

Thirsk and District Museum Society

Summer Newsletter



The Museum opened for the 2017 Season on Monday 3 April and closes on Saturday 18 November. On Friday 7 April Kevin Hollinrake our local M.P. visited the museum to mark the start of our Fortieth Year. Balloons with 40 years on them were a suitable decoration outside of the building.

In the year of the Museum's Fortieth Anniversary it is important to remember Peter and May Wyon who formed the Society and provided the loan to purchase 16 Kirkgate and also Cooper and Margaret Harding for their dedicated work over many years.

The season so far has been very successful with an increase in visitor numbers of 25% and donations showing an increase of 47%. Visitors have come from all parts of the United Kingdom and also from many other different countries. Many visitors have indicated that they have been attracted to visiting Thirsk through watching the television series 'The Yorkshire Vet'. The comments in the visitors' book indicate how the museum brings back memories, particularly the items on display in the kitchen. There are also many complimentary comments about the warm and friendly welcome shown by our stewards. The quiz for children continues to be very popular with all family members being involved. We have recruited several new stewards this year and also are pleased to welcome back some who have been absent for a period of time. We would like to thank all of our volunteers for their dedication and their help is greatly appreciated.

The Annual General Meeting took place on Thursday 25 May and was attended by 25 members of the Society. Ray Ballard (Chairman of the Trustees) gave thanks to three members of the Management Committee who were retiring. Jean Sampson had carried out her duties as Treasurer in a very efficient and competent manner. Susan Stephenson as Chairman had been responsible for the progress and achievement made during the course of the last ten years. Arthur Whitehead as Vice Chairman had been involved with the Museum since its inception and his dedication and wealth of knowledge have been greatly appreciated by the Society. Honorary Membership was awarded to Arthur in recognition of his outstanding contribution.

The Officers of the Museum Society are:

Trustees: Ray Ballard (Chairman), Sue Dalton, Gareth Dadd, Janice Hall and Susan Stephenson.

Management Committee: Jim Seymour (Chairman), Andy Brook (Vice Chairman), Allan Webster (Secretary), Catriona Haig (Treasurer), Susan Harrison (Museum Mentor), Jeanne Hindmarch (Assistant Secretary) and Susan Stephenson (Trustee).

Since the Museum has been accepted to go forward to apply for accreditation the Committee has continued to make progress in formulating the required policies and documentations. Several new data bases have been set up including an archive section and particular thanks should go to one of our new stewards, Jean Rhodes who has spent many hours entering data.

We have had a firm of Chartered Surveyors to do a detailed survey of all areas of the building. This has highlighted that a great deal of structural repairs need to be made and we are in the process of obtaining quotes for the different aspects of the work required. It is very clear that the cost of these improvements will be very expensive and that in due course we will need to start a programme of fund raising.

The autumn talks are all now booked and should be really interesting. The first one is on Thursday 28 September and will be given by Anne Jenner and her talk is entitled 'Pursuing Potters of the Past'. On Thursday 26 October Professor Richard Bailey's talk will be on 'The Saxon Stones of South Kilvington Church'. The final talk on Thursday 23 November will be given by Anthony Hughes from the Records Office at Northallerton. Talks start at 7.30pm and apart from the first talk they take place in Thirsk Town Hall Annexe. **Please note that the talk on Thursday 28 September will be held in the Court Room at The Rural Arts Centre.** Further details will be sent in due course and we look forward to inviting you to these talks.

As many of you will be aware Allan Webster has not been well recently and we wish him all the best for a speedy recovery and hope that he will be able to return soon. We would like to recruit additional volunteers and particularly would welcome applications to join the committee to help in the never ending administration tasks that we are facing.

The new Landlord of the Frankland Arms held a Garden Party recently and the proceeds from the tombola amounted to £250 which Neil has kindly donated to the Museum Society. We are very grateful for his contribution.

A reminder that subscriptions for membership of the Society for 2017 – 2018 are now due – single membership is £10 and joint membership is £18. Cheques should be made payable to Thirsk Museum and sent to the Treasurer at the Museum.

Jim Seymour (Chairman)