

Fairground HERITAGE NEWS

FRIENDS OF THE FAIRGROUND HERITAGE TRUST

BUILDING UNDERWAY

Following the successful Turf Cutting ceremony at the September Fairground Weekend, the diggers moved onto the Dingles site in mid-October, and construction of the new museum building began in earnest. The new 25,000 sq' gallery will provide a long term home for the Trust's collection, and will be large enough to house up to six adult rides, and a selection of supporting attractions, including shows, stalls, juveniles and transport. It is anticipated that much of the equipment in the new building will be working, so that visitors can experience the fun of the old time fair.

The two existing museum buildings will continue to house a wide selection of static exhibits, with the Trust hoping to take over the running of the museum from the start of the 2006 season. Some steam and working exhibits from the existing Dingles collection will remain to add some variety and interest, as will Stuart Hands important collection of road signs.

FUNDRAISING: YOUR HELP NEEDED NOW!

Plans for a new museum are now as far advanced as they have ever been, and the new Fairground Museum building will be available for fitting out by Spring 2006.

We really do need your donations or offers of support, sponsorship or any other form of assistance you are able to give. Anyone wishing to donate for a specific purpose can do so, and we will do our utmost to ensure the money is used accordingly. **However, we cannot stress strongly enough that your support at this stage is vital.**

It has been suggested that in order to focus your minds on the Trust's need for financial assistance, it may prove helpful to itemise some of the specific needs.



The current scene at Dingles Steam Village, showing the work in progress on the site (09/11/05).

The remains of the children's playground can be seen to the left.

FUNDRAISING: YOUR HELP NEEDED NOW!

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In order for the Trust to open The Fairground Museum at Dingles for the 2006 season, it will need some working capital. We have already had to start committing some funds to marketing for next year, and we will also have to find money for rent and other overheads, insurances, and staffing costs.

If attendances are reasonable, then much of this will be recovered during the course of the season, and provide working capital for future use. However, we really need around £50,000 to ensure we can meet all bills as they fall due.

The key elements of this will be approximately £10,000 for marketing and publicity, £30,000 for rent, rates and other overheads, and £10,000 for wages, shop stock, and other costs.

Our application for a Heritage Lottery Project Planning Grant has now been made, and if this is successful we shall need to demonstrate that we have our 10% match funding in place before HLF will release the money.

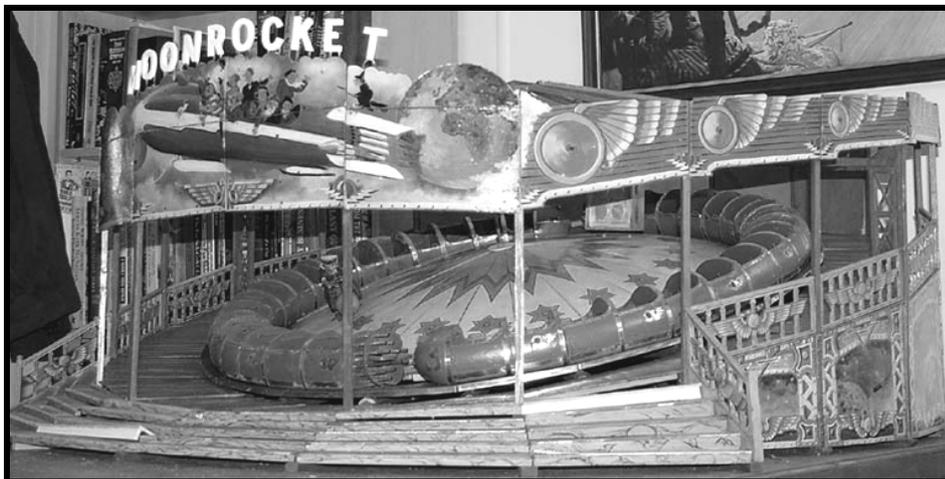
This is likely to be around £5,600, but it will bring £50,000 of funding from HLF to finance the submission of an essential Heritage Grant application.

When work on the Project Planning Grant commences, we will also need volunteers to assist in the assessment of the collection for the Conservation Management Plan. This may involve lifting, moving and sorting of some of the items in the collection in order that the people working on this can view individual items. If you are interested in participating, please register your interest now.

Some of the fitting out costs in the new museum gallery will need to be funded directly by the Trust. It is unlikely that external funding will be available for basic wiring, plumbing, painting and so on, but we will be unable to make much use of the building until at least some of this work is complete. We are still compiling and assessing information, but the likelihood is that costs will be in excess of £20,000.

GIFT AID

We urge you to complete a Gift Aid form to accompany any donation you may feel able to make, as this enables us to recover an additional 28p from the Tax Man for every £1 donated – quite a substantial extra contribution!



AMAZING MOONROCKET FOR COLLECTION

Special thanks are due to lifelong enthusiast Sid Wright, and his family, who have agreed to the loan of his ¾" scale model Moonrocket, built in the 1940s, to the FHT collection.

The miniature ride is currently undergoing refurbishment by Kevin Scrivens, and will be on display alongside parts of the ex-Ling Rocket next season. This is a particularly fine model, and will be invaluable in demonstrating to visitors what the full size machine would look like if restored.

HALL OF FAME AND SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

The Trust will shortly announce details of a new scheme for sponsorship opportunities within the new museum building. These will include sponsorship of individual rides and artefacts, the new building itself, and a Hall of Fame.

THE GAZELEY COLLECTION

As mentioned in the last Newsletter, it would be helpful if ownership of some or all of the items in the Gazeley Collection could be regularised. This would enable the Trust to seek funding for their conservation or restoration, and incorporation into access and interpretation plans, as part of the proposed Heritage Grant.

External funders will generally not finance exhibits which are not owned outright by the Trust, no matter what the loan terms. To achieve this we need to raise up to £90,000, although this can be broken down into much smaller amounts for the individual items. If you would like to make a donation for this purpose, please contact one of the Trustees.

Alternatively, if you would like to purchase a specific item, this can be done in one of two ways: the item can be

bought outright, and loaned to the Trust, provided you would be willing to bear the costs of any necessary conservation work, or you can purchase the item and donate it to the Trust, enabling HLF funding to be sought to cover any conservation costs.

Key items in the Gazeley collection include the ex-Brett Ghost Train, the Savage Joy Wheel, the Cakewalk, the ex-Ling Moonrocket, the ex-Billy Wood Boxing Show, and a number of other major artefacts.

THE EDWARDS COLLECTION

It is likely that the move of the Edwards family rides to Dingles will take place sometime in the Spring of 2006.

We already have several offers of assistance, but more are needed. If you have a low-loader or draw bar tractor available, you may be able to help move a specific load. Otherwise we will need to raise funds to pay for diesel and other costs, and possibly low loader and vehicle hire, if we don't find enough volunteers to complete the move.

All in, there are over 20 loads/trucks to move, ranging from the galloper and ark centres, through various sizes of frame and box trucks, to the rare FWD lorry, and Scammell and Foden eight-wheelers.



FAIRGROUND WEEKEND & TURF CUTTING

The weekend of 24-25 September saw the 2005 season draw to a close at Dingles Steam Village with a very successful event. On the Saturday this incorporated a Turf Cutting ceremony to mark the start of construction of the new Fairground Museum gallery.

A very large number of Trust supporters past and present had gathered for this momentous occasion, and long-serving Trustee Sir William McAlpine wielded the spade, ably assisted by Showmen's Guild Junior Vice President Ramon Henderson—as seen in the above photograph. They were introduced by Richard Sandercock, current chairman of the Trust, and the ceremony was concluded with thanks being given by Showmen's Guild Honorary Life Member and FHT Trustee, David Wallis.

On arrival, visitors were greeted by Mike & Mavis Stabb's Dean organ, accompanied by John Dyke's ex-Pettigroves' Burrell "Star".

Outdoor exhibits—as seen in the photo, right—included Mick Goulding's Walker-built Gallopers, and Scotty's juvenile Gallopers and Striker. Music on the Saturday was provided by the Anderton & Rowland Marengi Grand Organ, presented by Peter Phillipps and assisted by Mike Harris. These were flanked by John Atkinson's Burrell "White Rose of York" and Clive and Marion Gibbard's ex-Bostock & Wombwell's Burrell "Rajah", and the

two resident A&R Showtracs "Dragon" and "Gladiator".

Inside, the main gallery was packed with models and trade stands. Special thanks are due to all those who supported the event – some travelling quite long distances to be present.

David Wallis's marbling demonstrations were particularly popular, with quite a number of people actually having a go, under David's close supervision. As it created so much interest, it is hoped that it will be possible to repeat this item at a future event.

MUSEUM OPENING 2006

The Fairground Museum at Dingles will be open for the 2006 season as follows:

May 22 – September 28
Mondays – Thursdays 10.30 – 5.30
Last entry 4.00pm

Fairground Weekends:
Saturdays & Sundays May 20-21
& September 23-24

Fairground Weekend exhibitors are most welcome – there is space for models, fairground artefacts, photo displays, vintage transport, organs, engines, trade stands, etc. Booking forms are available from Michael Smith. Model exhibitors are invited to contact section steward Arthur Dyke on 07967 691012 or by e-mail at swcarnival@hotmail.com.



*Outside exhibits at the Fairground Weekend at Dingles in September, 2005.
(Photos courtesy of John Hobbs).*

VOLUNTEERS

We are still hoping to establish some volunteer working groups at Dingles in the near future.

The main requirements at present are for housekeeping-related activities, although it should be possible to start some basic conservation and restoration work soon, subject to suitable skills (carpentry, engineering, painting, etc) being available.

If our application for a Heritage Lottery Project Planning Grant is successful, we will need assistance when we come to assess the collection for the Conservation Management Plan—this will mostly be just moving/re-stacking items from the collection, so that the conservators can view each item.

If you think you can assist in any way, please contact Michael Smith.

Many thanks to those who have already responded to the appeal for volunteers — we will be in touch shortly to make suitable arrangements.

ADVERTISING

We are considering the possibilities of accepting small advertisements for future copies of *Fairground Heritage News*, mainly as a way of underwriting production costs rather than diverting funds from other activities.

If you would be interested in advertising, please contact either Michael or Stephen Smith.

LONG EATON MODEL SHOW AND AUCTION

The Trust will again have a display and sales stand at the forthcoming Long Eaton Model Show. Held in the Town Hall, next to the Asda Superstore, this year's event is on 19 November, and is sponsored by James Mellors Amusement & R.B.S Models (Long Eaton).

The show is open from 10.00 'til 5.00 and is free admission, although there will be a donation box on the door. Usually this is for a charity; however this year all money will be donated to the Fairground Heritage Trust for their appeal.

There will also be an auction of fairground memorabilia and artefacts and this money will also be going to the Fairground Heritage Trust.

This will be a silent auction, which will run throughout the day, and lots include a juvenile galloper horse (donated by Ian Hunt and decorated by Tate décor); some carved work and an ark animal (Craig Cooper); Beat the Clock gag card (Pete Tei); Fairground and Circus Posters (Neil Calladine); a selection of fairground books (New Era Publications); and Fairground Artwork (various artists, including Paul Wright, Tate and Gary Bignall); Corgi Galloper model (Graham Downie). The star lot is a 1996 Showmen's Guild Calendar signed by over 80 leading showmen, many with humorous comments – an absolute must for any collection of fairground ephemera!

If the concept is successful, then we hope to be able to repeat it in the future, so please let us know if you have any potential lots you may like to donate.

If you would like to bid on any lots at Long Eaton, but are unable to attend, please phone Michael Smith.

FHT SALES

Thanks to the generosity of author Roger Mills, the Trust has a limited number of copies of his excellent history of R Edwards & Sons Ltd. **"Everybody's Favourite"** for sale. These are priced at £7.50 per copy + 60p P&P.

We also have some other books for sale, but copies are limited, so it may be worth a phone call to reserve before sending your money.

The Harry Lee Story (Scrivens & Smith; published by the Fairground Society 1996) £11.95 + £1.50 P&P.

The Travelling Cinematograph Show (Scrivens & Smith; published by New Era 1999) £20.00 + £3.00 P&P.

Philip Bradley – Fairground Photographs & Notes (published by New Era 1999) £12.00 + £1.50 P&P.

The Great Nottingham Goose Fair (Wilkes; published by Trent Valley 1989) Out of print and rare £10.00 + £1.20 P&P.

In the Feast of St Edmund the King: Petworth Fair 1189-1993 (Jerrome & Norman; published by Window Press 1994) Out of print and rare £18.00 + £5.00 P&P.

All the Fun of the Fair (Crowther; published by Walker 1992) Children's Fairground Pop-up book with lots of paper mechanics. Out of print and rare £12.50 + £3.00 P&P.

You can order any of the above by post from Michael Smith, 6 Winswell Water, Petersmarland, Torrington, Devon, EX38 8QB. Please make cheques and postal orders payable to the FHT.

WINTER SOCIAL IN GLOUCESTER

Mike Willis is organising a social event in Gloucester for all fairground enthusiasts. Everyone is welcome, and Mike has generously agreed to donate all proceeds to the Fairground Heritage Trust.

Funfair Enthusiasts Social

Saturday January 21st 2006
13.00 – 17.30

Churchdown Community Centre,
Parton Road, Churchdown,
Gloucester, GL3 2JH

(M5 junction 11 take A40 to Gloucester. At first roundabout (2 miles) take final exit (B4063 Churchdown), at 2nd traffic lights (1 mile) turn right, at 3rd mini roundabout (1 mile) turn right.)

Slide Shows, Models, Raffle,
Sales Stalls, Light Refreshments.

Organiser: Mike Willis
Tel 01452 714173

e-mail mikewillis@blueyonder.co.uk

FHT WEBSITE

Since its launch in June, the new website www.fairground-heritage.org.uk has been attracting large numbers of visitors. This has been greatly helped by the number of other sites adding links to our site, especially the 24 hour museum (www.24hourmuseum.org.uk) who very generously made us their website of the week at the end of July. All of this has also been beneficial in increasing our search engine rating — bringing a greater awareness of our activities.

TRUSTEES

Richard Sandercock (Dingles Steam Village, 01566 783425) – Chairman; Michael Smith (07770 852971) – Secretary; Sir William McAlpine; Stephen Smith (07879 415822) – Educational Consultant and Friends Administrator; Richard Ward – Founding Trustee; David Wallis (Honorary Life Member of the Showmen's Guild, 07836 291215) – Showmen's representative; Simon DeVey (Member of the Showmen's Guild, 07770 725726) – Showmen's representative; Steph Gillett MSocSc (Independent Museums Consultant) – Honorary Curatorial Advisor, reporting to the Trustees.



PRODUCED BY THE
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