

## STEYNING MUSEUM TRUST

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

T: 01903 813333: [www.steyningmuseum.org.uk](http://www.steyningmuseum.org.uk)

Registered Charity Number: 1169540



### Newsletter February 2025

Welcome to the February 2025 edition of our newsletter, I hope you find it interesting reading, I have certainly enjoyed compiling it!

Time has flown by and the AGM will soon be upon us. It would be lovely to see as many members as we can at the meeting, to be held on the morning of **15th March 2025 in the \*Steyning Centre, Steyning at 10.30 a.m.**

\*Please note the change of venue from previous years!

Leonie (newsletter compiler)

### Exhibition news – Rachael Rainbow

This week we removed the *Festive Fun* exhibition and replaced it with *The (Lost and Found) Vicars of Steyning*. This exhibition charts the interesting story of Steyning's vicars from the 1200s to the present day. It is the result of three years research by Sarah Leigh (church historian) assisted by Chris Tod (for 25 years Hon Curator of Steyning Museum), Christopher Whittick (previously Senior Archivist at East Sussex), Brian Hanson of Steyning Parochial Church Council and other volunteers.



Their research verified the details on the Vicars' board in the church which lists those who have been vicars of Steyning, going back to the 13th century. Research into various archives threw up several omitted names, and some who seem not to have been vicars at all.

The exhibition was initially on display in the Church and has been slightly reworked for display in the Museum. We are very grateful to Steyning Parish Church of St Andrew and St Cuthman for lending it to us.

In June we are planning to have an exhibition about the various second world war and cold war underground shelters and bunkers we have around Steyning (there are more than you'd think - we have air raid shelters, pill boxes, observer corp / radar bunkers and underground saboteur tunnels)

Do any of our members know any more or have any photos or reminiscences? If you do, please get in touch by [email](mailto:), phone, or in person. We would love to hear from you!

## About the Trustees – Russell Bowman

Hello,

I'm Russell Bowman, Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Steyning Museum Trust (CIO). I became a trustee in September and stepped into the Chair role in October, but I have been involved with the museum for many years as a steward and so I know where all the power switches are when opening and closing.

I have had a few requests to explain about the roles of trustees and their differences from those of the Management Committee.

To put it simply, trustees manage the charity. We are legally responsible for:

- Ensuring the charity is carrying out its purposes [and nothing else] for the public benefit [very important], and complies with the charity's governing document (our Constitution) and the law
- Acting [take decisions] in the charity's best interests with reasonable care and skill
- Managing the charity's resources responsibly and ensuring the charity is accountable

(The charity's Constitution (available on the museum website) defines the charity's purpose.)

The trustees are generally concerned with the longer-term plans for the charity (what do we want to achieve next year, and the year after ... and how), and our compliance with our policies, plans and the law.

The Management Committee is responsible for the day-to-day running of the museum, i.e., the management of the museum's:

Finance, Maintenance, Collections, Oral History, Research (incl. Family History), Exhibitions, Education, Membership, Stewards, Publicity, Social Events, Shop

(The trustees (re-)appoint the committee each year.)

As Chair of Trustees, I provide leadership and coordination of the trustee board, act as spokesperson for the charity and museum when necessary, and provide the link between trustees and the Management Committee and other volunteers.

There are currently six trustees: myself, Muriel Wright, Paul Norris, Nick Quinn, Rachael Rainbow, and Barbara Chandler. (Muriel and Paul have been trustees since the formation of the CIO in 2016, while myself, Nick, Rachael and Barbara were appointed in 2024.) We meet four times a year, or when needed, and stand for re-election each year at the charity's Annual General Meeting.

Most of the trustees also volunteer in other roles (management committee members, stewards etc.) and keeping these activities separate is one of the challenges of being a trustee of a small, entirely volunteer run museum.

Given the relative 'newness' of the Board of Trustees, one area of focus for the next year is a review of our policies and plans. Do we have all those we need? Are they up-to-date? How well are they implemented? It might sound dull, but it is a good way to ensure we are a well-managed organisation.

That is probably enough for now, but I will leave you with two things:

First, the Charity Commission publishes an excellent guide to being a trustee: The Essential Trustee.

Second, I want to include the purpose of the charity (because this is so important):

1. To maintain Steyning Museum for the public display of material evidence which illustrates the local history of Steyning and its adjacent parishes (Ashurst, Bramber, Upper Beeding, Wiston) for the delight, interest, and to advance the education of the public.
2. To care for and conserve the museum collection and develop it as appropriate.
3. To interpret the collection for the education of people of all ages and levels of ability.
4. To promote research to understand the collection and the associated local history and make the results of the research accessible.

Thank you.

Russell Bowman

russell.m.bowman@gmail.com

## Events & Fund-Raising Committee – Maggie Hollands

We made a profit of £279.00 from the raffle of the Christmas hamper and other prizes. Winners were as follows:-

1st prize	Hamper	Anne Bellis
2nd Prize.	4 Bottles of wine.	Maggie Hollands
3rd Prize.	Bottle Rum.	Alison Goodman
4th Prize.	Christmas Crackers	Dominie Hill
5th Prize.	Scented Candle set	Sarah Warren
6th Prize.	Marsella Reserva	Charlie Henderson
7th Prize.	Baylis & Harding set.	Chris Allen
8th Prize.	Mug & Coaster set.	Vivian Kingston-Jones
9th Prize.	Box Chocolate Biscuits	Susie Acton

Thank you to all who donated the prizes and to those who bought tickets

**PLEASE NOTE** All events this year are all being held in the Steyning Centre due to the refurbishment of the Penfold Hall.

Future events are:-

AGM - **Saturday 15th March** at 10:30  
Spring coffee morning - **Saturday April 12th** at 10:30am  
Afternoon Tea - **Saturday August 16th** 2:30pm  
Autumn coffee morning - **Saturday 4th October** 10:30

More information about these events to follow  
Hope to see many of you there.

Maggie Hollands and Social Events Team

## Shop news – Muriel Wright

The most popular items in the Museum shop have been those made by local Steyning artists and crafts people. Lavender bags and glasses cases frequently sell out and the wooden keyrings are also a good seller. Just before Christmas a local artist donated some of her paintings of Steyning to the Museum for us to sell. They have proved very popular.

So, I would like you to spread the word to anyone you know who is a crafts person/ artist and let them know that the Museum would be interested in seeing their goods and perhaps we would be able to sell them. They can get in touch with me via the Museum just pop in and leave a note or ring me on 01903 812281.

## Membership news – Leonie Etherington

I would like to say a big thankyou to everyone who has paid their membership subscriptions so promptly, it really is appreciated.

For anyone yet to pay, a reminder will be sent out shortly, so please complete and return with payment to me at the museum as soon as you can.

And please remember to keep me updated of any change of address or contact details so we can make sure the newsletter reaches you.

## Publicity – Ray Powell

### Adopt an Artefact Steyning Museum

We have now launched our Adopt and Artefact scheme which has already attracted much interest. The money raised through this scheme helps fund important projects at the museum, such as the conservation of our collection and the purchase of important objects. Adults can adopt museum objects for £15. Children can adopt museum objects for £5.

When you adopt an object, you will receive:

- An adoption letter and an adoption certificate
- Regular email newsletters from the museum
- Your name on the object's label for a whole year (unless you choose to remain anonymous).

You can adopt an object for someone else, maybe as a gift - just give us their name and details so that we can prepare their adoption certificate.

Browse the list of objects from the suggested ones below and choose which one you'd like to adopt (up to three adoptions per artefact)

1. Illuminated Map of Steyning
2. Stage Dress from Elsie and Doris Waters
3. Model of L.B.S.C.R Suburban Line Train, circa 1900
4. Skeleton of Steyning Man
5. Stuffed Pet Canary c.1900

If there is something else that is on display that you want to adopt then we are happy to consider adding this to our list.

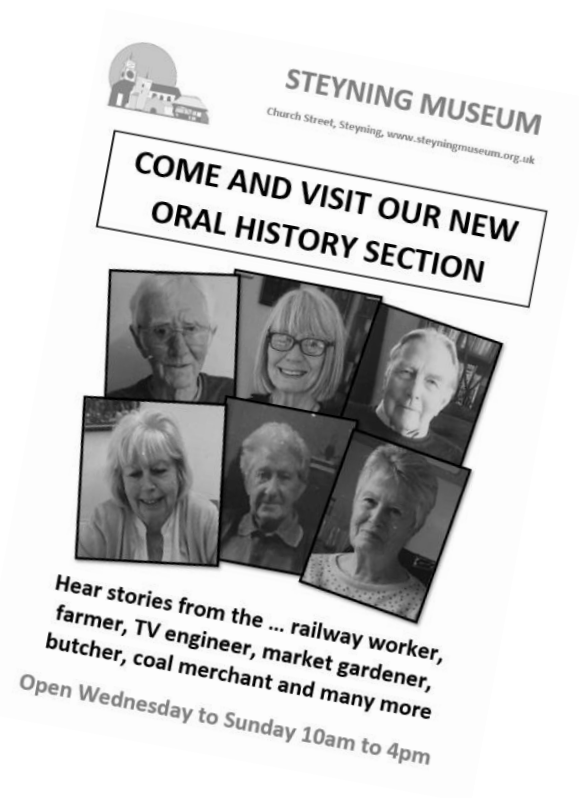
Please contact Margaret Kelly at

[adopt-an-artefact@steyningmuseum.org.uk](mailto:adopt-an-artefact@steyningmuseum.org.uk)

## News from the Oral History team

'Steyning in Living Memory' is a new exhibition by the Oral History Team. We are collecting an archive of interviews with local residents who describe Steyning, Upper Beeding and Bramber going back to the 1930s.

You can listen to clips from some recent interviews on the Listening Post next to the Carman Room.



**STEYNING MUSEUM**  
Church Street, Steyning, [www.steyningmuseum.org.uk](http://www.steyningmuseum.org.uk)

**COME AND VISIT OUR NEW  
ORAL HISTORY SECTION**

Hear stories from the ... railway worker,  
farmer, TV engineer, market gardener,  
butcher, coal merchant and many more

Open Wednesday to Sunday 10am to 4pm

The poster features a grid of six black and white portrait photographs of elderly people, representing the oral history subjects. The text is arranged in a clear, hierarchical layout, starting with the museum's name and contact information, followed by the main announcement, a list of professions, and the opening hours.

## News from the Research Hub – Lois Roemer

### Enquiries - People

Mannings family  
Beck family  
Nary Richards  
Ada and Alfred Penfold  
Langford, Churcher, Godley and Haynes families  
Archibald James Perry  
Cripps family  
Henry James Prevett

### Enquiries - Places

Elm Grove Lane  
The Tinder Box  
Yew Tree Cottage, Bramber  
33 High Street  
The Town Clock

### Other

The Stonemason's Hat

## Fish and Chips contd....

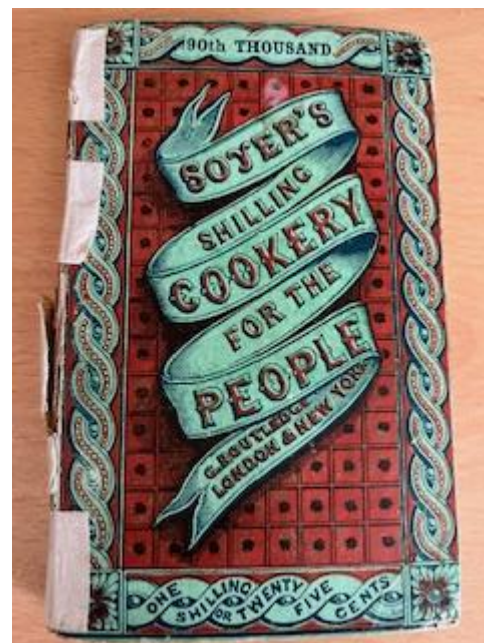
In the November Newsletter reference was made to a cookery book 'Soyer's Shilling Cookery for the People' published in 1855. Amazingly Pamela Platt of the Museum Oral History Team had a copy of this book, which she has now kindly donated to the Museum collection.

It is a very interesting book, not only for the recipes but the additional information and the advertisements it contains. The firm of Crosse & Blackwell were producing sauces, pickles and relishes, J Schweppe & Co had their lemonade, soda and magnesia waters and several firms advertising on the strength of their having taken part in the Great Exhibition at the Crystal Palace. Soyer also advertised his own line in cookware and cooking stoves, the first celebrity chef!

The author of the book, Alexis Soyer (1810 – 1858) is no less interesting, born in France and trained as a chef in Paris he came to Britain in 1830 and became chef to the Duke of Cambridge, and he prepared breakfast for Queen Victoria on the day of her coronation. In 1847, concerned about the Irish Famine, he wrote to the government and was authorised to travel to Dublin where he set up soup and meat kitchens. In 1855 he wrote to The Times offering to travel to the Crimea at his own expense to organise food for the army and he also worked with Florence Nightingale supplying food for the hospitals.

He died in 1858 at St John's Wood in London and is buried in Kensal Green Cemetery.

Sources: Florence Nightingale Museum Online, Soyer's Shilling cookery for the People





## Avenue Steyning, Montreal

Ray Powell, Museum Publicity Officer, was on a visit to Montreal late last year when he discovered that there was a road named Avenue Steyning in the Golden Square Mile area of the city. There is only one building in Avenue Steyning, so named in 1913, when the McConnell House was being built there for John Watson McConnell (1877 – 1963) a sugar refiner, newspaper publisher, humanitarian and philanthropist. In 2019 the building was valued at \$40 million and said to be the most expensive residential property in Montreal. Among the people who stayed at the McConnell House at various times are Winston Churchill and Queen Elizabeth II, where else would they stay but in 'Steyning'!

There is a plan afoot to find other places in the world where there is a street, or building, or park or anything with the name Steyning attached to it and to make a map for the Museum. So when any of you go travelling please keep your eyes open and let us know if you find anything.

Sources: Mansion Global, Google Maps

