



Volunteer News Bulletin Number 30: Spring 2016

Beautiful South Awards



In December we were awarded Bronze in the Beautiful South Awards 2015-16 (Tourism South East) in the category of Small Visitor Attraction. We received an inscribed piece of Darlington Glass and an award certificate. Gold and silver were taken by the Bombay Sapphire Distillery (Laverstoke) and the WWT Arundel Wetland Centre respectively. Our reception volunteers were particularly praised in the mystery shopper report for the warm welcome and clear instructions that were given. Thank you for your contribution!

Museum Refurbishments

Old Kitchen

I'm sure many of our volunteers have noticed that the old kitchen has had a facelift! Nick and John worked extremely hard to improve the kitchen for everyone and I'm sure you'll all join us in thanking them.

Lecture Hall

The Lecture Hall has been installed with brand new electronic blinds and will soon be refurbished

with new audio visual equipment. This really improves the facilities for museum events and those that hire the hall.

Volunteer Garden Party

The Volunteers' Garden Party will be held on Wednesday 8th June from 12pm-2pm. Please RSVP to the office so we can make sure there is enough delicious food for everyone!

Shop Volunteers

Margaret is looking for new volunteers for the shop, particularly in the afternoon. If you can offer her any help or know anyone that can please get in touch.

Laura Ponsonby (1935 – 2016)



We are very sorry to report that Museum volunteer and Honorary Botanist, Laura Ponsonby, died on 6th January after a short illness. Laura had been involved with the Museum for many decades. She served for over 40 years as Honorary Botanist and until her stroke a few years ago she arranged the flower table in the Museum every week. She was President of the Haslemere Natural History Society between 1983 and 1992 and latterly was on the committee of the Society, which meets at the Museum and organises joint lectures on subjects of natural history. Laura was a guide lecturer and the Education Officer between 1965 and 1994 at Kew Botanic Gardens. She wrote books on botany including 'A List of Flowering Plants and Ferns of Haslemere and District' and on Marianne North, the botanical artist. She was also Vice-President of the Haslemere Recorded Music Society and a talented musician. She was always a great supporter of the Museum and she will be sorely missed by everyone.

Jim Donaldson (1933-2016)



In February we sadly lost Jim Donaldson, who was a volunteer at the Museum for many years. He will be fondly remembered for his wonderful character and dry sense of humour. He was only one of two male reception volunteers.

Upcoming Events and Exhibitions

Curators on our Doorstep

Saturday 30th April – Saturday 28th May
Members of the local community have curated this special exhibition showcasing the Museum's fine art collection. The works on show are from the reserve collection and were selected by local people from across the community.

Art Out of a Child's War by Sylvia Taylor

Saturday 30th April – Friday 27th May
A retrospective exhibition by a former U3A Art Instructor including semi-surreal watercolours of her child-remembered impressions of WWII in Surrey.

Museum Plant Sale

Saturday 14th May 11.00am – 1.00pm
Organised by two of the Museum's Trustees all proceeds will go towards the Museum in a Million Campaign. The sale will include a wide range of perennials, annuals, bedding plants plus garden ornaments and lots, lots more.

Tea and Talk - Mineral Paradise

Tuesday 24 May 2.30pm
Learn about minerals in the Museum's Collections. With tea and biscuits.

Collections News

Sweden Trip



I was very lucky to have the opportunity to visit Stockholm in early March thanks to a grant from the International Council of Museums UK. I visited the Skansen, the famous Open air Museum, and the Nordic Museum to study their collections of Peasant Art and meet with their curators. They were very interested to hear about our Peasant Art collection and are assisting me with further research into the objects. The trip was also useful for our application for Designation of the European Peasant Art Collection, which would be a great accolade for the Museum. We are working on the application for stage one at the moment and hope to have more news by the end of 2016.

Museum working on book about the Life of Sir Archibald Geikie



The Museum is working in collaboration with The Geological Society of London to publish a book entitled 'Aspects of the Life and Work of Archibald Geikie'. The book has been in the pipeline for several years and is likely to be published in 2019. Geikie was an eminent Victorian Geologist and former Chairman of the Museum. We hold a significant archive of his life's work including watercolours, drawings, notebooks, letter books, photographs and publication.