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Why is the Electricity Hall called the Milne Museum?

Bow Making with the Forest Knights

Tandem: restored

Spotlight on the rail hall

AMBERLEY

Museum & Heritage Centr

Limelight is the magazine for members of Amberley Museum. It is published

Issue 7 Winter 2017

twice a year.



Interview with Scooter Event Organiser



Update on Billingshurst Signal Box

2018



from the Editor and Director

Welcome...

...to the seventh issue of *Limelight*, the magazine which is sent to members of the Museum twice a year.

We've had a great 2017 with visitor numbers up on 2016, and a huge variety of events enjoyed by many.

In 2018 some of our membership categories are changing, so please have a look on page 19 where this is explained.

We are always looking for help in many ways - new volunteers, people to distribute posters and leaflets, help at events - if you might be able to spare a few hours, please contact the office. Whether or not you can help,

we really appreciate your membership and the support this gives the Museum.

Please drop me an email to *ruth.tyrrell@amberleymuseum.co.uk*, by 1st April 2018, with any contributions or suggestions for the next edition.

Ruth Tyrrell, *Limelight* Editor, Communications Manager

Welcome to your winter magazine

It is hard to believe that we have already reached this time of leaves on the ground and frosty mornings.

As I write the team is busily adding the final touches to the festive decorations across the



Museum, Amberley is sparkling with the magic of Christmas.

Since joining the team as Director in May we have seen summer come and go, with visitors in shorts and t-shirts enjoying all the fun Amberley Museum has to offer. Families have been delighted by the

wonders of Alice at our story book day... complete with a special appearance by the Mad Hatter (our very own Chair of Trustees!). Enthusiasts flocked in on their vintage bikes for

our first ever scooter event (look out for this again next year), and we welcomed brave ghost hunting visitors to our autumn Halloween evening.

There is never a quiet moment at this Museum. Although we are now closed for the winter, our team of staff and volunteers is beavering away on all the restoration and conservation tasks necessary to preserve the collections and displays.

2018 will be another year of vintage fun, and we have lots of exciting new and 'old favourite' events and activities for everyone. We also plan to host a few special treats exclusively for members, to say thank you for your support and give you an insight into our work. Look out for news of these early next year.

I would like to wish all our valued members a very Merry Christmas and we look forward to welcoming you to Amberley Museum in the new year.

Leanne Clements, Locum Director

Front cover image: visiting scooters at the recent Classic Scooter event, taken by Ruth Tyrrell Back cover image: bus driver volunteer Richard Penfold, taken by Ruth Tyrrell





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Collections

urator's Collections Update



Something for Nothing...

As a charity with no core funding, we rely on the money we get from members and other people visiting the Museum. We are grateful that people support us in this way – thank you. We also rely on volunteers to run the Museum and again, we couldn't do it without their help. Recently, we have also managed to gain sponsorship from several local companies who generously provide materials at reduced cost or for free.

One of these companies, Funnells Furnishings of Storrington, recently donated some vinyl flooring for the Billingshurst Signal Box to help us complete this project. If you are involved with a local company who might be able to help the Museum please let us know. In particular we are looking for Christmas lights and decorations for the Museum for our Christmas events. In return, we will mention your company's generosity at every available opportunity! Please contact the office by email: office@amberleymuseum.co.uk



Billingshurst Signal Box

The signal box is now safely installed at the Museum, on top of the De Witt kilns. We haven't quite finished dressing the interior, but we have opened it a few times with the help of our dedicated signal box volunteers. Watch out for the official opening in the spring. The lever frame dates to 1876, and the box that houses it, a rare Saxby and Farmer type 1B box, is probably earlier. We think it was in use somewhere else first and taken to Billingshurst in 1876 when the lever frame was installed.

We have re-installed the signal levers and the instrument panel and are aiming to dress the box as it might have looked in the 1930s. We are still looking for a small coal stove (1930s or earlier). The upper operating room of the signal box is a very pleasant place to be, the light is amazing and you feel as though you are living in the tree canopy. We look forward to welcoming you all here in the spring. Julia Edge, Curator

News from the Electricity Hall

Now that the full closure of the Museum is with us, the electricty hall volunteers have the opportunity to carry out much needed repairs and maintenance.

We are replacing our old unreliable tungsten light fittings in the back hall. The new fittings are suitable for LED type bulbs. These have the advantages of more concentrated light to highlight our exhibits and they are cheaper to run. Half the work is complete and Julia (Curator)



/isitors enjoying the previous version of the plug display

seemed pleased with what she saw. It's always good to see a staff member having a look at what we do and giving some praise!

socket interactive display is being rewired, with worn out parts being replaced. The "wire" is plaited rope, so there are no PAT (portable appliance testing) or insulation problems there. However, one of our "bright sparks" suggested that we do actually use wire between the sockets - out of public reach and at low voltage - to connect the whole lot together so that a successful completion of correct plugs to sockets results in some form of illumination. A bright idea! We have every hope of a successful end result and look forward to seeing it in action. Thanks go to our new volunteer Larry for his work on this.

Other work at the moment includes general cleaning, maintenance and gardening. We like to keep the area in front of the Milne tidy and weed free, if not exactly carefully tended.



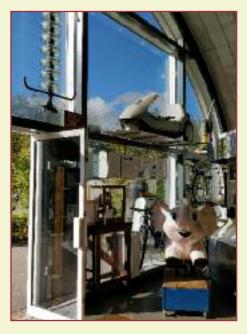
Our ever-popular plug and

Our new long-term storage facility is taking up a lot of our time with stocking and making sure it remains damp and dust



free. Visitors are welcome but please do not ask to enter the new building on very wet days!

Roy Plummer, Electricity Head of Group



Collections



News from the Stationary Engine Group

We've replaced the rotting post in the corner of the Open Engine Shed.

We're awaiting bricks to build a plinth to take the Lister SL1 Start-O-Matic in the Municipal Engine Shed. This will match the existing plinths so that it can be operated for the public.

Julia (Curator) has approved plans and drawings to rebuild the bench in the Municipal Engine House so we can have running engines on it to demonstrate to the public.

The Dando wind pump has been operating very well since its refurbishment earlier in the year. The only problem we have encountered is getting enough wind to make it go round!

Winter will see the grease electro lubers being replaced when there's a day calm enough to go up. The greasers will last a full year.

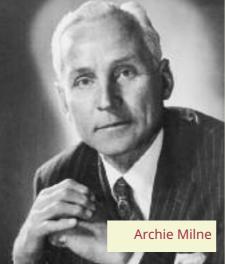
David Ballantyne, Stationary Engines Head of Group

THE MILNE MUSEUM

So, the Electricity Hall... why is it sometimes called the Milne? I spoke to Roy Plummer, Electricity Head of Group, and Dick Saunders, long serving group member, and found out a little about Archie Milne, the person who gave his name to the collection.

In the 1960s the Electricity Council asked its area boards to appoint surveyors to look into whether there were items and archives worthy of preservation, with a view to the establishment of a national electricity museum. The national museum never came to fruition, but Seeboard's Bob Gordon (1911 – 2006), a former senior commercial manager, guickly tracked down a wide range of material and earmarked it for preservation.

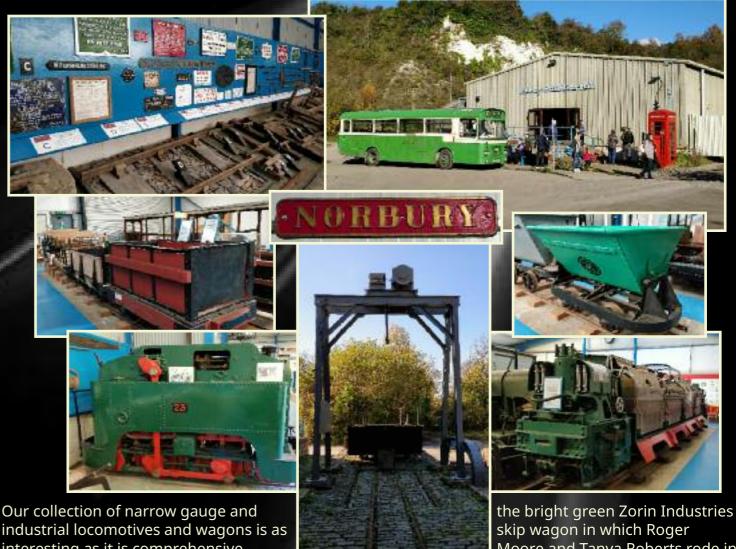
Deputy Chairman, later Chairman, Archibald Milne gave the go-ahead for the items and archives that Bob had collected to





be housed in an old power station at The Slade, Tonbridge, Kent, when it became apparent that the national museum was a long time coming. This established the original Milne Museum which opened in 1975. In 1989 the collection moved to the then "Amberley Chalk Pits Museum", into a purpose-designed building. A lot more detail on the story of the collection can be found on the Milne's own website, www.milnemuseum.org.uk. **Ruth Tyrrell, Editor**

spotlight on the railway hall



interesting as it is comprehensive.

It ranges from displays of track components and railway notices through to examples of rolling stock and locos, many of which, of course, are used on a day to day basis. However, in the Exhibition Hall, there are those which for various reasons stay on static display.

We have one of the electric trains from the Post Office Railway, part of which has recently reopened as an attraction at the new Postal Museum in Mount Pleasant, London,



Moore and Tanya Roberts rode in the film "A View to a Kill" and the

quirky William Spence locomotive, built for and used at the Guinness Brewery in Dublin, which comes complete with the hoist and converter wagon which enabled it to work the brewery's main line sidings. Industries such as brick-making, slate guarrying and military railways are all represented.

Our children's activity area is currently undergoing redevelopment and we hope the new hands-on displays will be ready in early 2018.

Special Events

Special Events in 2018

Sunday 11th March Mums Can Do

Saturday 17th March Morris Dancers

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Sunday 1st April Vintage Car Show

Sunday 15th April Spring Industrial Trains Sunday 22nd April Spring Bus Show Saturday 5th May Wood from the Trees

Sunday 6th May **Classic Motorcycles Day**



Saturday 12th May Minis at the Quarry Sunday 13th May **Commercial Vehicles Day**



Saturday 19th & Sunday 20th May Home Front Weekend

Saturday 26th to Monday 28th May Traditional Crafts Weekend

Sunday 3rd June London to Brighton Classic Car Run

Saturday 9th & Sunday 10th June Mid Summer Steam Show

Sunday 17th June Dads Can Do

Saturday 23rd & Sunday 24th June **Emergency Services** Weekend

Saturday 14th & Sunday 15th July Rail Gala



Sunday 29th July **Classic Car Summer Show**







Our 2018 leaflet is now out! Please pop into the Museum on any open day to collect yours, and if you have friends or family who might like to visit, please give them a leaflet and help spread the word. The best way of marketing the Museum is by word of mouth, so if you enjoy what we do, please tell everyone!

We will be opening in February half term from Monday 12th February to Sunday 18th February, then the main season starts on Wednesday 7th March. Full calendar details are in the leaflet.







Saturday 15th & Sunday 16th September Miniature Steam Weekend





Museum Explorer Days - Wednesdays Activity days during Sussex school holidays. Mr Pepper's Little Learners - Fridays Toddler activity days. Book a block of term time sessions for discounted entry, and drop in during the holidays. Art@Amberley - selected Saturdays Art activity sessions, each looking at a different skill. Please see the calendar (over) for event dates.



Saturday 11th August Historic Cycles Day Sunday 19th August Petrol Locos Day

Bank Holiday Monday 27th August Story Book Day - Grimms Fairy Tales

Friday 31st August to Sunday 2nd September Ale at Amberley



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Sunday 23rd September Bus Show and Riders Day

Saturday 29th September **Classic Scooter Day**

Sunday 7th October **Autumn Historic Transport Gathering**



Saturday 13th October Communications Day Sunday 14th October Classic Land Rover Day



Sunday 21st October Autumn Industrial Trains

Friday 26th & Saturday 27th October Halloween Evening (Fri) and Daytime Event (Sat)

1st, 2nd, 8th, 9th, 15th & 16th December Christmas at Amberley Museum

Recent Events

Recent Events

Great events this year at the Museum



Historic **Cycle Day**



Another successful Historic Cycle Day took place in September. Bicycles from the mid-1800s to the present day were exhibited. The variety of entries was remarkably diverse, including a quadricycle, an 1880 Cheylesmore Convertible Tricycle, several trades bicycles, a tandem which could be ridden and steered from the back and a plastic Itera bicycle built by Volvo, an example of which can be seen in the Paviors' building.

The exhibitors paraded round the triangle, stopping at the bus stop to give a history of their cycles over the loudspeaker for the spectators. Everyone was encouraged to enter a competition to give the restored Sun tandem a name. Staff members Sharon and Nikki chose their favourite name from the list and a prize was awarded to the winner: the tandem is now named 'Two's Company'. All the riders, most of whom were in period dress, followed me in a ride round the site making a truly striking spectacle.

We were lucky with the weather until later in the afternoon when I stood at the gate, despite the increasing rain, to thank everyone for supporting the event. I was rewarded by every exhibitor making a point of thanking me for a well organised and enjoyable day.

As well as thanks to Helen, Nikki and Sharon I should like to mention the invaluable assistance given by George Parkinson and the team in the office which ensured the smooth-running of the day. We're now looking forward to the next one, on Saturday 11th August.

Richard Ratcliffe, Organiser and Head of Cycle Group

The lovingly restored 1936 tandem had many happy memories; they was on display at the Historic Cycle often drew a lot of attention Day. It was donated to the Museum by Clive and Barbara Hughes of Felpham, Bognor Regis. In 1964 they upgraded their mode lot of hard work the tandem was They owned the tandem from 1952, and until 1964, they enjoyed scooter, but they kept the tandem. summer of 2016 the couple visited travelling around Sussex, Kent and Although offered over £300 by a

Hampshire, staying at YHA hostels on their journeys. Over many years of travelling on the tandem, they do not remember ever having an accident or a puncture. Amoung their favourite places to stay was Frog Firle YHA, near Alfriston, East Sussex from where they

turning up on the tandem which

soon became a talking point.

of transport to a Lambretta

man from Holland, they could not bring themselves to part with it. In 2016 Mr and Mrs Hughes decided to donate it to the Museum. With a lovingly restored, and in the the Museum to see the tandem.





What made you run a scooter event at **Amberley?** I've been into

Mod music, loved the Who, the film Quadrophenia and scooters, for years. I think the scooter fraternity is a good bunch and thought it was time that Amberley Museum welcomed them here.

What was it like planning the event? It was my first time running an event and it was full on. It wasn't my first priority as my main job is in site services, but George Parkinson and Richard Carter in the office went above and beyond to help.

Wolseley Car Club Rally

The Rally was held at the Amberley Museum & Heritage Centre, situated in a disused chalk quarry nestling in the beautiful South Downs, so I think everyone enjoyed their journeys there and back. The weather, which is such an important factor of our outdoor rallies could not have been better, being sunny and warm all day.

The museum collection is quite amazing and has expanded since our last visit some years ago. There is a free, circulating classic bus service around the extensive site every 30 minutes and a narrow-gauge railway which is also free – and today it was pulled by a steam engine. They now have an excellent, modern cafeteria too, offering a surprisingly wide range of snacks and food at very reasonable prices.

If you did not join us today you should definitely add it to your future outing list - you will not be disappointed; look on their website for more information.

We had 12 Wolseleys on display, joined by members' friends with 3 other lovely cars; a Sunbeam 90 Series 3, a TR7 and a Wolseley



Hornet Special. A very impressive line-up, creating a great attraction for the other visitors to the museum. Many photos were taken and intelligent questions asked. Alan Simmonds, Hon. Sec. SE Region, Wolseley Register



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SCOOTERING went? It went very well, but I envisaged more visitors and more scooters, all the way down the Museum. I'd hope at the next one we'll have more budget to make it bigger and better.

> And tell me about the special guest... Gary Shail was one of the principals in the film Quadrophenia, he played Spider, and we've been friends on Facebook for years. He's approachable and nice, and he did a really good job talking to the public. He even gave me a lovely memento of the film!

What can we expect next year? A much bigger event: live music, trade stands, themed food, more scooters from the 1960s - and we're hoping for Gary Shail to join us again. It's on Saturday 29th September - don't miss it!

Ruth Tyrrell was talking to Robin Cattani, Classic Scooter Event Organiser and Site Services Operative







Other recent events included a very busy Classic Car Summer Show, our ever-popular bus show in September and a ghost train ride for Halloween.

Feature - Bow Making

Feature - Bow Making

Dow Making with Dow Forest Knights

One of the most common questions I get asked whilst making bows within the Greenwood village is "Are your bows made from yew?"

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It's a common misconception that historic bows were made primarily from yew. One reason for this belief is the long bows found with the Mary Rose. The Mary Rose was the pride of the English Navy, Henry VIII's flagship, so it is reasonable to surmise that only the best equipment available in 1545



Wayne Jones, founder of Forest Knights, explains how the bow making process works

would be supplied to the sailors and archers. The yew would have been imported mainly from Modern bows are generally Spain and given to the Welsh bowyers to fashion into long bows.

1545 is fairly recent in bow making terms. The majority of the bows we craft at Amberley are based on far more

ancient bows. In the UK we have very few ancient Bows to study.

Wooden artefacts rarely survive unless they are found in anaerobic conditions such as peat bogs. The Ashcott Heath Bow and the Mere Heath Bows were discovered in the Somerset Levels. The other significant find of Mesolithic bows was discovered in Denmark in 1944. The Holmegaard Bow is displayed in the **Royal Copenhagen** Museum and dates back to approximately 7000BC. These 3 Mesolithic bows

are shaped from a single piece of elm. This is called a self-bow. composite bows of different woods laminated together. The bows often seen at the Olympics are manufactured with carbon fibre limbs and aluminium risers

or handles. Wooden All cultures, with the artefacts exception of the rarely survive indigenous people of unless they Australia, used bows are found in for hunting and warfare. The style anaerobic and materials used conditions

are often based on the availability of resources and game in those regions. The Mongols Horse Bow is a composite short limbed bow made with a combination of wood and horn. The bows used by the San Bushmen of the Kalahari are long, very light draw weight bows with a limited range. Good wood is hard to come by in the steppes and within the desert so necessity dictated a style of hunting and manufacture to suit the location. Northern European temperate forest has an abundance of wood especially during the

Mesolithic period so ancient man was spoilt for choice for species to use in bow making, yet the relatively few bows found are not made of yew.

Back to the majority of the bows carved at Amberley by the Forest Knights group: the inspiration for our bows is the Holmegaard Bows. They are self bows with a cut out handle giving an almost centre shot. The limbs are wide, tapering to almost a point at the tips. Each bow is made using traditional skills using only hand tools. Each limb has a flat cross section with the back of the limb slightly curved. We take great care sourcing locally grown trees to minimise our impact on the environment and to ensure that the trees are suitable for bow making. The average 10-12 inch diameter 8 foot long tree trunk yields between 3 and 4 bow staves depending on how well the wood splits when cleaved. Ideally the wood

should have few knots and be as

straight grained as possible. The group is entirely self-funded so we can't always be too choosy about the wood we use for bow making. Making a bow from lower premium wood adds to the excitement. The bow is in the

outside of the tree with the back of the bow being the first growth ring under the bark.

The bark is carefully removed using a drawknife and then the rough outline of the Holmegaard is marked out with charcoal or a pencil. Using an axe the waste wood is chopped

away to reveal the outline of the bow. The handle is not removed on the first day as the tension in the wood may cause a bow limb to move relative to the handle. The length of the bow is determined by the archer, we aim to make the bows around 3-6 inches taller than the user. I would not be considered short in the 15th century, and the bows during the 100 years war were 7ft long.

Chopping away the excessive wood using an axe is physically demanding and requires quite a lot of calorie expenditure so a bow is a major investment for a Mesolithic hunter. In the greenwood village we use a range of axes to suit the needs of the bowyers from hatchets to broad axes. This allows the visitors to see a range of different historic tools being used and enables us to efficiently carve the bows. I have made a bow using only stone tools from first principles. Once the profile of the bow is carved out with an Each bow is axe we leave the realm of simple made using carpentry and enter traditional the exciting and skills using mysterious craft of only hand the bowyer. The only tools thing that matters to the bowyer is how the bow bends. It needs to be a straight stick when unstrung and a beautiful sensuous curve when at full draw. Any flat spots or areas of weakness can result in a spectacular failure of the bow and an injured archer. To achieve this we carve the limbs from the tip towards the handle using ever finer tools: axe,



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drawknife, spoke shave and rasps.

Once the bow is bending sufficiently on the ground, the bow is placed in the odd notched stick in front of our shelter. The tiller stick is used to look at the bend of the bow. Each limb must bend at the tips equally, yet the bow is not made from a uniform material. Wood being an organic material has weaknesses and stresses that can be hard to see, only becoming apparent as the bow begins to take shape and the limbs start to bend.

Care has to be taken to return to the tiller often to check the bend of each limb. Often once one area is worked another issue is revealed. The bow will go onto the tiller about a hundred times during its manufacture to attempt to craft a bow that doesn't break under tension. After hours of work some bows break and it is from the failures that we learn the most.

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Feature - Bow Making

Future Events



Our objective as bowyers is to create a bow that the archer can pull to full draw. Full draw is when the bow string is pulled back to the corner of the mouth before the arrow is loosed. The draw weight of the bow is determined by the piece of wood the bow is made from and the strength of the archer. There is little point making a bow that the owner cannot use safely. Elm makes a beautiful bow but can be challenging to work. Not only has the wood got the usual longitudinal fibres, it also has interconnecting cross fibres. If you're not careful, the cutting tool can tear into the grain and suddenly your 45lb draw weight bow becomes a child's toy. Replicas of the Holmegaard Bow suggest it had a respectable draw weight around 45-50lb. Compare that to the yew long bows from the Mary Rose: those bows had a draw of 120-150lb. Not something I would like to use regularly.

The bows are strung traditionally with linen or hemp bow strings handmade by twisting the fibres

together and forming the loop. This is called a Flemish twist. Bow strings in the UK were not normally made out of animal fibres because of the damp climate. When damp the strings become too elastic so hunting could only be done on very dry days. Sinew bow strings are common in the more predictable climate of the western USA.

Getting the bow string correctly tensioned at the correct length to achieve what is known as brace height can be an exercise in frustration. There is

no formula to determine where to tie the bowyers knot to achieve the correct brace height. Getting this right prevents the bow string from hitting the hand holding the bow every time you loose an arrow.

Once the bow has been successfully taken to full draw without breaking it is time to celebrate and to consider making the bow a thing of beauty. Traditionally this would

be done by a process called boning. A piece of bone or antler would be used to vigorously rub the surface of the bow to heat the fibres and polish the surface. Modern glass paper was unavailable to the past bowyers. Burnishing the surface of the bow is superior to sanding but I cannot convince our quests not to use sandpaper. Lastly to

complete the bows Elm makes a beautiful bow but can be challenging to work

and make them waterproof we give them several coats of beeswax.

Forest Knights in the Greenwood Village do not exclusively make

bows based on European first historic designs: we also make Bhutanese style bows and bows in the style of those made by native Americans such as the Penobscot.

Forest Knights are now working with Southampton University to create an Academic Study to quantify the benefits of working with wood in the outdoors.

Wayne Jones, Head of Forest **Knights Group** www.forestknights.co.uk





to obtain an exhibitors form.

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