

Doverly Manor Museum Autumn Newsletter 2019

I will begin by thanking Ros Lawton, Fiona Plumstead and all who helped to make the Museum's fund raising July Barn Dance such an enjoyable evening. A lot of planning and effort went into it and it was much appreciated. One of the raffle prizes was a foot massager, which may have been needed after an evening on the dance floor.

August's talk, by Rosemary Gray on the history of the Cape House, in the Museum Solar was very well attended and it was lovely to have Rosemary Cape with us to share her memories of living and working there. Thank you to both Rosemarys and to Tim Gray who was instrumental in the research and in amassing early images of the house and the trades that flourished there. To research and record the history of the older dwellings in the village is an ongoing Museum project.

Another thank you to those of you who supported our annual May Coffee Morning, the cakes were fabulous and it was fun to see so many of you at the Museum. It is always a sociable morning, enjoyed by visitors and locals alike.

I am, as Curator, grateful to all of you who donate items to the Museum. A few of our recent acquisitions include a stunning oil painting of Culbone Church, by Lionel Knight; a WWI service medal that belonged to Private Stanley Moore; a collection of stoneware and a large file on the life and career of Capt. Tony Collings of the Porlock Vale Riding School. Some of you may have your own memories of the Riding School and of Capt. Collings. As we plan a small exhibition on his life and times in 2020, I would appreciate any information, memories or images you may have.

The Museum had a moment of hope, which proved false, when we read that the Samworth Brother's Charity Challenge had awarded Doverly Museum £7,000! Before we could break out the champagne we were told it was not the Museum that would benefit, but the committee that looks after the structure of the building on behalf of the Parish Council, which was very disappointing. As we receive no funding and rely only upon our fundraising efforts and visitors' donations, it is very much a case of back to the drawing board to plan the future fund raising events that help to keep us afloat and to ensure that records of Porlock's history remain in the village. So, if you hear that the Museum has had a windfall, I am afraid that very sadly, it is not true.

Porlock Museum is one of a number of 'learning stations' for a Children's University project. Our young visitors are given a quiz sheet to complete and once completed they are given a stamp in their Learning Passport. Museums and places of special interest throughout our area are taking part and the children enjoy getting as many stamps as possible in their passports.

In 2020 we will be looking at village life during the Second World War, while remembering those who served, as we approach the 75th anniversary of the end of the conflict. Jeff Cox, assisted by Ron Biddle, will be hoping to record the names, stories and fate of those who served and gave their lives. There is more information about his latest project for the Museum below. The Museum is grateful to Jeff and Ron for undertaking this project.

Dates for your diary are October 18th and 19th when Christine de Vere Hunt and the Museum Players present 'A Touch of the Doones' in the Museum Solar. Tickets are £5 and available at the Visitor Centre. Early booking is advisable as these are popular events. There will be wine & canapés before the performance and coffee & chocolates with the cast afterwards.

The recent gales brought down one of the Museum's heavily laden apple trees, but our stalwart gardening team assure me that while it may be down, it is not out and they have propped it up and are hopeful it will survive.

The Museum Garden and its far reaching views and many benches, on which to rest and admire the garden and view, is frequently mentioned in our visitors' book. Looking through the book it is amazing how many different countries are recorded; definitely a mini United Nations. It is rewarding to think of people from around the world taking with them positive memories of the village and its museum.

Have a wonderful autumn and I will hope to see you at the Museum.

Lita Strampp, Curator

Second World War Project

No sooner has the Dover Manor Museum completed one wartime project then it embarks on another. November 2018 marked the centenary of the end of the First World War, and the culmination of the Museum's extensive tribute to those men from the three parishes of Porlock, Luccombe or Selworthy who died in the Great War.

Next year, on Friday May 8th 2020, the nation will be commemorating another significant occasion, the 75th anniversary of VE Day, the end of the Second World War in Europe. The early May Day Bank Holiday has been moved to May 8th to enable the nation to join in the commemorative events.

Dover Manor Museum will again be making its contribution, with exhibitions and events telling of the role of the men and women from our three parishes in the war. Fifteen men from Porlock died in the Second World War, eight from Selworthy and four from Luccombe*. The Museum has already started a fresh project, researching the full stories of each of these men, their family background, their wartime service and where they are now commemorated.

To do this, the Museum seeks the help of anyone with information, materials or photos of the men from our three parishes who died. Research into the Second World War is hampered, as there are legal restrictions placed on public access to personal archives less than 100 years old.

So the Museum needs your help: we are keen to hear from anyone with information on any of these men to help us present the fullest possible tribute. We also want to hear about the wartime exploits of those who survived, the men who went to war and the women who performed vital tasks in support at home.

There are also fascinating stories to be told of the impact of the Second World War here in Porlock and the Vale, such as

- the activities of American and Allied troops billeted in the district for intensive training,
- the role of the Observer Corps and of the Home Guard, patrolling the moors and beaches,
- housing the evacuees seeking safety from England's urban centres,
- the planes that crashed here, on the marshes and hillsides.

The Museum is also keen to hear from anyone who has information, material or photographs relating to any of these local wartime activities, or any other material related to the Second World War.

Please leave your details at the Museum, (open until September 30th from 10.00 -17.00 weekdays, 10.00.-16.30 on Saturdays)

or contact

Jeff Cox on 01643 863083, email jeff.cox@talk21.com

*The local men who died in the Second World War were:

Porlock: ARKWRIGHT, JOHN, D.S.C , R.N. Lieutenant-Commander, BRYANT, GORDON H, Corporal 15/19 Hussars; COMER, JOHN, Gunner, R.A.; DAVIS, JOHN, Private, Welch Regiment; GLANVILLE, W.A. IVOR, Sergeant, R.A.F.; GOULD, GEORGE, Stoker, R.N.; HOLLINGDRAKE, HENRY, Flight Lieutenant R.A.F.; PECK, GILBERT W, Major, 3rd Hussars; McGOWAN, WILLIAM G, Private, Somerset Light Infantry (also on Selworthy WM); POLLARD, L ROY, Lance-Corporal, Glos Regiment; PRISCOTT, LIONEL J, Trooper, Recce Regiment; RICKETTS, WILLIAM C, Guardsman, Welsh Guards; ROBERTS, A PENN B, Captain, Royal Scots Fusiliers; WILLIAMS, JAMES E, Sergeant, R.A.F

Luccombe: BARRON, Albert; HARDING, Clarence; HOWARD, Richard; HOWARD, William.

Selworthy: DAVIS, Philip Thomas; DAVIS, Walter James Bailey; DONATI, Marcus David; FARMER, James; HILL, Wilfrid Lawrence Creech; McGOWAN, William (also on Porlock WM); PILCHER, John Allan; ROBINS, William John