

# The Friends of Henfield Museum

## Winter 2018-19



### The Legend of the White Hare

"In the Limekiln Lane I saw the "White Hare of Woodmancote" in broad daylight; it was a hot summer's day in the sixties, as I was passing down this lane, out from the Furze field on my left, just in front of me, came a very large white hare, being well able to run, I gave chase at my topmost speed, of course she soon distanced me, ran into the Church Field on my right, along the Church Path a few yards and then disappeared into a dry hedge where there was not cover enough to hide a mouse. Of course my surprise knew no bounds, and I realised that a very serious thing had happened to me, for 'a white hare had-crossed my path'. So wrote 'an old inhabitant' of Henfield in an article for the Parish Magazine of 1916, reproduced in 'A Tour of our Commons', for sale in our Museum. This quote inspired Will Green to paint a picture of the White Hare, a copy of which

*Will Green, 2018*



can be seen within Henfield Museum.

In Celtic mythology and folklore the hare was seen as mysterious and magical, with supernatural powers. This lonely creature was admired for strength, speed and was noted for being active at night and associated with the moon. Eostre was a goddess also associated with the moon, and was also a shape-shifter, taking the shape of a hare at each full moon. All hares were sacred to her, and acted as her messengers.

Julius Caesar, when visiting Britain, recorded that

Eóstre - Celtic hare goddess that rabbits and hares were taboo foods to the Celtic tribes. In Ireland, it was said that eating a hare was like eating one's own grandmother -- perhaps due to the sacred connection between hares and various goddesses, warrior queens, and female faeries, or else due to the belief that old "wise women" could shape-shift into hares by moonlight.

Hares appear in legends in many cultures around the world. There is the Algonquin Great Hare from North America, who brought summer to defeat winter, the hare from Ceylon, who threw himself into the fire to feed Buddha and was rewarded by being placed on the moon, the African trickster hare, who become the American trickster Brer Rabbit when he crossed the Atlantic, and the famously fast hare from Aesop's fables. There is also the Indian hare, who tricked a lion into fighting his own reflection (rather than eating the hare!).

*Article continues on insert...*



## From the Chairman

Dear Friends, I hope 2019 finds you well! I would like to sincerely thank you all for your ongoing support - it is very much appreciated and helps to provide the museum with the community bolster it needs as the museum seeks to remain both relevant and accessible. This year being that of both the Horsham District Year of Culture and the Henfield Festival, an excellent opportunity arises to take forward and publicise history projects in the Henfield area while also reaching people who may not have engaged with the museum or local history more generally in the past.

We have a number of events & visits planned this year (see bottom right). Some ongoing projects will be displayed at the annual parish meeting on the 5th of March and can be viewed before and after the meeting Q&A - please do come along! At the AGM on the 28th, after official business, Stephanie Richards will be updating us on costume - her new display, Monochrome, is exhibited now in the museum.

Enjoyable recent visits were made to Christ's

Robert Gordon

Hospital School & Museum, East Grinstead Museum and in November to the Brighton Old Prison Cells Museum & Town Hall.

Our leading article takes a look at one of the oldest continuous folkloric traditions; that of the hare - grateful thanks to Rose Sharp. Thanks go also to Peter Bates for his memories of one of our museum objects - the Tilley Iron.

New greeting cards & prints of museum paintings are planned - please look out for signs of these in the coming months.

We continue to look for help with Museum and Friends publicity. If you can, or know of someone who might want to help either as committee Publicity Officer or perhaps a younger person looking to gain experience of publicity & social media in the shorter term, please do get in touch. *RG*



*The Henfield Festival and Horsham District Year of Culture 2019 logos*



## From the Curator

The three temporary exhibitions in 2018 were "Recent Acquisitions", "100 *Suffrage exhibition* years of Henfield Women & the Vote" and "Royal Doulton Shakespeare Ware Plates". If you know of anyone who has a collection they would like to display at the museum please put them in contact with me.



Stephanie Richards has been busy with the dress collection and has shown items to three groups this year. Various items have been posted on her blog, and have received a lot of comments.

The museum has opened its doors once again on special occasions such as the Village Evening in April and the Garden & Art Weekend in June which attracted 280 visitors in total. Sadly visitor numbers overall continue to drop; last year's number was 1738, 424 down on the year before. It has not been helped by the falloff in support for the Monday Market in The Henfield Hall. I am now placing arti-

Alan Barwick

cles in the BN5 magazine on a monthly basis, which is also going onto to their Facebook page, to reach a wider audience.

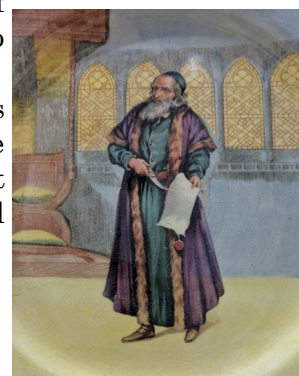
Two U3A groups visited the museum and came on guided walks around the village. St. Peter's School visited the museum twice to learn about the history of Henfield, and Henfield in WW2. I emailed other local schools offering our services but did not receive any replies.

The oral history project continues its good work with Rose Sharp and other volunteers.

At the time of writing this report I still require a volunteer to do a regular duty on the first Saturday afternoon of the month, and one to do a first Friday morning.

There are lots of things which need doing in the museum, so if you want to get more involved please speak to me. *AB*

*Shylock, from Shakespeare's Merchant of Venice, as interpreted by Royal Doulton*



## The Sussex Dialect: Glossary 2

Here are some more largely lost words of the Sussex dialect, compiled in the 19th century by the Reverend Parrish (his explanations *italic*).

Key: e, w, m (was mainly used east, west, or mid Sussex).

AGWAIN. Going.

AMMUT-CASTES; ant-hills, from Old English æmete/West Germanic emaitjon; literally 'the off cutter'. *This form of plural is invariably retained in words ending with st, as postes, nestes. A Sussex man would see nothing absurd in saying;*

*"I saw the ghostesses,  
Sitting on the postesses,  
Eating of their toastesses,  
And fighting with their fist-  
esses."*

BATFOWLER. *One who takes birds at night with a large folding net on long poles, called a batfowling net.*

Gon: *"You are gentlemen of brave metal; you would lift the moon out of her sphere, if she would continue in it five weeks without changing."*

Seb: *"We would so, and then go a batfowling."*

Shakespeare, The Tempest, Act ii. sc. I.

CUCKOO GATE, m. The gate now commonly known as a kissing-gate.

FLUTTERGRUB, m. *A man who takes a delight in working about in the dirt, and getting into every possible mess.*

KELLYCK, w. A romp.

PEST. A common exclamation.

*"What the pest has become of the watering pot?"*

RIDDLE, w. [*Hriddel, Ang. Sax.*] *A large sieve for sifting wheat in a barn.*

SEVERALS, m. *Portions of common assigned for a term to a particular proprietor; the other commoners waiving for a time their right of common over them. "My lips are no common, though several they be."*

Shakespeare, Love's Labour Lost, Act ii. sc. I.

SLIRRUP. *To lap up any liquid noisily.*

Ref. Parrish, W.D, 1875, 'A dictionary of the Sussex dialect and collection of provincialisms in use in the county of Sussex'. RG

## Photo Gallery

Running from 1908-1914 as part of the enthusiast coaching season, A.G. Vanderbilt's 'Venture' stagecoach en route from London - Brighton, enters Golden Square (after a stop at the White Hart). Vanderbilt died on the Lusitania, having given his life jacket to a lady and her baby who lacked theirs.



The Friends visit to the East Grinstead Museum Guinea Pig Club exhibit & the new McIndoe Statue, July 2018.



## What's coming up?

**Display at Annual Parish Meeting, 5th March 2019**

The Friends and Museum will be putting on a display of current projects with time to look before and after the main business of the Parish Meeting.

**The Friends AGM, Thurs 28th March 2019**

Official business and an update on the year followed by a talk on the Museum's costume collection and new display by Costume Curator Stephanie Richards.

**Visits/Talks later in 2019**

*Brighton Museum tour: early summer*

*A History of Henfield, talk by A. Barwick, Autumn*

*Henfield & the Bishopp Family in the Civil War, talk by R. Gordon, mid summer*

*100 Objects Exhibit Sept*

## Henfield Museum

The Henfield Hall, Coopers Way  
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West Sussex  
BN5 9DB

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### Museum opening times:

|           |                              |
|-----------|------------------------------|
| Monday    | 1000 to 1200                 |
| Tuesday   | 1000 to 1200                 |
| Wednesday | 1430 to 1630                 |
| Thursday  | 1000 to 1200                 |
| Friday    | 1000 to 1200                 |
| Saturday  | 1000 to 1200<br>1430 to 1600 |

*Other times by arrangement.*

*Shut Bank Holiday w/e & between Christmas/New Year*

## The Story of a Museum Object - The Tilley Iron

The Tilley iron which is normally on permanent display in the museum with its original (somewhat dilapidated) box, belonged to my mother and was purchased in the early 1950s. We lived on a 48 acre small farm in the Weald of Kent and had no mains electricity until 1962. The Tilley iron replaced a lot of old flat irons that were heated on a paraffin oil stove.

We also had a lot of Tilley lamps, some of which were used in the home (along with Aladdin lamps, torches and candles), but more in the chicken sheds to encourage more egg

production. With no electricity visitors often complained that the chicken had better lighting than we did in the bungalow. Tilley irons were manufactured near Leatherhead and many thousands were exported to Africa and other countries where mains electricity was sparse.

PETER J  
BATES



## From the Oral History Archive - Keith Burchell on Brickmaking

'We've all got brick dust in the blood'.

Keith Burchell, from Warnham, gave a fascinating insight into brick making. This is of particular interest to Henfield as we had a flourishing brickworks on the way to Small Dole, and the ponds on Broadmere Common were formed by the excavation of clay to make bricks.

Keith said "my grandfather started brick making before the 20th century began. The bricks then were all made by hand - the clay was dug by hand and people were feeding the mixers. Some of the processes of preparing the clay for brick making were driven by horses: the horses would walk round the pan of clay in a circle, water was added, and it came out of the end underneath and was put on

to the handmakers' tables. You can see a handmakers' table we donated at the Singleton Museum. For one week a year they give people the opportunity to make bricks by hand, by throwing the clot of clay into the mould, and turning it out to be dried and then fired. The drying cycle is about forty hours: you can't dry things made by clay fast or they shrink too quickly and the migrating moisture from the centre tends to form cracks. The bricks were dried outside in the summer in 'hacks', canopies under corrugated sheets. It was a seasonal affair in those days.

In the very early days if you were building houses in a particular area, because we are sat on Weald clay which is a brick-making clay, you would set up

the brickmaking tables and so on close to where you were building the houses.

In my day there were steam-engines which drove through a rope pulling system with line shafts through the making sheds. Each individual machine was driven with a belt from pulleys on the line shaft. They were huge steam engines: 750 horsepower. There was an award, a shield that was displayed on a shelf, for the best kept boiler shed and the best kept steam engine in the company. If you were silly enough to venture into the steam engine shed with dirty boots on, the chap who used to walk around doing nothing else but polishing and lubricating the engine would give you the big E - you were told to go!"