

Welcome to Wells & Mendip Museum's newsletter with information about exhibitions, talks, events and developments at the Museum. If you would like to receive a copy by e-mail please contact admin@wellsmuseum.org.uk

Opening hours: From Monday 2nd April
Monday – Saturday 10am – 5pm. Closed Sundays.

SMALL ART EXHIBITIONS IN MEETING ROOM

The late Peter Coate, a prominent local artist, long held an ambition to find a display area in Wells where artists from across the region can showcase their work. We are pleased to be able to provide this facility, with the intention that it will be a regularly changing exhibition to allow as many artists to exhibit as possible.

If you are interested in exhibiting in this area, or for more details, please email your contact details to: Christine Quinn admin@wellsmuseum.org.uk

2 – 30 APRIL – ART EXHIBITION BY JOCELYN HENFREY



Jocelyn has lived in Somerset for many years and it is here that she has had the chance to paint. She enjoys painting in egg tempera, which is a mix of watercolour, paint and egg yolk. This gives a bright and heightened colour to the watercolour, but unlike watercolour, mistakes can be rectified by scraping off the paint. She also likes to use Neo Colour II, which are water-soluble wax pastels, which she finds easy to use and fluid. She says "I like the challenge of painting something that is alive and giving it its character".

Jocelyn was born and brought up in South America (Chile and Brazil). She has also lived in Canada, but moved to England in 1971, finally settling in East Horrington on 1976 and belongs to painting groups in both Wells and Draycott.

THE REMAINING PICTURES FROM THE STUDIO OF PETER COATE **30 APRIL – 11 JUNE**

The Museum is a fitting venue for the six-week exhibition and sale of the residue of paintings from the studio of The Late Peter Coate. A member of The Royal West of England Academy. Peter produced many fine works during his lifetime, in oil, watercolour and other mediums. Many of these paintings are of the Somerset countryside, particularly The Levels, and are rich in local historical interest, documenting the changing nature of the county's buildings and landscape.





These remaining works will be offered for sale at greatly reduced prices, the proceeds of which will go to The Somerset Wildlife Trust, much beloved by Peter, and to the Museum. **Normal museum entrance fees apply**

1st FLOOR EXHIBITION ROOM SHOWS

2 – 14 APRIL ART EXHIBITION

BY SUE DURANT, LIN HAWKINS & LESLEY HILL

Three long-time friends unite for an exciting exhibition showcasing their recent work. This includes acrylic and mixed media paintings, a range of textiles, felted item and bespoke children's clothes. **Free entry to exhibition only**



24 APRIL – 5 MAY ART EXHIBITION BY DRAYCOTT ART CLUB



A wide-ranging exhibition of art styles and techniques. The Draycott Art Club enjoys life drawing or portrait sessions every week and this exhibition will feature a selection of work showing the wide range of styles and approaches to this subject. In addition, you will be delighted by extraordinary still life paintings, landscapes and abstract compositions. Members range from art trained artists to complete beginners - an exhibition of exciting variety. **Free entry to exhibition only**

8 MAY – 1 JUNE ART EXHIBITION BY ANNIE DAVENPORT

Annie Davenport presents an exhibition which is part retrospective and part her new series of paintings, which celebrate Somerset. Other artists from the Old Bakery Artists will be joining her (Janet Jackson, Diana Walker, Frank Reeves and Penny Lloyd). Annie has had a long career as an artist/designer, using many different media, oils, acrylics, watercolour, print and textiles. Most of the exhibition will include open studio events where the artist will be painting as part of the exhibition



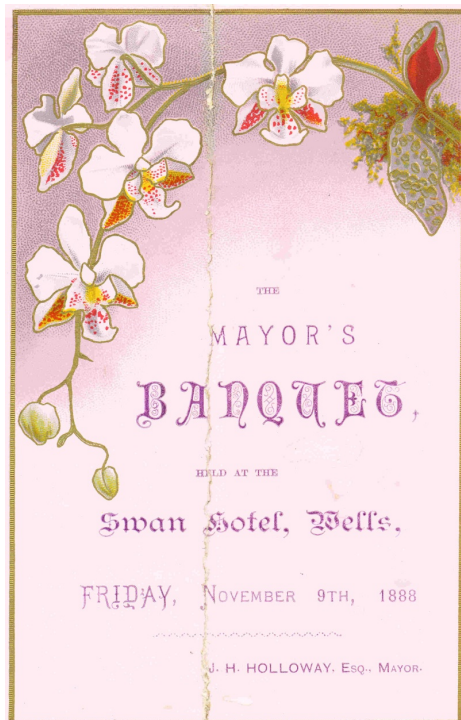
NEWS FROM WELLS CITY ARCHIVES

In December, Julia (the Archivist) gave a talk about the City Archives to Pilton History Group, and in February, one to Shepton Mallet Local History Group. Archives volunteers are working hard on data entry, which forms part of the digitisation project. Many additional years have been added to the Petty Sessions database, and work has begun on ScraseBase. The latter will contain a vast amount of data about properties in Wells, generously shared with us by the eminent Wells historian Tony Scrase. Julia's priority at present is to complete the Archives catalogue, which will then be made available online. The hard-working Archives Box Listing Group is temporarily in abeyance while Julia focusses on cataloguing.

A charity Victorian dinner was held at the Swan Hotel on 4th February, inspired by finds unearthed by volunteer Andrew Haymes during an Archives Box Listing session. He came across beautiful Victorian menus of lavish banquets held at the Swan at Victorian Mayormakings; one of these is shown below.

Reproductions of many of these vintage menus were on display at the event, along with historic news cuttings about the Swan. A stunning original Victorian dress was also exhibited, kindly loaned by Katy Beauchamp.

The dinner, which was sold out, was attended by 86 people, many of whom were in Victorian dress. The event (which Julia and Clare Blackmore helped to organise) was in aid of Wells & Mendip Museum and Macmillan Cancer Support.



On 19th February, a very successful Wells Traders' Evening was held at the Museum. Julia gave a presentation about the Archives collection. She highlighted the documents it contains which local traders could use in promoting their businesses or decorating their premises.

New-style Archives Reading Room – We've trialed running a Reading Room session in the Lecture Hall, which enables us to accommodate up to four readers at a time. Not only is it much more spacious and light than the existing Reading Room; it's also warmer! The first session was pronounced a success by the readers who attended, so we shall be continuing with this model on a monthly basis.

Appeal – We urgently need a laptop for the City Archives. Julia requests that if anyone has a laptop

which they no longer need, they might consider donating it to us. Please contact her on archives@wellsmuseum.org.uk if you're able to help.

GARDEN DAY

Saturday 5 May 10.30am – 4pm

The museum will be holding a Garden Day with various plant stalls and visits from nurseries including Wild Thyme in Frome and Mill Cottage in Wookey. There will also be a second-hand book stall. Refreshments all day including tea, coffee, light lunches and cream teas. Inside if wet. **Free Entry.**

WILLOW WEAVING WORKSHOP DAY - Saturday 12 May 10am – 4pm



Sophie Courtier, one of the artists involved in creating The Willow Cathedral by the River Tone in Taunton will be returning to run 2 willow weaving workshops –

10am – 12.30pm "Garden Structures" where you can make cloches, plant supports, border edging etc. £35.00

10am – 4pm "Sculpture" where you will be able to make a sculpture of your choice to take home £60 (the full day workshop includes lunch). Materials included.

Booking essential - If you would like to book a place on either of these workshops please contact the Museum for details.

VISITOR INSIGHTS FINDINGS 2017

For the last nine months the museum has been participating in the South West Museum Development programme's "Visitor Insights" survey of museum visitors, and we have now contributed sufficient surveys to receive feedback. A big thankyou is due to our Front of House volunteers for supporting visitors completing the surveys, and also to Jonathan Chivers for processing the data.

The report highlighted that many of our visitors are holidaymakers, an indication of the importance of tourism to the economy of Wells & the South West. The age and gender of our visitors is fairly typical for museums like ours, with a higher proportion of visitors aged 55+, and a higher proportion of females as well. The reasons for visiting are interesting - many wanted their visit to be different (10%), informative (29%), to find out about local/family history (20%) and for social reasons. 26% said that their visit had something to do with family and friends. We can learn a lot from these findings and focus our attentions accordingly.

Finally, visitors were asked to rank the quality of their overall experience. The museum was rated 'Excellent' overall, and the volunteer stewards/staff were also rated 'Excellent', so very well done to all!

OTHER EVENTS AT THE MUSEUM

Friday 6th April at 7.30pm – “The Archaeological remains found in local caves” – Philip Hendry has been a caver for more than 50 years. He has produced several caving publications and writes a monthly column in the “Mendip Times”.

Wells Natural History & Archaeological Society

Wednesday 11th April at 7.30pm – “Wells in Mosaic” – Ian and Ruth Ames-White will give an update on the progress of this ambitious project for 21st Century art in the City.

Wells Civic Society

Wednesday 9 May at 7.30pm – “Wells’ Railways – three stations and many lines” – Colin Price will share his passion for the railways which connect the City and its industries.

Wells Civic Society

Friday 18th May at 7.30pm – The Story of Radio Astronomy” – James Fradgley FRAS will take us from the first chance discoveries in the 1930's, via iconic radio telescopes such as Jodrell Bank to the latest observations of bizarre objects and extreme events.

Wells and Mendip Astronomers

TICKETS

We are currently selling tickets for the Royal Bath & West Show being held at the Bath & West Showground 30 May – 2 June.

Two children go free with the purchase of an advance adult ticket



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