

# Bradford on Avon Museum

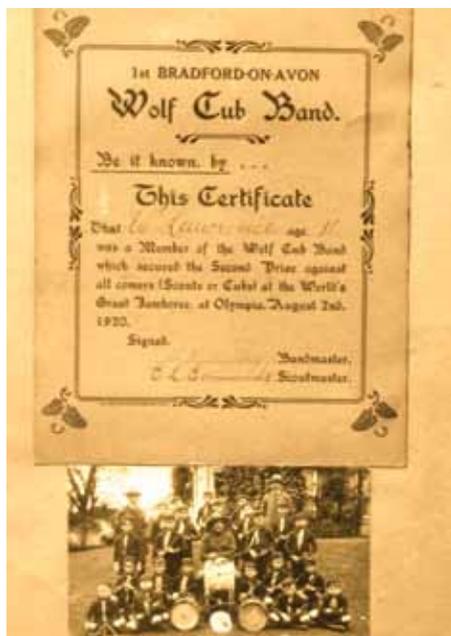
## Newsletter/Spring 2012



### Our latest acquisitions

The year got off to a good start as far as building up the collection goes. We have at last acquired some stone-cutting saws, including an example of the big-bladed saw that was known as a "frigbob". This would have been used to cut out blocks of stone in the underground quarries and for slicing up ashlar slabs by masons.

We now have enough material to make a realistic reconstruction of a stonemason's yard one day, when we get a bigger museum; until then, these big saws are a bit difficult to store. A website page takes you through stonemason's tools and their use.



With a couple of nice photographs – of the Red Cross Hospital barge *Bittern* and of the Bradford Church Lads Brigade – came a framed certificate that was awarded to a member of the Bradford Wolf Cubs Band who gained second prize at the Scouts Jamboree at Olympia in 1920, competing with boys from the rest of the Empire.

## On the Jubilee trail



Market Street in the 1950s. What are your memories of shopping in Bradford on Avon 60 years ago?

Memories of the 1950s should come flooding back in June this year with the Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations. For long-term residents of Bradford on Avon, those memories will be jogged by a photographic trail featuring the shops which were serving the town in 1952.

Photographs and adverts from the Museum's collection and from the Wiltshire History Centre archives will be displayed in individual shop windows, showing the various trades in business in 1952 in each of those locations.

Many people remember Goodall's and even Christopher's before their doors were permanently closed, but fewer will be able to

recall Maison Beryl upstairs in the Town Hall or Stan Green's Cycle Shop, where Carter and Harding is now in Market Street.

The exhibition trail was suggested by a new member of the Museum Society, Stephanie Laslett, and she's currently collating photographs, relevant adverts and personal memories. If anyone knows of material, including their own reminiscences, which would be useful for this event, please contact her on 01225 866166 or email [stephanie.laslett@gmail.com](mailto:stephanie.laslett@gmail.com)

● We are also planning a Jubilee exhibition at the library – details will be posted on our website soon.



### Don't forget to renew your membership

Museum membership runs with the calendar year and subs for 2012 are now due – still at the bargain rate of £10 for individual membership or £15 for a family.

Payment should be made to: Chris Dale, Hon Treasurer, 13 Whitehill,

Bradford on Avon, BA15 1SG.

If you have not already arranged to pay by standing order and/or declared Gift Aid on your subscription, please consider doing so. Contact Chris at [chris@cdale99.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:chris@cdale99.fsnet.co.uk) or call 01225 862198 for details of how to set up either or both.

For regularly updated news, pictures, events listings and a wealth of information about the museum and its exhibits, visit our wonderful website: [www.bradfordonavonmuseum.co.uk](http://www.bradfordonavonmuseum.co.uk)

## Stewards enjoy social evening

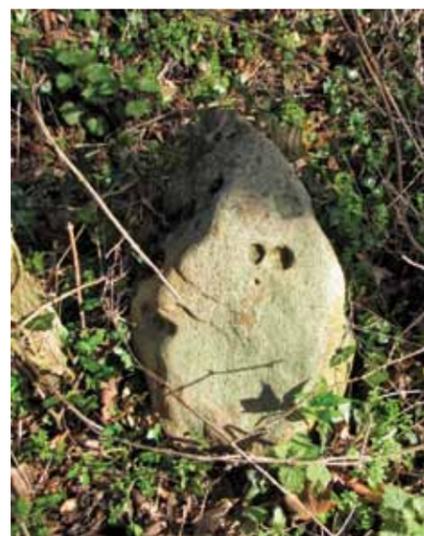
The annual stewards' evening was held in the library meeting room on 11 January. The event was well-attended and guests enjoyed Roger Clark's presentation of some of his excellent photographs of classical sites in Europe and the Middle East (see below).



We have a great team of volunteer stewards, but always need more. In order to safeguard the objects on display, the museum can only open when there is a steward on duty (two on Sundays). Stewarding shifts are only two hours long and it is a pleasant place to sit and read in the quiet spells (there are thousands of books downstairs in the library!) between interacting with our visitors.

If you're interested and can spare just a couple of hours a week (or month), please contact Doreen Ellis on 01225 863509 or Mervyn Harris on 012225 863440.

## Mystery of the stone ...



Right on an angle of the border between the parishes of Westwood and Rowley is a curious stone which must have been used as a boundary marker. It looks rather strange with two shallow holes like eyes, but is also a stranger to the district, as it is made of a hard quartzite stone which doesn't naturally occur around here. It must have a story to tell, but what is it?

## On the shelf ...



Bottles and jars line the shelves of the Christopher Pharmacy at the museum.

**The museum has a wonderful collection of ceramics and glass, from apothecary jars to a crinoline-clad advertising statuette. Dorna Daw has made a study of the items on display; this is an edited extract.**

In Miss Christopher's Pharmacy the shelves are filled with neat rows of apothecary jars, some sealed with ground glass lids and stoppers, some fitted with corks. Golden bands are transfer printed on each jar, proclaiming a plethora of powder and liquid contents in Latin – TINCT QUILLAIÆ, SANG DRAC. CREM. FRIGID; there are scores more, intriguingly named constituents of the pills and potions, prescriptions mixed especially for the individual patient by Miss Christopher and her father before her.

The collection in the shop also includes white earthenware inhalers, and there is a tiny feeding cup of white bone china, the vestiges of its golden rim just visible.

A larger white mortar, with its wood and ceramic pestle, and a small pestle and mortar are displayed at the Dispensing Department. There is also a small white earthenware pot with a lid, rather like Gentleman's Relish pots, as they used to be, before plastic replaced ceramic.

The familiar 'Black and White' Highland terriers advertising Buchanan's Scotch Whisky, are slip cast, an industrial method for mass

production. On the shelf behind the desk is the elegant blonde in a billowing flounce of skirts, clasping roses in her hands, the legend on the base 'Petal Soft Modest Masslin Sanitary Protection' – rather a different form of advertising from today's TV commercials.

From smaller to larger – a row of stoneware jars, mainly for cider and beer, stand on the floor, bearing the names 'Harding and Co., Brewers', 'T.E. Taylor' and 'L. Weaver, Queen's Head'. Stoneware is ideal for containing any acidic liquid such as beer, cider and vinegar.

The 19th century water filter is a beauty: hand-thrown on a potter's kick wheel, fitted with a brass tap and printed 'CHEAVIN'S PASTEUR SYSTEM Microbe Proof Filter'.

One cannot leave the museum before close inspection of the Royal Doulton Harvest Jug, given by Dr Alex Moulton's grandfather, John Moulton of The Hall.

The most recent acquisition is a white earthenware chamber-pot with WINSLEY SANATORIUM transfer-printed in green on the side: one of a set bought when the sanatorium for TB sufferers opened in 1905.

## Research group identifies possible moot site



A natural hollow at the edge of the Motley field group at Bradford Leigh looks like a possible site for the moot.

Over the past two years members of the Museum Research Group have been entering the 4632 Tithe Map entries for the Bradford Hundred into a database.

Gill Winfield entered the data for the Bradford on Avon parishes and Ritchie Brown has created a digital map which references this information. Rob Arkell has entered the data for the outlying parishes and has used place and field name reference material to interpret the field names.

This exercise has uncovered many topics for further study, including a lost silk mill in South Wraxall and links to medieval parks as well a tentative site for the Bradford Hundred Moot. Three fields in Bradford Leigh all have the name Motleys, which is a strong indication of a moot site. In the absence of any obvious mounds or marker stones then a natural hollow at the edge of the Motley field group looks like a possible site for the moot.

This has the added bonus of overlooking the Roman ruins recently excavated at Cumberwell (which are themselves preserved in the field name Little Walls) and gives a possible link between Roman Bradford and the Saxons who followed after. Bradford Leigh is documented as the site of

the Hundred Court until 1651.

Pam Slocombe has also made a link between the area around Ford Farm and the moot. It lies very near the geographic centre of the Hundred and the land linked to the manor of South Wraxall was the traditional holding of the bailiff or beadle of the Bradford Hundred. The emblem of the bailiff was the fetterlock, a padlock for fastening the chains of prisoners arrested by the bailiff, and this is reproduced extensively at the manor house and South Wraxall church.

William Bedel held a hide of land in the 12th century and before him the beadle was a Saxon called Brictric. After the Bedel family the lands were held by Thomas de Forde, in 1329 they went to Richard Poyntz, then in 1395 to Thomas Berlegh or or Barley (whose family were linked to Cumberwell). The Berleghs also had a house at Wraxall called Barley's Court, perhaps the predecessor of South Wraxall Manor. The bailiff's land being held by families at Ford Farm and later Great Cumberwell again seems to point to the moot being in this area.

The next step is to gather more information for submission to a nationwide moot site project being run by University College London.

Rob Arkell

## From the chairman

The winter months are traditionally quieter for the museum than the summer ones – but not for everyone. While the museum was closed for four to five weeks over the Christmas period, there was a lot of drilling, sawing and hammering going on. Anyone peering round the corner would have seen Roger Clark, perhaps on his hands and knees, wrestling with screwdriver, tape, set-square, saw or drill. He has changed around some displays, made new ones and, by cunning means, created another square foot or two of precious storage space.

We have had some welcome offers from new people wanting to steward in the museum. A feature in the *Wiltshire Times* and our website seems to have generated most of them. Especially welcome has been more help for David Stokesat weekends, which is often a potentially busy time for museum visitors.

We've long wanted to set up an active publications group and now, thanks to Ivor Slocombe, this is up and running. The first publication is the excellent Pharmacy booklet. One on the 'lost pubs of Bradford' is already drafted, and others on Bradford's wool and cloth industry, the Saxon Church, Abbey Mill and, possibly, Early Bradford and Bradford's Roman Villa are being considered.

The plan is to produce a series of booklets, with a themed format, about 20 pages long, which are both readable and accurate, and sell for around £2. As well as selling them in the museum, we hope they can be available in the TIC and Ex Libris. There are lots of stories to tell about Bradford, and elsewhere in the Hundred. We hope that, in time, these publications will build up into a valuable resource for inhabitants and visitors alike.

Another very active group, under Maggie Dobson and Jenny Arkell's inspirational leadership, is the oral history group – which has recently changed its name to the Bradford Hundred Memory Bank. You can read more about their work over the page.

The museum is keen to play its part in the Jubilee celebrations. The Millennium Embroidery is planned to be on display in the Bradford on Avon tent in The Close at Salisbury on Tuesday 1 May. The Queen is to visit then, so we are hoping she might come to see it and be given a copy of the Embroidery booklet. Gill and I will be practising our curtseys and bows – just in case! We also want to put on a Jubilee display in the library foyer of photos, press cuttings or other items relating to the 1952 celebrations. If you have, or know of, any, do let us know.

We look forward to an exciting and enjoyable summer of celebration and good weather.

Mervyn Harris  
Chairman

01225 863440

## Campus solution to museum's future is up for discussion

While the museum can stay in its present premises when its lease ends in 2015, that reassuring fact does not hide the problems the museum faces in fulfilling its present role and future potential, which can be solved only by having a larger museum in a more accessible place.

One avenue currently being explored by the museum trustees is having a 'campus' site in Bradford on Avon. Wiltshire Council, as part of its 'unitary council dividend', has pledged to have a programme of asset sales – land, buildings, and so on – the proceeds from which would then be used to help fund campus projects in Wiltshire towns.

A campus would locate several local services under one new roof, providing adequate customised space for their respective needs and, where possible, providing a modern, energy-efficient building with minimal running and maintenance costs.

Campus projects are to be set up and run by the Community Area Boards. The museum can propose or support such a project, but cannot be the lead body. However, some of the trustees had preliminary, and encouraging, discussions with county officers in 2011.

Some Wiltshire towns, including Corsham and Melksham, already have campus schemes planned and are working towards fulfilling them. A campus in Bradford could not happen until 2014 at the earliest.

There will be a Community Area Board meeting on 16 May in St Margaret's Hall. The museum and town council are asking that a Bradford on Avon Campus proposal be discussed at that meeting and we are hoping for a positive outcome. Fingers crossed!

Mervyn Harris

