



Calendar of Events 2012.

MAY

Wednesday 9 2pm VISIT Winsford Museum Store

Tuesday 15 Evening Talk by Lee Stewart
'The work of the RSPCA Stapeley Grange'

Wednesday 16 2pm VISIT Winsford Museum Store

Wednesday 30 Tea and Talk 3pm
'Richard II and Cheshire'

Thursday 31 Film Night 7 for 7.30pm
'Mademoiselle Chambon' Cert. 12

JUNE

Thursday 14 Evening Talk 7 for 7.30pm
'Northwich and the River Weaver through the ages-
a reason to celebrate' by Colin Edmondson.

Wednesday 27 Tea and Talk 3pm
'Prints from the Weaver Hall Collection'

Thursday 28 Film Night 7 for 7.30pm
'The Arbor'. Cert. 15

JULY

Thursday 12 Friends' Preview of New Exhibition:
'Music in Cheshire'

Wednesday 25 Tea and Talk 3pm
'Folk Tales brought to Life'

Thursday 26 Film Night 7 for 7.30pm
'Went the Day Well' Cert. PG

Children's Activities 25 and 26 July
'Blow thy Horn Hunter'

AUGUST

Children's Activities 1 and 2 August
'Build a Band'

Children's Activities 8 and 9 August
'Shake it Up'

Children's Activities 15 and 16 August
'Victorian Music Day'

(Friends do have to pay for Children's Activities.)

SEPTEMBER

10 45am Thursday 6 September
Visit to St Mary's Church, Astbury- see flier

Thursday 20 Friends' Preview of New Exhibition:
'Fun and Games'

Wednesday 26 Tea and Talk 3pm

Thursday 27 Film Night 7 for 7.30pm
'The Way'. Cert. 12A

OCTOBER 18 AGM with speaker: Lord Lieutenant.
Details next Newsletter.

Welcome to our New Keeper! Andrew Davies.



Andrew and his wife, Rosalyn, together with their 3 boys, are looking forward to a move to the Northwich area very soon. Andrew takes up his position on 11th June and he is "looking forward to meeting everyone and embedding myself into the role of Keeper at Weaver Hall". Andrew has written us a fascinating biography of his "geographical meander of nearly 30 years in the profession", but too long for this space! I didn't want to spoil it by poor editing, so the full version is on the Friends website under 'News'. www.fowhm.org.uk



New Exhibition
'Music in Cheshire'

This picture shows Eileen from our committee holding an ophicleide, forerunner to a modern tuba, with Tom holding two octave flutes.

Do come and see what other musical oddities there might be at our **Friends' Preview Evening on Thursday 12th July.**

Tom was grateful for Friends' response to his appeal - re exhibition. Thank you.

Friends' Events so Far in 2012.

Tony Bostock and Place Names on Wednesday 11th January 2012.



Tony gave us an eloquent talk on 'Place Names In Cheshire.' He explained that the oldest place names are topographical, i.e. to do with natural features, such as rivers and hills. He then described names reflecting historical periods, e.g. 'chester' 'caster' from Roman occupation, with 'by' for Viking influence such as 'Greasby' and 'Irby' on the Wirral and locally Saxon names, such as 'ing' 'ton' 'ley' and 'ham' e.g. Weaverham, Barnton and Plumley. Tony then used maps and the landscape interpretation to show ages of places. He used Malpas as a

model, and then went on to demonstrate to us it worked locally as well. A really interesting talk.

Thursday 2nd February saw the Friends at the preview of the new exhibition 'Castles and Hill Forts.'

This was a special affair for the Friends, as Helen Carey, OBE, DL, Chair of the Landscape Trust, opened the exhibition for us. Helen started by saying and I quote "We should all be very proud of our Cheshire heritage and our landscapes as it makes our county a very unique place to love and cherish." She then gave us a flavour of the special nature of the exhibits and artefacts on display. It made an interesting change from our normal preview evenings. Helen is seen here with Tom Hughes



Wednesday 15th February was billed as Jonathan Pepler talking about



'Cheshire Maps and Map Makers' Tom Hughes stepped into the breach, when our speaker didn't arrive, and he gave us a talk about 'Medieval Pilgrimages'. Tom gave us a fascinating insight as to why people went on pilgrimages and the distances they travelled to do so.

He told us that the church encouraged people to make pilgrimages to special holy places, shrines or relics, often in cathedrals. If you prayed at these shrines your sins may be forgiven and you had more chance of going to heaven. People from all walks of life went on pilgrimages, travelling long distances and using monasteries to stay overnight.



Pilgrims dressed with a broad brimmed hat and carried a satchel and a stout stick or staff, as you can see in this picture of the 14th century carving in Chester Cathedral. Often pilgrims bought a souvenir or a badge. This 14th century Spanish ampulla, a holy water flask, was found in Davenham and is in the museum's collection. You wonder how it reached there!

A BIG 'thank you' to Tom!



On Thursday 8th March, Tom Hughes gave the Friends a talk on the 'Piper's Tale'.

A talk from Tom with pipes is always a delight, as he demonstrates the different types with a tune! He linked the development of different pipes with pictures of carvings from various churches in Cheshire. This picture of a carving of a bagpiper is from St James' Church in Gawsworth. Tom convinced us all that Scottish bagpipes were developed very much later. It was interesting to hear about the different woods Tom's pipes were made from and how he got started. It added a nice personal touch.

Friends' Events so Far in 2012 continued

On Tuesday 17 April, archaeologist Dan Garner talked to the Friends about 'Castles and Hill forts in Cheshire'. Both pictures are Woodhouse.



Dan told us there are six prehistoric hilltop enclosures, or hill forts focussed on the sandstone ridge in Cheshire. They are Helsby, Woodhouse, Eddisbury, Kelsborrow, Beeston and Maiden Castle. Dan explained how he and his teams have excavated each one and he described their findings. They have



used the most up to date technology to survey the sites and take aerial photographs. The artefacts have been collated, classified and dated. The archaeologists are now better able to surmise when each one was built, their purposes and even their surrounding habitats.

Our Visits to The Museum of Policing in Cheshire in Warrington.



The museum is part of the actual working police station in Warrington. Peter Wroe, creator, collector and curator of the museum and his team gave us a splendid guided tour. We started with the entrance area of the police station with its historical cartoons, old uniforms, their knife 'haul' and old photographs as a few points of interest. Going through the 'tardis' door into the



museum itself there were masses of artefacts to see, and in the case of the handcuffs, to try on! The team were happy to answer any of our questions on present day policing. It was a fascinating and very informative visit.

Forthcoming Events.

Tuesday 15th May: Evening Talk 'the Work of the RSPCA at Stapeley Grange, Nantwich', by Lee Stewart. This talk is to go with the previous coffee shop exhibition. This local rescue and rehabilitation centre is one of only four operated by the Charity. Lee Stewart will reveal his experiences there.

Thursday 14 June: Evening Talk by one of our favourite speakers, Colin Edmondson. Colin's talk is entitled 'Northwich and the River Weaver through the ages - a reason to celebrate.' This is a new talk by Colin and will be a splendid prelude to the River Weaver Festival, which is the weekend of 23 and 24 June. A rival no doubt to the Queen's Jubilee and the Olympics.

Weaver Hall Museum News

'phone number 01606 271640 www.weaverhallmuseum.org.uk

Apparently the most frequently asked question to museum staff is "How is Matt getting on?" Our Membership Secretary, Mary Curry, has been to see him and his wife, Anne in Eire. So here is the result.



The most FAQ "How is Matt?"



We can report that he is alive, well and living in a beautiful part of south east Ireland. Jim and I visited the Museum where he is the curator and we can only say "Wow!" What a wonderful setting to work in; the grounds and castle are stunning and the museum just goes on and on. We arrived at about 10.30 and we were there all day. We wandered in the extensive grounds, had lunch in the café, toured the museum and its huge collection of artefacts and then were treated to a "behind the scenes" tour by Matt.

Matt sends a message to you all and hopes that if you are ever in the area you will get in touch and pay a visit to the museum. We can definitely recommend it for a "grand day out!" at the Irish Agricultural Museum www.irishagrimuseum.ie

The rest of Mary's article, along with some more pictures can be seen on our own website www.fowhm.org.uk. 'Under More News.'

News from Your Committee



At the end of March, Rita, our Secretary, and I went to the launch of Heritage Watch in St John's Church in Chester. This is brand new initiative led by Assistant Chief Constable, Ruth Purdie with the support of English Heritage, led by their Chief Executive Dr Simon Thurley. Essentially both parties are very worried about the amount of crime targeting our churches, ancient monuments and listed buildings. Heritage Watch is essentially like a neighbourhood watch for important

buildings. The police want the help of all local communities, to be aware of any unusual behaviour around precious buildings and please, please report to the police.

Sue Hughes, Museum Director gave members of the committee the opportunity to give our input to the work of the artist, Katayoun. She is the artist who has been appointed to be involved with the new landscape opportunity at the Library end of Witton Street. Katayoun has met several members of the local community; given a workshop for local artists; met with local retailers and toured various local sites. She asked the committee to choose an artefact that we thought represented the local area and explain why. Katayoun has designed areas of landscaping in Gloucester Docks and glass panels for a new shopping development in Exeter. I, personally, was impressed with her work. Hopefully she will come up with something interesting, imaginative and very specific to Northwich.

We are still short of one person for the committee. We have about 4 - 6 meetings in the year, as and when we need them - usually planning the next part of the calendar. We meet when is convenient to everyone. At present it is 10am on a Monday morning in the Museum. The meetings are no longer than two hours, the limit of my powers of concentration! We often repair to a hostelry for a lunch, though this is not obligatory. We do often communicate by email. So it would be helpful if you were on line, but not vital. It would be good if we had the full complement of committee to meet our new Keeper, Andrew Davies. Do get in touch with me 01244 300782.