



Emsworth Maritime & Historical Trust NEWSLETTER

President: The Rt Hon Lord Willetts of Havant
Reg. Charity No. 1204910

Emsworth Museum, 10b North St PO10 7DD

February 2026

Museum newsletter

Christine Bury, editor, steps down

Christine Bury, editor the EM&HT newsletter since 2017, is stepping down. Her career, in advertising and public relations, and her personal passion for history, has meant that the EM&HT's public-facing publications (Christine also edited The Emsworth ECHO) since she took on these editorial roles, have been of the highest quality.

Christine's interest in history was ignited by history lessons at school, and she had hoped to study history at university. This however was not to be. Instead she joined the advertising department of the International Nickel Company of Canada (Inco) in London. It was while working for Inco that she took on the editorship of her first internal company magazine.

Christine moved to Taylor Woodrow, the construction giant, in 1972. She travelled all over the country promoting events and special projects for the company and also edited their internal magazine with the help of a team of correspondents.

Christine took a break from work to bring up her son, Colin, and then, once he had started school, she joined the Society of Freelance Copyeditors and became self-employed, specialising in the construction industry.

Christine and her husband moved from Surrey to Emsworth in 2004. She signed up for an archaeology class in Havant and subsequently joined the Havant History Group and the Chichester & District Archaeology Society (CDAS) where she met Trevor Davies (now the Museum's chairman) and wife Ann.

Both groups have a close relationship with the EM&HT and Christine was soon a member of our organisation, joining the committee in 2016.

PA

Christine's commitment to the museum has been unwavering. The newsletter in particular has benefitted from her enthusiasm and professionalism. But Christine is a pragmatist and she has decided that it is time for a change of editorship. She will continue to be actively involved with the museum.



Christine (pictured left) recently visited SRP Design & Print, the company that prints our publications, to thank Kim & Naomi (pictured above, with Christine) for their support.

Christine has handed the editorship of the Museum newsletter to Phoebe Atkinson. Phoebe has lived in Emsworth for over 30 years and has been involved with many local groups including the Emsworth Residents Association (she edited the EMS for several years), the Emsworth Business Association, and the Parish of Warblington with Emsworth. She is not, she confesses, very interested in history. We sincerely hope that her involvement with the museum changes all that!



Spring Lectures

Don't miss out

Tickets for the museum's winter lecture series are available to purchase in advance from **Bookends, 7 High Street**. Our lectures are often very popular, so we always recommend buying lecture tickets well in advance, to avoid disappointment.

Please note: You can only buy tickets with cash, in advance. Tickets are not sold 'on the door'.

Thursday 5th March, 7:30pm (doors open 7pm)

Violette Szabo GC

Speaker: Jeremy Prescott

Venue: Emsworth Community Centre, PO10 7DD

Parking: North St car park & Palmers Rd car park (both free after 6pm)

Violette Szabo was a Special Operations Executive (SOE) during World War II. Jeremy Prescott's lecture covers her life from recruitment to the SOE through to her imprisonment and execution in Ravensbrück Concentration Camp in 1945.

Thursday 2nd April, 7:30pm (doors open 7pm)

Portsmouth 4 – The Final Chapter

Speaker: Andrew Negus

Venue: Emsworth Community Centre, PO10 7DD

Parking: North St car park & Palmers Rd car park (both free after 6pm)

Andrew Negus presents the final chapter in his entertaining series of lectures about the history of Portsmouth.

Thursday 7th May, 7:30pm (doors open 7pm)

Tudor Castles & The Women who lived in them

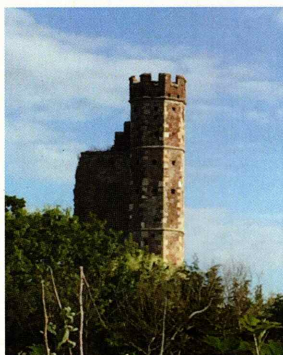
Speaker: Dr Rachel Delman

Venue: Emsworth Community Centre, PO10 7DD

Parking: North St car park & Palmers Rd car park (both free after 6pm)

Dr Delman is an expert on Tudor women and their impact on the built environment. As a Heritage Partnerships Coordinator, Rachel works with researchers, groups, students and professional services organisations and partners.

- Our lectures are significant fundraisers for the museum
- Tickets are great value at £5
- We usually have a raffle to raise additional funds
- All money raised through our lectures and raffles supports the museum



Volunteering

Why not join the team?

For the past five years Nigel Gossop has been organising the Trust's ever popular evening illustrated lectures. The subjects talked about have been diverse, fun and always interesting.

He is looking for an assistant who will work with him, contribute ideas and share the workload.

If you would like to help mould the future programme contact Nigel by email at westermanyarns@googlemail.com or Trevor Davies, chairman, using email trevor.davies28@btinternet.com.



Exhibitions

Margaret's Castle

Discover more about the life of Margaret Pole, her influence on national politics, and her home, Warblington Castle.

Exhibition runs 3rd April - 25th May

Emsworth Memorial Garden

The memorial garden, within the footprint of Emsworth Recreation Ground, celebrates its 20th anniversary this year. This exhibition explores its origins and the lives of those it remembers.

Exhibition runs 30rd May - 12th July

Nore Barn Woods

Nore Barn Woods is an attractive area of public open space in Emsworth, adjacent to the shore of Chichester Harbour. This exhibition explores its flora and fauna, and the work that the Friends of Nore Barn Woods have done to protect and enhance the area for everyone.

Exhibition runs 18th July - 30th August



From the Chairman

Trust is 51 and thriving

The 51st Annual General Meeting is to be held on Thursday 19th March in the museum, starting at 7:30pm. It will give those attending an opportunity to look at the updated exhibits. Drinks will be served in the David Rudkin room afterwards. The papers for the AGM are in the same envelope as this newsletter. The coloured slip will allow those not able to attend in person to register their vote by post.

PG Wodehouse

The story of PG Wodehouse and Emsworth continues to attract attention. In October, Mary McSparran, Curator of Manuscripts Special Collections at the Jean & Alexander Heard Libraries, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee, visited the museum. Mary looks after the American PG Wodehouse archive.

On Saturday, 14th March 2026, the PG Wodehouse Society is holding a conference in Chichester at which I will speak. The museum will be open on the afternoon of Friday 13th March and the morning of Sunday 15th March to allow the delegates to visit us.

Museum Opening

Although the museum will not yet have opened, we will have to be ready by mid-March because the first stewards' training session will be on the morning of Friday 13th March, with sessions throughout the following week, and the last one on Monday 23rd March. We will then be ready for the opening of the 2026 season on Friday 3rd April.

Our first exhibition is entitled 'Margaret Pole & Warblington Castle'. The exhibition tells the story of one of Warblington's most historically significant figures, Margaret Pole, Countess of Salisbury, and the magnificent castle she constructed.

Stewards

Having a group of well-trained, enthusiastic stewards is central to the Museum's operations. One only has to look at the comments in the visitors' book to see how much their efforts are appreciated.

TD

Pig-hoo-o-o-ey

We hope you will make any PG Wodehouse fans visiting Emsworth in March feel welcome. If they wish to walk past his home, 'Threepwood', direct them to Record Road - the house has a blue plaque, so is easy to identify.



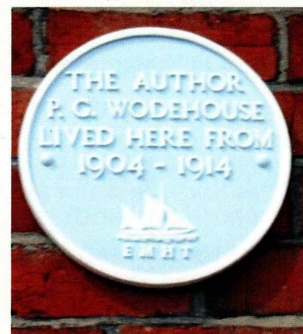
Trevor Davies, Chairman



PG Wodehouse



Mary McSparran



Threepwood's blue plaque

POSTAL VOTING

If you are unable to attend the
AGM in person,
please vote by post

MUSEUM WEBSITE

www.emsworthmuseum.org.uk

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Curator's Corner

Visitors: They get to have the last word

The idea for a Visitors Book in any museum is on the face of it a sound one as it can provide a valuable insight into the museum's presentation and how the visitor sees it. However, once the book closes at the end of the season very little attention is paid to it, which is a shame.

Generally speaking people are often loathe to make any critical comment verbally but are invited to do so in written format in the Visitors Book under 'Comments' as well as providing the date of their visit, their name and address. I thought it would be of interest to our membership to share with you a few of the salient features.

Visitors come from near and far

275 visitors signed their name between the 5th April and the 2nd November during the season last year. Of these 170 (62%) were local, 80 (29%) were from further afield and 25 (9%) were of international derivation, including visitors from France, Australia, New Zealand, Portugal, Belgium, America, Ireland, Spain, Canada, and Holland.

Two of the exhibitions we displayed came in for celebratory comment. The Swing Riots inspired a visitor to note that we found the answer to why they were called 'The Swing Riots'! "*Fascinating, lovely helpful stuff*". The Women of Emsworth exhibition was clearly popular. A local visitor wrote that "*it was far better than I expected and good to fill in gaps with those I remember*".

More generally, an amusing comment read "*lovely small museum – as they should be*". Did the writer mean lovely, or small I wonder! Another local visitor mused that it was "*really special. A moment for women to be celebrated and highlight their importance to the community. Seeing the rest of the museum more after living here for 2 years, I feel like I know Emsworth even better*".

Younger visitors record their views too

Our efforts to entertain younger visitors were appreciated, moving a visitor to note that "*Henry really enjoyed doing the small quiz, and took great interest in the Echo boat! Staff were so friendly and made us feel very welcome. Will return soon*".

In general terms our visitors are massively impressed with the stories we select to relate and the way in which we use objects to support them. Many first-timers think that a visit will only take minutes rather than hours and are consequently pleasantly surprised at the breadth and depth of local information we present and feel moved enough to note that they will be back. Whether they do or not is another matter!

Our volunteers make it all possible

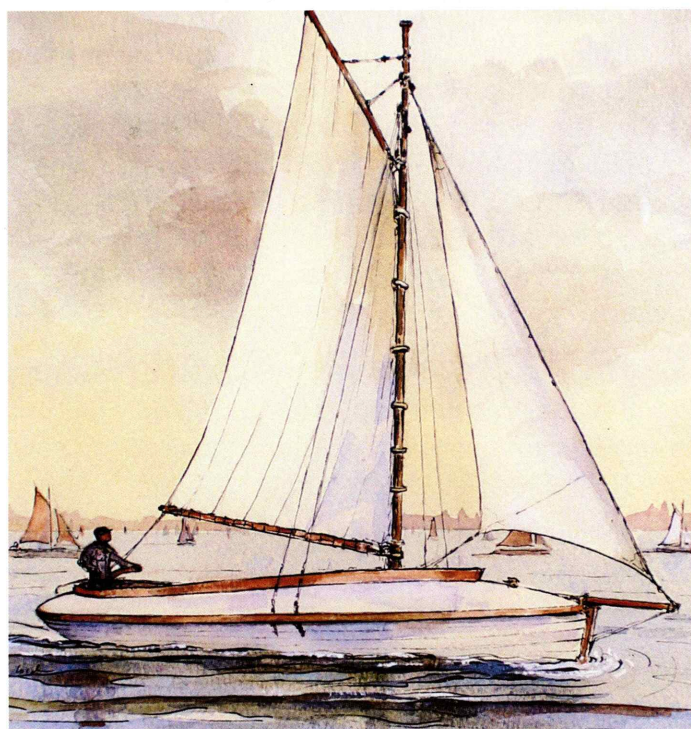
Our weekend volunteers who man the museum are incomparable. Without them we simply could not open and the welcome they give and the knowledge they have comes in for frequent praise, as noted above. Perhaps the final comment ought to be left to one of our younger visitors - as evidenced by the handwriting - which read "*very interesting full of amazing history. I loved the old clock and the wedding dresses*".

PM

Curator's Quiz

Who painted Terror?

The museum has several paintings of sailing boats in its collection. Do you know who painted this watercolour of the oyster boat, Terror? (answer on the back page)



Winter Works

Reorganising, redecorating, re-indexing

- As soon as the museum was closed for the winter last year the Archive room and the office were stripped ready for re-decoration
- The Archive room was re-organised to eliminate the need to use a ladder to reach any document
- A leak in the office that we thought had been repaired last January hadn't, and on Christmas Eve another attempt was made by HBC to sort it out
- At the end of November the Archive room and office were redecorated
- Additional shelves were installed under the work top in the Archive room
- A new storage cupboard was installed over the door to the David Rudkin room

Next Steps:

The next big project is to re-file and re-index the contents of the Archive room. This will be led by Jane Kidd.

The files will be consolidated under 3 main headings - People; Addresses; Organisations. The files will then be placed in conservation standard sleeves, within conservation standard boxes. Finally, a searchable index will be created for each box that will be accessible via our website.

Dr Hannah Eberle has been working on how we can improve the way we use Omeka, our database software, which will underpin this part of the project.

TD

Lecture Review

Portsmouth Canal: a good idea gone wrong

Nigel Gossop's fascinating illustrated talk on 18th September was linked to his exhibition in the Museum, 'From London to the Sea', and was an opportunity for him to share with the audience his extensive archive of material about the short working life of the Portsmouth to Arundel canal.

The project to create a 15 mile canal that would finally connect London to Portsmouth got Parliamentary approval in 1817 and investors quickly came on board.

However, as with so many infrastructure projects, there were unforeseen problems and the budget overran. Workmanship was shoddy and floods hampered progress.

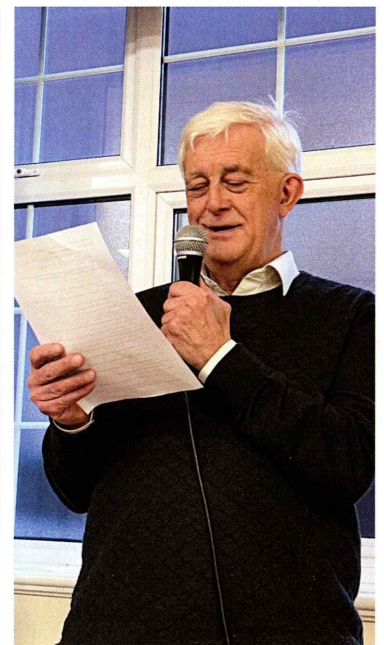
The Portsmouth to Arundel Navigation opened in 1823 but it was not a success: silting up began within weeks and it simply did not attract traffic. The Portsmouth & Arundel Navigation Company ceased trading in 1830 and the canal was abandoned in 1855.

CB

Volunteers' Party in January



Our party on 29th January was an opportunity to thank all the volunteers for their hard work. A quiz (thank you, Gordon) was followed by a delicious afternoon tea





Lecture Review

The Swing Riots of 1830: boys will be boys?

Neil Spurgeon placed himself on the side of the local 'swing' rioters in his evening talk at the Community Centre on Thursday, 2nd October.

In Neil's opinion, the local rioters - aged mainly 19-21 - were most probably misguided youths who joined the fray and were treated harshly following farm attacks in Westbourne, Emsworth and Warblington on 17th, 18th and 19th November 1830.

Captain Swing was the imaginary leader of agricultural labourers who attacked farms, set fire to barns etc. and trashed machinery in the southern and eastern counties of England in 1830. Agricultural labourers wanted a fair day's pay for a fair day's work. Usage of the new threshing machines was seen as a means of depriving men of their livelihood.

Throughout Hampshire over 200 other miscreants were arrested and sent to the prison hulk, YORK, in Langstone harbour, prior to transportation.

In his talk, Neil looked at the reasons behind the insurrection, the local farms involved and the personalities of the land owners, perpetrators and their opponents. Although the riots were ruthlessly put down, the rural agitation led the new Whig government to establish a Royal Commission on the Poor Laws and its report provided the basis for the 1834 New Poor Law Act enacted after the Great Reform Bills of 1833.

An interesting question and answer debate followed the talk.

A full review of the Swing Riots exhibition itself can be found in the August 2025 Newsletter

Neil Spurgeon is Chairman of the **Havant Local History Group**, based at the Spring Arts Centre, Havant

Lecture Review

Portsmouth's Home Front: Preparing for the Blitz

Local historian John 'JJ' Marshallsay gave the last of our illustrated Autumn lectures on Thursday, 6th November.

November's talk focused on the response by Portsmouth City Council and its residents to the outbreak of World War II.

Portsmouth, a premier naval port, was thought to be an obvious target for bombing raids. The evacuation of children began on 3rd September 1939 to areas thought safe from bombardment.

The expectation was that planes carrying bombs would attack the south coast immediately but this did not happen as German fighters did not have the range of the bombers. Aerial bombardment began in earnest in 1940/41 once French aerodromes were under German control and the fighters could be based there and guard the bombers.

Those people who stayed in Portsmouth purchased Anderson and Morrison shelters. Portsmouth City Council developed its own shelter which was strongly built of brick with a roof of reinforced concrete and was often free to council tenants.

Shelters were built in the roads for flat dwellers and painted white so they would show up in the dark. Hundreds were put up in Portsmouth and were available to passers-by if the air raid siren went off.

The blitz in Portsmouth began in 1940. The heaviest bombing took place between August 1940 and March 1941. The most devastating single raid was on 10th January, 1941. Twenty firefighters were killed in Portsmouth during WW2, one of them a woman. In his introduction Trevor Davies remembered the Emsworth fire engine and crew that were sent to Portsmouth to help fight fires and never returned.

CB

JJ set up the **Memories of Bygone Portsmouth** Facebook Group which now has around 37,000 followers.

Maureen Barrett

27 March 1936 - 19 December 2025

Maureen was a long-standing and committed steward, always willing to provide extra support if required. She took on the role of housekeeper, making sure there were supplies of tea, coffee & biscuits as well as cleaning materials. Ill health forced Maureen to retire during the pandemic.

The museum is grateful to her sons, Ray and Steve for passing donations made in her memory to the Trust.

Art Fund Network

Discount for National Art Pass Holders

Did you know that Emsworth Museum is a member of the Art Fund Network?

A National Art Pass lets members enjoy free entry to hundreds of museums, galleries and historic houses across the UK as well as 50% off major exhibitions. It also gets members special offers at museum shops and cafés, a comprehensive Art Map and Art Quarterly, the members' magazine.

If you are a member of the Art Fund, remember to show your membership card to get a 10% discount on purchases at our museum shop. To find out more about the benefits of purchasing a National Art Pass, visit www.artfund.org.



Membership

Spread the word for us

The EM&HT has approximately 220 members. Emsworth has a population of approximately 10,500. It doesn't take a maths genius to work out that not very many of Emsworth's residents are members of the Emsworth Maritime & Historical Trust!

When you have finished reading your newsletter, please consider passing it on to a neighbour or friend. Sharing our newsletters might spark an interest in the museum in others and result in new members.

Annual membership costs £15 (single) or £28 (joint). Members receive a newsletter 3 times a year and also receive the museum's annual ECHO journal. You can become a member online via the museum website or you can email the membership secretary at membership@emsworthmuseum.org.uk

Main Gallery

New displays for 2026

Jean Heal has donated a shop sign for Charles Bailey, an Emsworth watch and clockmaker. It is now on display on the east wall of the staircase beside a Charles Bailey clock that was already in our collection.

The Black Rod uniform donated by Admiral Sir Richard Scott Thomas, will soon go on display on a conservation standard mannequin, sized to fit the uniform. It will replace the Margaret Tatchell wedding dress, which would benefit from conservation work.

The yacht Condor was the most important Emsworth boat of the last 50 years and a picture of Condor, lent by its designer, John Sharp, has been added to the Sailing Innovation story. Condor was built by Bowman Yachts, King Street, Emsworth and skippered by Peter Blake. It was the first across the finish line in the otherwise disastrous 1979 Fastnet Race.

TD

Emsworth Arts Trail

Celebrating 25 years

2026 is going to be a very special year for the Emsworth Arts Trail, as it marks its 25th anniversary. It will have an amazing community of artists exhibiting in their own homes, studios and community spaces throughout Emsworth. The Museum will once again be hosting local artist, Nic Cowper.

The Arts Trail takes place over two weekends: April 25, 26 and 2, 3, 4 May. The museum will be open between 10am and 4pm on each of these days.



MUSEUM NOTICEBOARD

Museum Stewards' Training:
starts Friday 13th March

Emsworth Museum's

SUMMER WALKS

check website for more information

Westbourne Local History Group

- ★ Interesting website - check out the Then & Now page!
- ★ Also organises lectures
- ★ Membership is free
- ★ Regular meetings

www.westbourne-history.org.uk



Black Rod's uniform being fitted
for its bespoke mannequin



Marian Forster painted Terror in 2006. Marian began her career as an archaeological illustrator working on the Mary Rose Project

Petersfield Museum Exhibition

14 January - 18 April, 2026

Sara Lee: Chalk Lines. Drawings from the South Downs

Primarily working in pastels, her drawings are a response to the ephemeral nature of landscape and our relationship with it.

www.petersfieldmuseum.co.uk



ChicnestHER: Their Story, Our Inspiration

Uncovering, celebrating, and sharing the stories of remarkable women from across Chichester District - past and present - whose contributions have helped shape our community but whose voices have often gone unheard.

This 2 year initiative, funded by a grant from the National Lottery Heritage Fund, includes an exhibition at the Novium Museum in **October 2026**

There are interesting volunteering opportunities - contact their Exhibitions Officer at rng@chichester.gov.uk.

DON'T FORGET
EM&HT AGM: 19th MARCH

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