



MUSEUM NEWS: SUCCESSFUL SPRING EVENTS & LAUNCH OF GODMAN EXHIBITION

We enter the warmer months of the year having had a really fantastic spring season at the museum. The Gallery at Horsham Museum has had a very successful inaugural collection and visitors have loved being able to enjoy the artwork of the talented artists which we have in the area. Our holiday crafts have continued to gain in popularity and the Shelley Gallery has provided a space for people to learn more about Horsham's famous poet.



On Saturday 27 May the Frederick DuCane Godman exhibition opened and we have had a really positive response from both members of the public and the supporters and lenders who helped to bring it all together. The exhibition has been curated by Assistant Curator, George Graham, and I hope everybody will be able to visit and find out more about Godman, his life and achievements. The Friends sponsored the exhibition and made possible the return of the ceramics from South Lodge which are on loan to us from the British Museum collection. Working with larger museums is an exciting opportunity but involves a lot of planning and additional measures to be put in place. It is fantastic that a selection of these works have returned 'home' for the summer and I am very grateful that the Friends have been able to make this happen. We will be hosting an open evening

for members of the Friends of Horsham Museum, from 5-8pm on Friday 18 August. If you want to attend then please RSVP by Monday 14 August to: museum@horsham.gov.uk.

Although the exhibition looks quite effortless in place it has been a large focus of the museum staff's work for the last 18 months but especially since the beginning of 2023. The culmination of this was the Thursday before opening when the objects from the Royal Society and British Museum arrived from London. The big question was whether the British Museum object crate would fit through a doorway into the building. We had a plan A, B and C route for this and after realising plan A through the main entrance would not be possible (the crate did fit through the door but couldn't make the turn in the porch), we had success with plan B. After that it was very straightforward. The objects were condition checked so that our team and the lenders agreed their condition at arrival, and we managed to mount the British Museum tiles onto the plinth without a single error in measurement. It was a joy to work with the Royal Society and the British Museum. We are really pleased with how the objects look in the gallery.

Following the success of the Coronation event (a full summary is given by Rick Domas on page 2) we will be putting on 'Friday Lates' where visitors will be able to enjoy the museum during the evening on selected Fridays from June-September. Join us for a drink and to enjoy live entertainment on Friday 16 June, Friday 14 July, Friday 4 August and Friday 15 September. We will also have a special 'Godman Week' from 8-11 August with talks and workshops related to the exhibition's theme. We are putting the final touches to the programme, but full details will be live on our website by the end of June.

We hope to welcome many Friends to the museum over the summer months.

Nikki Caxton

MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

We continue apace since the issue of our last Newsletter.

A slightly more streamlined Committee was voted in at the recent A.G.M. Steve Payne and I are now "in post", Audrey Coventry has relinquished the Secretary's role but remains a guiding light as a Committee member, and we have said farewell to Edwina Willsher. During the second half of the A.G.M. we met Lesley Ward from Horsham Gingerbread and those of us in attendance will fondly remember her largesse with a variety of tasty samples.

At last we have had the Woolbeding Gardens coach trip and I am very pleased that it was so successful. In the end, we had a waiting list to join. Those on board enjoyed a lovely afternoon and we're now scouting for locations for another excursion, or even excursions, in 2024.

Right now, the Friends are one of the proud Sponsors of the Museum's current exhibition which celebrates the life and achievements of ornithologist and collector Frederick duCane Godman who resided in what is now the South Lodge Hotel. Do visit, it's in situ until 23 September and has many special exhibits on loan from external sources. We hope to work closely with Nikki and the Museum in the future to provide similar support as new Exhibitions are planned for the community to enjoy.

Elsewhere in the newsletter, you will see that Dr. Janet Pennington will be visiting us on Wednesday 4 October to reveal the secrets of old Steyning. She's an experienced speaker and a celebrated local historian so we look forward to meeting her.

The events calendar for 2024 is well under construction, and proposals for 2025 will be considered soon.

I would also commend you to visit our brand new Friends website at www.friendsofhorshammuseum.co.uk

This is really a fine piece of work, constructed single-handedly by our own Steve Payne, and is stuffed with news, articles and useful information. Steve updates it regularly so do keep dipping in.

You will also notice that we've been asked by our colleagues, the Friends of Horsham Park, to join in and support an initiative to write the history of the Park from a variety of perspectives (see page 9 for details). We'll see how we can help once the level of interest is identified.

So, lively times and it's good to have so much positivity going forward.

Enjoy your summer.

Till next time.

Paul French

GODMAN EXHIBITION OPENING EVENT



Pictured (from left): Chairman of the HDC David Skipp, Museum Curator Nikki Caxton, Assistant Curator George Graham, Friends Chairman Paul French

The Museum's major summer exhibition, Frederick DuCane Godman: The Legacy of a Collector, opened in May.

It is an important event for the Friends as we

have provided funds to help mount what is a comprehensive and informative look back at a remarkable man.

There was a special preview a day before it opened to the public, at which members of the newly-elected district council attended, along with relatives of Godman, and the Friends committee.

After a welcome from Curator Nikki Caxton, Friends Chairman Paul French gave a short speech in which he outlined how the Friends continue to support the museum in its various ventures.

The new Chairman of Horsham District Council David Skipp then spoke of the value of the Museum's role in the town, thanked the various people who had worked on the exhibition and singled out Assistant Curator George Graham for curating the project.

Steve Payne

A GOOD TIME WAS HAD BY ALL...

Particularly the many youngsters and their parents, siblings and friends who inundated the Hurst Room on Sunday, May 7, to create “a crown fit for a king (or queen)”. The crown-making was part of the Coronation festivities at the Horsham Museum and Art Gallery over the three-day Coronation weekend, and every newly-crowned “king” or “queen” completed his or her regal attire with a smile from ear to ear!

The crown-making was only part of the festive events over the weekend, which included a journey through English royalty over the museum’s free Monarchy Trail and a garden party on Sunday, May 7. Thanks to the museum’s garden committee and volunteers, the garden looked lush, trimmed, and ready for the big event.

The garden party consisted of coffee/tea/cakes/sweets provided by the canteen Rustic Mobile Bars parked at the back of the garden, and Britpop classics played in the front formal garden by the well-trained and entertaining string quartet ‘Fortune Strings’. For those of a certain age (ahem!), the songs brought back pleasant memories of earlier days, and I was so inspired on several songs that I tried out my rusty two-step with my wife Mary. Hands down, she’s the dancer in this family!

It takes a village to mount such an event, and kudos to Nikki, George, Helen and Emma Locke of the Horsham District Council who very ably organized and managed the weekend’s festivities. Kudos and Thank Yous also to the band of merry museum volunteers who assisted in making for a very enjoyable Coronation weekend: Deborah Dunn, Martin Turner, Maria Mehlin, Joy Langridge, Hazel Salvage, Sandra Smith, Margaret Andrews, Katrina Rosen, and Julie Leach.

Rick Domas



Museum strings at the Garden Party. © Toby Phillips Photography

COMING SOON:

DR. JANET PENNINGTON - AN ILLUSTRATED TOUR ROUND OLD STEYNING



Do join us on Wednesday 4 October 2023 at 7.30pm in the Wesley Hall, London Road Methodist Church and meet well-know local historian, Dr Janet Pennington.

With her renowned audio visual presentation, Janet will be guiding us through the streets of old Steyning whilst looking at its remarkable past which stretches back over a thousand years.

Janet has an admirable reputation as a speaker and local author so we look forward to welcoming her in what should be a very enjoyable and informative evening.

Members and Guests: admission £5 cash only.

Paul French

PROFILE

Helen Leary, Visitor Services Officer



Helen is the Visitor Services Officer at Horsham Museum & Art Gallery. She joined in late 2022. She grew up in Haslemere, Surrey. In 2016, she moved to Liverpool, where she experienced a fusion of work in cultural institutions.

After studying History of Art at A Level, she was keen to continue it in higher education and explore what the northwest of England's field of contemporary art had to offer. During this period, she worked for the World Museum, The Bluecoat,

Liverpool's contemporary arts centre, the Open Eye photography gallery Tate Liverpool and volunteered at cultural events such as Light Night and Liverpool Biennial. She also took on the role as an intern in 2018 at the Peggy Guggenheim Collection in Venice, Italy, where she presented talks and managed museum operations within the team.

Her first degree centred on research in contemporary Indigenous Australian art that tackled topics of land rights, identity and delved into anthropological understandings of material culture. This time at university gave her an opportunity to collaborate with students from Liverpool School of Art and Design to produce an exhibition on the climate crisis. She then further investigated humans' relations to the environment and climate change throughout her master's degree in Exhibition Studies, that also expanded her comprehension of curatorial theories.

Following graduation in 2021, she enjoyed working closely with volunteers at a community project called The Shed in Dorset and continued working with volunteers in her role as a Communications Assistant at a London-based environmental charity, working with communities to conserve rivers.

She is now thrilled to call Horsham Museum her home and is ambitious to support the developments of family activities and visitor engagement.

HORSHAM MUSEUM SOCIETY 100 YEARS AGO

The July 'ramble' was taken to West Grinstead where Canon Smith conducted us over the Ancient church and described this most interesting settlement where no village environs the churchyard and the dead seem the only occupants. A short walk through the lanes in showery weather prepared us to enjoy the excellent tea at the Burrell Arms, and a longer one after was taken through the grounds of the new Knepp Castle.

Guildford was chosen for the annual excursion and the sights of the town were visited. After tea there was a walk along the river and a photograph was taken. The third ramble was to the museum of Mr J G Millias whose travels have secured him a fine collection of animals etc which he gladly showed to the 35 members and friends who gathered to view them.

In April a party of 15 went by bus and bicycles to Shermanbury. The showery weather, so much a feature of the 1923 Spring, prevented several others from making the attempt. Floods were rather prevalent. Tea was provided at the Bull Inn and a paper on 'Michael Fairless' (whose house was inspected) was read by Mr S Mitchell and much appreciated. The ride home was in fine weather, and the memorable day came too soon to a close.

A forest ramble is booked in June for young folks and good walkers.

Liz Vaughan

MUSEUM GARDEN & CENTENARY GARDENS 2023

It has been some time since the management changes at the Museum and the COVID lockdowns. The garden team was asked to take on the maintenance of the Centenary garden after Terri's retirement. During this period of time, and despite the two lockdown summer periods when we were not permitted to be there, both gardens have been reclaimed and maintained by an excellent team of volunteers. New team members were sought because of the extra work of getting it all back under control, plus the maintenance of the additional Centenary garden area, and to keep all of it looking good. Heather remains as team leader, but the team now continues with Keith Fontyn, Carole Leonard, Adrian Holmes, Jackie Jaffe, Sophie Rose and Mark Crane. All are very knowledgeable, happy gardeners who have worked really hard so visitors can enjoy these peaceful, lovely gardens throughout the year.

As with any gardens, the team are planning and making alterations to the planting in order to keep up with climate change issues. For example, Adrian has planned an arid garden to the left of the barn, where we won't need to water even during hot spells of weather. An outline of his plan is that it will feature plants from the world's dry climates so visitors can see what's good without watering. They will be watered this year to ensure they establish well - after that they'll be on their own and we'll see how they fare! This plan is in progress, and I am sure visitors will be delighted to see other improvements and changes as the months roll by. Mark is taking on clearing the walled courtyard where the toilets are situated, and will make that area look more attractive with some planting. Over the last few years, we have lost some of the old roses, but have now planted three new ones: one in the Archive bed, and two more on the right of the barn, where there are already two other lovely established roses. We are looking forward to seeing these bloom from May into June.

Heather Glenny, Garden Team Leader



Adrian & his arid plants bed



The Camellia & Japanese Quince flowering

PRESENTATION BY LESLEY WARD OF HORSHAM GINGERBREAD



The Friends were very fortunate to have a talk by Horsham Gingerbread Bakehouse founder Lesley Ward after the AGM business had concluded on April 12.

Lesley, a good friend of the Museum, very rarely gives talks, so those attending at the Wesley Hall had a real treat.

Her generous supply of samples gave everyone a great insight into the business as she explained how her interest in gingerbread began.

In the time of Percy Bysshe Shelley Horsham was famous for its gingerbread and the local poet wrote to his aunt asking her to buy some to take on a picnic.

However, by 1917 the last local gingerbread maker had died and with him went his recipe.

Decades later, Lesley and the then Horsham Museum curator Jeremy Knight re-discovered how to make the famous sweet treat.

It took a year to perfect the recipe, but once this was done Horsham Gingerbread Bakehouse was born and has flourished ever since.

Lesley has added various biscuits to her range, all based on the same ethos of using local produce and historically inspired recipes.

Lesley brought along several fascinating old recipe books which she had collected over the years. They all included ways to bake gingerbread and revealed it used to be a somewhat haphazard approach!

Overall, a fascinating talk with plenty of gingerbread and biscuits to enjoy!

Steve Payne

THE BIG ARCHIVE

As the Millennium approached the WSRO decided to mark the event with a competition (and substantial prizes) in which local groups were to provide a picture of their community in the year 2000. They suggested five categories - Photographs, Video and Oral History, a Scrapbook, Creative writing and two-dimensional items such as paintings and drawings.

The Horsham Museum Society Local History group decided to compile a Scrapbook and fourteen members chose their topics.

This was a very different project to the usual historical research - the researchers had to find information for things as they were now, not a hundred years ago.

The first section has articles on population, domestic architecture, water supply and changes in the economic function of the town in 2000.

The second section looked at local government, magistrates courts, state education, religious organisations, medical services, emergency services, transport and cultural activities. In the third section a few people chose their own interests: Scouting, Air Training Corps, Horsham in Bloom and Horsham Museum Society.

Each researcher chose their own methods of assembling information - with additional historical information or not as they pleased. The religious organisations section shows a photograph of all the chapels and churches in the town with information from a questionnaire. All the state schools provided prospectuses which give guidance to parents, while the County provided statistics on pupil numbers, expenditure and results.

Each topic is presented as a booklet, the only guide lines imposed were related to presentation and labelling. Everything was stored in acid free paper and sleeves.

The complete Archive is in the West Sussex Record Office but a second copy can be found in Horsham Museum although it lacks some of the photographs and the printed booklets.

The Local History Group won the principal prize and was entertained by the County Council at a reception in Chichester.

Looking over the Archive in 2023 it is quite surprising how much has changed in the town.

Liz Vaughan

INTRODUCING THE NEW FRIENDS WEBSITE

The Friends now have their own website at www.friendsofhorshammuseum.co.uk.

However, some of you may be asking the simple question - why?

It's true that we had (and still have) a presence on the Museum's own website, but having our own site enables us to showcase the work of the Friends as never before!

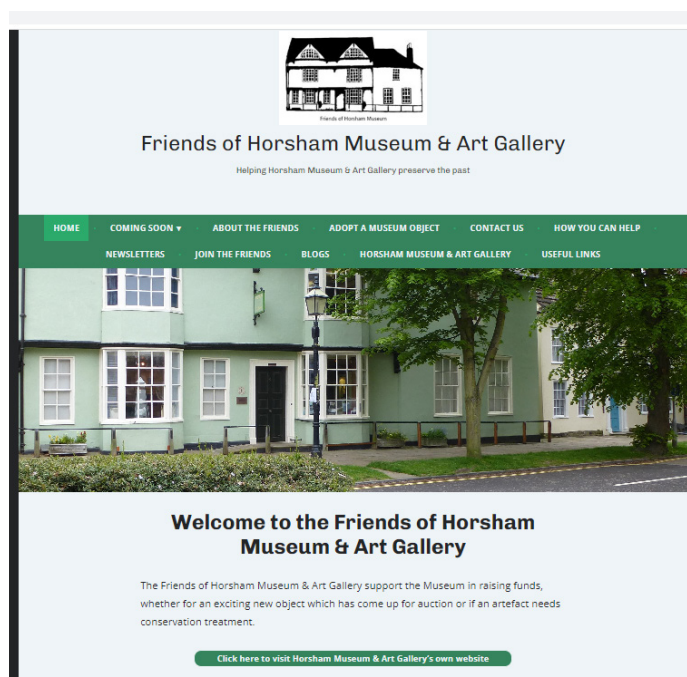
In order to attract new members we have had to embrace the digital world. Having Facebook and Instagram pages was a solid start and we've been able to spread the word about what we do.

However, we needed somewhere that people could access everything they needed to know about the Friends, and the Museum website could only scratch the surface for us.

I have created a site that, hopefully, brings all the strands together in much more detail; what the Friends do, how the public can help, upcoming events, ways of contacting the Friends, as well as a place to access our constitution and other documents.

We also have a 'blogs' section. For those who don't know, blogs are just basically articles of interest, written in a chatty style. They are considered very important as they encourage people to visit your site and they are very popular with search engines (eg Google).

So far, our blogs have been extended versions of some of the Museum's Facebook posts (eg, history of the Barn and the first plane landing in Horsham in 1914), but we can include anything relevant.



Of course, our site has to be a companion to the Museum's website, so we have various links between the two.

The new FHM site will be ever evolving. We will add new pages as and when needed and I have already tweaked parts of the website as I continue my journey on what has been a steep learning curve!

Looking ahead, the hope is always that we can encourage more people to join the Friends and help the Museum. I believe our new website will play a vital role in this aim!

Steve Payne

NEW CABINET BY TOM HOUSTON

In the last newsletter we announced that a TV screen in the Museum now shows slides all about the Friends and the work we do. Since then, and thanks to Museum volunteer Tom Houston, there's now a splendid cabinet underneath so that various promotional leaflets can be left on it for the public to take away. There's also plenty of room inside the cabinet so we can keep all the literature tidy and safe for future use. Despite the often strange angles of the Museum's walls, Tom's woodwork skills mean that the cabinet slots in very well and it's been painted to blend in perfectly!

Steve Payne



A TRIP TO WOOLBEDING



A number of the Friends and their guests spent a sunny day in May enjoying the beautiful and magnificent scenery at the National Trust's Woolbeding Gardens, near Midhurst.

Organised by Friends chairman Paul French, the trip was blessed with sunny weather that showed off the colourful plants and flowers at their best.

The gardens are only open a couple of days a week, for a few months and there is no car parking, so Paul organised a minibus there and back which circumnavigated various road closures!

The gardens at Woolbeding are a fairly new project, thanks to businessman, philanthropist and art collector Simon Sainsbury and his life partner Stewart Grimshaw who, along with top garden and architectural designers, have created the astonishing display over the past 50 years.

Originally owned by the Lascelles family, Woolbeding Estate was given to the National Trust in 1957, a total of 1,102 acres, 26 of which are devoted to the gardens.

Since 1972 Woolbeding has been leased to Simon Sainsbury, and subsequently his partner (the house

remains a private residence).

in the past, Woolbeding has seen various famous residents and visitors, such as the Sussex poet Charlotte Smith, Lord Robert Spencer and Benjamin Disraeli.

The gardens now consist of three distinct sections: the area closest to the house that has been arranged in a series of formal garden rooms; the second section, designed as a less formal Pleasure Ground; and finally the Silk Route Garden and Glasshouse.

Arguably, the most dramatic sight, though, is the ten-sided contemporary glasshouse, which dramatically unfolds (sadly, it wasn't opened during our visit).

It's reached via the meandering Silk Route of fascinating flowers and plants.

After so much walking, the tea shop was a welcome sight for a refreshing drink and a slice of cake!

The gardens are so big that a return visit is a must and, who knows, it might be worth making this a regular fixture for the Friends' calendar?

Steve Payne



CELEBRATING 100 YEARS OF HORSHAM PARK

In 2028 we will be celebrating 100 years of public ownership of Horsham Park. In 1928 the first section was purchased from the Hurst family “to keep and preserve the open space for the benefit, enjoyment and recreation of the Town and Parish of Horsham forever.” We are all thankful for the Council’s foresight in purchasing the park - imagine getting through COVID without it or not having this wonderful green space at the heart of our town!

The park has a fascinating history which provides glimpses into societal changes over the last 100 years. However, this history is not fully documented, much is anecdotal and most is tucked away in archives or in residents’ memories.

To celebrate the park’s 100th anniversary, the Friends of Horsham Park and Friends of Horsham Museum are planning a joint project to research and write a book in time for the centenary. The park is a community asset and we want this to be a community project, reflecting the interests and experiences of Horsham residents. We will mix archive material with people’s memories and photos.

The initial plan for the book is to cover:

- A historical perspective on who owned the land, the enclosure of Horsham common, the sale and gift of the park to Horsham Urban District Council. This will also include the history of Park House and its buildings.
- The landscape, pond, gardens and trees - how these have been shaped by events, hurricanes and changing tastes.
- The changing recreational use of the park over the decades - from stoolball to skateparks.

- The gardeners, people and organisations who have had an impact on the park we enjoy today
- Imagining the future - aspirations for the park for the next 100 years.
- We are looking for people and local organisations who would like to get involved in helping us collate material and shape the book. There are lots of ways you can get involved:
- Share your memories and photos.
- Research Horsham Museum’s archive - we are looking for 1-2 people to help with this. They will be trained in how to search the database and retrieve information that may be of interest.
- Assist with researching the Council archives housed at West Sussex Record Office, Chichester (we’ve made a start on this!)
- Research the Hurst family archives and estate papers also housed at West Sussex Record Office, Chichester.
- We have a couple of writers on board, but there will be opportunities to join the team and, working with an editor, write a chapter of the book.

If you would like to share your memories or get involved, please contact Paul French, Chairman of Friends of Horsham Museum & Art Gallery via fhmag1893@gmail.com, who will then liaise with me.

*Sally Sanderson
Chair, Friends of Horsham Park*



FORTHCOMING EXHIBITIONS & EVENTS



Exhibition | Frederick DuCane Godman
27 May 2023 - 23 September 2023 | Craft & Art Gallery



Friends event | Dr Andrew Hodgson talk on Percy Bysshe Shelley
12 July 2023, 7.30pm

Wesley Hall, London Road Methodist Church, Members admission £5. Guests admission £7.50. Cash only.



Exhibition | Summer collection
8 July 2023 - 28 October 2023 | The Gallery at Horsham Museum

Events | Friday Lates Programme
June 2023 - September 2023 | Museum open 10am - 5pm
Refreshments from 5pm, entertainment from 6pm

- Friday 16 June: Morris Dancing from Broadwood Morris and Mythago Troop
- Friday 14 July: Flute Choir
- Friday 4 August: Glenn Palmer - Spanish Guitarist
- Friday 15 September: String Quartet



Events | A summer of history
Every Tuesday - Friday, from 25 July - 1 September 2023 | 10.30am - 3pm
Craft activities for children.
Please note there are no activities 8-11 August.



Friends event | Museum Open Evening
18 August 2023, 5 - 8pm
If you would like to attend then please RSVP by Monday 14 August to:
museum@horsham.gov.uk. See p1 for details.



Events | Godman week
8 - 11 August 2023
Workshops and talks - More details end of June.

Friends event | Dr. Janet Pennington: An Illustrated Tour round Old Steyning
4 October 2023, 7.30pm | Wesley Hall, London Road Methodist Church
Members and Guests: admission £5 cash only.

FHM COMMITTEE

Jenny Cheal, Pam French, Steve Payne, Maureen Radbourne, Audrey Coventry
Chair: Paul French | **Secretary:** Vacant | **Treasurer:** Vacant
Newsletter Editor: Gail Chapman
Contact email: fhmag1893@gmail.com | **Friends website:** www.friendsofhorshammuseum.co.uk
Contact address: Horsham Museum, 9 Causeway, Horsham, West Sussex, RH12 1HE

You can support Horsham Museum & Art Gallery by making cash or card donations, Adopting an Object, joining the Horsham District Council lottery, registering with www.easyfundraising.org.uk to do your shopping or by leaving a gift in your will

www.horshammuseum.org & www.horshamposters.com
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