

April/May 2015

Athelstan Post

Volunteer Newsletter of the Athelstan
Museum

Dear Volunteers,

Welcome to the latest newsletter. We have several events coming up in the Museum specifically the talk by journalist, author and Chairman of the National Trust, Sir Simon Jenkins. Tickets are still available and all the proceeds will go to the Museum so please come along a support what I'm sure will be a very interesting evening. For more details see this newsletter.

Moravian Church

You may have heard that unfortunately the Museum was not successful with its application to the Heritage Lottery Fund to purchase the Moravian Church. The aim is still to purchase, restore, conserve and maintain this Grade II derelict building, however the Committee are now looking for alternative sources of funding. The response from the public has been extremely generous and it is clear that many in Malmesbury think it will be a great asset to the town and the Museum.

A Talk by Simon Jenkins

The title of the talk is 'Can Special Landscapes and Places Survive the Twenty First Century', a topic, I'm sure you'll agree is very pertinent to Malmesbury and the surrounding area. It's to be held in the Town Hall on May 2nd at 7pm. Tickets are £14 and will include a glass of champagne on arrival. Sir Simon, amongst other things, is a newspaper journalist for the *Guardian*, the *London Evening Standard* and the *Sunday Times*, once editor of the *Times*, broadcaster, author and since 2008 chairman of the National Trust. Given Sir Simon's various and wide-ranging interests this promises to be a very exciting evening. All money raised will go to the Museum so please support this event.

Coin Hoard

The coin hoard is now safely ensconced in a safe awaiting any conservation work that might be necessary and also accession into the Museum's collection. Money will be needed, not only to pay for conservation, but also to purchase a new case. We will be looking into applying for grants from various organisations but also any donations from the public would be gratefully received. Please (politely) encourage the public to donate! The aim is to get the hoard on public display as soon as possible, however it will take a bit of time especially with the accession into the Museum's collection as each coin is treated as an individual item. If anyone is interested in helping the collection team with this time consuming task then please let me know. Each coin needs to be photographed, registered on the computer and in the accession register.

Malmesbury Historical Society

This new society may appeal to anyone interested in recording, researching or publishing information about the history of Malmesbury and the surrounding area. It's inaugural talk and

meeting was held this week however it's not too late if you would like to join. Further details can be obtained in the Museum.

St Aldhelm's Fair

To be held on Monday, 25th May on the High Street. We will be manning a stand at this event to promote the Museum. If anyone would like to help then please let me know.

An Evening of Music and Prose

A date for your diary. The Museum is to hold an evening of music and prose on Saturday, 20th June. Please put this date in your diary. More details to follow soon.

Museum Shop

If you've been in Museum recently you will have noticed the shop has had a bit of a facelift, some new stock has been added and there is more to follow. So far the changes made have made a significant, positive difference to the shop takings. All items now have a price on the back and we still require any sales to be marked on the sheet. Copies of the Civil War map are held in the bottom right hand drawer of desk.

We also have a very smart new donation box at the front of the Museum, the old wooden box is at the back of the Museum and can still be used to take donations!

Till

If you are having trouble locking the till at the end of the day try turning it the other way or putting the key in the other way round - it does work!

Family History

We get quite a few requests for help or information from visitors investigating their family tree. We hold very little information on families and don't really have the facilities to help unless you know the family personally. We can, however point people in the direction of the Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre in Chippenham. They hold the census returns, Church of England parish registers, wills, personal name indexes and much more in their archives. The Centre is very user friendly and has some fantastic information on Wiltshire history. Leaflets about the Centre are available in the Museum.

World War I Display

Commemorating the 100th anniversary of the First World War will be a theme in the Museum in the next 4 years in various different guises and a collection of World War I artefacts are now on display in the cabinet upstairs. The Museum hopes to focus its commemoration on how the War affected the local community, not just those that served on the Front, but also the families left behind. The display includes items from the collection and on loan from local families. In addition we have been lent one of the ceramic poppies that was on display at the Tower of London. If you have the opportunity to take a look then please do. There will be more information on projects planned

around the theme of World War I in the next Newsletter, however if you have any ideas then please do let Maria Marsh or myself know.

Some of the Civil War items have been moved to a cabinet downstairs.

Housekeeping

A couple of housekeeping items:

- If you action an item in the volunteer book can you please tick and initial so we know its been done.
- Please wash all coffee and teacups in warm, soapy water - it's the only way to get them clean. Thank you.

FOAM Membership

If any of our volunteers are not members of FOAM and would like to join please contact Sharon Nolan at sharon@euclidvillas.co.uk

Contact Details

As part of the Museum's accreditation with Arts Council England, the Museum is required to have at hand emergency contact details for its volunteers. I've had a few but still missing most! If you could please email me these details or write them down and leave them in the Museum, I would be very grateful. The details we require include: emergency contact name, relationship to you, their telephone or other emergency contact details. This will enable us to keep a list in the Museum. Thank you for your assistance in this matter.

Locking Up

Please can I remind volunteers to lock the till at the end of the day. The key lives in the drawer and has a yellow tab. The monitor and lights need to be turned off and the outer doors need to be locked. I know its very tricky unlocking and locking these doors as you almost have to kneel on the pavement but they have to be locked. In addition it has been pointed out to me that the alarm does not always make a noise when opening up. If you have any queries about opening or closing please don't hesitate to contact me.

If you have anything of interest you would like to share with our volunteers and want it to be included in the next newsletter, please send it to me. Thank you.

With very best wishes,

Bridget

