

The Summer Exhibition opened with *Christine de Vere Hunt* singing, solo and along with Frank Sinatra, to hits of the 1940's. We were pleased to welcome so many from the community who continue to support the Museum through donations, encouragement and the loaning of objects for display. We thank them all and are grateful to Chris for setting the scene.

Carrying on last season's story of Porlock Weir, *Seas of Change*. Encompasses the two World Wars and the periods of peace between and after them. We end in 1950 when the last of commercial shipping all but vanished from the harbour and small sailing and pleasure boats took its place.

Through both exhibitions we have charted the enormous changes, socially, economically and technologically, to the community and how it has reflected in the daily lives of inhabitants.

When electricity and telephone lines arrived in the 1920's, a relatively isolated village was suddenly connected to a world well beyond its familiar territory.

A section of this season's exhibition deals with the war years and the planes that came down, Allied and German, on the shore and in the woods above the Weir. Lives were lost, but some were saved by the heroic efforts of those first on the scene. No one survived the sinking of the supply ship *Inverdargle* during WW2, which was loaded with aviation fuel for the war effort. She was sailing from the West Indies and sunk by an enemy U-Boat in Porlock Bay. An oil painting by Porlock artist *Alexander Carruthers-Gould*, above the Solar door, vividly depicts the scene.

Elsewhere in the Museum two recently donated oil paintings by Carruthers-Gould are on display in the Great Hall. In the Upper Room there is a stunning collection of pottery by *Waistel Cooper* done during his years at Culbone. The stage coach wheel has been relocated to the entrance and joins a collection of photos of Porlock Hill. Items have been added to the display cabinets and the story of the Foresters (a very early benevolent society), is told and their ceremonial tunic, sash and horn are on display. The model of Ada, Countess of Lovelace and 'prophet of the computer age' along with information regarding her life and her home at Ashley Combe have been updated and many more of our more recent acquisitions are on view.

The coach horn that sounded the arrival of the stage coach on the Minehead, Porlock and Lynton route has come home to Porlock. It has been kindly donated to the Museum by Mr & Mrs Clarke of The Meadows. Through the provenance of the coach horn, we've learned that the coach and its route were also referred to as *The Lorna Doone Stage Coach*.

The Museum's annual Plant Sale & Coffee Morning will take place on Saturday May 27th, from 1030 to 1230. There is always a good selection of locally grown plants and delicious home baked cakes and biscuits. A good chance to have coffee with friends and check out the plant selection. As a village of gardeners there are often treasures to be found.

On Friday July 28th, at the Village Hall, John Thorne and his team of helpers will be setting the questions for our annual Quiz Night. Tickets, £5, include light refreshments during the interval, and are available at the Museum, and the Visitor Centre. It is always

a good evening and we will hope to see you there. The bar will open at 7.00pm and the **Quiz will start promptly at 7.30.** Who will triumph this year?

The Museum would like to thank Frances Timbrell for her years of service as our Recording Secretary. We are sorry that she and Martin are leaving the village and wish them well in their new location.

In researching this seasons's exhibition, which features a model of a young evacuee, I made a note of the government's list of items that each child should take with them when they left the cities for the relative safety of the countryside. They journeyed into the unknown with only their gas-mask, a change of underclothing, and extra pair of socks, night clothes and a warm coat (if possible), and little else. For some inner-city families even assembling these few items were a considerable hardship.

Upon arrival and for many observing country life for the first time there were surprises in store and many years later some still spoke of their horror upon seeing where milk actually came from. There is no doubt that the evacuee program saved the lives of countless children.

This is your museum, your stories and your history and I will hope to see you at the Museum.

The Curator.