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## Coming events

### Museums Association Conference - 20th September

John Williams-Davies is arranging a seminar for SHCG members on the Tuesday before the start of the Museums Association Conference at Swansea.

The morning will be occupied by two lectures, one by Bill Jones of the Welsh Industrial and Maritime Museum, the other by Adrian Babbage of Torfaen Museum Trust. Both will tackle the challenge of interpreting industry and industrial society in the museum and in the landscape. In the afternoon there will be a visit to Ogmere Vale, the site of a proposed Industrial Heritage Centre, returning via the Rhondda and Afon Valleys.

Members wishing to attend should inform John Williams-Davies without delay at The Welsh Folk Museum, St Fagans, Cardiff CF5 6XB. (tel 0222 569441).

### Keeping Livestock in Museums - October 7th/8th

Chris Page is organising a semina on this subject to be held at Manor Farm Museum, Cogges, (Witney, Oxfordshire) on October 7th and 8th. Friday will see papers by Roy Brigden, Sylvia Lough, Alan Cheese and John Rhodes, and on Saturday participants can see round the farm museum and inspect a herd of longhorns.

Chris Page can offer limited floorspace for Friday night; details and booking forms from him at Manor Farm Museum, Cogges, Witney, Oxon (tel 0993 72602)

### Oral History Seminar - 19th October

A seminar on Oral History and Museums will take place at Nottingham on Wednesday 19th October. Details are available from Suella Postles at Brewhouse Yard Museum, Castle Boulevard, Nottingham NG7 1FB (tel 0602 411881).

### Making a Museum: the role of designers and curators 18th November

Sam Mullins is organising a seminar at Harborough Museum, Market Harborough, on Friday 18th November to look at the relationship between designer and curator. It will be based on a critical examination of the museum's new displays, and what went right and what went wrong from both designer and curator's point of view. It will be particularly useful for anyone about to undertake a display project.

### Women in Museums: weekend school - 7th/8th April

This weekend school aims to investigate both the portrayal of women in museums and their experience within the profession. Dale Spender is giving the introductory talk on the Saturday. There will be a set of parallel workshops looking at women's heritage and individual disciplines, followed by a set of strategy workshops. Sunday will include papers from representatives of the Department of Museum Studies, the Women in Libraries group and the NCCL. Val Bott has kindly agreed to lead the plenary session to conclude proceedings.

A creche will be provided. There will be an exhibition, and entertainment on the Saturday night.

For further details please contact Sue Kirby, Carlisle Museum & Art Gallery, Castle Street, Carlisle CA3 8TP (tel 0228 34781).

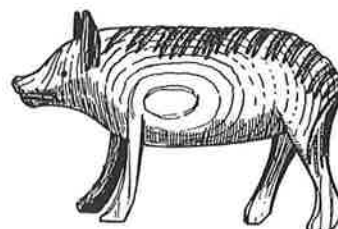
The school will be held at Woolton Hall, Fallowfield, Manchester.

### Other future meetings

The postponed weekend meeting on Vernacular and Neo-Vernacular in West Surrey will, it is hoped, take place next Spring.

The much-discussed conference on 20th Century Collecting will also take place next year.

A joint meeting with the Society for the Interpretation of Britain's Heritage will be held in October 1984, devoted to interpretation in open-air museums.



## Concerning the Aged

SHCG was one of several museum interests represented at a recent meeting in Edinburgh with Age Concern Scotland (ACS). The proportion of our population over retirement age is already large, and increasing. Pensioners swell the ranks of museums Friends organisations, they boost our visitor numbers and they act as willing, often able, volunteers. Many more of them, house-bound, institutionalised or with poor mobility could be of help too, or be helped by museums, particularly in the field of social history. Given that there is such scope for a symbiotic relationship between museums and the elderly, it is all the more surprising that the former have done so little specifically for the latter.

ACS is currently carrying out a retirement education project, for completion in March 1984 and with the aim of opening up more educational opportunities for older people. Within this, they see museums as having an important role. We are all overworked and I doubt if anyone would feel able to take on any major project single-handed. On the other hand, the collective efforts of several museums could be usefully applied to a particular project, with a fairly small individual input. One possibility now being explored is a loan package, on a specific theme, which could be sent out to old people's homes, hospitals and day centres. This might comprise photographs, printed ephemera, 3-dimensional objects, tapes or slide-tape programmes, using materials and skills drawn from a number of museums. There are indications that a grant might be made towards this by ACS Education project fund.

I should like to hear from any SHCG members in Scotland who feel that they, or their museums might be able to contribute to this, or any other project concerning the elderly. Likewise, I should be grateful for any information on museum/elderly projects outwith (trans 'outside' -Ed) Scotland.

John Shaw  
National Museum of Antiquities of Scotland  
Queen Street  
Edinburgh EH2 1JD

PS The Seminar Series will be back soon.

## Work in progress

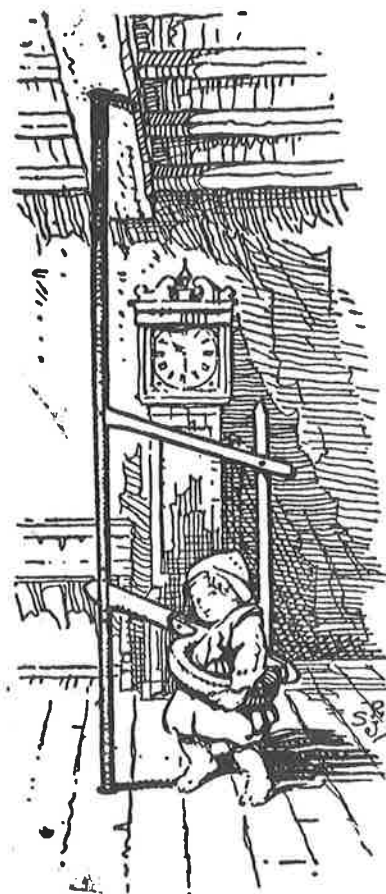
One of the points to come out of the successful SHCG seminar on Research at MERL, Reading, in July was the desirability of curators knowing what their colleagues elsewhere were doing in terms of research, exhibitions and publications. To this end we propose to launch a Directory of Work in Progress in SHCG Journal No 11, to be published in October 1983. The success of this feature, already found valuable by such groups as the Oral History Society and the Urban History Yearbook, is utterly dependent on the response of the membership. Please pack as much information as possible on your own interests, the projects in progress at your museum and the work of your immediate colleagues on the form supplied with this issue of SHCG News, and return it to the Editor (Journal), Harborough Museum, Adam & Eve Street, Market Harborough, Leics LE16 7LT, as soon as possible.

## New member

We welcome the birth of an SHCG member; Claire, daughter of Gaby Porter our former Secretary and Peter Moran. Congratulations and best wishes to all three; we look forward to meeting Claire at future meetings.

## SHCG committee

Chairman	John Shaw National Museum of Antiquities of Scotland
Vice-chairman	Suella Postles Brewhouse Yard Museum, Nottingham
Secretary	Sue Kirby Carlisle Museum & Art Gallery
Treasurer	Sherri Brown Newarke Houses Museum, Leicester
Membership Sec	Helen Clark Beamish
Ed (Journal)	Sam Mullins Harborough Museum, Leics
Ed (News)	Crispin Paine Area Museum Service for SE England
Seminar Org Committee	Helen Clark Stuart Davies Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery Deborah Haase Stirling Smith Art Gal & Museum Janice Murray St Helens Museum & Art Gallery David Fleming Kirkstall Brewery, Leeds Jenny Mattingly Herbert Art Gal & Mus, Coventry Anne Williams Bersham Indust Heritage Centre Rosie Crook Sunderland Museum & Art Gallery



## History of provincial museums

Many of the national museums have had their histories written, but the history of provincial museums and their collections has been almost ignored.

Stuart Davies of the Local History Department at Birmingham and I are interested in holding a one-day seminar on the subject in Birmingham in the early part of 1984. I should be interested to hear from anyone who

- a) would like to attend (no deep commitment necessary at this stage)
- b) feels they could contribute a talk on some aspect of the history of provincial museums and their collections. We should also be interested in brief reports on work in progress.

Gail Durbin  
Education Officer  
Castle Museum  
Norwich NR1 3JU

## Manufacturers' catalogues

Do you have any manufacturers' catalogues? These are some of the most valuable sources for social history curators, and we would like to publish - either in SHCG News or in SHCG Journal - a list of the whereabouts of the biggest and most important collections of them. Please send a list of the catalogues you hold, giving:

- a) Manufacturer's name and address
- b) Manufacturer's business, and description of contents
- c) Date
- d) one-line assessment of catalogue's usefulness to the present-day curator, rarity, quality of illustrations etc.

Major collections of manufacturers' catalogues are held by Beamish, Ironbridge and Birmingham, but there are probably important collections elsewhere (including in libraries) and no doubt rare individual catalogues in many museum offices.

It would be very helpful if you could send both details of your own holdings and the whereabouts of any others you know of to: Crispin Paine, AMSSEE, 34 Burners Lane, Kiln Farm, Milton Keynes MK11 3HB.

## On offer

The Cotswold Countryside Collection at Northleach is offering the following items to another museum. Details from David Viner at Corinium Museum (0285 5611).

- 1) Suffolk seed drill by Smythe of Peasenhall, in good condition;
- 2) Massey Harris seed drill, made in Canada before World War II and used for 25 years at Hartpury, Glos;
- 3) Brenton root drill;
- 4) Two flat-bed trollies fitted with hand-brake and sprung wheels, one by E. PRICE/BUILDER/EVESHAM;
- 5) William Allchin circular rack-saw, originally installed on Sherborne Estate, Glos. In working condition near Stow-on-the-Wold;
- 6) 1925 auto cultivator;
- 7) Field Marshall Mark I Series 2 tractor of 1945-6, used in Gloucestershire;
- 8) Massey Harris 44K tractor, purchased new in 1945 and stored near Malvern;

- 9) Ruston Hornsby 54" tractor thresher made in 1926 and used on the Cotswolds;
- 10) Two reaper binders, one by Albion;
- 11) Several chaff-cutters by various manufacturers including Kells of Gloucester.

## Annual Study Weekend

The Annual Study Weekend in June was a great success. About thirty members spent a very enjoyable weekend in Hebden Bridge under Peter Brears' inimitable guidance. Peter began things with a masterly summary of the development of the West Yorkshire woollen industry and its effect on local landscape and culture, then gave a graphic practical demonstration of carding and spinning, and then led a long walk around Hebden Bridge's beautiful and fascinating countryside.

Saturday was occupied by a marathon coach-tour of local textile museums and sites, and Sunday morning by a miscellany of talks, including Stockport Hatting, Dundee jute and interpretation of the 'South Pennines'.

## AGM

The Group's AGM was held at the White Lion, Hebden Bridge on Friday 24th June.

The first piece of business was formally to report the change in the Group's name, following the ballot agreed at the last AGM. 11 members had been against change but 24 in favour, of whom 14 wanted the SHCG title.

The Chairman reported on a long discussion in the Group's committee of a Policy Review paper. Two major new initiatives were to be explored:

- a) a handbook, or manual, of curatorship for social history, to provide specialist information
- b) a survey of social history museum provision in the major cities of the UK. A draft questionnaire had been tested out at Birmingham and is being revised for wider application,

The Secretary reported on a variety of activities:

- a) Manual of Curatorship: in a letter to Dr Prince she had conveyed the committee's concern over the coverage of small museums in the Manual and the lack of liaison between contributors for overlapping subject areas
- b) Working Party on Code of Ethics: contributions on live animals in agricultural museums had been submitted by Roy Brigden and Alan Cheese on behalf of the Group
- c) Curatorial Board: following a report that representation of all Human History disciplines on the Board would be reduced to one person only, the Secretary wrote to the Museums Association expressing grave concern.
- d) Membership of the Group; the committee had discussed a clause of the constitution restricting membership, and had agreed that non-professionals should be allowed to join; the incoming committee was invited to review the Group's whole constitution
- e) Review of Area Services: the Group had written to the Working Party of the Museums and Galleries Commission suggesting that they look at the 50% rule (which discouraged research) and at provision of specialist training, and should consider whether AMCs should have more say in museum standards and whether they should have a policy towards new museums.
- f) an approach from SIBH seeking close cooperation had been welcomed
- g) Peoples' Palace Museum, Glasgow: continuing concern for the museum's deteriorating position and condition had led to correspondence with the Director, Alistair Auld, and the Curator, Elspeth

The meeting debated two proposals to change the constitution. A motion to make election to officer and committee posts by postal ballot was rejected, but a motion to require a postal ballot for constitutional changes was carried.

Graeme Cruickshank reported on negotiations with the Reviewing Committee on the Export of Works of Art. Among proposals discussed with the Committee's civil servants were

- a) a change in the Committee's name, eg to '...items of cultural heritage'
  - b) a relaxation of age and price limits, at present 50 years and £8,000
  - c) inclusion of items of major local importance
  - d) discouragement of/ban on container use for export
- The Chairman asked Graeme to continue his work on the Group's behalf.

King. A meeting of the Group's representatives, Deborah Haase and John Shaw, would take place in the near future to discuss this further.

- h) Scottish Local History Conference: in view of the above, and other developments in Scotland, the Group had taken one year's membership of the Conference.

The Treasurer had reported that there was a balance of several hundred pounds in the account, which would allow publication of a special Journal issue and a further Journal in the autumn.

The Membership Secretary reported 75 new members, bringing the Group's membership to 185.

The series of traing seminars organised in Scotland had been going well, but there had been less progress in England.



The Sign Painter