

TOM BROWN'S School Museum



The Friends Newsletter

DECEMBER

2009



TOM BROWN'S SCHOOL MUSEUM

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COUNTRY FILE VISITS WHITE HORSE HILL

Caroline Searle (the National Trust Warden) and I had a very entertaining day filming for a piece on Countryfile. On Monday, the White Horse could not be seen through the heavy mist but the filming had to go on as the programme was due to go out on the following Sunday. Although the finished piece on the programme only took a few minutes the filming took all day from 10.00 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. and it was very, very cold! There certainly

weren't any make-up artists, wardrobe assistants, food wagons and all the other paraphernalia you associate with filming – just a packet of sandwiches and using the car heater to dry out Julia's socks!



CHURCHYARD SURVEY

The Final act of the churchyard survey. Sharon handing over the completed survey to Rosanna. As we reported in the September Newsletter after 7 years of work the churchyard survey was finally completed. Early in October at a gathering in the Museum of members of the church congregation and Friends a copy of the survey was given to the Church for their use. Another copy is kept in the Museum. This should enable relatives to locate their family graves.



UFFINGTON FEAST

The Fair has visited Uffington again – carrying on a tradition of over a hundred years with its history going back to the times of Scouring the White Horse and the associated Pastimes.

George Scarrott is the third generation of his family that have come here and he remembers when the field was full of stalls and rides with Showmen coming

from all over Oxfordshire. In George's memory the Feast originally was on The Green, where he climbed the trees surrounding the pond with the village lads. It then moved to the field on the corner of Station Road and Fawler Road where the photograph was taken. George had a series of photographs that were taken by a photographer who used to

live in the bungalows in Broad Street; he took this photograph at 1.00 a.m. when the Fair was still going strong!

The Fair transferred to the field behind Uffington Garage before ending up on the Jubilee Field. It has always come at the same time of the year and has suffered in recent years with the White Horse Show taking

place at the end of August. George always likes returning to Uffington and meeting up with the people that he has got to know over the years. He tells the tale of Jackie Hollick who would win all the prizes with his

dart throwing, and of a 'tall dour man with a trilby and a

hump on his back' – this man had remarked to George's grandfather that he 'had had his ups and downs' whereby George's grandfather replied – 'I may have had my ups and downs but I never got the hump!'

*"GEORGE ALWAYS LIKES TO
RETURN TO UFFINGTON"*

UFFINGTON FEAST
CIRCA 1950:s



METAL DETECTING FINDS AND REPORTING FINDS

Metal Detecting Finds

Towards the end of September the Weekend Wanderers Metal Detectors Club held a rally not far from here. On land near West Hanney, amongst other artefacts, they found a circular Anglo-Saxon brooch which is garnet encrusted with what appears to be gold inlay. Next to where this was found there was a hole in which were human remains so no further excavations could take place until a licence has been issued for archaeologist to investigate further. It is likely to

be a grave of someone of high status so it will be exciting to learn what is found. Up until now this area of Oxfordshire was unknown as a site of Saxon occupation.

A spin off from this rally was the presence of a swarm of metal detectors on land to the east of



“Anglo Saxon Brooch”

Uffington. They were eventually rewarded by finding some small coins. In the Baulking area they found a Roman and an Anglo-Saxon coin. In Uffington, not far from the church, they found two more coins one of which was from the reign of James, 1603-1626. It is interesting to speculate who might have accidentally dropped them.

Reporting Finds


There are two categories of finds for which provision is made for reporting. These arrangements were the result of a great in-

crease in the number of people metal detecting and the possible damage this could cause. It is a controversial subject!

One is articles covered by the Portable Antiquities scheme which is voluntary and has Officers covering each area of the country. They will identify artefacts and give advice, the aim being to add to our knowledge of our history and prehistory. The

web site is www.finds.org.uk
The second is articles covered by The Treasure Act 1996, which replaced the common law on Treasure Trove, and was extended in 2003. This imposes a legal requirement to report relevant finds found after the act became law. There is a comprehensive list in a useful booklet published by the British Museum, of which our Museum

holds a copy. Their web site is www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk



“www.finds.org.uk”
www.thebritishmuseum.ac.uk”

Blackie- Honora Mary Newport-Black.

**18th July 1915 - 17th October
2009**

Blackie fulfilled her great wish of never having to leave her home at Shotover, where she had lived for 37 years, as it was there that she died. She was a loyal Friend of the Museum always taking an interest in what we were doing and commenting on our Newsletter. Just shortly before she died

she had sent a donation to help in our work.

Many members of her family attended her funeral, coming from Ireland and Canada. In their tributes to her they highlighted the interesting life she had led especially as a Queen Alexander's Nurse in the Second world war. Her experiences then included tending the wounded from the battle of El-Alemain. No wonder she valued her village life here. She is still remem-

bered fondly by the older consultants at the John Radcliffe hospital for her time as matron there.

We shall all miss her determined and cheerful figure taking herself to visit our shop. Latterly walking firmly with her trolley down the road, she was rightly respected by all other road users.

FRIENDS

If you have any questions about the Friends please contact one of the committee members. All phone numbers have the prefix 01367.

Jane Cooper (Chair)	820207
Sharon Smith (Museum Curator)	820259
John Davis (Treasurer)	820318
Brian Short (Secretary)	820347
Pamela Preeene (Newsletter)	820251
John Henville (IT)	820411
Lucy Dillistone (Rota)	820493
Bill Mitchell	820693
Maurice Leyland	241054

**The Museum's address:
Broad Street, Uffington, FARINGDON,
SN7 7RA
The Friend's web site is <http://www.>**

AGM

We hereby give notice that our next AGM will take place in the Museum at 7.30pm on Wednesday February 17th 2010.

Please make a note of this as we do need a quorum of Friends for the meeting to be valid moreover it is your opportunity to tell the Committee what they should be doing.

VISITORS

Congratulations to all who have helped in the Museum this year. We have had a most successful year with the number of visitors being the second highest ever recorded. This year we had 1239 visitors beating the 1201 we had last year.

Visiting Groups, for whom we open at other times to our regular openings, help to increase our numbers. Some of us will long remember one group of 35 Cubs who came one early evening to learn about their neighbourhood. They came in their reflective jackets with plenty of adults but were very lively. I think their highlight was returning to their transport through the Churchyard (safer than the road) by torch-light.

One visitor at a weekend corrected the name we had given to people in an old photo as it was of her and her grandmother, not the person mentioned. The friend who was with her wanted help in identifying her late husband in another old photo – it took some detective work to find out he was not in the photo after all.

ROTA

A very big thank you to everyone who has spent an afternoon in the Museum this year. Without your help we would not be able to open the Museum which would be a great waste of a special part of our heritage. As we cannot control when our visitors come some Friends have a busy and interesting afternoon while for others it is a long visit. I would encourage the later to explore the information we have on the computer and in the blue box files. You might even find out something about where you live.

Lucy Dillistone, who has helped me with the rota, is going to take it over next year, for which I am very grateful. We have yet to work out if she has anywhere to leave the “bag” or whether my newspaper box will have to be used – we will let you know. As next year Easter is earlier she would be glad to hear from anyone who could join the rota. Tel 820498.

Betjeman's England

Stephen Games came down from London to promote his latest book, Betjeman's England, in a talk at Wantage Library. This is the latest of four books that Stephen Games has recently edited on Betjeman's work. He has used archive material of Betjeman's programmes for both radio and television. He explained that his theme in these books was to show that Betjeman was aware of another side of contemporary Britain to the romantic and cosy image por

trayed in much of his work. Betjeman's England is a gazetteer of England, 1953-7, taken from the best of his TV programmes. The audience was most interested in this approach and asked a number of questions but their true enthusiasm was reserved for the archive clips that Stephen had brought with him. Unfortunately he had to be taken to catch his train otherwise it could have been a very long and interesting evening .

Wantage Betjeman Festival of Literature and Poetry 2010

February - Lance Pierson. “The John Betjeman You Never Knew”

May 8th - Tim Heath.
“Summoned by Bells”

June 11th and 12th - Two Blokes and a Piano. “ John Betjeman – Loved and Lost”

Further information from jamesmitchell@onevoice.freereserve.co.uk