

OVER THE GATE WINTER 2016



Friends of the Farmland Museum Newsletter

Regd. Charity No. 1072142. Museum Website: www.farmlandmuseum.org.uk
Education Dept. Website: <http://dennyeducation.co.uk>

VALEDICTORY ISSUEGOODBYE !



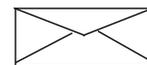
Well the time has finally come after so many years for the sun to set for the last time on the Friends of the Farmland Museum. Oh, you noticed... the photo above is of course not of Denny or the immediate surroundings. It is one I took of a sunset in the North of Scotland at approx. 2.00 am. in June a few years ago. There there are few hours of darkness in the summer in the far North and the sunsets are delayed to be enjoyed by insomniacs etc.

However, there is no delaying the sunset over the Friends unfortunately. There have been no viable plans or necessary volunteers put forward to keep the support organisation running in its current format. However, doubtless there are public spirited

individuals, yes like your good self, who would be prepared to assist at special events or tasks around the Museum to aid smooth running. To those I suggest contacting the Museum in order that a register may be kept of skills and willingness.

With no Friends in the future, there will of course be no Friends newsletter and this will be the final issue. I cannot remember how long I have been editor of 'Over the Gate' now but at least 12 years and probably more. I have enjoyed keeping you all informed and hopefully entertained. The following pages will, in part, inform you of the work of the soon to be defunct Friends over many years and will look back with both pride and sorrow. Farewell.

THE CHAIRMAN'S LETTER.



Greetings to you all - for the last time, sadly.

Yes, this is the last 'Over The Gate' Friends' Newsletter that I shall have the honour and privilege in which I can write to you.

I am sure that you must be as sad as me knowing that the Friends of the Farmland Museum at Denny will fold at the close of the year. I also feel that to close anything in one's year of Office is a form of failure on the Officer's part. That said, it was not for the want of trying to maintain the Friends to go forward. As you will remember reading in the last three Newsletters, we needed you to attend the AGM and to offer to fill the vacant Officers' roles on Committee. Indeed, not enough came to the AGM for me to even hold that Meeting - we were not quorate! ...so, an EGM was called. Whilst we were quorate at that we still did not have anyone to take on the Officers' roles, thus the death knell for the Friends was sounded.

As Friends had paid their subscription for the year, the small Committee - me and two others - decided that we would not close completely until your subscriptions expired at this year end.

Over the last 19 years the Friends have been of tremendous support to our wonderful Museum, giving upwards of £30,000 (a list of the main articles for which we have provided or bought will have been seen in an earlier Newsletter). And, since then, we have given and bought even more items which the Museum has gratefully accepted. Of course we have already decided we will give the remainder of our assets to the Museum for spending as it feels right so to do.

During the last few years the Friends have put on all sorts of events, the most well-known being the Teddy Bears Picnic/Parties in the summer and the Carols in the Abbey in December. They have both been widely enjoyed and appreciated especially by accompanying children of all ages as they are themes with which they could all readily connect with. And it was Ros Wright who has produced these occasions lovingly for so long. ***Please note that our last event will be Carols in the Abbey at 4pm (in the Abbey), preceded by hot drinks and mince pies from 3pm in the café. This will be on***

Saturday 10th December. Do please come and make for a lovely time together.

Recently a few Volunteer Friends joined with other Volunteers to put the Museum to bed for the winter. Whilst the work was not too arduous, it was a lovely day and friendship was cemented in our doing our annual job to maintain this fantastic layout in an almost perfect setting. Camaraderie was paramount during the break for lunch and again at the end of the day when tea was had. The Friends paid for any overheads that day - our parting 'thank you' to the Volunteers.

This is a time for thanks. Thanks are due to so many: the Management of the Museum, including Fanny Bara (Education Officer) and the Assistant Curator (Emma Kennedy); the Trustees, chaired so efficiently by Jane Williamson, MBE and not forgetting the first Chair when the Museum transferred from its original home in Haddenham, Lady Rosemary Hughes; the Friends and Volunteers who have been many during the years, giving of their time and expertise, without whom the Museum would find it almost impossible to run - including many who have since moved away, for instance Sheila Armit and her daughter, others who have become ill, our very loyal Friend, Shirley Randall who so often had the bric-a-brac stall getting money for the Museum, and who plays the keyboard for our Carols event, of course long-time serving Secretary and Treasurer Adrian Wright, so lovingly helped by his wife Ros; Mr John Martin and without some of his land the site would not exist; and... last but not least, a certain little boy from Haddenham!.. supported so lovingly by his parents Mike and Lorna. Well, Mike, who would have thought that what Craig first started those many years ago in a shoe box, would have led to a Museum as we see it today - one of the finest and most comprehensive of its kind in England? An inestimable 'thank you' is quite inadequate!

So, that is almost the end of the Friends as we know them today. If there comes a time when they can be revived and 'fresh blood is raring to go', then who knows, a new Friends Group could be started. That said, I shall write to you in the late winter to invite you to a Friends Farewell of cake and tea - a party in the Café - about the time the Museum opens for the new season in 2017. We can then say good-bye to one another as true friends.

There is always something to do at the ultimate point and on this occasion it is to thank most warmly our Editor on his superb Newsletter - one of the best of its kind I know - Peter Reeves: well done, Peter.

I wish you all well for the coming Festive Seasons and in the years to come.

Robert Stripe,
Chairman of the 'Friends.'

FRIENDS WINDING UP

As you will know the Friends of the Farmland Museum is a charitable organisation set up to assist the Farmland Museum with both support labour at special events and with raising additional funding. The success of this project is undeniable as demonstrated by the articles in the last few issues of this, their newsletter, showing very substantial amounts spent in assets for the benefit of the Museum since formation . Recent changes resulting in benefits of membership being withdrawn by the Museum inevitably created a marked decline in membership to such a degree that the last AGM failed to produce essential officers and committee members to continue thus triggering winding up with effect from 31st December. Utilisation of recent funds raised accordingly become pressing. Last issue showed the mini-Ferguson tractors bought and donated to the museum (that's one below in use) More recently this sturdy trailer (right) to transport heavy/bulky items, A Black & Decker Workmate bench and a recycled garden bench have been added.



The Education Department now has its own NEW dedicated website. Why not take a look NOW?

Discover what is going in the dynamic Education Department at...

<http://dennyeducation.co.uk>

DENNY TIME MACHINE

On August 28th and 29th the Denny Time Machine was switched on and transported visitors back to the 'Good Old Days' of Merrie England.... well, they may have been good and merry for some but.....



Watched by a drummer



These two could not resist having a go at each other.



..... and interested time travellers.'



Whilst others travelled to attractions based in the Stone barn. Interestingly, centre is hooded, hard working Education Supremo Fanny Bara, who is from France... at a Merrie England event?? Not out of context as the Museum was established by the Delanoy family (De la Noy) whose antecedents originally came from Northern France, maybe despite the best efforts of the optically challenged, Brexit sympathetic, King Harold.

WHAT IS A MUSEUM. M.Delanoy, (co-founder of the Museum)

What IS a museum?

A museum is never just what one sees;
There are hidden facts and many memories.

It needs volunteers and many friends
Both organised, and informal, to meet its desired
ends.

And when the Friends of the Museum disappear
It really IS bad news I fear.

Then the volunteers, they keep the museum
ALIVE

And without them, no museum can survive.
Their varied skills they bring each week -
Without them, the future would be bleak.
Some you need with painting skills,
Others who can use a saw, spanner or drills.
Some to prune and hoe or weed;
Others knowing how to plant or sow seed.
Restoration is a skill on its own
Treating metal, wood, leather or bone.
And of materials there are many more -

Fabrics, pottery, willow and straw.

And as for records, to keep them is a MUST
Not only the object, but has it been treated for
rust?

The worm holes, are they dead in the wood
Or would a dose of Wykamol do it good?
On large objects, what's the restoration cost
Or is accepting it going to be money lost?
Does it go on display or does it go in the store?
If so, will it see the light of day any more?

There are trustees needed to look after the ship...
Managers, and officers to make sure attendance
doesn't dip.

Good relations with press and radio helps the
museum survive
Custodians to greet the people when they arrive.

And last, but not least, to forget him I would hate...
That all-important producer of **OVER THE GATE**.

MUSEUM MANAGER'S REPORT

Dear all

Merry Christmas everyone!

As usual it has been a very busy season and year
that's gone by in a flash! We were so lucky with
the weather and managed to get a lot achieved!
At the end of the season we said our usual
goodbyes and thank you to our Seasonal Teams -
Louisa and Josie our Visitor Services Assistants
and to Tea Room Assistant Angie Jefferson. We
hope to welcome all three back next year. I'm
very pleased to say that Cherry and Avril, having
been seasonal appointments for so many years,
were given permanent contracts; a big thank you
to Clive and Smiley who are also an important
part of the Tea Room team.

We're going to be very busy over the winter with
changes to the Auctioneer's display and a special
display going up in the first Pig Shed to mark

the 20th anniversary of the Farmland Museum
opening to the public at Denny.

The museum office will be closed from 20
December - reopening on 4 January. We will be
open during February half-term for our annual
Twilight event (15 February) and the following
afternoon for Family Holiday Activities (16
February). Following on from this year's
successful opening on other days during February
half-term we're also going to open on 17 and 18
February (11am – 3pm) for general visits.

The new season starts on Saturday 1 April 2017.

Don't forget to keep up to date with our latest
news by following us on Twitter or 'like' us on
Facebook:

Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/#!/Denny.Farmland> - we regularly post photographs
and news; please visit and 'like' the museum's

facebook page and help us reach a wider audience. But DON'T like us via the museum's website as it doesn't link to the Facebook page at present!

Twitter – www.twitter.com/farmlandmuseum we are being 'followed' by people, groups and other museums all over the world; follow us too and 'retweet' our news. The museum's twitter account is linked to the facebook page; the tweets also appear on the website.

A big thank you to everyone who has supported us this year.

Ann Wise, Museum Manager.



APPLES, PUMPKINS & SPOOKS

Sunday 30th October saw the annual Museum event celebrating Hallowe'en with a plethora of pumpkins awaiting transformation. Is this a traditional British event in any way I wonder but it is, no doubt, most welcome to local pumpkin growers. Museum staff were in evidence but looking to disguise themselves.



While Assistant Curator Emma adopted a more feline appearance to mark up the unsuspecting vegetables for imminent surgery. Mutilated pumpkins were everywhere - except oddly enough in the kitchen! They are primarily a food item aren't they????



Museum Manager Ann Wise seemed to be having a very 'bad hair day' at the event. Dressed as a fugitive from a Harry Potter film?





Education Officer, Fanny Bara, meantime patrolled the area with camera in hand (as did I co-identally) to record images such as the original wooden face masks top left.... and scary tales being related in the Education block by the elegant but alarming sinister 'Lady in black.'

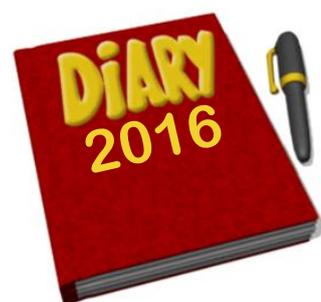


Also in attendance - but not following any Hallowe'en theme was the VERY impressive sample brought by the Cambridshire Raptor Foundation who home more than 200 birds of around 40 different species at Woodhurst near St. Ives. (www.raptorfoundation.org.uk). Fanny Bara chose to photograph the largest bird present - the purposeful looking character on the left above whilst I was totally charmed by the smallest bird on display, the diminutive and delightful white-faced eared owl shown above right, should there be any doubt!

The Foundation are to be praised for their excellent work in caring for these extremely impressive birds at their site in close proximity to Cambridge and arrange many activities as you can discover from visiting their website. Doubtless a visit to them will be immensely rewarding and educational and you may well wish to look into this possibility... when the Farmland Museum is not holding any special event of course. Meantime, hopefully the Foundation can be induced to return to Denny in the near future to captivate others. As you may have gathered I am very interested in birds and maybe Raptors in particular. Although not in any sense condoning the illegal practice of removing healthy birds from the wild, should you share this interest in Raptors, 'The Goshawk' by T.H.White makes fascinating reading in helping to understand the relationship between man and captive bird - and is available in paperback from Amazon would you believe? Meantime be sure to introduce your little ones (and the bigger ones) to the fascinating world of nature and these wonderful birds.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Further/updated information on these events can be found on the Museum's website www.farmlandmuseum.org.uk



Well, there is only one future event for 2016

Come along to the Candle lit Carols
in the Abbey on Saturday 10th
December from
4.00 pm.



Warm clothing and charged
torches are advised !!!

Everyone welcome

No auditions will
be necessary

Hot drinks and
mince pies available
from 3 pm in the
Cafe.

Get in the mood
for Christmas
early.

Put this event in
your diary NOW!!

***A source close to the organiser of this ever popular event Ros Wright, advises me that the theme this year is 'Why do we do that? (Christmas Traditions)' so come along and sing lustily (can I say that?) and rattle the rafters of the Abbey as never before at our last ever Carols in the Abbey event. Our 'FINAL FLING' as retired long term Hon. Secretary Adrian Wright describes it.

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