



BISHOP'S WALTHAM MUSEUM

Newsletter for the Volunteers and Friends of the Museum Winter 2021 Issue 30

Editor: Tony Kippenberger

A message from the Chair of Trustees, Roy Stainton

Despite Covid constraints, much has been achieved over the past year. Not only have our Volunteers supported the Museum so well by allowing it to be open during the later summer months, but the Trustees have been able to complete a number of tasks which are reported in this newsletter. In particular, we have completed our transition to a CIO (Charitable Incorporated Organisation) with all its administrative and responsibility benefits, we have developed our Forward Plan, and we have set course to employ the Covid-related grants we have been awarded.

During the year, we have asked visitors to complete a short questionnaire to discover their views of the Museum. Those who were willing to do so were self-selecting, of course, but I am pleased to say that all gave us a top score and said they would recommend others to visit. Fifty percent of respondents were local residents, but of the other half, the larger proportion came from at least 60 miles away. Many of them were on holiday, others visiting friends and some exploring English Heritage sites. Their reasons for their Museum visits included an interest in local history, the current exhibition of maps, and simply wishing to explore the farm house building. The model of the Palace had considerable appeal, but no more than the various artefacts on display. Looking to the future, requests were made for more detailed history of the town, more audio/visual display and the creation of a model of Bishop's

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Waltham set in the early railways age or an even older period.

With the town model in mind, we have begun to plan the details of how it might be achieved, and we have made contact with a very experienced model builder in Waltham Chase – two examples below.



His principal interests are in railway modelling with its related town interests and, together with his associates, we are hoping to commission a start on our town model. We shall keep you informed as the project develops.

Our relationship with English Heritage continues to mature. We have a very good rapport with them as their tenants and they have made a number of improvements to the structure of the Museum building.

Although the notices at the gates of the grounds say that they are closed during the weeks of the winter months, with EH approval, we have been keeping them open during the week by adopting an opening and closing rota, and ensuring that the grounds are kept clean and tidy. Those visitors who have been able to continue enjoying the facilities have said how much they appreciate it. The opening of the Museum remains summer months only.

The newly formed Bishops Waltham Area Oral History Group is continuing apace. It is independent of the Museum but we are pleased to provide whatever support we can. The Oral History bench (below), a joint venture, has been installed in the Sensory Garden in Basingwell Street and has created a great deal of interest. We wish the Group all success in the coming months and years.



Octogenarian Den Marriner (left) symbolises the importance of reaching across the generations on the Oral History bench

A note for volunteers – from Dawn Woodsford, Volunteer Co-ordinator

We had a good season this year despite the necessarily late opening of the museum because of Covid. I would like to thank all the volunteers who gave their time to steward at the museum and am eternally grateful. I hope everyone felt it was worthwhile. As always, we have lost some volunteers and are very keen to recruit for next season. So, if you know of anyone who might be interested, please do let me know (see email and telephone no. below).

We had a very pleasant evening at The Bunch of Grapes on Saturday 27th November, despite the very cold evening – so glad to see those who could attend and we missed those who couldn't.

Future Events

As we did last year, we will share a "Christmas Party" meeting with the Bishop's Waltham Society, via Zoom, on Thursday evening **16th December** at 7.30 p.m. Apart from trying to shout Christmas greeting to each other over Zoom, the event will have two halves. Last year Robin Shepherd's brother, actor Simon Shepherd (of Peak Practice renown), read from JRR Tolkien's "Letters to Father Christmas". This year Robin's daughter Phoebe Shepherd, and her boyfriend Callum (two aspiring actors) will put on a Tudor themed 10-15 minute show – designed to preface the Henry VIII celebrations planned at the Palace for next July. Again, as last year, this will be followed by a fun quiz put together by Penny Copeland and her partner Mark. About 70-80 people attended last Christmas and we hope you'll join us this year.

We already have some events planned for next year:

Wednesday 16th February - A trip to Hampshire Record Office in Winchester for a show of film reels, planned for

2.00pm. Films to be shown will be local to our area

Saturday 26th February – Open morning for new volunteers or people thinking about volunteering at the museum

Wednesday March 9th – Museum Trust AGM, Church Hall, Free Street, at 7.30pm. Tony Kippenberger will then give a talk on “Henry VIII and the Treaty of Waltham” (see page 8)

Saturday 26th March - A quiz at the Jubilee Hall, Bishop's Waltham. This will be hosted by an 'Egghead', so please come along with your team. There will be a ploughman's supper, raffle and a music interlude. To start at 7.30pm

In the month of April – A meeting at the Saxon Church in Corhampton for a talk on the 1,000 year history of this church. Time and date still to be arranged

Sunday 1st May – Museum opens weekend afternoons – Tudor theme this year to match with the next event

Saturday/Sunday 2/3rd July – Celebrations at the Palace to mark the exact 500th anniversary of Henry VIII signing the “Treaty of Waltham” with the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V. More information on page 9

Saturday 10th September – Heritage Open Day tour of the museum

Thursday 15th September – Heritage Open Day tour of the palace (We may add more such events if these are popular...)

Sunday 30th October – Museum closing for the winter

To advance local knowledge, there are plans to meet at the museum one afternoon or evening a week or fortnight as an informal group for research and discussion on local history, people and events relating to Bishop's Waltham and area. No cost involved. Either a Monday or Wednesday is planned. If anyone is interested please let me know.

And finally, if there is anyone out there who would like to join a team for a spot of spring cleaning in January or February, you will be most welcome. Date to be arranged.

For more information on any of the above, please contact dawnwoodsford@hotmail.co.uk or 07746 810969

English Heritage's conservation work at the Palace (part 2) by Penny Copeland

This is the second year of work for Paye, English Heritage's contractors at the Palace, and by the time you read this they may possibly have finished on site. This year, the hard work has been concentrated on stabilising the stonework, replacing some elements and preventing further deterioration or weathering. Nothing as dramatic as the abseiling photos of last time, but we have been fortunate enough to take several parties of volunteers and friends up on the extensive scaffolding to see amazing views from the tops and great close ups of the medieval stonemasons' work.



Safety first! James and Bernie leading a party up the West Tower, and just in case someone fell off into the moat they brought a rubber ring...



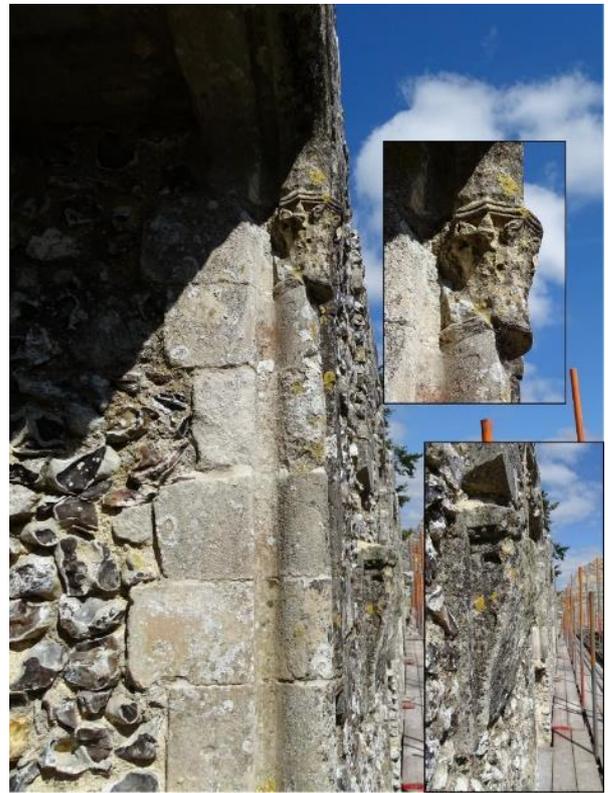
Friends and volunteers behind (scaffolding) bars!



The Palace kitchen scaffolding and the delivery platform used to bring in materials over the moat.



This fine detailing would have been very visible – if you had been lucky enough to be allowed inside the bishop's private chamber and were to look out over the Great Pond...



Very fine carving on the window and on the last surviving corbel in the Great Hall – certainly not visible from the ground in the darkness of the roof!



If you look closely in the corners of the Great Hall, you will see that the Bishop was being watched over by angels or winged cherubs. Before cleaning, these were impossible to make out, but now the wings above the head, the chubby face and the curly hair can be seen.



And this chappie was not happy about being trapped in the wall... He will be visible from the ground to the right of our very own gargoyle once the scaffolding comes down.

Our discoveries will continue in the next newsletter...

Secretary's Report by Gill Williams

This has been a wonderful summer season with lots of interest from visitors, especially the inspection of the map displays. Hunting for your homes, locations of friends and family dwellings has been something quite different as a visual summer exhibition. Many visitors remarked on how old the town was and how it has grown and changed post World War II. What will happen next?

Visitor numbers have grown throughout the summer as people became more adventurous post Covid lockdowns and the site has been a haven for picnics, meeting friends and play in the outdoors.

There have been lots of comments on the English Heritage works through the season, especially the EH posters around the site which have been well examined, with their strong images and historical information.

Group visits have included Bishop's Waltham youth groups, with lots of drawing done in the museum, harvest treasure hunts and outdoor games organised by the youth leaders. However many times the children visit, it never seems to bore them with so much to

explore. Two local U3A groups have had morning visits, with a guided explanation of the museum, led by the Chairman of the Trust much to their appreciation.

Those of you who engage in social media comments about the site would have seen one of the comments, which queried if the Palace, all clothed in scaffolding, was going to be transformed into yet another supermarket (one of the cheaper variety).

So thank you all for the many comments you provide. They make our Trustee work such fun and sometimes they are completely unexpected!

Financial Report by Nick Whitehead

In the last newsletter (Spring 2020) I expressed the hope that notwithstanding Covid, our reserves would not be too depleted. In the event, we made a small profit of £1,000 (£2,300 - 2019) chiefly due to a rate rebate and lower expenses. In addition, we received a Covid related grant of £10,000 from the Government, via Winchester County Council. We therefore ended the year with reserves of £17,000 which was a wonderful financial foundation for our **2021 -2026 Forward Plan.**

This year saw us begin receiving visitors to the Museum again and donations (£1,150) were about 50% of those received in 2019, pre-Covid. The SumUp machine has been invaluable in catering for people who rarely, if ever, carry cash. It accounted for £230 of donations and book sales, and should become more significant in 2022.

Surprisingly, we received a second Covid-related grant (available to charities who are liable for business rates) of £8,000, and will probably end the year with reserves of £24,000.

We have just begun making use of these grants, improving the way the Museum collection is displayed, updating office equipment, creating proper signage at the two entrances to the Palace grounds, and paying for an up-to-date digital

recorder for the newly formed Oral History Group.

Lastly, since we became a CIO (Charitable Incorporated Organisation) we have been obliged to close our old bank account and open a new one; in this Covid year, this could only be achieved with the help of the Co-op Bank. If you are a Member, and particularly if you have a standing order with Barclays Bank in favour of the Museum, would you kindly cancel it for any payments due after 31st Dec 2021. If you are planning to renew your membership in 2022 (Couple: £15; Single £10) and wish to do it by BACS/Standing Order, our new bank details are as follows:

Co-op Bank

Account name: Bishops Waltham Museum Trust
Sort code: 08 92 99
Account no.: 67221259

Thank you!

Planning matters...

As you probably know already, planning permission for the Country Homes development on the Fox/Youth Club site, opposite the Museum, has been given and work is expected to start in January.

It is understood that Beechcroft Homes will be submitting a new planning application for the Station Road/Abbey Field site and they hope to start selling properties "off-plan" by the end of 2022. So lots of building works around us!

English Heritage Conservation in Action Day by Penny Copeland

In August, we had a Conservation in Action Day, with the English Heritage conservation team arriving in their campervan, and EH Building Curator Sam Stones giving tours. Paye (the English Heritage contractors) were doing demonstrations and adding some

medieval panache were our own volunteers to the musical accompaniment of Myal Pyper!

We had over 400 visitors on the day so a huge thank you to everyone who helped including the EH volunteers, the Bishop's Waltham Society and the North Pond Group.



Photos by Geoff Hallett

Memories of the Museum Move by Linda Didymus

Mention in the last newsletter of Georgie Busher's role in the Museum's move to its present location in the Palace grounds prompted us to ask the then chairman, Linda Didymus, to recount the story.

Here are her memories:

I was Chairman of the Museum from 2005-2011 and so oversaw the move.

Many of you may not know that the Museum's early life was in two rooms behind Barclays Bank, in what was the original scullery and kitchen to St George's House.

We were fortunate to have the use of these rooms for a peppercorn rent, although quite a bit of work had to be done to make them useable.

Life ticked along fine until in 2007, Barclay's Bank sold their premises and we had a bombshell when the new owners asked for a rent of £6,000 a year. This was way beyond our means and there was no hope of renegotiation.

So our only option was to try to find a new home and all eyes turned to the Palace Farmhouse but in the past English Heritage had not been interested. Fortunately Georgie Busher knew someone who was now in a senior role at English Heritage and we received a positive response, with our first meeting with their team taking place in February 2008.

There then followed a long period of complicated negotiations that I had the task of leading whilst continually having to discuss issues with fellow Museum Trustees.

English Heritage finally produced a large and complex document called a Maintained Property Agreement, and local solicitor, Colin Chamberlain, very kindly offered to check it for us.

Finally, we were ready to move and the Bishop's Waltham Society gave the Museum a donation of £800 to cover removal costs, for which we were very grateful.

We had to vacate the Barclays premises by 9th October 2008 but, as we neared the date, English Heritage had still not signed off the Agreement. After some stressful days, confirmation finally came through on 7th October and I met their surveyor later that day to receive the keys to the Farmhouse premises – we were booked to move the following day.



Leaving the old premises
(Left to right: Brian Fisher, Linda Didymus, Bruce Taylor, Betty Hiscock and Tony Woodsford)

Moving day actually went quite smoothly and White's Removals did a brilliant job packing and transporting everything. At the end of the day all of us involved stood in the Farmhouse looking at three rooms full of boxes and display units, wondering just where we would start putting the museum back together again.



Now began a winter of hard work. Every Wednesday, Betty Hiscock (the Museum's Curator) and I began sorting

out the collection, joined by Bruce and Anita Taylor at weekends with others popping in to help. Tony Woodsford and my husband Mac worked on assembling the displays. Nothing was allowed to be attached to the walls, so they designed a timber framework and assembled it to support the Tudor panelling and Askew's shop before these items could be put in place.

Six months later, the work was finally complete and we had an official opening with English Heritage in April 2009. Since then the Museum has gone from strength to strength.



Opening Day at the Farmhouse:

Linda Didymus and Samantha Lloyd of English Heritage, in front of the full size recreation of Askew's shop

Map exhibition 2021 by Penny Copeland

I hope you enjoyed our 2021 exhibition on maps. If you are interested in looking at the old maps further, then I recommend two websites for you:

www.oldhampshireremapped.org.uk. This excellent website was launched by Jean and Martin Norgate and contains digital versions of most of the ancient maps held by Hampshire Museums, together with analysis, glossaries and other useful information.

<https://maps.nls.uk/> The National Library of Scotland has all the old Ordnance Survey maps of Britain (not just Scotland) free to view, including the very useful side by side viewer,

transparent overlays and host of other options. Enjoy!

Henry VIII and the Treaty of Waltham by Tony Kippenberger

The Treaty of Waltham was signed by Henry VIII and the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V at Waltham Palace on Wednesday 2nd July 1522.

The Treaty cemented Henry VIII and Charles V's alliance against Francis I of France. The basic terms of this alliance had been drawn up some two weeks earlier in the Treaty of Windsor. The Treaty of Waltham brought forward by a year the date on which the two monarchs would attack France and confirmed where in France and with what numbers their forces would meet. The new Treaty was the detail that gave reality to the earlier, broader plan and concluded an extended Royal visit by Charles V that lasted for a full six weeks.

This event is important enough to be commemorated in one of the English Heritage signs within the Palace grounds. You'll probably recognise it, it illustrates the now lost, first floor, Great Chamber on the west side of the Palace.



Painted by Peter Urmston, it shows Henry VIII greeting Charles V. Henry is on the left with Cardinal Wolsey behind him and his wife Catherine of Aragon nearest, looking on. Charles V is on the right with his Grand Chancellor Mercurino Arborio in his standard black robes by his

side. Behind them are just some of Charles' entourage also staying at the Palace.

Charles V, both King of Spain and Holy Roman Emperor (territory stretching across the Netherlands to the Hungarian border and from Denmark to half way down Italy) was the most powerful monarch in Europe. Yet he chose to spend six weeks with Henry on a slow progress from Dover to the royal palace at Greenwich, thence to a tumultuous welcome in London, down to Hampton Court and then across to Windsor. They then travelled through Farnham to Winchester and thence to Waltham, where they stayed for nine days before Charles sailed from Southampton.



Charles' entourage numbered nearly 2,000 nobles and knights and their servants, as well as more than 1,000 horses. Henry probably travelled with a party of between 500 and 750. So big was this combined court that some had to stay as far away as Salisbury!

Waltham would have been abuzz and the Palace seething with activity as the two monarchs and their chosen companions hunted deer or went hawking in the Palace's 1,000 acre deer park or at Waltham Chase and even Bere Forest, while their advisors drafted the new Treaty.

Saturday 2nd July 2022 will be the exact 500th anniversary of the signing of the Treaty! So the Bishop's Waltham Society, Bishop's Waltham Town Team and the Museum are co-sponsoring a two-day Tudor event at the Palace on 2nd/3rd July in 2022 to celebrate. There will be lots of entertainment, living history, re-enactors and a banquet – very much like the Agincourt celebration in 2015. There will be a Tudor theme to the Museum and an explanatory exhibition. So see you there!

More Photos for our archive

Our stalwart digitising volunteers, Peter and Jenny Meadows, have done a sterling job of scanning more of our print archive during lockdown. So do you know who any of the Carol Singers are in the photo below? If yes, we'd love to hear from you! The photo was taken on the 12th December 1964 by John Bosworth, we believe. (penny.copeland@btinternet.com)

