

# The Friends of Henfield Museum, Winter 2024-25



## The Plough Inn, Montague Penley c. 1860

by Robert Gordon



Man taken to court and fined for illegally parking van in front of the Plough Inn...

*'Defendant, a licensed hawker, was summoned for leaving his horse and van in Henfield Street, on the 14th Jul last, without a person in charge. He pleaded not guilty, and stated his wife and three children were in it the whole time. The police-constable said they were not, and that it remained in the middle of the road in front of the Plough Inn for more than half an hour.'*

The case was heard at the Petty Sessions in Steyning on Monday Aug 31 - P. C. G. Egerton v. Henry Beeny (alias Atifield). The magistrates casting judgement that day were Major Sandham, G. J. Gibson, Esq., H. Ingram, Esq., Col. Lloyd, and H. P. Crofts, Esq.

The defendant Mr. Beeny was 'convicted in the penalty of 5s., and 17s. 6d costs', with the case

being reported in the Sussex Advertiser on 8th September, 1857.

The characterful pencil and crayon drawing initialled 'MP' is by Montague Penley (1799-1881) and shows the pub in the winter. It is undated, but would have been taken about the time of the great van-troversy described above. The landlord named on the sign was John Hyder, who had worked as a groom and coachman before moving to the pub trade. 1855 found him up the road at the Bull, moving to the Plough by 1859 with wife Ann and a servant/barmaid. Perhaps it is John sweeping up the snow here, watched by his small black dog. From trade directories we know he took on the license in 1858-9 and was still there as of 1867, but had gone by 1874. *Continued on page 5...*

## From the Chairman

Dear Friends - greetings after another busy year! I would firstly like to thank you for your continued support, and especially our committee for their continued service. Our membership currently stands at 90 (equating to 118 Friends total).

We had good sales of greeting cards, books and prints at the Charities Fair, with a healthy budget allowing several projects to move forwards. A greeting card set featuring just the popular Golden Square image went on sale for Christmas.

In April the Mudlarks of London event was extremely popular. Resultantly, it returns to Sussex at King's Church Lewes on 22nd March - another chance to see some real treasures! Our Shoreham Airport visit also went down well, with two groups visiting the museum and touring behind the scenes. At the AGM and Christmas, we were treated to fine talks from our Vice Chairman Peter Bates on 'Farming in the '40s and '50s' & 'AmDram ProDram' (talks are also audio recorded) and some fine fare from our volunteers in the kitchen! A post-Covid re-awakening of the oral histories project, led by Rose Sharp; with the help of new volunteers, the guidance forms have been updated. We have also backed up the recordings to the museum Google cloud, also increasing their accessibility. The recordings range from the 1970s to now, being formerly on tape to those recently recorded via Zoom or mobile phone.

2024 also saw 3D scanning of further objects from the collection, to be progressed when time & funding available. The first object scanned, the Bronze Age palstave axe, also returned from Exeter University's new lab, where it was one of the first scanned and written up. Scanning of the museum image collection will also proceed in 2025 with help from Friends funds.

## From the Curator

Many of the photographs from the museum collection have appeared on the Henfield Photos Facebook page throughout the year, and we have been putting photos on our own Facebook page. Stephanie Richards, our Costume Curator, also contributes to the museum Facebook Page.

Visitor numbers to the museum last year totalled 1710 which is an increase of 200 from the previous year. As



Cubs being shown around the museum, Oct 2024

## Robert Gordon

Across 2024, the museum website received ~5000 users and over 11000 page views, with blog articles particularly popular. The Friends continue to fund and develop the site, helping to open the collection to a worldwide audience. Social media posts likewise continue to reach a wide audience, the museum Facebook page now having over 1000 followers as well as Instagram and X engagement. As well as myself, the Curator and Costume Curator continue to post, so do drop by!

Research, sometimes resulting from enquiries, also continues. In 2024, photos/information was provided on the Allen-Brown violet nurseries for (*Violets, suffragettes and socialist gardening...* by Rebecca Welshman in Gardening Magazine and a chapter in Fiona Davison's book *An Almost Impossible Thing*). Other enquiries related to the 100th anniversary of Peach Tree Church in Atlanta, Georgia - the stained glass design was done by the Glasby family at Henfield - and support given by the Borrer family to botanist William Hemsley. On which, transcription of William Borrer letters also continues (get in touch to help).

Articles published included *The Cat, the Canary, the Carpenter and the Canon, A Redwood Renaissance* as part of Project Arborea, and *From Botany to Industry and Back Again...*, in *The Researcher* magazine, featuring some archival discoveries, Here's to a productive 2025. *RG*

*Medieval weight and Wilberforce waistcoat, both 3D scanned*



## Alan Barwick

part of our Forward Plan we will be placing a questionnaire on-line to try and determine why more people are not visiting the museum. We had evening visits from the Henfield Cubs in October when 40 came to the museum over two evenings. During the year we had two visits from U3A groups who were also given historical walks around the village. Last year we introduced a series of five guided historical walks around the village at different times and days, led by myself and Steve Robotham, the money received from all of these walks went to the Friends of Henfield Museum.

*Continued on page 3...*



## From the Curator *(continued)*

Stephanie hosted a group of 15 fashion design students from the University of Brighton looking at the costume collection, the curator of Chertsey Museum, a lecturer from the London College of Fashion, and three other ladies. Stephanie also gave a talk on our costume collection to the Bognor Regis Local History Society.

I also gave a slide show talk in August on Henfield to the residents at Red Oaks.

Throughout the year there have been temporary displays on Morris Dancing, West Sussex on the Front Line, 120 yrs of Henfield Fire Brigade, and Doctor Who. We had a display of Devil's Dyke in the Roving Display Case, and a WW2 display which was produced to coincide with the production of Goodnight Mister Tom in October, performed in The Henfield Hall. Stephanie put on costume displays for the Village Evening in March, the Biodiversity event in December, and a running display at the museum throughout the year on biodiversity in clothing materials.

We opened the museum at 6pm on the Village Evening in March but didn't attract any visitors. We had more luck extending the opening hours on Election Day in July when 73 people came in. We also had a pitch at the fair in the Kingsfield in June where we gave people the opportunity of throwing quoits. The oral history project started

## Alan Barwick

up again after Covid, and we have an enthusiastic band of folk who are keen to carry on the good work. Please contact Rose Sharp to get involved, or if you know of any candidates for recording.

A forward plan covering the next five years is in place. The plan includes: produce more imaginative displays, engage with local schools, more storage for museum objects, a survey to find out why more people are not visiting the museum, the oral history project, the natural and ecological history of Henfield, Henfield's lost and tangible history, ongoing digitisation of the museum collection, more signage to the museum around the village, ongoing disposal of objects which are not within our collections policy, further 3D scanning, ongoing collection outreach in the community with the Roving Display Case, and develop further the use of social media. This is an ambitious programme of aims which can only be achieved with your help, so please come forward and volunteer your services if you fancy getting involved with some of this work. *AB*

*The Curator proffers quoits at the Summer Fair, June 2024*



## Those Who Served

A recent addition to the 'Those Who Served' project featuring Marjorie Baker's portraits of servicemen and women, and their accompanying stories. This fine 1937 portrait of Walter Benedict Rayment was taken the year he joined the RAF Volunteer Reserve. The 5th October 1940 found him serving as a Sergeant Air Gunner in a Handley Page Hampden bomber of 61 Squadron. While returning from

a mine dropping mission to the Elbe in horrendous weather conditions - *'extremely bad, with gale blowing, icing and low cloud as well as rain'*, the aircraft crashed on Hartoft Moor in Yorkshire. All four crew were killed. Such accidents sadly claimed thousands of lives during the war. Walter was a Henfield Scout and is seen in other photos in the museum collection. *RG*



*At left, Walter pictured by Marjorie Baker in 1937, perhaps taken to mark his joining the RAF reserve?*

*At right, a 61 Squadron Hampden being 'bombed up' prior to a mission. Image: yorkshireaircraft.co.uk*

*Newsletter images copyright of Henfield Museum or Friends of Henfield Museum unless noted otherwise.*

## From the Costume Curator

*Including a number of interested visitors and Henfield Museum costume visits Bognor Regis.*

Back in March 2024 the museum costume stand drew interest and attention at the Village Evening. The theme of the display that night was 'Biodiversity', showcasing nature and natural fibres. This linked with HPC's theme for 2024 and developed into the current display in the large costume case.

This year also brought a return visit from a group of First Year Fashion Design students from the University of Brighton. Their visit gave them a chance to have a glimpse of what our collection holds and hear what caring for a museum costume collection entails.

Grace Evans, Curator of Chertsey Museum in Surrey, visited for a look round the museum and to see our costume collection. She was particularly interested the c1790 female stays found in the workhouse in Henfield. These are currently on display at the museum.

Susanne Baldwin, a lecturer from London College of Fashion, came to see our collection of CC41 labelled items in connection with her current research. After seeing my Facebook posts about costume at Henfield Museum, I was contacted by a lady in Whitstable, who subsequently visited the museum and then left this review on Facebook.

"What a fabulous day! If you are in the Henfield museum area, don't miss out on an opportunity to visit. Stephanie Richards is a brilliant guide, and they have some absolute treasures. This museum should have ten times the space!"

I'm sure you will forgive that bit of boasting....

An exciting discovery of concealed objects, including 18th and 19th century shoes, occupied myself (and Robert Gordon) for some time towards the end

*At right clockwise: owner Rick & Stephanie with the concealed C18th-19th shoe collection, shoes from the 1700s - today, and an embroidery from the Biodiversity display*



## Stephanie Richards

of the year. I was able to consult the relevant experts concerning the shoes, and now a local property has some historical information to add to the story of their home.

Some of the Henfield Museum costume treasures had an evening out in Bognor Regis when I gave a talk to the Bognor Regis Local History Society. The 40+ audience enjoyed themselves and admired the costumes. Hit of the evening was a velvet and fur trimmed Victorian ladies' mantle.

I had a display at an evening arranged for the final Biodiversity group event. This was another chance to showcase some natural fibres from the costume collection and I can report that the hits of the evening were a Sussex smock in linen and a pair of tiny silk 1902 bridesmaid's shoes.

My projects continue, and I'm starting the new year with researching a tartan, examining possible donations and preparing for the next case change....and my first visitor of 2025 is due soon...

One more boast to finish on...I'm delighted to say that an article I wrote for an academic journal in the UK has been picked up by an online journal in the USA. The article contains several outfits from the museum's costume collection, so helping promote Henfield Museum abroad. Thanks, as usual, for all the help and friendly chats with the volunteers I meet at the museum. SCR

## What's coming up?

### New Year Temp Display

A private collection Doctor Who display saw out 2024. 2025 begins with a medley from the museum and private collections: 'As Things Were'.

### Roving Display

The 'Goodnight Mr. Tom' WW2 display is in the Henfield Hall, soon to rove onwards.

**The Friends AGM, 22nd April 2025, 19:00, with talk: Secret Sussex Resistance.**

Official business & update on the year, followed by refreshments. Talk by Stewart Angell on the WW2 Auxiliary units. The 'stay behinds' had their Sussex HQ at Tottington Manor, being expected to sacrifice themselves in the event of invasion.



## The Plough Inn—a Look Back in Time *(continued)*

One of the pub's original two elm trees at front then still remained, here in its winter guise making a convenient post for the pub's sign. This was to be finally cut down in the 1950s, with today's very solid wooden pub signpost offering a ghostly reflection. Although there may have been some artistic license used, the drawing shows well the fairly venerable age of the pub, nowadays well hidden under subsequent Victorian alterations. The right hand side appears to have been hidden behind a two storey extension and de-chimneyed, with a forward single storey extension added. The left hand side while keeping the same form, seems also to have been extended forward somewhat, as the chimney position shows. In the 1940s, Henfield vicar and historian Henry de Candole said '*a Roman jug was reported to have been found in the foundations of the Plough Inn during restoration many years ago*' - this seems likely to have been during these alterations.

The name then and now gave due tribute to Henfield's fertile soil and the occupation of most of the villagers, but it was likely the successor to the pub known as the 'King of Prussia' in the previous century. Frederick II ('the Great') of Prussia was one of the major figures of the 18th century, being king of that nation for almost 50 years and a nephew of King George II. He was closely supported by Britain during the first half of the Seven Years' War, gaining great fame for his successes against what had looked like overwhelming opposition from the other European great powers.

As for the artist, Penley originally worked as a theatrical scene painter, and was accomplished, having exhibited paintings at the Paris Salon in 1844, 1846 and 1848. A 30th September 1826 announcement in the Windsor and Eton Express stated: 'Under the Patronage of Her Royal Highness Princess Augusta. Drawing and Perspective, Taught by, Montague Penley, Particularly the fashionable and superior art of Crayon Drawing. His proficiency in which was acquired under the celebrated Monsieur Cheni, professor of the Academie Royale, Paris.

M.P cannot enter on the present avocation without returning his sincere acknowledgements of gratitude to the inhabitants of Windsor and its vircinity (sic), for the kind favours he has so many years experienced, and at the same time ventures to hope for a continuance of that sup-

port which will ever be his study to deserve. Specimens to be seen at the principal libraries, where further information may be obtained; or of M.Penley, Thames-side, Windsor'.

Princess Augusta was presumably the 2nd daughter of King George III. She spent much of her life focused on music and the arts. An original 'To be returned when copied' note affixed to the back states that at the time of this sketch, Mr. Penley had his studio in Brighton at Gothic House, Western Terrace, Western Road, a striking neo-Gothic building designed by well-known Brighton architects Amon Henry Wilds and Charles Busby in the 1820s (their only building in this style). Today, the building survives, albeit divided between a recently closed Taco Bell and section of a grocery shop. A large cow silhouette stood atop the roof for many years as a reminder of a former restaurant tenant, but of Penley's days, only his paintings remain.  
RG



*Penley's former studio at Gothic House, Hove, seen August 2024 (Google Street View)*

## From the Treasurer *Lyn Sheppard*

Dear Friends, what a year we have had, so many interesting visits. We have visited Shoreham Airport, enjoyed lectures and most recently a wonderful Christmas Tea Party. I feel sure this must be the best investment of your membership subscription for a whole year.

This past year for the first time we produced a membership card. Not completely without its problems, not least trying to issue them to you all as economically as possible.

*Continued on page 6...*

## Henfield Museum

The Henfield Hall, Coopers Way  
Henfield  
West Sussex  
BN5 9DB  
[www.henfieldmuseum.org](http://www.henfieldmuseum.org)

*Friends Secretary (Rose Sharp):*  
secfriendsofhenfieldmuseum@gmail.com  
01273 494566  
*Chairman (Robert Gordon):*  
friendsofhenfieldmuseum@gmail.com

## The Story of a Museum Object - 1913 Armand Marseille doll

This fetching lass belonged to Anne Hall (née Gardner) and was made by Armand Marseille of Germany. She is 15" tall, with porcelain head, and opening/shutting. Note too the flash of blue trim beneath her bonnet. Armand Marseille were founded in 1885 in Sonneberg, the then centre of the German toy industry. They could produce 1000 dolls' heads per day (bodies being sourced from oth-



1913 Armand Marseille doll (name unknown) and 1910 Ringtail cat ring game



er manufacturers) and continued until 1930. The German Toy Museum in the city has a collection of over 60,000 toys. Donated over 40 years ago, the Curator notes 'She had a spell at the Dolls Hospital in Burgess Hill recently where she underwent hair and eye transplants, and had a very good clean.' As a bonus, we see a contemporaneous Ringtail cat puzzle game from 1910. RG

## From the Treasurer (continued)

Lyn Sheppard

So my thanks to those of you who collected them. This year we will be using a different coloured membership card and ask you to show it when you attend our various functions. They will be available in the New Year when you have paid your annual membership renewal fee which as you know will be due on 1<sup>st</sup> January, 2025.

Subscriptions remain the same this year. Annual membership runs from January to December and will be £10 per person, £15 for a family, £100 for a lifetime membership for an individual and £150 for a family life membership. Corporate membership is £50 annually. I would be most grateful if you could return to me or drop them into the Museum, your renewal

membership form as this allows me to keep abreast of any changes of address or phone numbers or email addresses, I thank you in advance for this. By the time you read this I suspect Christmas will be gone, but not forgotten, my good wishes to you all for a Happy and Healthy New Year.  
LS

## Remembering - Leo Jago & Conway Thorns



2024 saw us bid a sad farewell to two local forces for good and founder members of the Friends of Henfield Museum. We pay them both tribute.

Leo left us in April, aged 86. Originally of New Zealand, he had been involved in community work in Sussex for many decades. From 2015 he served as Vice Chair and Chairman and was a strong spirit and force for organised action. At left at a village evening in 2020.

Conway was a well known force in Henfield life and left us in December, aged 83. Coming from an old Henfield family, he was a long-time stalwart of the football, cricket club (seen at right donning the tie of the latter) and museum and was our first Treasurer from 2015-18.

