



Jane Cooper's Memorial Bench

If you have passed the museum recently you cannot have failed to notice the installation of our beautiful new bench to celebrate the life of Jane Cooper. There will be a formal unveiling with Jane's family on Saturday 12th August at 6pm with refreshments and all Friends of the Museum are welcome. To aid catering arrangements please let Jo Coad know if you can attend: 01367 820428 or jpcoad@btinternet.com



Channel 4 Filming



The museum has again hosted a film crew, this time for a Channel 4 programme as part of 'Britain's Hidden Villages' presented by Penelope Keith. Uffington has entered the 'Village of the Year' competition and was shortlisted for filming due to our unique museum and association with the White Horse. The programme should be aired early October and we keep our fingers crossed that Uffington is chosen for the winning prize of £10,000!

Visitors

As we go to print the museum has been open for 15 weekends and exactly half of the season. We are delighted to have welcomed over 650 visitors already and raised over £530 in donations and sales. Please do come and see us and bring your friends and family to see the exhibition. Here is a selection of feedback we have received in the visitor's book :

"A treasure on our doorstep" BM from Little Coxwell

"This visit was very, very interesting, I'm so pleased I came here" BS Michigan USA

"Super exhibition - well done everyone" CF from Uffington

"Very informative on the school & the area, well worth the visit" - JO from Basildon Essex

"Absolutely fantastic, love the White Horse exhibition" RW from Sydney NSW

"Super museum, a hidden gem - the interactive PC was especially good!" MT Kent

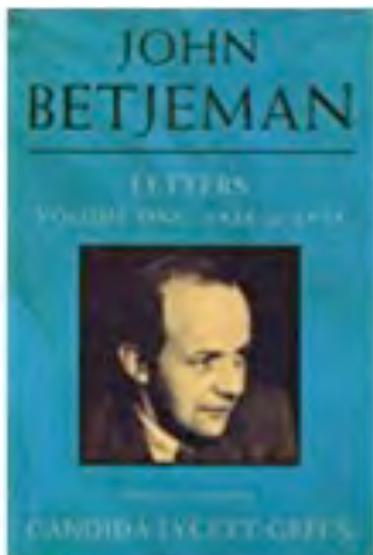
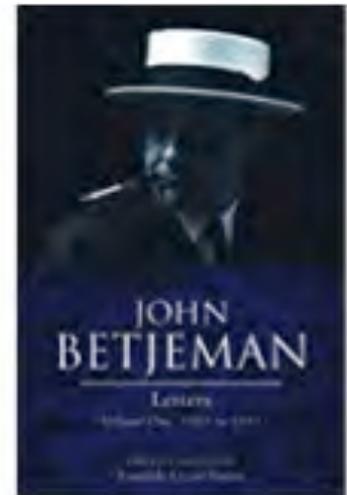


Museum Events

As well as the exhibition it's been a busy couple of months organising events. Many Friends joined us for the 'Crime on the Canals' talk given by Anthony Poulton-Smith. We enjoyed hosting the cubs one evening in June to enable them to work towards their heritage badge. The school fete attracted lots of visitors to our stand and the whole school managed to fit inside the museum for Founders Day, a special event this year as the Saunders Trust also unveiled a new plaque to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the founding of the old schoolroom.

Betjeman Letters: Volumes 1 & 2

Rupert Lycett-Green has very kindly donated six copies of each of the above books with all sale proceeds going towards the repairs to the museum building. Written by Sir John Betjeman and edited and introduced by his daughter Candida Lycett Green, they are on sale for £10.00 – RRP is £14.99.



In addition, Dave Kennedy has also generously donated various books for sale.

These include a first edition of Thomas Hughes 'Scouring of the White Horse'. If anyone is interested in purchasing any of the books please e-mail karen.pilcher@btinternet.com. Alternatively the Betjeman Letters books are available for sale in the museum when open at the weekends.

Donation of Museum Model

Part of our new exhibition includes a model of Tom Brown's School Museum created and donated by Pendon Museum in Long Wittenham. The following is part of the article which appears in their July newsletter...



Pendon – Portraying life from the 1920s and 30s

Pendon Museum represents the Vale as it was during the 1920s and 30s; a period before modern development changed life through easy transport and communication. It was a time when most folk travelled only short distances, when few went beyond the local towns and manufactured goods were delivered by canal or railway. For those who lived in the villages of the Vale life was hard – working either on the land or the railway works at Swindon. The Pendon

Museum founder, an Australian called Roye England, came to the Vale staying with his cousin who was the Rector at Wanborough. He fell in love with the gentle landscape, the unspoilt villages and the railways that ran through it. When a cottage in the village had its picturesque thatch roof replaced with pink asbestos tiles he resolved to create a model of it to preserve the original appearance for future generations. Made from artist's board, painted with permanent watercolour and thatched with hair, it was a three-dimensional water colour painting that captures the interior and exterior appearance with surprising accuracy. Buoyed with his success of that first model, Roye embarked on an ambitious enterprise – to capture a slice of the Vale so that future generations could appreciate the appearance of a spring line village, so typical of those running along the Downs.

Uffington and its' immediate surrounds proved to be a rich source of inspiration for Pendon; from the tiny Styles Cottage one of the oldest labourers' cottages built around 1699, through to the complex Britchcombe Farm, both at one time in the ownership of the Craven Estate. Wharf Farm, alongside the canal, The Snobby shoe-menders', now demolished and replaced by semi-detached houses and Benjys, once the local Post Office are others. Occupying a central location in the Pendon village are the principle buildings seen in any village. Amongst these is the reproduction of Tom Browns' School, a fine building of cut, dressed stone built up from a foundation of sarsen stones and tiled with limestone slate. Like the real building, the model school sits close to the church, and the building style reflects the practises used in ecclesiastical buildings. The model on display in Tom Brown's School Museum is made from resin and machine painted as an approximation only of the real thing. It does however, capture some of the charm of the real building, and spreads the knowledge of how old schools were four centuries ago! We are fortunate that the real building survives and that its appearance seventy years ago led to it appearing in miniature at Pendon Museum.

Pendon Museum is at Long Wittenham, north of Didcot and is open most weekends, Bank and School Holidays between 11 am and 4 pm (last entry at 3:15). Further details are available at www.pendonmuseum.com

Rota Volunteers

A huge thank you to the Friends that have welcomed our visitors already this season by opening the museum. If anyone would like to join the rota by volunteering for three hours on either a Saturday or Sunday then please contact Lucy Dillistone. Alternatively, we are also looking for support at the White Horse Show on our museum stand – if you can spare an hour on either Sunday or Monday then again please contact Lucy on: 01367 820498 lucydillistone@gmail.com

Update on the building

The work to the old schoolroom walls started in April however the stonemason has highlighted major structural problems and the current listed building consent for minor repairs is no longer valid. The Parish Council has sought expert advice from the VWHDC Conservation Officer, Oxfordshire Buildings Trust and Andrew Townsend Architects and they have all confirmed that structural repairs are required rather than just the repair work to the chalk. It will be necessary to re-apply for listed building consent and an architect and structural engineer have been appointed as the work is now too complex to be handled by the Parish Council without expert advice.

The Parish Council is in the process of obtaining quotes from architects and structural engineers and the repairs are now on hold until a structural report can be produced detailing the extent of the work required. We will be requesting quotes from firms on the list of structural engineers supplied by the VWHDC Conservation Officer. Early indications are that the cost of the repairs and the fees to various experts will increase the overall requirement from £22,500 to closer to £40,000 so further fundraising and grant applications will be required.

Friends Management Committee

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