

Warblington Archaeology Re-opens Museum



Dr Trevor Davies, left, and David Hopkins, County Archaeologist, examine the new Warblington display

The Museum re-opened on 31st March with the unveiling of the new display highlighting the Warblington excavations. Dr Trevor Davies of Chichester and District Archaeology Society (CDAS) has led the various excavations of the Warblington Roman Villa and curated the latest permanent display in the Main Room.

In his introduction, Dr Davies explained that in this part of the world we live in the shadow of Fishbourne Roman Palace. Warblington may not have the grandeur of the latter but excavating our local Roman villa has taught us a great deal, in particular that Warblington was in demonstrable high status use for longer than any other local Roman site including Fishbourne. On display are a stylus, indicating possible commercial activity, coins, painted plaster, roof tiles, part of a hypocaust and some tesserae. The most important finds though include part of an amphora made in the Naples area between 90BC and 10BC and a rare stone cist. The cist is the centrepiece of the exhibit and is a unique find from Roman Britain.

CDAS is grateful for all the support it has received from many quarters and Trevor Davies was delighted to show David Hopkins, Hampshire County Archaeologist, the new exhibit and to ask him to formerly open the Museum.

David Hopkins told his audience that he has always thought that the archaeologist's mantle is as the storyteller of a community. Everywhere and everyone has a story to tell. Knowing our past heritage is important to so many people. For example, 80% of overseas visitors tour heritage sites. It is the UK's 4th most important activity and is worth nearly £30 billion to the country's economy. There has been a rise in the importance of community archaeology in the last 10 to 15 years with more and more local stories being told about past activities. Local museums such as that in Emsworth are vital in telling that story. David Hopkins was delighted to declare the Museum open, and he added:

"If we weave these strands together we find ourselves here at the opening of Emsworth Museum, the community valuing, enjoying and sharing their stories."

Also present were members of the public and of EM&HT, Jane Weeks who helped set up the Warblington exhibit, Hampshire County Councillor Jackie Branson and Vicki Offen, Estates Surveyor, Havant Borough Council.

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Diary Dates

All monthly exhibitions are held in the Museum's David Rudkin Room. Talks are held in the Mountford Rooms, Emsworth Community Centre, North Street, at 7.30pm. Members £3.00 non members £4.00.

April 28th - May 20th	Exhibition – Paintings by local artist Michael Bury (Emsworth Arts Trail – April 28th/29th and May 5th/6th/7th)
May 16th	Local History Walk led by Christine Bury
May 26th - June 24th	Exhibition – Family History revisited
June 13th	Local History Walk led by Christine Bury
June 30th - July 29th	Exhibition – “Town, Land and Sea” Paintings by local artist Angela Loader
July 4th	Annual Treasure Hunt
July 11th	Local History Walk led by Christine Bury
August 3rd - 27th	Exhibition – “Emsworth Weather” by Bernie Gudge
August 8th	Local History Walk led by Christine Bury
August 27th	Emsworth Show
September 1st - 30th	Exhibition – “Growing up in Emsworth in the 1950s/1960s” by Steve Miller
September 22nd - October 7th	Emsworth British Food Fortnight
September 30th	Talk and Walk “Ale, Gingerbread and Oysters” led by Dr Margaret Rogers
October 6th - November 11th	Exhibition – “Commemoration of Emsworth Men in WWI” by Bob Duncan
October 7th	Talk and Walk “Ale, Gingerbread and Oysters” led by Dr Margaret Rogers
October 15th	Illustrated talk – “Chichester in the 1950s: A Decade of Change” by Alan Green
November 19th	Illustrated talk – “The Butler’s Christmas” by Dr Bob France
December	Stewards Christmas Tea party

Museum Opening Times: Emsworth Museum is open until 11th November on Saturdays and Bank Holidays 10.30am - 4.30pm and on Sundays 2.30pm - 4.30pm. On the two Sundays of the Arts Trail, 29th April and 6th May, the Museum will be open 10.30am - 4.30pm. In addition it will be open on 23rd April 10.00am - 2.00pm and all Fridays in August 2.30pm - 4.30pm.

Members are welcome to visit the Museum for research on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons 2.00pm - 4.00pm (except May 15th, June 26th, August 7th, September 18th, October 30th and December 11th). If you would like to visit and be sure that the Museum will be open, please telephone or email me.

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

Dorothy Bone 01243 373780 dorothybone@btinternet.com

Preview of Exhibitions

April 28th – May 20th (Arts Trail 28th/29th April and 5th/6th/7th May) Michael Bury is displaying water colours of classic sailing craft that can be seen around our coastline as well as local harbour scenes. Some pictures are dramatic others placid – but all aim to convey the excitement of sailing in rough water.

May 26th – June 24th Many people visit Emsworth Museum to research their family history. This fascinating subject forms the basis for the exhibition which shows the family trees for several local families. Some of this information was first shown in 2017 and is being revisited because of its popularity – but with some additional material.

June 30th – July 29th “Town, Land and Sea” is an exhibition of paintings by award winning local artist Angela Loader who is returning after a successful solo exhibition in Emsworth Museum in 2012. Angela has been

Curator's Corner

One of the many long-running dilemmas I have involving one aspect of my full-time employment has recently been solved by happening upon one of the Museum's artefacts. This is a book of evident antiquity with no bibliographic details other than the word HAMPSHIRE which survives on a well-worn spine.

Recently it was suggested to me, as Curator of Artillery for Royal Armouries at Fort Nelson, that a more detailed history of the Portsdown Hill Forts would be a beneficial purchase for some of our more academically inclined visitors. This process is currently underway and during its early stages I felt that a picture of how Portsdown Hill appeared to the itinerant in, say, the eighteenth century or at least before the forts were constructed between 1861 and 1870, needed to be presented.

There are several options of course. William Cobbett's observations during his tours of southern England in the 1820s are quite revealing since he describes the southern foot of Portsdown Hill as 'where I shall see the earliest corn in England'. There is also A History of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight (1900-1912) in the Victoria County History series which awaits consultation.

But the book in question carries the accession number EMHT66.1 with the OMEKA entry describing the title as 'Book on the History of Hampshire, 1716' although no evidence is present in the book to confirm this. The pagination runs from 845 to 920 which suggests that these pages could have been extracted from one of many directories and rebound in the format we see today. Anyway, on page 865 the following entry appears.



Part of Robert Morden's map of Hampshire from the 'Book on the History of Hampshire, 1716'

The Hills between this and Southwick, are called Portsdown, either From Portsmouth, or from the Port, which was anciently at the Upper End of the Country. The Roads and Grounds below these are Very miry in wet Weather; but as Travellers pass thro' them slowly They have a lovely Prospect of the Isle of Wight and the Sea.

This is quite a revealing description even though there is no mention of a drovers track across the top of the hill as one might have believed and perhaps following the east/west line of Portsdown Hill Road.

Oddly enough in this work Emsworth does not receive a mention of any description although that for Warblington is quite lengthy.

Phil Magrath

Preview continued from page 2

inspired by the fast and ever-changing developments all around us. Her aim is to capture the history and beauty of the town, the surrounding landscape and coastline in their natural colours by embracing contrasts and highlighting the fading light of day. Original paintings, prints and a new range of greetings cards will be displayed and available for purchase during the exhibition.

August 3rd – 27th The theme for Bernie Gudge's exhibition is the changing weather. Bernie is Emsworth Museum's Photograph Archivist, and he has gathered together a range of pictures – some from the Museum collection and some from his own albums – to show the extremes of weather experienced in Emsworth and locally since 1895. Ice flows 6" thick at Langstone Mill, happy children playing in the snow in 1947, the bitter winter of 1963 and the disastrous storm and wind of 1987 as well as residents skating on the mill pond and floods on the bridge at Hermitage – all are shown in crisply defined black and white photographs.

Vice-Chairman's Address to the AGM on 19th March

Good evening everyone and welcome to the 43rd AGM of the Emsworth Maritime & Historical Trust.

I think one of the unique strengths of Emsworth Museum is the sturdy band of volunteers we have acquired over some 30 years who give their services so willingly. Although we try to show our thanks to them annually at the Christmas Party each December, they do in fact deserve our unreserved thanks for their services throughout the year. When you reach retirement age you have the luxury of sitting back and evaluating what you personally consider to be worthwhile spending your time on and we are grateful that so many consider it time well spent to become a volunteer. What sets our Museum apart is the warm welcome at the top of the stairs given by someone interested in showing visitors our latest exhibition, the new arrivals in the Main Hall and an interest in helping them to leave both informed and interested in what we offer.

Another of our strengths is the fact that we are an independent museum. When you hear of the continual cutbacks decimating the professional sector, with their skills and expertise lost so summarily because of the constraints of budgeting, we are thankful that by being independent such axes do not fall on us.

So what has been happening over this past year? One of our first landmarks was the acceptance by Lord Willetts of our invitation to become our President. Over the years Lord Willetts has always shown a keen interest in the Museum, and despite his reluctance to become Lord Emsworth, we are delighted he has accepted our invitation. Then, later in the year, two Winchester University students sought our help in producing a promotional video about Emsworth. Next is that, thanks to Phil Magrath and his helpers, there has been a continual theme in both the Research Room and Main Hall of improved presentation and conservation. As Dorothy Bone once remarked to me, when visitors come into the Museum these days they often expect to see professional standards, and we must try our very best to meet them.

To that end the OMEKA system under the guidance of Graham and Marguerita Taplin is continually being added to and now offers a wealth of readily available information, Geoff Higgins is still at work ensuring that the tremendous bequest of material given to us by our Honorary Archivists is safely documented, Bernie Gudge has ensured our photographic archive



Vice-chairman, Margaret Rogers with Stephen Miller, the newest member of the General Committee

is now second to none and Tony Stimson, our past Chairman, has more than fulfilled his pledge to continue to oversee many contractual hazards, to resolve outstanding key administrative issues, to ensure we had improved lighting as well as finishing off the myriad of small jobs so essential to the smooth running of the museum. And we are most grateful to him and everyone who has done so much for the Museum. Sadly, one thing is still lacking — we do urgently now need to appoint a new Chairman — lady or gentleman — someone with a genuine interest in seeing the Museum continue to develop and thrive, backed by a most supportive General Committee. Should you know of someone please do let us know.

Advertise your research interests

The committee is considering offering a service for members to be able to advertise their research interests, whether linked to a particular family, building, street or workplace, on a Museum website.

The idea is that it offers the opportunity to share (and hopefully increase) knowledge, which will also add to our overall information about the area.

At present, the potential service is in a trial state — and requires more users to see if it will become viable. So, please, if you think this is something that would interest you, contact **Sylvia Courtnage** c/o the Museum or email scourtnage@btinternet.com

AGM News

Thirty seven members attended the 43rd Annual General Meeting in March. Reports on the events of the past year and plans for 2018 were presented and copies of the income and expenditure statements for the year ending 31st December 2017 were available for everyone present.

Steve Miller was unanimously elected to fill the position on the General Committee created by the resignation of Wendy Bright. The Vice-Chairman thanked Wendy for all her work over the past seven years.

CLlr Rivka Cresswell's appointment as Havant Borough Council Representative on the Trust's General Committee was ratified and Richard Mcmillan was appointed the Trust's Independent Examiner for the year ending 31st December 2018.

After the business of the AGM. Mike Edwards showed a selection of attractive and informative pictures of the 2017 holiday to Hereford and the Forest of Dean.

Dorothy Bone

50/50 Club

The 50/50 Club was launched in January 1990 by David Rudkin, the first Chairman of the Emsworth Maritime and Historical Trust. Half of the money raised is retained by the Trust and is used for specific rather than general purposes, principally to enhance the Museum. The other half is returned to members of the 50/50 Club as cash prizes in a monthly draw. The current first prize is £35 and the second is £15. One ticket now costs £6 a year with a minimum holding of two tickets. A list of winners is displayed every year in the Newsletter.

When you next visit the Museum I hope you will notice the attractive new Window Blinds and, what I hope you will not notice, the new UV filters which have been fitted to all the windows to prevent the deterioration of our collections by sunlight.

Previous purchases included a high definition camcorder for the oral/video interviews, the Blu-ray DVD player and lighting for the display boards.

These have purchased by the generous sponsorship of the 50/50 Club.

In future we intend to purchase two display cabinets for the main room, a new facility to replace the swing boards that have passed their use-by date and cannot be renovated or repaired, and software and monitors for recording temperature fluctuations and humidity.

Future possibilities include a new name board over the front door (the old one is now getting very shabby) and an upgraded security system.

The sooner these purchases are achieved the better so we need lots more members to raise the money and, at the same time, have a bit of fun. If you would like to join or increase your holding of tickets there is a Membership Application form enclosed with this Newsletter. Just fill it in and send it to me (**Peter Morse**) at the Museum.

Treasure Hunt

This summer the Museum's annual influx of brownies, guides, rangers, beavers and cubs is on 4th July. Some adults also return year after year for the treasure hunt and log it into their annual calendar for a pleasant way to spend a summer evening. Last year's winning team was headed up by the very capable Ann Sims, who has been a participant for several years. This year's route has already been devised and as always we hope for good weather.

Margaret Rogers

Holiday

Applications are now being received for our 4-day trip to Devon in October which was advertised in the previous Newsletter. The coach is filling up but spaces are still available. In the first instance, please apply to **Peter Morse** at the Museum.

If you have already applied you will have received a response from Woods, usually by email. So, please check your emails and, if necessary, your junk mail.

The Seaside Piers of the British Isles

A talk on seaside piers on a wintry wet evening in January was just the right subject to make one think longingly of warm summer holidays. A full house in the Mountford Rooms of the Emsworth Community Centre greeted Graeme Payne on the evening of the 15th for the first of the Trust's 2018 illustrated talks.

Only 85 piers were ever built and 53 of them are still in use. Of the 85, one was erected in Scotland while seven were constructed in Wales. Pier building reached its zenith in Victorian times and boomed to ease transportation problems. Trippers aboard steamers needed to be able to reach the land dry shod. Before the advent of piers, often the only way ashore was to be carried by waiting 'would be' porters.

Piers were built far enough out to sea so the ferries could dock safely, the passengers could then disembark and make their way to land on foot or by train. The first pier was built in Ryde on the Isle of Wight in 1814. Graeme likened Ryde, to the 'Waitrose' of piers. Not to be outdone, Southend was constructed in 1829 and Herne Bay in 1832.



Graeme Payne with talks organiser Wendy Bright (left) and vice-chairman, Margaret Rogers (right)

Others quickly followed including Southsea's Clarence Pier in 1861, Worthing in 1862 and Bognor in 1865.

Piers were well liked and soon became places for entertainment. Bookstalls, deckchairs, funfairs, bandstands, dance halls, theatres: all became well-known features of piers. Sporting pastimes included swimming and fishing while competitions such as the annual Birdman competition at Bognor were held.

Nine piers date from 1900 including Deal, built in the 1960s. Day trips to France used to run from there aboard the ferries, *Royal Daffodil* and *Queen of the Channel*. Tickets cost 2s 3d if you didn't land and 3s 6d if you wanted to spend a couple of hours in a foreign country, perhaps to buy some duty free goods!

Fire was a hazard and several piers have had to be rebuilt. Some of them were very long. Southend was the longest at 7,080 ft (2,158m) originally while the shortest is at Burnham on Sea with just 117 ft (36m).

Some were beautiful such as Cliveden or Southport. Most were built of timber but some were constructed in cast iron. Gravesend is the last remaining cast-iron pier.

Graeme spoke about sadly-missed piers such as Dover where passengers on the *Golden Arrow* would leave the train at the pier end and board the ferry for France. He looked at newly rebuilt piers such as at Eastbourne with its traditional architecture and Hastings with its modernist wooden layout. A show of hands by the audience showed that his listeners were equally divided as to which pier they preferred.

The evening concluded with questions and the drawing of the raffle.

Auntie Pat's School of Dancing



*Ex-pupil
Cynthia Field*

The first temporary exhibition in the David Rudkin Room from 31st March to 22nd April was a continuation of the last exhibition there in 2017. Several new photos were on display. They had been bought in by some of Auntie Pat's ex-pupils including Mary Brown, formerly Mary Daines, Barry Hancock, June Ephringham and Cynthia Field. June's Mum used to play piano for some of the classes while Cynthia became a Tiller girl and gave shows in the Nutbourne area.

Sugar, Slaves, Ships and a bit of Speculation

This was the intriguing title of Rodney Stone's illustrated talk on 19th February. A packed audience had gathered in the Mountford Rooms in the Community Centre to hear about Mr Stone's genealogical quest which led him to look at the Isle of Mauritius in the first half of the 19th century.

The story had begun when he started researching the Bullen ancestors of his wife Sara. One of them, Robert and his wife Mary, had 11 children, some of whom were born in Mauritius. The latter territory is a small volcanic island, not much bigger than the Isle of Wight, which lies some 500 miles east of Madagascar in the Indian Ocean. The Dutch named the island Mauritius on discovering it in 1598. Attempts at colonisation were made but proved unsuccessful and the island was finally taken over by the French in 1715. They remained in control for nearly a hundred years but following the Napoleonic Wars, the island was ceded to Britain in 1814.

So why did Robert Bullen wish to uproot his young family from Britain and take them so far away. The answer lies in that emotive word 'Sugar'. Robert was 38 when he, Mary and the children arrived in 1831. Five years later, he had made enough money to buy a sugar estate in the middle of the island called 'Gros Cailloux'. The name means 'Large Rocks'.

Sugar plantations had previously been worked by slaves but Britain abolished slavery in 1833 and the ruling took effect in Mauritius in February 1835. The plantations were thereafter worked by indentured labour, primarily from India. Initially, the abolition of slavery was a disaster for the sugar plantations and several estates changed hands in the mid 1830s. Robert was an entrepreneur and not only prospered in the sugar industry but became a founder member of a Commercial Bank on the island and the owner of two cargo ships.



Map of Mauritius in 1791 drawn by Rigobert Bonne, a French engineer and cartographer

Robert was a humane employer and with others was responsible for bettering the welfare of imported Indian labourers. Today 68 percent of the island's population are Indo-Mauritians who are descendants of those Indian labourers.

The Bullen family returned to Britain in 1862 and Robert died in Awbridge House, Romsey on 16th March 1869.

Rodney and Sara, fascinated by the genealogical story, visited Mauritius in 2013. They found the estate and were able to photograph the surviving remnants of the sugar industry. While much of the talk was on the ancestral story, Mr Stone diverted the audience with speculation about what the Dodo looked like and with the thought that Charles Darwin could well have visited Gran Cailloux during his 10-day stay on the island. He kept a diary of the voyage of the Beagle and recorded seeing 'fine fields of sugar-cane growing amidst huge blocks of lava'. Gros Cailloux (Large Rocks) perhaps!

This was the last of the Trust's four winter talks but the next series will begin on Monday evening, 15th October 2018. Save the date!



Rodney and Sara Stone

Local History Walks

Four evening walks around Emsworth are planned for this year. Each will start and finish at the Museum in North Street and take from 1½ to 2 hours. These informal strolls will cost £3 per person, payable on the evening, and start promptly at 6 pm. Comments, questions and reminiscences are welcome so that we can all learn from one another. These walks have proved very popular in the past and this year they will take place on Wednesday evenings on 16th May, 13th June, 11th July and 8th August.

Palace of Westminster Outing

Few buildings in the world have such a heritage as that of the Palace of Westminster or, as it is perhaps better known, the Houses of Parliament. EM&HT's tour of the Palace on 9th April, sponsored by our local Conservative Member of Parliament, Alan Mak, was an eye-opener in many ways.

The cavernous Westminster Hall, built by William Rufus in 1099, is where we started our tour. Austere and stark on a rainy April Monday, the Hall has been the scene of many state occasions from coronation feasts in medieval times to famous trials and ceremonial lyings in state.

The visit was organised by Hon. Secretary, Dorothy Bone and led by former Chairman, Tony Stimson. Our group tours, which were split into two, took around 75 minutes. The iconic building we toured though is not the medieval palace that once adjoined Westminster Hall. That was destroyed by fire on the night of 16th October 1834 and was rebuilt by the architect, Charles Barry. He spent 25 years designing and constructing the Palace and the interiors, embellished by Augustus Pugin, are magnificent.

Prince Albert chaired the Fine Arts Commission which was established in 1841 to supervise the project. The scale of the challenge was considerable, for example, over 100 wall compartments had to be filled with paintings. Historical themes were chosen for the decoration. The crowned portcullis is the emblem of both Houses of Parliament and is a recurring feature throughout the interior. It is found on carvings, curtains, wallpaper, even apparently cast into the metal of Big Ben, the great bell in the Clock Tower. (By the way, the Clock Tower was a forlorn sight, scaffolding is everywhere and the clock is minus its hands.)

The contrast between the ornate Queen's Robing Room used at the State Opening of Parliament and the highly decorative House of Lords with the seemingly plain Chamber of the House of Commons is vivid. The contrast though was caused by fire after the Chamber was destroyed by bombs on 10th May 1941. The new chamber was designed by Giles

Our tour ended beneath the entrance from Westminster Hall to the Houses of Parliament. There we were shown the latest addition to this great building. New Dawn by artist Mary Branson commemorates the long campaign which led to some women getting the vote in 1918 and to full suffrage in 1928. It is a breathtaking artwork whose illumination is controlled by the height of the tide in the River Thames.

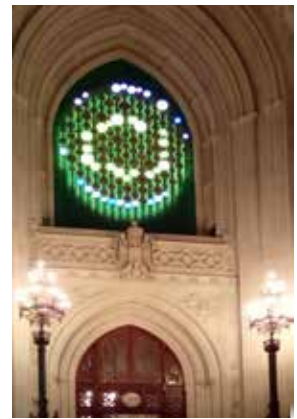


Photo: Audrey Mant

Gilbert Scott. The knowledgeable guides skilfully weaved us through the labyrinth of corridors and halls between the Lords and the Commons and gave us a fascinating insight into the workings of Parliament.

There is another remnant of the medieval palace that still remains and that is the Jewel Tower. Not the one at the Tower of London that houses the Crown Jewels, but a small keep, reminiscent of Portchester, just across the road from the Palace of Westminster. The group went to visit it in the afternoon. Run now by English Heritage, it used to house Edward III's silver plate and royal treasures. Later it became a Tudor lumber room before becoming a storage facility for House of Lords records. It was also the home at one time of the National Weights and Measures Office.

So what are our abiding memories. Here are a few. Comfortable Woods coach organised by Membership Secretary, Peter Morse; Paul's excellent driving; friendly policemen; cold floor in Westminster Hall; welcoming café; well-stocked shop; plethora of gold leaf; cathedral-like ceilings and crowds of tourists.

Margaret Rogers and Christine Bury

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If you would like to provide a news article or illustration, please send it to the editor, preferably on disk or by email.

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