



## Children Welcome Very Welcome

In line with its stated aim to encourage discovery, the Museum provides a wide range of activities for children and young people, both externally and internally.

External activities include an Outreach Programme, whereby personnel from the Museum visit a school or student group and give illustrated talks on subjects as diverse as the history of Bexhill, the Second World War and Dinosaurs.

These sessions can also include an introduction to, and opportunities for, the handling of artefacts from the Museum's collection.

Walks and off-site guided tours can also be arranged. These are mostly restricted to specific subjects, although it can be arranged for other subjects to be covered, within reason and weather permitting!

Museum-based activities include organised visits by schools.

These can be "standard" and include a free 10 minute introductory talk, or "enhanced". An enhanced visit includes the use of the Museum's Education Room and a guided tour or teaching session. A good example of this kind of visit is the highly entertaining "Wobbly Wheels Workshop" recently undertaken by Year One Classes of Little Common School.

During the school holidays the Museum runs a series of children's activities afternoons. On specific subjects such as dinosaurs or Ancient Egypt, these are for accompanied children of between five and eight and involve a lot of cutting and sticking and creativity. For older children the Museum also runs the occasional Technology Challenge, involving youngsters in more advanced design and model making.

On a day-to-day basis, the Museum provides quiz sheets (six different ones), "design your own dinosaur" sheets, interactive exhibits in the Motoring Gallery—and for those who just want to sit and play, a big box of plastic dinosaurs in the refreshment area.

Children are our future.





## Diary Dates

### Lecture

**'A Sussex Romance  
by Charlotte Moore**

16th November 2011 2.30pm  
St Augustine's Hall

### Quiz Night

**18th November 2011 7pm**  
Little Common Community Centre

### Christmas Craft Fair

19th November 2011 10am

### Workshop

**Pioneers, Power & Invention: the  
birth of the British Motor car &  
aviation industries  
with Colin Manton**

19th November 2011 2-4.30pm

### Alternative Rock Night

26th November 2011 2-4pm

### Lecture

**'Art Deco by Dr Graham Whitham'**

30th November 2011 2.30pm

### Coffee Morning

1st December 2011 10am

### Guided Walk

**Stepping Out to Bexhill's Collington  
Woods**

With Cliff Dean  
3rd December 2011 10.30am

### Workshop

**Insensate Folly: pioneering climbers  
from the Alps to Beachy Head  
with Paul Gilchrist**

3rd December 2011 2-4.30pm

**Children's Carol Concert  
at Bexhill Museum**

7th December 2011 6pm

### Outing

**Fincoaks, Goudhurst, Kent for  
Musical Christmas Concert**

8th December 2011

### Lecture

**Twelfth Night by Tim Mc Donald**

4th January 2011 2.30pm  
St Augustine's Hall

### Coffee Morning

5th January 2012 10am  
Parkhurst Hall

### Lecture

**The British Sporting Hero Through  
the Ages by Paul Gilchrist**

18th January 2012 2.30pm

### Coffee Morning

2nd February 2012 10am  
Parkhurst Hall

## A Day in the Life of a Gallery Attendant

Thanks to the welcome decision to order branded polo shirts, sweatshirts and fleeces, the question of what to wear for a stint at the Museum no longer arises. Previously, it could be quite a problem. One's clothes ought to be smart after all, the 'front of house' people are the public face of the Museum. But not too smart, you might have to carry a stuffed animal from A to B, or penetrate the dusty subterranean Tardis that is the Curator's storeroom. Above all, they ought to be warm, the Museum's open door policy does have its drawbacks. Happily, these problems are now a thing of the past.

In the morning, the first task is to count the contents of the till. If you are doing an afternoon shift, this is the last task— but whatever end of the day, the 1ps are fiddly little blighters. After that, you check to see if there is anything out of the ordinary taking place. School visits are great fun, especially when the children are very young and the world seems magical to them.

Then it's off around the galleries to see what has changed since one's last tour of duty, a sort of giant Kim's Game. I don't know when the Museum fairies do it, but there's always something different—a beautiful quilt in the Costume Gallery which wasn't there last time, a load of new African artefacts in the Sargent Gallery

Hopefully by now visitors will be arriving, and it's time to perfect that essential skill of a good gallery attendant, the unobtrusive lurk, to be close enough to answer questions and offer help if needed, but not to be close that they think you've joined their party. In my experience, our visitors are, almost without exception, nice people who are interested in the Museum's exhibits. For many of them it is a repeat visit, and a surprising number can remember visiting as a child and seeing Henry Sargent.

If there are no visitors, then there's always the Access Centre with its mass of reading matter: Bexhill and the Raj, street directories going back over a hundred years, the history of the De La Warr family. This is really is the place for anyone contemplating Bexhill as their MasterMind specialist subject.

And suddenly it's the end of the shift. You head back to the mother-ship, the front desk. You take off your badge and you sign out, until the next time.

Vicki Armstrong

## A Fresh Look at a Victorian Craft

Have you seen the taxidermy display, **Life in Death**, in the Sargent Gallery yet? If you had been to Jeremy Adams' Saturday afternoon lecture on 21st October, part of the Victorian series of half-day schools, you would have been well-informed of this craft (or is it art?) Mr Adams, now retired from the Booth Museum of Natural History in Hove, brought along the tools of his craft to carefully explain the many stages of taxidermy. For the first half of his lecture, slides of the Booth Museum displays were shown, both original Victorian cases prepared by Mr Booth, founder of the museum, and more recently arranged exhibits in the modern manner. An explanatory 'hands-on' session followed when materials used in the mounting of the subjects were produced and passed around. This painstaking traditional methods were described when fine wood-wool and tow were used to produce the internal form. This material, tightly bound in cotton, makes a suitably flexible shape, combined with wire, on which to stretch the cleaned and prepared skins—a lengthy process. A very fine example of work in progress of a hawk for display, with feathers held in place on wire armature, showed how a bird's actions can be achieved. Having explained in detail these techniques, Mr Adams surprised his students with news of the latest modern way of taxidermy—freeze drying! Thus the bird or mammal is kept completely intact. A tiny treecreeper mounted on a branch was shown as an example

Do have a look at the special taxidermy cases in the gallery. You will the view Bexhill's Victorian collection of birds and mammals in a new light.

Judith Carey



## Outing to The Watts Gallery and Loseley Park House & Gardens Guildford

On Tuesday 30th August last we had another outing which was first of all Watts Gallery at the little village of Compton, near Guildford. The Gallery only re-opened this Spring after an £11 million Restoration to return it to its former glory. It houses a collection of works, paintings and sculptures, by the eminent Victorian artist George Frederick Watts. It is the only purpose built gallery in the U.K. dedicated to one artist. We were greeted by a very well informed young lady with a talk for 15 minutes, and then we toured the Gallery on our own.

For those who fancied a 5 minute walk, there was nearby the hidden gem of Watts Chapel, a grade 1 listed Arts and Crafts masterpiece, built by the widow of George Watts and where he was buried.

At 1p.m. we left for Loseley Park just 5 minutes away, for lunch or a picnic. We were then split into two groups and had guided tours of the House, which has been home to the More-Molyneux family for 500 years. The House is Elizabethan in origin and steeped in history and the guides were very knowledgeable. There was a Walled Garden to explore with many scented roses, in part designed by Gertrude Jekyll and of national repute.

Many of us had a cup of tea, then we left for home at 4.30 p.m. after a most enjoyable day out.



Michael & Bettina Openshaw



## The Fashion Pathway on The National Diploma for Art and Design at Sussex Downs The "Vintage" Collection

The "Vintage" project is about exploring the colour, print and silhouette of vintage clothes from the 30's, 40's and 50's. Students were asked to work collaboratively to experiment with the cut and con-

### A Few Words

Hi, if you attended the AGM you will have heard my name mentioned and perhaps seen me as a new face behind the museum front desk over the last 3-4 months.

The name I answer to is Tony Parker and I am your new acting chief executive officer, so what qualifies me for this post? Not a lot really, I retired in 2009 after spending just over 40 years in the museum and libraries field working for a national institution, first as an apprentice Bookbinder, then a Conservator managing a studio working on a wide range of materials, before finishing as Collection Storage Environmental Monitoring Manager.

After commuting to and working in London for all those years I was looking forward to a calm relaxing retirement in a place where I could keep my brain ticking over and where my experience could be of some use. The local town museum seemed ideal; I was looking forward to learning how to use a till from the cashiers' side and learning about Bexhill.

After the first of the Society's recent music evenings I blew my quiet volunteer cover by writing a short document, pointing out some of my concerns about that evenings organisation (to be fair this was the first time the museum had done this sort of event) I think it was this act and the fact I was away for a fortnight that suggested to some of the Society's directors that I be asked to fill the vacancy left by Peter Fairhurst.

What have I done since taking over? Not much. Generally I have stuck my nose in to several areas (with more to come) to meet people and to see what assistance they could do with either to maintain or improve their area of responsibility so that our visitors leave us after an enjoyable and educational visit with an enhanced impression of an enthusiastic efficient group of volunteers running an interesting sometimes quirky, museum that is well worth revisiting.

We now open to the public every day, the front desk manual is being rewritten so that every volunteer has access to the basic day to day data needed to run a museum, for example, several existing Policy documents are now available in one place, processing event ticket sales, dealing with alarms and Induction training has been revised.

My aim is to relieve both Don and Julian of some of their more mundane tasks so that they can concentrate on the essentials of their respective duties by providing the information and support to our volunteer staff and encouraging them to undertake greater day to day responsibilities.

If this is seen as making positive progress then it is all down to the enthusiasm and dedication of our volunteer staff.

Best Wishes for the Forthcoming Christmas and New Year Festivities.

Tony Parker





### **Bexhill Museum Shop**

Once again the shop will be decorated for the festive season and we would love to see all our members doing some of their gift shopping in our shop where all the profit goes into keeping the museum going and improving. To help encourage you we are again offering a 10% reduction on all purchases in November and December providing you show a current membership card.

We have some new products to tempt you including railway books; notebooks; jams, marmalades and chutneys (all made in Sussex) as well as new gift ideas such as branded stationery packs. For boys and bigger boys we have model mini's, hippy VW campervans, Jaguar E types and Morris Minor vans with a retro advert. Elva car greetings cards are still available as are the Elva garage models. Cuddly toys come in a variety of types from wild animals to dogs, big cats and seals.

The new Manor House book makes a good adult stocking filler as do the Francis Frith Edwardian Bexhill view notelets, available singly or in packs. The Manor House book is the result of many years thorough study by our own volunteers, so if you've ever wondered what the house was like and how old it was this book is a 'must'. For the younger stockings there are still plenty of smaller items and will show that Santa supports the museum as well!

Unique to us are the range of books written and published by Peter Fairhurst. These include the 'Tangletree Bike Race' for the younger readers and other titles for teenagers and families. All of them are a good read, light-hearted and fun.

If you are looking for items on Sussex in general rather than just Bexhill, our Sussex Address book is very attractive with beautiful photographs and the book of aerial views of the Sussex coast reveals an unusual way of looking at familiar places.

On the war theme, as well as David Burton's 'Bexhill in the Second World War' we also have a reasonably priced and well illustrated biography of Winston Churchill and Shire books on Wartime Childhood..

This could be your last chance to buy one of a set of three bone china mugs with the West Parade, Colonnade and early motor racing views as stocks are running out and will be replaced by alternative views next season. The colour view mug of the Walnut Tree in Old Town based on a watercolour in the museum's collection is also still available.

So come on in and see what you can find, some lines have bargain prices as we start to look forward to the next season.

Chris, Emma, Don & Peter.

### **Alternative Rock Night**

An Alternative Rock Night has been organised to raise funds for the museum on Saturday 26th November 2011 at Bexhill Athletic Club. Doors open 7.30pm performance starts at 8pm. Tickets cost £6.00 and are available from the museum front desk and on the door. Featuring local band CITY ON FIRE and Hastings's Sanity FM and KingBathmat. Free KingBathmat CD with every ticket bought. We hope to see you there, please tell friends and family.

Emma Tickner

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*"To inspire people of all ages and promote learning and enjoyment among all Bexhill residents as well as visitors by encouraging discovery"*

Bexhill Museum  
Egerton Road  
Bexhill-on-Sea  
East Sussex  
TN39 3HL



Phone: 01424 787950  
Email: [museum@rother.gov.uk](mailto:museum@rother.gov.uk)  
[www.bexhillmuseum.co.uk](http://www.bexhillmuseum.co.uk)

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