

# MUSEUM NEWS

Preserve | engage | inspire

## New role

We'll be appointing a new Museum Assistant to help us as we move into what will be a very busy phase of the Museum's history. They will be central to the team, coordinating rotas, supporting volunteers in the shop and organising training. If you know anyone that fits the bill, please direct them to the details on the website.

## New volunteers

We are organising a 'behind the scenes' day in April to encourage people to find out more about what we do here and how they can get involved. Please come and meet our next volunteers.

## New displays

The Worshipful Company of Framework Knitters have offered to support a new display in the Chapel to explore the future stars of knitwear and textile fashion.



## Curator's notes

A huge thank you to everyone I have met so far and who has helped me settle in and feel so welcome. I am really pleased to be joining you all at this most exciting time for the Museum. Thank you also for the great efforts everyone put into our Christmas event. It was fantastic to see the site so full of people enjoying themselves.

I come to you having been a freelance curator for the past 12 years. This has allowed me to work with a huge range of exciting people and places. I come from a family of artists and craftspeople and always try to bring out the creative opportunities which a site offers.



**LOTTERY FUNDED**

## Dates for your diary

As we move into January and the Museum is closed to visitors, we can begin to get to grips with some jobs around the site. If you fancy joining a work party to help, please have a look at these dates.

**Jan 17th** *Big Sort Out* day. Come and help tidy and organise those forgotten corners of the site so we are fit and ready for the year ahead. Contact Jim or Helen

**Jan 29th** *A Stitch in Time* talk by Debbie Bryan. Discover how ingenuity in the past has inspired a new burst of creativity. £5 F

**Jan 31st** *Cheer Up the Chapel* day. Roll up your sleeves and make our hard working Chapel look amazing for 2019. Contact Jim or Helen

**1st Feb** we reopen to the public.

**20th Feb** Collections afternoon. Ever wanted to know more about what the Museum has in the stores? Come along for an informal tour and explore for yourself. Numbers limited, but we plan to run this later in the year. Contact Jim or Helen.

While preparing for my interview I had an experience that many visitors have; I discovered a series of family connections to framework knitting. I know a good deal of work has be done to find ways in which we might help people discover their textile heritage. I'd really like to begin in earnest to work with the stories people bring us and create an exhibit that collects and shares these.

The Heritage Lottery funded project 'A Right Good Yarn' is now fully underway and we all look forward to a year of exciting experimentation as we refine our ideas and complete our second round bid. Expect to see lots of talented people helping us develop and be ready to share your ideas for where the Museum goes in the future.

For example, Helen and I had an inspiring conversation with Jane and Philipa from artist collective *Common Threads* about a residency which would bring new audiences into the Museum and creative strands throughout the site. I'll keep you all up to date with how this develops and again, let me know if you are interested in getting involved.

**Jim Grevatte**

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The Friends of Ruddington Framework Knitters' Museum present

'A Stitch in Time' by DEBBIE BRYAN

on Tuesday 29 January at 2pm, in the Old Chapel, Chapel Street,

Ruddington, NG11 6HE

Debbie Bryan, owner of the renowned Craft Shop and Cafe in the Nottingham Lace Market, will bring samples of vintage lace and explain how ingenuity in the past has inspired a new burst of creativity in the present!

Tickets £5, including refreshments, available from 0115 9845375 or 0115 9215253

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## Steam Punk event

Over 130 people attended the event, which was organised in conjunction with various Steampunk associations from the Midlands and further afield. There was representation from Nottingham, Grantham, Lincoln, Newark, Sheffield, Chesterfield and Yorkshire White Rose, but some people had come from even further afield, including Leeds, Suffolk and Leicester.

The costumes were amazing with an array of hats – all uniquely decorated. The museum volunteers really rose to the occasion by dressing in Victorian costume and some had decorated their clothes and hats with cogs, spectacles, scissors and nails.



Activities included a very popular Steampunk sport of tea duelling and we had a range of vintage stalls as well as gin and ale, provided by our neighbours at the Frame Breakers Pub.

The museum itself is a very appropriate venue for Steampunk, adding the authentic Victorian social history of the industrial revolution. The visitors seemed to really appreciate the insight into the life and work of framework knitters and to see demonstrations of the frames and the circular knitting machines. Of course, Queen Victoria's stockings were much admired!

Jan Perrett

## John Rogers

We are sad to report the recent deaths of two Ruddington men who both played an important part in the life of our village and its museums.

Raymond John Starbuck Rogers passed away on 4 November at the amazing age of 103. Many of us will remember Museum News featuring him and Margaret Bingley – also a volunteer, celebrating their 100th birthdays proudly holding their telegrams from the Queen.

Having a real flair for anything mechanical John's skills were put to the test maintaining tanks and other army vehicles in Egypt during the war. His working career was spent with Singer selling and repairing industrial sewing machines. What John didn't know about needles wasn't worth knowing!

Luckily for our Museum John enthusiastically shared his expertise over many years, helping Peter Spick, Alan Cooke, Milla and others to look after our stocking frames. His hand-made spinning wheel was donated to us and it is in perfect working condition. Aged 80 he decided to make his own violin, and learned to play it! At his packed funeral service in Ruddington Methodist Church, the seven foot high wooden cross made by John stands proudly, the violin was on display.

**His family referred to him as "the eighth wonder of the world"!**

## Roy Howard

Roy Howard was almost 97 when he died on 25 November. He and his wife Sheila (who we lost last year) moved to Musters Road in 1962 and were soon able to indulge their passion for history by getting involved in the Flawforth dig and the development of the Village and Framework Knitters' Museums as well as the Local History Society.

Roy learned how to use the stocking frames and acquired his own Griswold machine. Through his friendship with Henry Hurt of GH Hurt shawl factory in Chilwell some exquisite shawls found their way to Grenay for a twinning event where Roy was able to converse in fluent French (he also spoke German and Welsh). The Great Central Railway was also very dear to Roy and was very keen to see the joining of the two stretches of the line. His last outing, in September, was a train ride from the Heritage Railway.

Roy and Sheila were staunch supporters of the Friends of RFKM and a few years ago were made honorary members.

Over the years we have lost so many of the early volunteers who helped establish our museums and History Society – all of which are still thriving today. Let us not forget how much we owe them.

**Kathy Powis**

## FRIENDS' CORNER

The Friends welcome Jim to our dedicated team of staff and volunteers and look forward to working with him. I think it will be a fun ride!

During our 25 years the Friends have contributed £28,500 to the Museum! Donations to the Redevelopment Fund amount to £10,750 including a cheque for £3,000 handed over to Santa Claus (aka Dennis) at the volunteers' Christmas fuddle. Our contributions may help to secure other funding.

Through the Friends the Museum has recently acquired the Parker Family Bible from descendants of John Parker. The Bible box owned by John and Hannah has been in the cottage parlour for many years so the Friends and trustees are all delighted that the Bible itself has "come home" to Ruddington. The Friends have committed to help cover the costs of conservation and display of this wonderful and so relevant addition to the collection.

Our two outings this year were the coach trip to Coventry on a hot summer's day (NB the annual coach trip is open to all Museum folk not just Friends members) and a tour of the Royal Crown Derby Factory.

Our October lecture delivered by Val Wood from Nottingham Women's Forum was about women's suffrage with an emphasis on local suffragettes and suffragists involved in the cause. In November the *Cellotapes* entertained a packed chapel with a crowd-pleasing mixture of folk, country and blue-grass music, plus an unexpected clog dance. These events swell our bank balance enabling us to support the Museum, so thank you to everyone for buying tickets and/or taking up membership (very good value!).

Season's Greetings to all from the Friends Committee, we have an exciting year ahead!

**Kathy Powis, Chairman**