

APRIL 2012

TOM BROWN'S *School Museum*

The Friends Newsletter



'SPORTING CONNECTIONS' EXHIBITION LAUNCH



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As we had sent out our invitations by email this year, we wondered whether we would get as many guests to our Launch evening but we needn't have worried! It was good to see so many of you there and to show you our new exhibition 'Sporting Connections'. It also gave me the chance to thank Jo Marshall for her expertise in designing the display which was complimented by all! Our guests included the Chairman of the White Horse District Council, Cllr. Alison Thomson, our County Councillor, Anda Fitzgerald O'Connor and our Curatorial Advisor, Carol Anderson who also opened our exhibition.

Our link to the Titanic Disaster

We will have heard a lot about the 100th anniversary of the sinking of the Titanic ocean liner on April 15, 1912, but few will know about the link to the author Thomas Hughes (1822-1896).

Hughes' youngest daughter and her husband both perished in the disaster that claimed 1,500 lives. They were travelling in second class (tickets: £26 pounds each) and probably could have secured seats in lifeboats, but accounts say they let others take them instead. Lilian Hughes Carter (1867-1912) and her husband, the Rev. Ernest Courtenay Carter, 54, (they married in 1890), boarded the Titanic in Southampton on their way to the USA to visit Lilian's brother George Hughes in Kansas.

An obituary from a newspaper of the day says:

Mourning reigns in hundreds of poor homes in Whitechapel for the loss of the Rev. E.C. Carter and Mrs. Carter, of St. Jude's Vicarage, who perished in the Titanic. Hope and fear alternated as each fresh list of saved was published, but the last hope has now vanished. A great part of the East End of London is stricken with grief. For the sense of loss is very personal one. Mr. and Mrs. Carter was not only known to their people, they were intimate friends. For fourteen years Mr. Carter had been vicar of St. Jude's and Mrs. Carter was the perfect complement of her husband.

Although childless themselves, Mr. and Mrs. Carter had by far the biggest family in the East End. Mrs. Carter was looked upon as a universal mother. "She was a simply wonderful woman" said a fellow-worker. "She mothered the whole of Whitechapel including the mothers themselves. The way the little children came running to her was extraordinary. She had wonderful gifts of speaking and persuasion and she was the life and soul of many little families down here. To see Mrs. Carter at her mothers' Bible-classes and her infants' classes would have done anyone good".

Several accounts detail that on the night before the Titanic's sinking, Rev. Carter presided over a hymn service in the second class dining salon that included the song "Eternal Father, Strong to Save," also known ironically as "For those in Peril on the Sea."

A memorial to the couple can be seen in St. Mary's Church at Longcot.

If you would like to read the obituary in full, it is in one of the blue box files labelled TH (for Thomas Hughes) under the numbers, 059 and 085. There is also another article from the Oxford Mail from 1998 in the MP box file (Museum Publicity) under number 30.

Accreditation

Here we go again! We have a busy year in front of us – The old Museums, Libraries & Archives association under who we gained Accreditation has been abolished and responsibility for Museums has been transferred to the Arts Council. So there is now a greater pot of money but with greater competition for it and a new system of Accreditation which we have been invited to apply for by 29th July. Accreditation means that we are of a suitable standard to be recognised as an official museum

Diary Dates 2012

We are having a talk on Tuesday, 12th June by Dr. Geoffrey Chapman entitled The origins of the Olympic Games. The modern Olympic movement was inspired by ancient Greek athletics, a subject on which Dr Chapman is well qualified to talk as he read classics at Trinity College Oxford. He was also Professor of Classics at the University of Natal, in South Africa until 1988 and has recently retired from the Headship of Queen Margaret's School in York

The talk will take place in the small hall of the Thomas Hughes Memorial Hall at 7.45 for 8.00pm. Entry is free to Friends of the Museum and guests will be asked for £3.00 at the door. We are going to have a Greek theme to the evening with appropriate wine and olives! Please do come along.

On 15th July, we are being visited by members of the OMC – Oxfordshire Museum Council – as part of their programme of events under the title a 'Hidden Gem'. This group comprises 40 museums in Oxfordshire and we meet regularly to exchange news, views, training as well as social events. The next social networking event will be held on Thursday, 24th May at Christchurch Picture Gallery at 6.00 pm.

On Sunday, 21st October as a fundraising event for the museum, we will be entertained by The Oxford Fiddle Group in The Thomas Hughes Memorial Hall. This is a lively and huge group of players - some players also play other instruments as well as the fiddle. So a typical line up could include Celtic harp, double bass, guitar, mandolin, viola, cello and concertina. There are some singers in their ranks, so we can be assured of evening of variety and of course the great sound of massed fiddles 'played with joy'. They play a variety of music and folk, classical, jazz and modern are in their repertoire.



In November, as part of the Betjeman Festival in Wantage, we will be showing a film of Tom Brown's Schooldays in the Thomas Hughes Memorial Hall and also in November – linked with this festival will be another exciting event – more details to follow – watch this space!

Also on the Agenda in the Autumn is the possibility of a series of talks on the history of the village culminating in a guided walk. If you are interested in attending for 4 or 5 sessions during October/November, perhaps you could let Jane or Sharon know.

Uffington White Horse

You may have seen the recent publicity stunt of putting a 'jockey' on our White Horse – we were horrified at the action and Jane was asked to submit an article to the Oxford Times – reprinted below.

As a publicity stunt for the bookmakers it was undoubtedly a success but as part of the care of our heritage it has been described in the village as many things from cheeky to an outrage.

Firstly this land is owned by the National Trust with open public access. In order to continue to enjoy this freedom we all need to respect and care for this site. To undertake such a covert operation with people spending hours during darkness, wearing night vision goggles, to adapt a chalk hill figure in order to advertise themselves shows neither respect nor care.

Secondly this action could give ideas to other people to use the site for their own ends. Although no lasting damage was done to the Horse this time, damage has happened in the past and we do not want it to happen again.

Thirdly the Uffington White Horse is part of an ancient and significant landscape revered all over the world. The whole site is special, the landscape having been formed by the melting of the last ice age. The Horse itself is about 3000 years old and to last tis long it must have been well cared for by generations of folk. It is left in trust to us to continue this care.

Fourthly the site is a great resource from which archaeologists can learn about our past and needs to be disturbed as little as possible.

We do hope that the National Trust will prosecute the bookmakers in question and that this will deter other publicity stunts. On a lighter note, the Trust are asking for volunteers for the annual Spring Clean of the Horse on 6th and 7th May – if you are interested please phone 01793 762209.

TBSM Coffee Morning

Coffee Morning on Wednesday, 9th
June 10am in the Primary School

Please come along and support our
fund raising event.

The Museum address is Broad Street,
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