented artists

## THE STEYNING FESTIVAL

A special exhibit that will be in the alcove by the Carman Room.

## STEYNING CLOCKMAKERS - a history.

This will be the heaviest exhibition I have attempted as we will be exhibiting all four of the grandfather clocks that are currently in the Museum Archive.

The projected opening date is Saturday June 9th but it may take longer to install.

## Events & Fund-Raising Committee – Maggie Hollands

We had a very successful coffee morning in April and raised approximately £200 for museum funds.

### Dates for your diary: -

Our next event is the ever popular **Cream Tea at 2.30pm on Saturday July 6th at The Steyning Centre**. There will be homemade scones, jam, clotted cream with tea or coffee. There will also be a raffle and we will have live music by the popular 'Cheerup Mollys'. Tickets £10 from the museum available from June 8th.

Our next **coffee morning at the Penfold Hall** is on **Saturday October 26th at 10:30**

One more note for your diaries. We are holding a **Thanksgiving lunch at the Penfold Hall on Thursday 28th November at 12:30**. There will be homemade vegetable soup, apple pie and tea. Tickets £10 will be available from the Museum nearer the time.

## Publicity – Ray Powell

The High Sheriff of West Sussex, Andy Bliss represented the Crown when he visited Steyning Museum recently. He arrived with a warm smile for his guided tour of this small but fascinating museum talking with volunteers, watching exhibition work in progress and admiring one of the Museum's star attractions "Steyning Man" – archaeology being his main interest. He also met the Museum research team and delved into the Museum's extensive archives. Andy much appreciated his look around and expressed his "thanks to all the wonderful volunteers who make this museum such a brilliant place to visit".



The photo above shows Andy with some of the Museum's volunteers.

A higher quality photo can be found at: <https://steyningmuseum.org.uk/wp/pressreleases/>  
Password: mU5eumPre55image55

The museum also hosted a very successful Easter Holidays Family Quiz at the beginning of April. During the two weeks that the quiz ran, we had 66 families take part!



As part of the events for Commonwealth War Graves week, our new War Graves Exhibition is now on display, do please come and take a look.

Don't forget you can also check the Steyning Museum website for details of current exhibitions and events.

## News from the Research Hub – Lois Roemer

Things have continued to be quiet on the enquiry front but nevertheless we have been kept busy.

### PEOPLE

- 'Ticker' Matthews, a Steyning watchmaker

### PLACES

- Mouse Lane/Charlton Place
- Wappingthorne
- 2 Charlton Place Cottages
- Castle Hotel, Bramber
- Dacre Gardens/Cement Works in WWII
- Little Drove
- Northfield Cottages

### EVENTS

- German Airmen, when were they moved to Cannock Military Cemetery

## THE CASTLE HOTEL

Looking at the Castle Hotel in Bramber, one gets the impression of a comfortable Victorian railway hotel, and so it was, but it has a long history.

Going back to the time of Henry VIII there were two inns in Bramber, one of which was the White Lion. In 1526 the Lion was 'dispensing alcoholic refreshment' but it may have been established much earlier. Bramber has been associated with the de Braose, de Mowbray and Howard families in the past, and all had a lion featured on their coat of arms, so there might have been a Lion Inn in Bramber since Norman times.

In 1552 there were two inns in Bramber, one of which was the White Lion, when the County Coroner met with 14 jurors at Bramber Court to conduct an inquest into a dispute between the two innkeepers, William Battner and Widow Christian Kayne, over local grazing lands. The Court heard that on 28<sup>th</sup> October 1551, Christian Kayne's pigs entered William Battner's land, grazing and causing damage. Battner's son John took the his father's dogs to drive the pigs away. Joan Davyd, Kayne's servant, saw what was happening, rushed over and 'fought John and beat the dogs away from the pigs'. Then William Battner, seeing Joan on his land attacking his son went over and struck her with his hand. Joan 'died a natural death in Christian's house', the verdict being reached when it was concluded that she had been weakened some time previously by 'black jaundice' and that the blow was not the cause of her demise.

The inn survived and prospered. In 1624 the accommodation could sleep 14 or more people, but by 1736 it had expanded and could sleep '20 people in comfort.' In 1636 it was owned by Richard Meade who owned 5 other taverns in Sussex, an earlier version of Wetherspoons perhaps!

In 1841 the landlord of the inn was James Potter, the father of Walter Potter who founded Potter's Museum in Bramber.

With the arrival of the railway in 1861 and the tourists who came from Brighton, Worthing and elsewhere to visit Bramber Castle, major rebuilding of the inn took place, and the White Lion became the Castle Hotel, thought to sound a little more 'gentrified'.

During the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century Bramber Castle and its grounds were usually let to the landlord of the Castle Hotel who would have made a profit from the entrance fees and selling refreshments.

A walk today round the Castle moat can still reveal pieces of broken bottles that were thrown over the walls by visitors in times past!

Lois Roemer and Jacquie Buttriss  
Source: Steyning Museum Archives

During the Commonwealth War Graves Week (11<sup>th</sup>– 18<sup>th</sup> May) we will be offering **guided tours of the nine war graves in Steyning Parish Churchyard at 11 am and 2 pm on Saturdays 11<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> May**, meeting point is inside Steyning Museum. This is a free event, no booking required.