

# SUSSEX BOOKENDS

A WEEKLY CELEBRATION OF THE SUSSEX CHARACTER

## Out & About in Sussex

A new exhibition has just opened at Charleston Farmhouse, former home of the Bloomsbury painters Vanessa Bell and Duncan Grant. Entitled Fragments, the show focuses on rarely seen textiles conceived by the artists.

Both Bell and Grant produced designs for textiles throughout their careers and of

course the farmhouse is full of their exuberant curtains, cushion and chair covers. Visitors to this fascinating exhibition can see unfinished canvas work, elaborate beaded pictures and fragments of unrealised designs. The exhibition continues until November 1. For opening times call **01323 811626** or visit [www.charleston.org.uk](http://www.charleston.org.uk).

## Bloomsbury Quiz

**1 What was the maiden name of Vanessa Bell and Virginia Woolf?**

**2 In which Sussex village was Virginia Woolf's early**

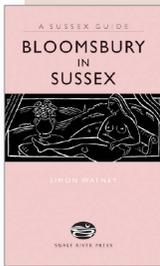
**home Little Talland House?**

**3 Name the founders of the Hogarth Press.**

**4 Who was married to the ballet dancer Lydia Lopokova?**

**5 Was Vanessa Bell's husband Quentin or Clive Bell?**

Email your answers, along with your name and address to: [editorial@snakeriverpress.co.uk](mailto:editorial@snakeriverpress.co.uk). The sender of the first set of correct answers received wins a copy of Bloomsbury in Sussex by Simon Watney worth £8.99. The correct answers will be posted at [www.snakeriverpress.co.uk](http://www.snakeriverpress.co.uk) next Saturday.



There always seems something new to learn about the antics that the Bloomsbury set got up to. In her book *A Sussex Miscellany* (published by Snake River Press) Sophie Collins recounts the following story.

The Bloomsbury Group were fond of animals, and cats and dogs in their Sussex households at Charleston and Rodmell were commonplace. A more unusual pet, kept by Leonard Woolf, was Mitz the marmoset (a type of monkey) given to him by Victor Rothschild.

Opinions were divided on Mitz, who travelled everywhere with the Woolfs, toured Nazi Germany, and sat at meals at Monks House, feeding off scraps. Lady Ottoline Morell admired her; most of the Bells, on the other hand, loathed her - Vanessa calling her 'that horrid little monkey' and Quentin Bell went much further, accusing the marmoset of having a vicious temper and a face 'like Doctor Goebbels'. An acclaimed novel about Mitz's life, *Mitz, the Marmoset of Bloomsbury*, by Sigrid Nunez, was published in 1996.

## Ripe Artwave 2009

This weekend is the last chance to catch the wonderful Artwave show in the delightful village of Ripe. As always an exciting range of work will be exhibited including paintings, sculpture, textiles, ceramics, jewellery and photography.

Lucy Goffin, Sarah Walton and Nicola King are among the artists showing, so a high standard of work is ensured.

The venue is The Green House in the heart of the village, open today and tomorrow between 11am and 6pm. Other exhibits can also be seen at The Lamb public house.

Artists from various other towns and villages are also participating including Lewes, Newick and Ditchling. For full details of venues and artists see [www.artwavefestival.org](http://www.artwavefestival.org).

## Live & learn

Such was their world view that in times gone by the true Sussex man or woman divided the globe into two parts; Kent and Sussex formed one division, while all the rest was known as 'The Sheeres.'

A Sheere-Man was one who came from the shire counties and was not always guaranteed a warm welcome on setting foot in Sussex.

The derisive term 'Sheere-Mouse' was often applied to incoming Sheere-Men but it should be noted that Sussex was not alone in its xenophobia.

The phrase 'the sheeres' was used in many regions of England, and in usually in a rather derogatory manner. In Shropshire the manufacturing districts were referred to as 'down in the sheeres.'

## Lost words

“ In his *A Dictionary of Sussex Dialect* the Reverend W.D. Parish lists several meanings for the word 'huck,' these are quite apart from the wonderful sounding huckle-bone, huckle-my-buff and huckmuck. One meaning of huck is the pod of a pea and it features in this children's rhyme.

*Pea-pod hucks,  
Twenty for a pin;  
If you doant like 'em  
I'll take 'em back agin.*

Do you know what the other huck and huckle words mean? If so email their meanings to [editorial@snakeriverpress.co.uk](mailto:editorial@snakeriverpress.co.uk) Answers will be posted at [www.snakeriverpress.co.uk](http://www.snakeriverpress.co.uk) next Saturday.

## THE BERWICK CHURCH PULPIT

Painted by Vanessa Bell in 1944, the pulpit originally featured three standing archangels very much in the style of Piero della Francesca, but they were vandalised beyond repair in 1962. There has been some discussion of the authorship of the present pulpit decorations, but finished studies by Duncan Grant exist for the two panels with flowers in rounded vases.

On close examination it is clear that the two flanking panels at either end are by Bell, while the central panel with a tapering chalice-shaped vase is a later work by Grant, perhaps with Angelica Garnett. The decorative vocabulary is instantly recognisable and Bell's exceptionally beautiful panel on the far right-hand side, incorporating her favourite salmon-pink and dove-grey, may be compared to her dust-jackets for the Hogarth Press, and also to the vases of flowers which flank the spare bedroom at Charleston. The roses and stylised lilies on Grant's panels stand in a direct line of descent from such earlier work as the 1920s three-panelled screen and the tall embroidered panel which are both in his studio, and the beautiful embroidered mirror-frames at both Charleston and Monks House.

From Bloomsbury in Sussex by Simon Watney.