

FRIENDS OF Tom Brown's SCHOOL Museum

Forthcoming Event

Monday 5
September, 7.30pm

with Prof.
Gary Lock,
Oxford
University

**Volunteer
NOW**
URGENT
Call for
Volunteers
**White Horse
Show.**

NEWSLetter

AUTUMN 2022



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One Friend to Another...

We are gradually welcoming more visitors back to the museum although overseas visitors are still scarce. Sunday is still far the most popular day, perhaps it is the draw of tea in the church. It takes a lot of work all year long behind the scenes to keep the museum open and running so we would dearly love to see more visitors. We have some new advertising leaflets, and if Friends have any contact with local B&B venues or other outlets, pubs, cafes etc we would be very pleased if you could take a few for their visitors to see. Thank you to all the Friends who continue to open the museum over the weekend. I will continue to send reminder emails with the key code. This is a way of ensuring that everyone remembered to put their turn on the calendar. I would be very pleased if you could respond to the email by the Thursday before your weekend. Wishing you all Happy Holidays and looking forward to seeing you at the first of our Autumn Lectures on Monday 5th September 7.30pm in the village hall

In June, Paul and I joined BAfM for a two-day visit 'Splendours of the City of London' organised and led by Daniel Calley. Daniel, chairman of BAfM arranges the visits through his personal contacts not tourist agencies. On Day 1 we visited Ironmongers' Hall followed

by luncheon in the Banqueting Hall, truly magnificent. Then a City walking tour. On Day 2 a private tour at Drapers' Hall, my favourite, luncheon and finally a Tour of Guildhall where the royal family gathered after the Service of Thanksgiving for the Queen's platinum jubilee. This was an exceptional tour with access to behind-the-scenes areas which are not open to the general public. The silver vaults were magnificent.

Daniel is now arranging a tour of Dundee 28th Sept – 30th Oct 2022. Staying in the Luxury Malmaison Hotel, visiting Abercairny Castle, Glamis Castle, Kingsbarn Distillery, Kellie Castle, Earlshall Castle and Gardens, V & A Dundee, Verdant Mill and a highlight will be a reception on board the RRS Discovery that took Scott and Shackleton on their first expedition to Antarctica.

For further details please email me.

Thomas Hughes Invitation

You are invited to join us on Sunday 22nd October to celebrate the 200th Anniversary of the birth of Thomas Hughes with coffee and cake in the museum at 11.30am.



Garry Gibbons

Curator's Report

It's been a busy month or two trying to get up to speed with this new role – and I'm sure its going to take the rest of the year to really get a handle on all the Curator's duties.

Jo and I are keen to reinstate events for the Friends and for the local community. We've organised three talks across September, October and November 2022. Friends (and concessions) will be asked to pay a small fee; non-Friends slightly more.

I've continued travelling around sister museums in and around Oxfordshire. I was fascinated by the amazing setting and resources at the **Richard Jefferies Museum**, Swindon and can recommend anyone interested in rural life and Richard Jefferies himself to get along there. The **Long Hanborough Bus Museum** is a great afternoon out. The bus collection is vast and is supplemented by a fascinating display centered on Morris car production in Oxford.

Looking forward...

As you know, the pandemic is probably the biggest social event – discounting world conflict – we've experienced over the past hundred years. We are now working towards collecting reflections on the pandemic and how it has impacted individuals, families and institutions across the local community. I feel the Museum is perfectly placed to record and archive for future generations what will doubtless be a unique period in the community's history.

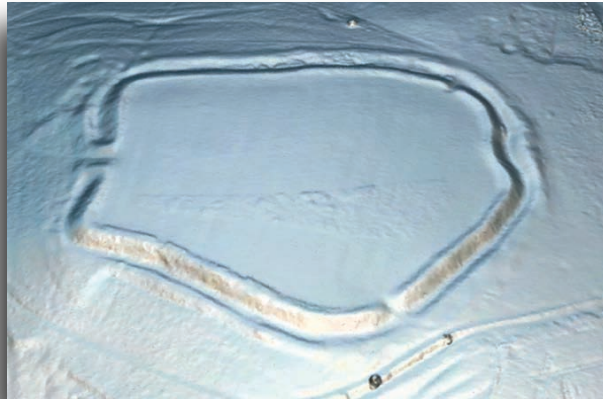
Finally, I'll be working towards new displays for next year but before that I hope to start assessing the potential of increasing our display area. We're a small museum so we have to be smart in creatively presenting our exhibitions to as wide an audience as possible.

MUSEUM NEWS

Forthcoming Event

Living with the White Horse: Excavations at Ridgeway Hillforts.

Join Emeritus Professor Gary Lock, University of Oxford, for a talk on three local hillforts and what they reveal about the prehistoric communities of the White Horse.



The Uffington White Horse is an iconic landscape feature that we are all familiar with, but what do we know about the people who may have constructed and used it? This talk will address this through the detailed excavations of three nearby hillforts, Uffington Castle, Segsbury Camp and Alfred's Castle. By comparing the evidence from these three sites we can build up a picture of the life of later prehistoric people and assess the importance of these enigmatic and spectacular monuments.

Monday 5 September 2022, 7.30pm
Thomas Hughes Memorial Hall, Uffington
Entrance £5
Concessions and Friends £3.

White Horse Show Urgent 'Call for Volunteers'

The Museum will be at the show on both the Sunday and Monday and are urgently seeking volunteers who can help on our stall.

Volunteers will work in pairs to simply talk to visitors and sell the Museum's merchandising.

Time slots for Sunday 28th August:
10.00am to 12.00pm
12.00pm to 2.00pm
2.00pm to 4.00pm

Time slots for Monday 29th August:
10.00am to 12.00pm
12.00pm to 2.00pm
2.00pm to 4.00pm

Volunteer for the stall and get free entry to the show.

If you can help please email:
uffingtonmuseum@gmail.com

WI Visit: Childrey & Sparsholt

Wednesday 6 July 2022

Childrey and Sparsholt WI experience the delights on offer at Uffington.

Under the capable eye of Simon Knapper, all arrangements for Childrey and Sparsholt WI's visit to Uffington had been ably coordinated, the weather was set fair, and the village looked its very best.

13 full members – plus one (very) new member -- of the Childrey and Sparsholt WI met at Tom Brown's School Museum late morning where the Curator briefly introduced the building's history and its wide-ranging displays. The group then made the short journey to St Mary's church where the Reverend Jeremy Goulston provided a guided tour of what must be one of Oxfordshire's most beautiful churches.



Members and President (Suzanne Empson, second left), of the Childrey and Sparsholt WI

The group were then taken on a tour of the village led by Karen Pilcher, Chair of the Uffington Museum Trust, before repairing to the Fox and Hounds where tea and cake were served.

It can safely be reported that an excellent day was had by all.

Founder's Day

Wednesday 20 July 2022



Upward of 110 school children and staff from Uffington School attended the Museum to celebrate the old school's founder, Thomas Saunders.

Fortunately for everyone concerned, the previous day's stifling weather had eased back to something like normal English summertime temperatures as pupils from Uffington School progressed down Broad Street towards Tom Brown's School Museum. Led by Headteacher, Mrs Lisa Bradbury, the school filed into the

Museum – yes, all 110 – where everyone was welcomed by the curator sporting 17th century costume.

The central component of the school's visit was handing over of the Founder's Day Box containing letters composed by all the school's pupils. The Museum will now act as custodians of the box over the coming year, after which it will be returned to the school in time for Founder's Day 2023.

Finally, as tradition dictates, the school's youngest pupil -- this year, Nuratu -- rang the schoolroom's old hand bell thereby bringing proceedings at the Museum to a close.

Pupils and staff then walked the short distance across St Mary's churchyard where parents joined the throng and everyone was warmly welcomed by Reverend Jeremy. The church provided a grand setting in which to acknowledge and celebrate the whole school for a year's hard work. Prizes were distributed, pupils provided a splendid programme of song and 'beat' music, flowers were placed on the Thomas Saunders' memorial by Year 6 pupils, and the Headteacher reflected on the past year. The day ended with an energetic picnic on the school's sports ground.

Mystery Object. Mystery Solved...

In the last edition of the Newsletter we asked readers to identify what a 'Drug Shoe' was and what it was used for.

The response has been amazing; we now know the correct name for this object is a '**Drag Shoe**'; our records have been adjusted accordingly!

We have been reliably informed that the drag shoe was used as a wheel chock to prevent a wagon rolling on a slope. The drag shoe was typically hung on the side of a wagon between the front and rear wheels and as the wagon came to a halt the drag shoe was placed under the rear wheel.

Mr Geoff Keene contacted us and recalls his father, Reg Keene, owning a drag shoe which Geoff discovered in his father's shed some years ago. Reg (1920-2010) lived all his life in Stanford-in-the-Vale and was employed as an agricultural worker from the age of 14 years old at a local farm. Geoff moved to Uffington in 1987 and still has his father's drag shoe.

As a young boy, **Mr Norman Drew** specifically recalls his father, Bert Drew, using a drag shoe on a Berkshire wagon. The wagon had pulled up on a slope along the road leading to white horse hill. At the time (c1949-50) Norman recalls being worried the drag shoe, which was sliding, might not hold the wagon. Norman's father had taken extra part-time work on Woolstone Farm to supplement his main job as maintenance worker at the RAF depot, Milton.

Finally, **Mr Simon Knapper** provides more detail relating to how a drag shoe was used to control a wagon's descent down a hill. He writes, '*A cart drag shoe was used as a brake for carts and carriages pulled by horses. It was especially important for steep hills when the weight of the cart could push the horse over. The shoe would be fitted over the back wheel to stop it rotating and cause it to slow. Once at the bottom of the hill it would be removed.*'.

Thank you to everyone for contributing to a greater understanding of this fascinating object.



Drag shoe in situ. Wagon kindly supplied by the Richard Jefferies Museum, Swindon

Friends of
Tom Brown's School Museum
<https://www.uffingtonmuseum.co.uk/join-the-friends.html>