



Emsworth Maritime & Historical Trust NEWSLETTER

President: The Rt Hon. Lord Willetts of Havant
Reg. Charity No. 294965

Emsworth Museum
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August 2019

Popular Return of Artist Deborah Richards

Deborah Richards made a welcome return to the Museum as this year's artist in the David Rudkin Room. She first exhibited here in 2016. This year's art exhibition from 27th April until 19th May covered the opening two weekends of the Emsworth Arts Trail. The stairs echoed with the sound of the many trail visitors coming to view Deborah's paintings and sculptures.

Deborah is especially known for her distinctive semi-abstract monotypes and her work is inspired by the South Downs landscape, Solent coast, sea crossings and fairgrounds. As she says, 'Exploring that creative space between abstraction and representation allows me the freedom to manipulate surroundings taken from memory and experience'. Her works invited visitors to explore the world as she sees it.

In addition to the paintings, visitors could view Deborah's experimentations in the use of fabric, ceramic, plaster, porcelain and wire. Smoke fired, stoneware oxide wolves, each subtly different from another, were featured in the cabinets. Explanations were given about how such media were used.



Left, Deborah Richards

Right, a stoneware oxide wolf

Below left, Deborah's painting of an early morning low tide



This edition of the Newsletter has been sponsored by John Saunders, Property Trustee, Vice President and first Treasurer of the Trust.

John also sponsored the May edition.

Several photographs in this and other issues of the Newsletter in 2019 were taken by John Tweddell.

Our grateful thanks to both members for their continued support.

Diary Dates

All monthly exhibitions are held in the Museum's David Rudkin Room. Winter talks are now held on **Wednesday** evenings, in the Mountford Rooms, Emsworth Community Centre, North Street, Emsworth PO10 7DD at 7.30pm. Doors open at 7.00pm. Admission: Members £3.00, Non Members £4.00.

August 2nd – Sept 1st	Exhibition – Emsworth Sailing Club: A Centenary
August 14th	Local History Walk led by Christine Bury
September 7th – 29th	Exhibition – Transport in Emsworth up to the 1950s
October 5th – 27th	Exhibition – 100th Anniversary of Scouting in Emsworth
October 13th	Wodehouse Walk led by Margaret Rogers
October 16th	Talk – 'The Naval Camps of Bedhampton and Leigh Park in WWII' by Bob Hind
November 20th	Talk – 'Commander Crabb: What Really Happened?' by Ann Bevan
December	Stewards' Christmas Tea Party

Emsworth Museum will be open until 27th October on Fridays in August 2.30pm – 4.30pm, on Saturdays and Bank Holidays 10.30am – 4.30pm and on Sundays 2.30pm – 4.30pm. Members are welcome to visit the Museum for research on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons 2.00pm – 4.00pm (except 13th August, 24th September and 12th November). If you would like to visit and be sure that the Museum will be open, please telephone or email me **Dorothy Bone on 01243 373780 or dorothybone@btinternet.com**

ADMISSION TO THE MUSEUM IS FREE We are always grateful for financial donations to help with the costs of running the Trust and Museum.

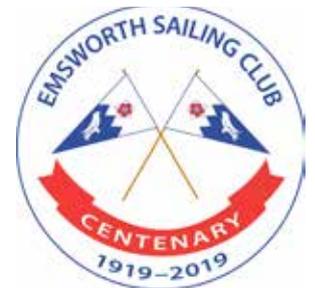
Forthcoming Exhibitions

Emsworth Sailing Club: A Centenary **2nd August – 1st September**

Emsworth Sailing Club's 100th anniversary is being celebrated with a series of events and activities throughout 2019 including an exhibition of pictures, documents and memorabilia in Emsworth Museum. Past members of the Club who will be featured are Lord Louis Mountbatten and the world renowned yachtsman and environmentalist, Sir Peter Blake.

Visit this fascinating exhibition and explore the past, present and future of this vibrant Club, discover the changing shape of the Clubhouse, the evolution of boats and fashion on the water and enjoy archive films.

One distinguished visitor on 24th August will be Trust President, Lord Willetts of Havant.



Transport in Emsworth up to the 1950s **7th – 29th September**

Bernie Gudge, Emsworth Museum's Photograph Archivist, has searched the Museum's archive and his own records to present an attractive display of historic photographs of horse drawn, motorised and pedal powered transport that has been used on Emsworth's roads in the past.

Until the 'short by-pass' was built, Portsmouth to Chichester traffic travelled through the shopping area of Emsworth – West Street, High Street and Queen Street. Large lorries, traction engines and other vehicles not suited to these narrow roads caused major traffic problems, sometimes holding up movement in the village for a considerable time.



For a nostalgic look back at Emsworth in the early 1900s this exhibition is a must for your diary.

100th Anniversary of Scouting in Emsworth

5th – 27th October

The final exhibition in 2019 provides the opportunity for Emsworth Scouts to celebrate their 100th anniversary and also to showcase many of the events and activities that they take part in. 1st Emsworth Scout Group is thriving with Beaver Colonies, Cub Packs, Scout Troops and Explorers. Some of these young people are working hard to raise funds to go on an International Scout expedition to Tanzania in August 2020.



Recently John Forster, Akela and Leader of the 1st Emsworth Drake Cub Pack for 37 years, was awarded the Silver Acorn by the Chief Scout in recognition of his dedicated service, outstanding commitment and enthusiasm for scouting in Emsworth.

This is a great exhibition to end the year.

Dorothy Bone

From the Chairman

On 11th June, we were saddened by the resignations of Phil Sharpe our Treasurer and his wife Sylvia Courtnage from the EM&HT Committee because of the pressures on them caused by Sylvia's illness. They have both served on the Committee for a number of years. I am sorry to say that Sylvia died on 23rd June and a tribute to her work with the Museum over many years is included on page 8 of this Newsletter.

It is now three months since I was elected Chairman at the AGM on 18th March. Since then, I have much appreciated those members who have spent time both inducting me into the way EM&HT works and sharing with me their views for the future of the Trust.

Largely as a result of this feedback, your Committee have also decided to set up a Museum Vision sub-committee to create a longer term plan for the Museum over the next 5 years or more. A similar document that ran up to 2019 was prepared in 2015 to support the Museum's application for accreditation. Many of the goals included in that document have been achieved, although some are still outstanding. Now is clearly the right time to update the vision for the Museum, and share it with our members. The sub-committee will be facilitated by a new member, Jane Weeks, who has spent most of her career in various aspects of the museum profession. The other members are Wendy Bright, Phil Magrath, Margaret Rogers, Graham Taplin and myself. I will keep you up-to-date with our progress.

Some changes in the constitution of EM&HT may be triggered by changes in legislation. Currently,

the EM&HT is an unincorporated charity. This means that under certain (it has to be said, unlikely) conditions the Trustees are potentially accepting some personal liability. We are in the process of checking the exact situation with lawyers. As a result, it may be best for the EM&HT to consider becoming a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO). This step is likely to require some changes to our constitution. Coincidentally, the Slipper Millpond Preservation Association (SMPPA) has already decided to make this change.

No museum like ours can run without people. The Museum cannot develop the presentation and interpretation of its collection without input from volunteers.

Today we need more volunteers to undertake specific tasks:

- Stewards to welcome visitors to the Museum and supervise the Museum while it is open.
- Researchers to respond to information requests.
- Data input to help digitise the Museum's archive and make it more accessible to the public.
- Assistant curators who can edit some of the Museum's collection into easily communicated stories.

If you would like to volunteer for one of these tasks, please email chairman@emsworthmuseum.org.uk

Trevor Davies

D-Day for Emsworth and Its People



Troops landing at Beachlands on Hayling Island during Operation Fabius 2.

Early on Thursday morning, 4th May 1944, 230 landing craft approached four of south Hayling's beaches. On board were over 10,000 men, mainly drawn from the 50th Infantry Division, with tanks and support vehicles. This was Exercise Fabius 2 and it was one of six simultaneous rehearsals taking place along the south coast to test the Allies' ability to mount a seaborne invasion.

Photo from Robin Walton's book 'An Island at War'

'At the going down of the sun and in the morning we will remember them'. These words by Laurence Binyon came to mind when viewing the 75th anniversary D-Day exhibition in the David Rudkin Room which ran from 25th May to 30th June.

The invasion of Western Europe on 6th June 1944 was a world-changing historical event that impacted not only on those who took part but also on those who stayed behind in England. As Chairman Trevor Davies said when opening the exhibition on 25th May, 'Emsworth must have been the centre of a gigantic military camp'.

In 2014, the late Bob Duncan mounted an exhibition to mark the 70th anniversary of D-Day and Stephen Miller has drawn on his research and record gathering to curate this latest exhibition. Apart from the seaborne invasion itself, Stephen's presentation focused on pre D-Day exercises, equipment and logistics as well as the impact on local life and on local recollections of the day itself.

In the run-up to D-Day, it would have been very difficult to cross the road in Emsworth because of the constant stream of vehicles including lorries taking materials to Hayling Island where some of the Phoenix concrete caissons were being built. In those days all traffic through Emsworth (then the A27) came over the Ems Bridge, where a road block was sited and identity cards had to be shown, up Queens Street, through the High Street and out through West Street onto the Havant Road (or vice versa).

Sapper Len Butt, born in Emsworth in 1925, recalled the countryside in 1944 as a place 'bursting at the seams with troops and military vehicles...large numbers of Canadian troops (as well as Free French and British servicemen) camped in bell tents in the

woodlands and their vehicles and half-tracks parked in many roads in northern Emsworth'. Just prior to D-Day, Len's company discovered that they would be landing on Juno beach, 30 minutes after the first assault.

On the day itself, residents mentioned the sudden absence of troops, the calm after the hustle and bustle and the eerie silence that ensued.

Another Emsworthian en route to the beaches was landing craft wireman, Michael Jennings. Michael recalled, 'our run to the beach was planned for approximately 10.00 hours as part of the fourth assault wave. Every man was given a tot of rum, even underage me. It tasted good'. The landing craft beached and the crew took refuge on shore. 'As the shelling continued I jumped into a foxhole and found myself with an American soldier who shared his K-ration chocolate with me.'

Fortunately, both men survived the assault. Over 150,000 allied troops came ashore on that first day of the landings and many, but not all, set forth on the long road to victory.



Visitors reading about how D-Day preparations influenced the lives of Emsworthians



L-R: Trust Chairman Trevor Davies with General The Lord Richards of Herstmonceaux, Emsworth resident and visitor to the D-Day exhibition. Lord Richards is a former Chief of the Defence Staff.

Mailchimp

Have you been receiving regular monthly alerts on exhibitions and other events held at the Museum? Contact **Marguerita Taplin** if you are missing out by emailing mailchimp@emsworthmuseum.org.uk

Thank You

Another Emsworth resident, George Burns also visited the popular D-Day exhibition. He was kind enough to write and praise one of our volunteers. We are grateful for permission to print part of his letter.

'As an Emsworth resident this past 30 years, I had the pleasure of attending the opening ceremony of the exhibition and I wish to congratulate all those members, led by Stephen Miller, who put together such a comprehensive and interesting display.

I would particularly wish to thank a gentleman steward, christian name Phil, who being aware of my 94 year old somewhat unsteady progress kindly found me a chair and a most welcome cup of tea. The chair lift was an essential asset to my entry.

I was indeed fortunate that on the D-Day build up and follow up I was way up in the night skies well away from the terrible carnage on the sea and beaches below. I was serving with a night fighter squadron patrolling the important coastal embarkation ports from anticipated attacks.

These memories cannot be forgotten.'

Annual Treasure Hunt 2019

The weather had been teasing us all week – first sunshine, followed by a downpour of rain. This latter was so bad that on the previous Wednesday evening to 13th June the monthly walk had had to be abandoned summarily barely halfway through. However, we trusted to luck and made all the preparations in the Museum we could during the afternoon to welcome contestants for a hunt on the Thursday evening which would test their observational skills, stamina and clue-solving.

When planning a Treasure Hunt it is important for any setters to ensure that it is made as safe as possible and that both children and adults of varying heights can read or observe a clue wherever it is placed. Importantly, if the hunt is devised well in advance, it is necessary to double-check the day before that the clues are still there – signs have been known in the past to get altered, house names changed and shops opened or closed!

But all was well – this year we welcomed 10 scouts and cubs and 20 guides and brownies as well as a brave pair from The Kings' Arms to the competition.

Everyone who had entered came back and gave in their papers to be marked whilst they enjoyed squash and biscuits until the results were read out. This year a win for the 1st Emsworth Scout Group No.1 and another for the Kings' Arms Regulars. Well done both!

As they left to go home, each contestant received a free mouse mat and rubber to, hopefully, set the seal on an enjoyable evening.

Margaret Rogers



Treasure Hunt winners, 1st Emsworth Scouts

Forthcoming Talks

The Naval Camps of Bedhampton and Leigh Park in World War II: a talk by Bob Hind of the Portsmouth News. Wednesday, 16th October

Our speaker for the October talk is Bob Hind of the *Portsmouth News* who will talk to us about the naval camps that used to be in this area. During the second world war accommodation was urgently needed. In Bedhampton and Havant, Belmont camp, Fraser camp, HMS Daedalus III and Stockheath camp were erected. Bob Hind recounts the history of these camps and how initially they were used as overflow camps for the forces in Portsmouth where there were so many sailors waiting to be drafted to ships. He will talk about their later uses, including how after the war Daedalus III was used for displaced persons from the Baltic States. When they moved on, the Daedalus III and Fraser camps were used, amongst other things, by Portsmouth people who had no homes to call their own. Eventually the camps were demolished when the Leigh Park estate was built.

Commander Crabb: What Really Happened? a talk by Ann Bevan. Wednesday, 20th November

This intriguing talk will discuss what happened in the early morning of 19th April 1956. Commander Lionel 'Buster' Crabb, war hero and diver with over 10 years experience, dived into Portsmouth Harbour on a secret MI6 mission to investigate the hull of a visiting Russian cruiser. He did not return. The

sensitive nature of the dive which took place against the express directions of the Prime Minister, Sir Anthony Eden, resulted in a bungled official cover-up which only fuelled an outbreak of conspiracy theories. The initial embargo on the truth was extended for a further 50 years in 1976. So what really happened?

Our speaker Ann Bevan is the wife of Dr John Bevan who has written books about Commander Crabb including *Commander Crabb: What Really Happened?* as well as a second extended version called *Crabbgate* and a book about the diving operations in Gibraltar which involved Crabb.

Tickets for this year's October and November talks will be available from the Museum from 21st July when the Museum is open at the weekends and on Thursday afternoons between 2pm and 4pm.

If you have any queries email **Marguerita Taplin** on talks@emsworthmuseum.org.uk

Advance notice

Our talk in January 2020 on the D-Day landings in Normandy will be by General The Lord (David) Richards of Herstmonceaux, while in February Denise Bennett will give us a creative response in poetry and images on the sinking of *The Royal George* in 1782. More information on both of these talks will follow.

Curator's Corner



Two pages from teenager William Whitham's 19th century sketch book

Browsing, the other day, through one of the Museum office drawers populated in the main with Girl-Guide memorabilia, I happened upon a plastic bag containing a sketch book together with a number of loosely arranged pages of hand drawings.

Accessioned under the number EMHT333, these were the work of William Wright Whitham born in 1878 and kindly donated by his nephew Peter Whitham in 1991. They were displayed in the Peter Whitham Art Exhibition two years later. Apart from the fact that they have probably seen little daylight since, they are remarkable in their abiding charm and evident skill especially so when it is learnt that William sadly died in 1892 aged only fourteen.

What an artist he might well have become! Several genres feature ranging from agricultural and railway engines; fishing boats; breeds of horses, cows, sheep and pigs. Also included are 'Country Scenes

or Farming Journal' as he describes it and 'Sea-Side Sketches'. The drawings are mostly in pencil or ink and some coloured with crayons. Those that have particularly caught my eye though are entitled the 'French Army,' other soldiers and 'The British Navy'.

The latter carries the date 29th December 1892 and contains a hand-written account of the history of the British Navy supported by wonderful sketches. I wonder if during his short life William ever shared his work with anybody since his parents and his history teacher would surely have been proud of both his knowledge and his artwork. Each one of his sketches could be included here but I have chosen one from the sketch book that I hope conveys some of the time and effort he put in, not to mention the skill he possessed.

Evidently William had a link with Emsworth and its surroundings. His 'Seaside Sketches' include a view of the seafront and castle at Scarborough, similar seafront scenes at Redcar and Whitby as well as three Southport pleasure steamers, the *Queen of the Bay of Preston*, the *Great Western* and *Bicasstaff* – although this is probably misspelt and was more likely to have been *Bickerstaffe*. Such experiences suggest that he was born and brought up in the north-east or perhaps spent a little of his short life on holiday there. According to Peter Whitham, William also bound the booklets himself! It is not known how William met his end but whatever the circumstances he must have derived much pleasure in the drawings and would no doubt be pleased that they are so highly regarded today.

Philip A. Magrath

Emsworth Horticultural Society: 100 years



Emsworth Horticultural Society (EHS) Management Committee Chair, Lyn Davies, setting up the centenary exhibition in the Museum

The July exhibition in the David Rudkin Room celebrated 100 years of 'toil' and 'triumph' by the Emsworth Horticultural Society.

The Land Settlement Facilities Act of 1919 allowed local authorities to provide smallholdings and allotments to war veterans. The Emsworth and District Allotment Association Limited was set up and in 1920 signed an agreement with Warblington Urban District Council to run the allotments in a site off Victoria Road. Many plots were miniature smallholdings on which members kept livestock such as hens and pigs as well as growing vegetables and fruit. The work of the Association expanded and in 1948 the group stopped being a limited company and became the Emsworth and District Allotments and Gardens Association. Seventy years on the Association has evolved into Emsworth Horticultural Society.



Sarah Sanderson's 'A Fisherman's Retreat'. EHS's entry at the Chelsea Flower Show in 2001 won a Silver Medal



The centenary exhibition was visited by many horticulturally-minded Emsworthians who could view the growth of the Society through the display of photographs, newspaper cuttings, advertisements, reports, recipes and, of course, the many trophies and certificates. Events such as the Emsworth Show, gardeners' question time, garden open days, outings and plant sales were well documented as was the work of the 'Hut' where members can purchase horticultural sundries.

Dr Sylvia Courtnage 1950 to 2019

Sylvia has been a quiet but very effective member of the EM&HT General Committee for several years, and her contributions will be sadly missed. In the past she juggled the demands of her degree course in London and skyped coursework whilst she also managed to join me on several occasions to compile Oral History DVDs of the memories and recollections of some Emsworth's residents and notables and her clear, pleasant voice can be heard on many. She had a talent for asking questions of interviewees which ensured they were at ease. **Margaret Rogers**



Sylvia was elected to the General Committee at the 2013 AGM and over the next 6 years worked on a number of projects including assisting Linda Newell with the successful application to the Heritage Lottery Fund for finance to record the Emsworth oyster industry and the package of events, film and school involvement that followed. When Linda died suddenly in 2015 Sylvia took over the project and saw it through to completion as well as negotiating with Chichester Harbour Conservancy for a grant under their sustainability fund for the reprint of Linda's book *Uncovering the Past: Emsworth, Oysters and Men*.

Sylvia was always aware of the need to let local residents and visitors to the town know about Trust and Museum events and activities and in 2016 she organised the update and reprint of the current Museum publicity leaflet. **Dorothy Bone**

Sylvia was always willing to volunteer when help was needed and beavered quietly in the background working on various projects. Despite her illness and the treatment that left her weak she would still volunteer to take a turn at the Museum stand at the Emsworth Show and encourage people to join the Museum and talk to them about our exhibits at our stand at the Farmers Market. She helped out at the Museum Talks selling tickets and enjoyed helping to man the stand when we ran the Oyster Stall during the British Food Fortnight to encourage people to come and visit our Oyster Exhibition at the Museum. She was someone you could always approach when an extra pair of hands was needed. **Marguerita Taplin**

Sylvia was awarded her professional doctorate posthumously.

The Archive Room

For some time now the Archive Room has been in the process of re-organisation, to make the books, folders and files more easily accessible to researchers, visitors and stewards.

As shelf space is at a premium the first task was to have a 'spring clean' of all the books and files with no direct connection to Emsworth and its immediate surroundings: this has been done.

Next, a numbering system was devised so that the most requested and used files are on the bottom, easy-to-get-at shelves and less used files placed higher up. The less relevant files, which we feel we

cannot get rid of for various reasons, are stored on the top shelf.

The second phase will be to list the contents of each file and this work has been started.

Phase 3 will be to integrate the research material, donated to the Museum by archivists Sheila and Roy Morgan, into the Museum's files. This substantial historical collection will take many hours to edit and merge. Offers of help will be gratefully received.

We hope members will be able to take advantage of the work that has been completed so far.

Margaret Rogers, Geoff Higgins

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