

Woodhall Spa Cottage Museum

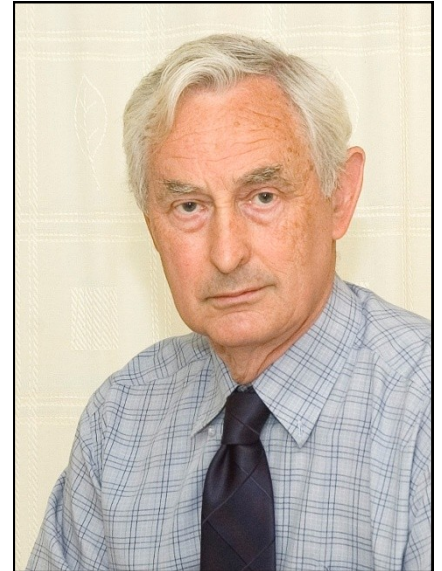


Newsletter No. 23
July 2016

Woodhall Spa Cottage Museum

A Note from the Editor

By the time you read this we will be halfway through this year's season. Visitor numbers are up on last year, which is very encouraging, but news has just broken that East Lindsey District Council is planning to reduce the hours drastically of some Tourist Information Centres and Customer Access Points in the region or close them. Due to budgetary constraints ELDC have to make savings of £6M over the next four years and CAPs and TIC services are being reconsidered. If these cuts go ahead it will be a big blow to tourism in the area and to local businesses who rely on the tourist trade. The Tourist Information Centre in Woodhall Spa is under threat of closure from 2017. It has been located in the Cottage Museum since 1991. The TIC staff handle the museum's admissions and souvenir sales, but a great deal of their work is centred around tourist information, leaflets etc. The museum directors are committed to keeping a TIC presence at the museum and are actively in discussions with both the ELDC and the local Parish Council. We will have to wait and see what progress can be made.



In this issue we celebrate the "phoenix" story of the restoration of the museum's Bath chair, which was very badly damaged in the arson attack on the outbuildings back in 2010. You can read the full story on pages 3 and 4.

The museum has had great coverage on local radio and national TV recently. David Hill and Colin Skinner were interviewed on the "Melvyn in the Morning" show on BBC Radio Lincolnshire and Patricia Duke-Cox was interviewed on BBC1 by Mel Giedroyc from The Mall whilst celebrating the 90th Birthday of HM Queen Elizabeth II.

Do enjoy the rest of the summer.

Philip Groves

Cover Picture

Top left: The original Bath chair. Bottom left: The Bath chair after the arson attack
Right: Colin Skinner, who restored the Chair with the finished result

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The Newsletter Committee

Chairman - Paddy O'Neill Editor- Philip Groves Roger Webb Marjorie Sargeant

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Reg. Charity: 1114268 Reg. Museum:1929

The Restoration of the Bath Chair

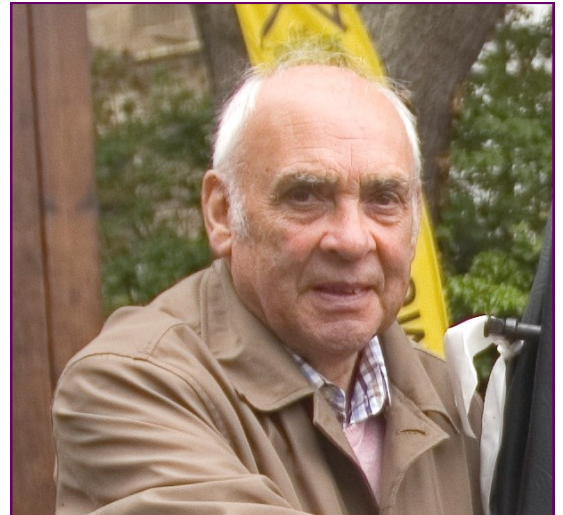
A small ceremony was held at The Cottage Museum, Woodhall Spa on Friday 3rd June to celebrate the restoration of one of its prime exhibits – a Victorian Bath chair. Chairman Gill Noble welcomed the guests, after which Patricia Duke-Cox, Head of Collections, outlined the background of the Bath chair and invited David Hill to recount the “Phoenix” story. Colin Skinner, who had done most of the restoration work, gave a brief insight into what had been involved. Colin and Alan Bent, Manager of the Woodhall Spa Co-Op, whose store raised much of the money to fund the restoration work, then cut the tape. Several of the museum volunteers had dressed in period costume and posed for photographs alongside the Bath chair.



Colin Skinner & Alan Bent cut the ribbon



L to R Gladys Ireland, Roger Reed, Peter Clark, Colin Skinner, Jane Hodgson, Alan Bent, Gill Noble & David Radford



Peter Clark, who donated the Bath chair in 1987

The Museum was given the Bath chair when it opened in 1987. It is very similar to those used by the Wield Bath chair business, originally based at the bungalow which is now the museum. The gift was from Mr Peter Clark of Minting, who, together with his wife, was present at the unveiling. Peter received it from a Miss Shipley on completing his apprenticeship. It had originally been purchased for her father, so he could be pushed around their estate. Their firm was bought by Jacksons and became the present day, Jackson & Shipley.

Unfortunately, in December 2010 there was an arson attack on the museum sheds where the Bath chair was stored and it suffered severe fire damage. It was almost unrecognizable but was kept for possible future restoration work.

After receiving some generous donations and some fundraising, local volunteers have been able to restore the original donated Bath chair to the stunning result you see now. The chair boasts Cee springs at the back, a hinged door and apron board and stylish upholstery within the carriage.



After the fire - the badly charred Bath chair

Woodhall Spa Cottage Museum

Bath Chair Restoration



The Bath chair is not the first restoration project that Colin Skinner has undertaken for the museum. The old delivery bicycle, shown on the left, was his first and very successful effort for us. The restoration work required on the Bath chair however was an order of magnitude more complex than the bicycle.



First job was to clean up the chair, which turned out to be a very messy and smelly job. The folding hood was completely destroyed and the seat cushion and upholstery were beyond repair. The metalwork cleaned up well and items such as the wheel hub caps polished up to reveal the name of the maker - W Monk & Co. of Bath. (see picture top right) . The front tyres were replaced using a high pressure hose pipe.



After cleaning, the main body was painted and looks quite smart. It is not pristine, but given the age of the item it does not look at all out of place. The biggest job for Colin was the restoration of the hood assembly. Using what was left of the original wooden framework as a pattern, Colin made new wooden hoops and these were covered in a vinyl material to complete the new hood assembly.



Next job was the hinged apron board which was rubbed down and painted on the outside and re-covered in vinyl on the inside (shown on the left).



The charred inside upholstery was removed and replaced with a red material, as a suitable navy colour was not available. The result can be seen bottom right. Whilst working on the upholstery Colin found two pairs of silk stockings hidden under the seat. Miraculously they were undamaged by the fire and one wonders what story they might have to tell!



The charred inside upholstery was removed and replaced with a red material, as a suitable navy colour was not available. The result can be seen bottom right. Whilst working on the upholstery Colin found two pairs of silk stockings hidden under the seat. Miraculously they were undamaged by the fire and one wonders what story they might have to tell!

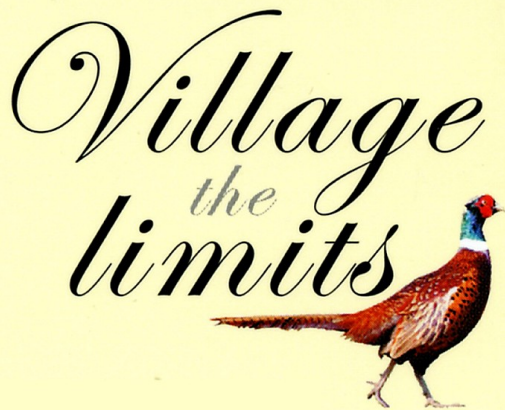
The wooden handle on the back of the chair (middle left), was remade by Mr Neil Finney.



Finally a new metal handle was made by Coningsby blacksmith, Mr Capes and fitted at the front, to enable the chair to be pulled by hand. This was not on the original chair but makes manoeuvring very much easier.

Grateful thanks are extended to the Lincolnshire Co-operative who raised funds through their Community Champion scheme, and most particularly to volunteer restorer Colin Skinner, who has done a splendid job with support from David Hill (Museum Director). Thanks are also due to Brian Olive who supplied materials for the project.

Philip Groves & David Hill



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Woodhall Spa Cottage Museum

Woodhall Spa - July 1914

Dear Readers,

The Woodhall Spa Season is reaching its peak, but I do not know how many visitors we have as the Horncastle News has desisted from publishing its list of those staying at hotels and boarding houses. The national paper shortage caused the News to be halved in size earlier in the year.

The weather has been very poor, beginning with a dreadful storm at the beginning of the Season when a blizzard raged all day, trees were uprooted, telephone wires brought down and two tall chimneys at the Royal Hotel crashed to the ground. A larger than customary crowd of people congregated around the bandstand on Sunday 18th June, which was the first time the Spa Band had been able to play outside.

The Golf Course has suffered because of the inclement weather. At its Annual General Meeting it was decided to suspend entrance fees for prospective members and to allow lady visitors to pay only one shilling and sixpence for one round, instead of having to purchase a day ticket.

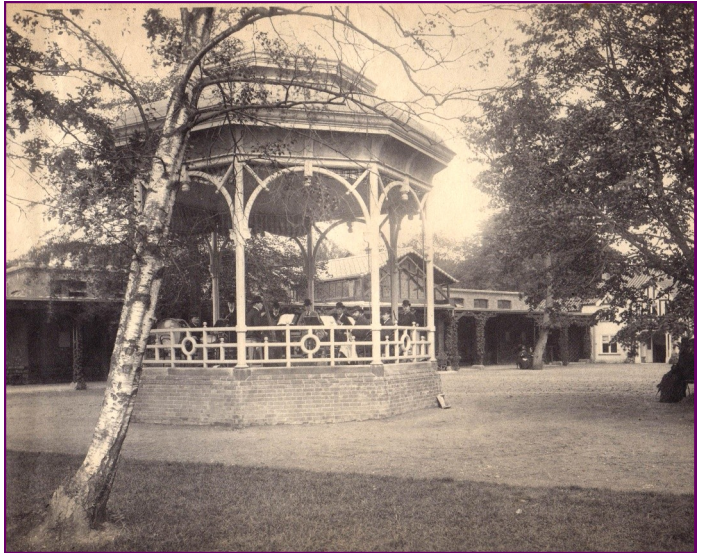
Young men are still leaving for the armed forces. At the beginning of the year a post girl was appointed to replace an enlisted man and everyone muttered about that. Now, a lady clerk is managing the busy station bookstall. Whatever will ladies have to do next?

The Tradesmen's Association still appeals for names and regiments of enlisted men and for dainties to put in food parcels for them. Several have written letters of thanks. They seem cheerful, although missing home comforts. Sometimes there are dreadful descriptions of what they are enduring, in awful conditions, at the Front.

A touching letter was received from Capt. J.W. Rogers recovering at Armstrong College Hospital, Newcastle upon Tyne. He says that he was given a boiled egg for breakfast, instead of scrambled, mixed with bread and such, to eke it out. He says it was grand and set him up for the day and it reminded him of hens in the garden at home, instead of the dreadful slaughter with bits of bodies flying about, in France. But the best of it was that the egg had a name on it, which the nurse wrote down for him. It was sent by Miss Roxy Croft of Green Lane, Kirkstead, Woodhall Spa and he was writing to thank her. We all know Roxy and in fact, she and her sister Kitty sang a duet at a bazaar in the Wesleyan Sunday School room on Wednesday 17th of this month!

The arrival of an aeroplane here at about 7 o'clock one Saturday morning last month, was witnessed by a great number of people. It performed manoeuvres for half an hour, sometimes at no more than 100 feet in the air!

Kindnesses are appreciated in these troubled times. Miss Hoyle has offered to provide a bench on the corner of Tarleton Avenue and the Broadway for the benefit of soldiers convalescing at the Alexander Hospital. Residents here are kind.



The Bandstand opposite the Spa Baths

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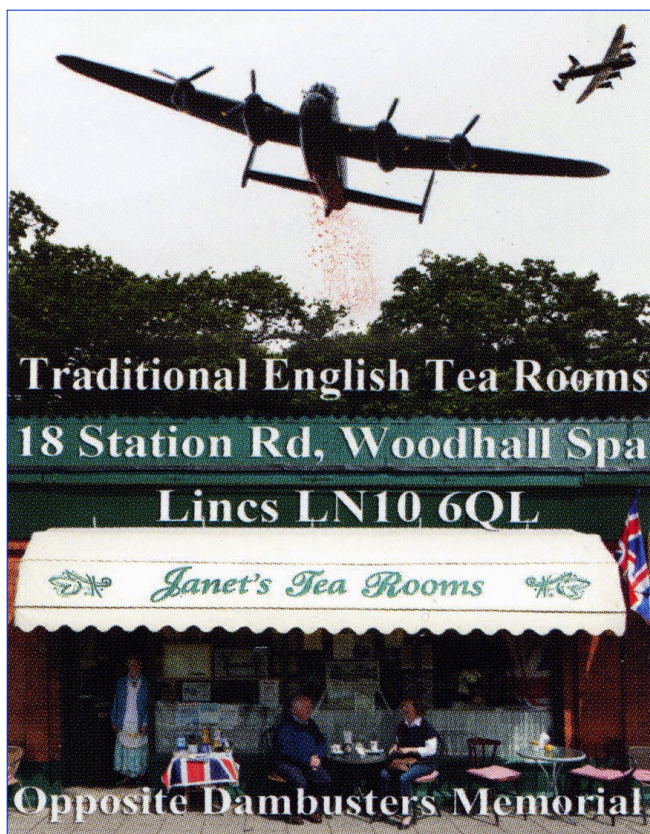
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Descendant of Grace Weigall visits Petwood

Mrs Anne Nicholson, a cousin (twice removed) of Grace Weigall of Petwood fame, came to Woodhall Spa recently and stayed at the hotel with her husband. They were met by a researcher from the Woodhall Spa Cottage Museum who has a great interest in the Petwood gardens and the architecture of the house.

During the afternoon Mr and Mrs Nicholson were given a comprehensive tour of the grounds with them viewing many of the photographs from the museum's photographic archive. The historic background was of such interest to the couple that more information was imparted over a delicious evening meal at the hotel.

The following day the couple visited the museum leaving a welcome donation to funds and the desire to exchange further knowledge.

The museum is always pleased to help researchers with family history or local history if enough basic information is available.



Mrs Anne Nicholson with Dr. Duke-Cox

Radio Lincolnshire Interview

On Wednesday June 1st. David Hill and Colin Skinner headed off to Lincoln for an interview on the "Melvyn in the Morning" show which was being hosted that week by Rod Whiting.

Radio Lincolnshire had been sent an invitation to the Bath Chair unveiling event on 3rd.June. They were so taken with the "before and after" pictures that were sent that they invited the museum to send a couple of representatives along to be interviewed about the restoration and the museum in general. It transpired that one of the subjects for that morning's programme was volunteering, so our story fitted this brief extremely well.

The interview lasted for nearly 10 minutes and was a wonderful showcase for the museum, so well done to David and Colin.

Trip Advisor Awards Museum Certificate of Excellence

The TripAdvisor website has awarded the Cottage Museum a Certificate of Excellence. This award is given to accommodations, attractions and restaurants that consistently earn great reviews from travellers. A big thank you to all our visitors, especially the ones that have taken the time to rate us on TripAdvisor. It is heart-warming to know that the efforts put in by all the Cottage Museum volunteers and Tourist Information Centre staff have been recognised in making this small but special heritage museum a welcoming and interesting place to visit.

Woodhall Spa Cottage Museum

What our Visitors are Saying

Once again such a wealth of lovely comments to choose from. We have had visitors from all corners of the United Kingdom - Scotland, Wales and Cornwall as well as lots of local visitors from Boston, Lincoln, Grimsby and of course Woodhall Spa. Of special interest was Francis Pryor of "Time Team" fame, who came with his wife Maisie and a party from a local Historical Society. Here are their comments plus a selection from the rest.

*Francis & Maisie Pryor
Sutton St. James Spalding*

We first came here 30 years ago. Still WONDERFUL - Well Done!

Mr & Mrs H. Boston

Very enjoyable. Lots of information. Nice to learn about the area etc. Have had a great time looking in drawers etc. Very hands on . Great experience.

C B . Chipping Sodbury

Really wonderful. So well presented.

L H. Stapleford. Notts.

Fantastic. Thanks. My 4 year old loved the games and me too!

M & J P. Woodhall Spa

New to Woodhall. This was a real treat. So much of interest in a small space. Great!

V & S L. Norfolk

Beautiful, quaint place, so well displayed. Very impressed.

M W. Lincolnshire

Feelings of warm family home.

R,P,C & R P.

Lovely, and best of all one of us didn't have to stay outside with the dog, so thank you!

Bedford & Scarborough

J & J MacG. Newark

Great trip down memory lane, including my photo on the wall!!

AN & EB La Suze France

Livvy (aged 8 years) really, really liked it.

Philip Groves

The Queen's 90th Birthday Celebrations

Unfortunately the weather took its toll on the Picnic in the Park celebrations organised jointly by the museum and Jubilee Park and staged in Jubilee Park on June 12th. Some people braved the heavy showers, but it was not the turnout that we all hoped for. The Bath Chair and the Delivery Bicycle were taken down to the park and proved popular attractions with the visitors.



Meanwhile in London Patricia Duke-Cox was enjoying her hamper in The Mall, where she also had to endure the inclement weather. However Patricia had the added excitement of being interviewed by Mel Giedroyc on the live BBC1 coverage of the event. She even managed a mention of the museum!

Early Press Releases

Hi Newsletter Fans!

What an eventful few weeks!

The Cottage Museum and Jubilee Park, shoulder to shoulder, helping to provide an event for the community to celebrate Her Majesty's 90th birthday; Vice-Chairman Patricia Duke-Cox appearing on national television celebrating at THE party on the Mall with her Majesty not too far away; our Bath chair, now restored to its former glory and receiving its own unveiling ceremony; these in addition to the preceding weeks' events arranged by the Friends; it is a WOW! I think you'd agree.

What a tribute to our volunteers' efforts!

My rooting about in my archives produced one of the first press releases for the beginning of our journey. I quote it with pride as so many of our then aspirations and dreams are there for you to see today, thirty years later.

"Imagine somewhere that captures in words and picture a detailed and fascinating record of a fashionable Spa's life in its Victorian and Edwardian heyday...and beyond.

Imagine a setting for these exhibits made up of items of the day from magazines to magic lanterns:.....imagine displays where you can glimpse guests at a Petwood garden party or puzzle out the other faces on an old school photograph."

The press release went on to ask the reader to picture a 'living' museum that attracts students of social history or photography, visitors and residents alike, with changing displays, a 'how-we-lived -then' appeal, and a library of taped (now digital) recollections of Woodhall Spa memories. Then the vital comment, "Imagine all this housed in one of the Spa's original buildings, itself of unique architectural interest."

I wonder how many of our visitors from around the world and local community realise the historic importance of this corrugated iron gem which is our cottage museum. The joy, of course, being, if you want to research your home or family, you can now do this on-site in meaningful, historical surroundings as you seek out the answers to your heritage enquiries!

"It is possible. A small group of Spa residents are forming The Woodhall Spa Cottage Museum Trust to translate this vision into reality. Daily they are adding new photographs and memorabilia to their store, which started with the gift of the Johnny Wield collection. To quote the Civic Trust..."The bungalow itself is of more interest in the national context than you think....I know of no other building (except of course Lacock) where photography can be associated with the actual environment in which the photographer lived..."

You see dreams can become reality. John Wield's, mine and now yours!!

David Radford, Founding Chairman



David Radford (right) toasts the restored Bath chair with Peter Clark who donated the chair in 1987

Volunteer Coffee Mornings

A coffee morning is held once a month to enable volunteers from the various teams to meet each other and to meet some of the Directors. It is a great opportunity to exchange ideas and make suggestions, or just have a general chinwag!

The Coffee Morning is held on the first Wednesday of each month, in the Community Room and starts at 10.00 am. Why not give it a try?

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Woodhall Spa Cottage Museum

From the Collection

PH00239 – This is a rarely seen view of the Victoria Hotel as it is a view that did not exist for a long time. The picture was taken between 1839 and 1849 and this was the time between the completion of the hotel and the start of the extension. We are looking at the rear and Spa Baths end of the Hotel where the extension was added. At a time of the rapid increase in the popularity of Woodhall Spa the need for extra bedrooms was one to be met.



GN03363 – Our second picture takes us behind the scenes of the first. We are looking at some of the gardeners who looked after the grounds of the Victoria Hotel at some point of time. We do not know the time, or any of the names of the gardeners. Perhaps this is where you can help?

Roger Webb

150 Club Winners

February

£20 [30] Mrs Sally Fletcher
£15 [100] Mrs Julie Czajkowski
£10 [7] Mrs Beryl Finney

March

£20 [84] Mrs Lilley
£15 [150] Mr David Hill
£10 [21] Christine Hibberd

April

£150 [100] Julie Czajkowski
£70 [144] Kim Barr
£40 [111] Gladys Ireland

May

£20 [67] Brian Smith
£15 [119] Kerry Webb
£10 [51] John Hammonds

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POPPY'S PAGE

We are looking towards the Summer Holidays in this issue. I hope you are going somewhere nice. When you are at home we have lots of exciting activities planned at the museum for every Wednesday through August. We have also given you a maze to explore to find the way to the royal crown! Have fun! Bye for now. Poppy



Events for the Family through the School Holidays

Wednesday 3rd August "Toys and Games"

Toys and Games old and new to enjoy.

10..00 to 12.00, £3.00 per child. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

Wed 10th August "Fun with clay"

Let your imagination go wild as you explore what you can make.

10..00 to 12.00, £3.00 per child. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

Wed 17th August "Fun and Games in the Garden"

Toys and games old and new to enjoy.

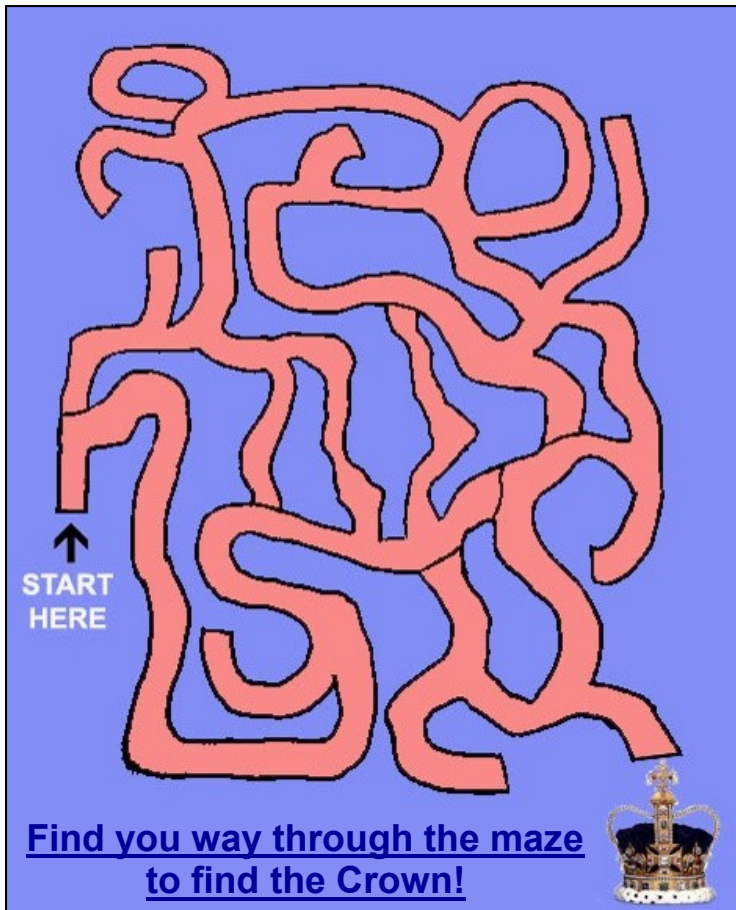
10..00 to 12.00, £3.00 per child. Children must be accompanied by an adult

Wed 24th August "Fun with Clay"

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10..00 to 12.00, £3.00 per child. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

Please phone Gill Noble on 01526 353 455 to book a place.



Maze devised by Jane Hodgson

"Sensational Summer Senses"

A Sensory Challenge

Use your senses
to look, listen, smell, taste
and feel your way around
The Cottage Museum.

The Challenge will run from
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Sunday 11th September

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The Friends of the Woodhall Spa Cottage Museum

Committee Members:

Chairman: Roger Webb	01526 353029
Carol Webb	01526 353029
Elizabeth Leech	01526 352595
Gladys Ireland	

Hello Friends,

Since the last Newsletter back in March there seems to have been a great deal going on, what with an early Easter opening of the Museum to the very real threat of the closure of the Tourist Information Centre in the Museum. As I write today the closure is in the consultation phase for ELDC but we will endeavour to keep you informed of developments along with the implications for the Cottage Museum, as and when we are aware of them. Many thanks to those of you who took part in the consultations by giving your opinions.

It is also time to say thank you for making the last two Friends events a success. The first one was the lecture about 100 years of RAF Waddington, excellently presented to us by Chris Dean. From the feedback I received, this was really enjoyed. On the subject of RAF Waddington, I will be looking to organise a visit to the Museum there in September. Whilst this seems a little way off I know I have to avoid the holiday periods for conflicts with child/baby-sitting, holidays away, etc. I will let you know when we have a date for that event.

The other successful event was Cutwater Productions play, 'Trouble on the Seafront'. This was well attended and their comedies are improving show by show. The week before the play I was considering cancelling the event as we only had around 15 names on the ticket list. In the end we were taking bookings from other areas where the show had sold out.

There were no requests for a larger print version of the What's On Guide I offered to look into in the last newsletter but the offer still stands for those of you who struggle to read it.

If August finds you with the problem of what to do with the children/grandchildren then remember that every Wednesday between 10 and 12 there is something for them at the Museum.

For those of you who like an occasional trip down memory lane we are in the process of getting all the back issues of Museum Newsletters onto the Cottage Museum website. Take a look back at how people and life has changed during that time.

Roger Webb

Come and Join Us

The backbone of the Cottage Museum are our volunteers and some of them are putting a lot of hours in and could really do with a hand. Can you help? Do you have a few hours to spare in the month? It does not have to be a massive commitment. There are numerous opportunities from meeting and greeting to gardening. If you would like to find out more without committing yourself then please call us on

01526 352456



What's On Guide

Woodhall Spa 40's Weekend

15, 16 & 17th July

Sensation of Summer Senses Challenge

16th July to 11th Sept.

At the museum

free to accompanied
Children

Music in the Garden

Rock-n-Roll

31st July 2-4 pm

Jazz with Colin & Gerry

7th August 2-4pm

Ukelele Band

21st August 2-4 pm

Folk Music

28th August 2-4pm

Arnhem Display

8th-11th September

At the museum

Please Sir!

Exhibition tracing the
story of Schools in
Woodhall Spa
Sept 1st - end October

See also

www.cottagemuseum.co.uk
& www.woodhallspa.org

