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February 2024



O! I said I wanted a chow for Valentine's



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Chair's Chat

Happy New Year to you all. I hope you are keeping well and warm!

I know we are only just into 2024, but we are already thinking about how we can all celebrate the 50 years of the Friends of Gressenhall in 2025. A 100 year celebration is a 'Centenary', does anyone know whether there is a name for a 50 year celebration?

Excitedly the Connie Flynn 'Making the Rounds: Stories of workhouse nurses told in textiles' exhibition which you, the Friends, have helped to fund is nearing completion ready for the 2024 season. Thanks goes to all those who have helped to make this the exhibition become real.

So do you know any children aged up to 100, who think they can draw? We need a front cover design for the half centenary edition in 2025. We will be glad to see your efforts via email at gressenhall18@gmail.com or you can drop them into the museum shop where they will be treasured.

Helen Bainbridge
Chair of the Friends of Gressenhall

Ed: you might recall , I doubt it as we have all been asleep since then, in this spot before Christmas. Well thanks to you my reader, and the generosity of others as a result: Sue and Bill Rhodes friends bookshop managers.

“2023 was a very good year for the bookshop.

The takings of £2500 were the best since 2017, considering the majority of books are priced at 50p, that’s a lot of books sold! Part of this success could be due to the improvements we made the layout of the shop, we were lucky enough to be given extra wall shelving by the museum which allows us to display several hundred more books. We were then able to dispose of the freestanding shelves in the middle of the shop as well as cupboards and the desk. This improves the look and feel of the bookshop, and importantly gave much better access for wheelchairs and pushchairs.

However, without donations of good books for us to sell the bookshop would not be the attraction for visitors which is it undoubtedly is. We have some lovely books donated last year doublecheck grateful to Hannah for her efforts in obtaining lots of great children’s books, and joy for not only keeping the bookshop clean and tidy but also for bringing quality donations.

Our largest donation, over 1000 books, covering a diverse range of subject was kindly made by Claire done from the cerise bookshop in Swaffham on her retirement. These are safely stored in our garage, and will find their way to the bookshop as and when space allows, so those who pop in regularly to the bookshop will be rewarded!

This does not mean that we do not need any more donations, far from it! We always need good quality books in particular children’s books are classic novels stop small quantities of books can be deposited in the donation boxes in the bookshop for larger quantities telephone us on (01362) 697053 and we can arrange collection. big thank you to all of you who have brought in donated books over the years.

Ed: in the mean time

Preparations for the 2024 exhibition are underway. It will run from 9 March until 3 November 2024 and will be a contemporary textile-art exhibition based on research about workhouse nurses at Gressenhall. A launch event will be held in late March.

Artist Connie Flynn has been working alongside volunteer researchers and the Gressenhall Curator, looking into the lives, work and living conditions of the nurses based at Gressenhall workhouse. Spanning from the building's origin as a House of Industry and early Workhouse (c.1777-1840s) when pauper inmates typically carried out nursing duties, through to the professionalisation of nursing and medical care (late 1800s-1900s) and ending with the building's conversion to a care home (1948).

Connie has also explored photographs and textile collections relating to nursing. She is producing five newly commissioned textile-art pieces which respond to the research and will be displayed through the 2024 season, alongside sketches and collections. This exhibition has been supported by the Friends of



Gressenhall by the generous funding of the artists' fee. Photograph of nurses posing of the first-floor fire escape at Gressenhall c.1920s (Breckland Area Museum Committee 04.12.3.2023)

Gressenhall Village Our host is having :

Gressenhall Village- our host.

Cash Auction Mondays 6.00 pm

Line Dancing Wednesdays 7.00 pm

Bingo Fridays 7.30 pm

Social Club Flyer

£50 min each session

Plans for building 10 affordable homes off Bittering Street Gressenhall have met with opposition based on the fears of losing the “ancient hedgerows.”(EDP)

A Talk by Megan Dennis of the National Trust
at Gressenhall Reading Room, Friday March 1st
at 7.30pm

Tickets £5 available from Gressenhall Shop or
0779 6267174 / 01362 860835

“In this talk I will explore the history and collections of the estate in their widest possible definition.”

Tractor Road Run 14th April 11am-3pm

Vintage, Classic and Working tractors will be departing a 9.30am ish, for the annual run down the rural lanes of Norfolk .

A little girl finally got to attend a wedding for the first time. While in the church, the

girl asked her mother: “Why is the bride dressed in white?” The mother replied to the

girl: “because white is the colour of happiness and it’s the happiest day of her life today.”

After a little bit, the girl looks up at her mother and says:

“But, then why is the groom wearing black? ([thanks to N&V news](#))

Committee News

Membership report:

It was a very successful year for the Friends with our membership numbers increasing significantly to around 400 members of all ages. Thank you all for your support and we hope you will continue to enjoy your visits and membership benefits during the coming year. Remember to show your membership card in the Museum café and Gift shop as you get 10% discount! We have managed to keep membership rates unchanged since 2017, but as agreed at our AGM in July 2023, we are increasing our rates by around 5% from 1 April 2024. We are hoping that we will be able to keep them at this rate for many years to come and we will send you details of the changes shortly, so please keep an eye out for them.

Treasurer's Report:

Friends of Gressenhall raised £244.60 at the Victorian Christmas Day, held at the Museum on Sunday 17th December 2023. Thank you to the Friends volunteers who helped at the event or with donations. The monies raised were from the sale of Christmas themed crafts made by volunteers and a Christmas tombola.

The first instalment of funding to support the refresh of the Village Row displays along with incorporating family friendly interactive elements has been made. Planning and consultation by the Museum will take place during the 2024 open season, with changes being made in the winter of 2024.

Friends are also supporting the Panhard Volunteer Team (who maintain and run the 1898 Panhard et Levassor car) and have pledged funds to employ a wheelwright to repair the wheels, which have become loose and are at risk of becoming inoperable. The wheels are due to be removed in early January and will be sent away for restoration. I am also pleased to say that the Friends have purchased a second defibrillator for the site which is now safely housed in the portacabin on the farm. This now allows us to have the cover of a defibrillator on both the Main site and the Farm site, making deployment much quicker, if required (although hopefully it will never be needed H.B.).

We have also been able in recent months to support the repair and revitalisation of the composting area with the purchase of a number of new railway sleepers. The area is in the process of being refreshed with the help of members of the Gardening and Front of House volunteer teams.

Andy Creed,
Treasurer

In memory of: Philip Waltham



A long term friend and Leader of the team Panhard Volunteers with a passion for looking after and ensuring the running of the Panhard et Levassur car. Our thoughts are with his family.



Ed; Have you ever heard of George Crabbe – no? Oh good I thought I was the only one. So for those of you who are interested here is a potted history:

George Crabbe 1754-1832

English Poet, surgeon and clergyman. 1780 gave up being a surgeon moved to London to become a poet. Chaplain to the Duke of Rutland. Amongst his friends were: Sir Joshua Reynolds, Edmund Burke, William Wordsworth and the Lake Poets circle. Lord Byron said of him “...an important- indeed-major poet”

The Parish Workhouse
by George Crabbe

Theirs is yon house that holds the parish poor,
where walls of mud scarce bear the broken door;
there, where the putrid vapours, flagging, play
and the dull wheel hums doleful through the day;
there children dwell who know no parents' care;
parents who know no children's love, dwell there!
Heartbroken matrons on their joyless bed,
forsaken wives, and mothers never wed;
dejected widows with unheaded tears,
and crippled age with more than childhood fears;
the lame, the blind, and, far the happiest they
the moping idiot and madman gay.
Here to the sick their final doom receive,
Here brought, amid the scenes of grief, to grieve.
Here, sorrowing, they each kindred sorrow scan
and the cold charities of man to man.



George Crabbe 1754-1832

ED: Recipe, well everyone else is doing it! Just for clarification seconds means the same as it does today:

A Quartern Loaf is a 4lb loaf or half quartern 2lb loaf (for those young readers 'lb' is a pound in weight or 454 grams)

Ingredients:

24 Good seconds in wheat flour (at least 24 hours old)
OR pea flour mix (if for the use of the poor)

Salt

Barm (collect the foam from your fermenting batch of ale)

Method:

Mix the flours, add the salt, add the barm knead a lot.

Cook in an earthen oven (not all homes will have one a conventional oven will do)

It takes 45 minutes at 400 degrees in the earthen oven less and cooler in a conventional oven.

Take it out. The crust will be hard and almost if not totally inedible. Distribute to the poor of the parish from designated distribution centres .

OR I would recommend, throw it away and go buy one!

(you could say : use your loaf, a slice off the old block(bread) not a grain of truth in it ...anyone else want to join in? 😊)

If you would like further information on any item included in this newsletter please contact :

<https://www.museums.norfolk.gov.uk/-/media>

Digital feed

Gressenhall Village our host

Gressenhall News and Views

Events

<https://www.museums.norfolk.gov.uk/gressenhall-farm-and-workhouse/whats-on>

Volunteering

gressenhall.museum@norfolk.gov.uk

Or the full information is here:

[www.facebook.com/friends of Gressenhall](http://www.facebook.com/friends%20of%20Gressenhall)

Contributions, photos, suggestions

streetmrs27@gmail.com

(Breckland Area Museum Committee 04.12.3.2023)