

SUSSEX BOOKENDS

A WEEKLY CELEBRATION OF THE SUSSEX CHARACTER

Next Sunday (March 14) is Mothering Sunday. Now is the time to start planning that extra special treat. With the weather warming up and the days getting noticeably longer, it is the perfect time to shake of the remains of a very long and hard winter and breathe in some fresh air. To encourage us all to get out and about the National Trust is offering free admission to mothers at certain of their properties next Sunday.

One such is Alfriston Clergy House. Always a popular destination, a trip to the house can be combined with the varied amenities of this most lovely of downland villages. If the weather is kind then a gentle stroll along the river bank takes some beating. For tea and the most delicious cakes try the stylish surroundings of Badger's Tea House, while Much Ado Books can always be relied upon for unusual and well-chosen books. (Do take advantage of their gift wrapping services if you really want to impress Mum!)

Live & learn

Every Sussex river had its watermills in the past, and some had many - for example even the Western Rother, a relatively small river, once had 13 spaced along it, of which the last, Terwick Mill, closed in 1966. Six Sussex watermills can still be visited and seen in action, including the following.

Park Mill, Bateman's, Burwash. Dating from the 1750s, this mill is adjacent to Kipling's last Sussex home and features in a number of his stories.

Isfield Watermill. Dating from 1684, but rebuilt and modernised in 1817.

Lurgashall Watermill, Weald and Downland Open Air Museum, Singleton. Dating from the 17th century, and given to the museum in 1973. Flour ground at the mill is sold in the museum shop.

Out & About in Sussex

Yes it's that time of year again and today sees the reopening of the much-loved Sussex Sheep Centre at East Dean. Between now and May 3 visitors can witness the marvel that is lambing time. Later in the year, between July 3 and September 5 there is sheep shearing and milking.

Along with the local Southdown, the centre is home

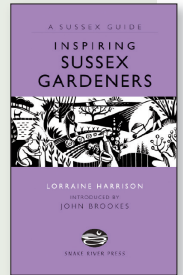
to a host of breeds including the Castlemilk Moorit, the Greyface Dartmoor and the strikingly hairy Whitefaced Woodland.

Entry costs £5 for adults, £4 for children and £17 for a family ticket and makes a really memorable day out with a difference. Call **01323 423302** for details or visit www.sheepcentre.co.uk.

Gardens Quiz

1. Name the author and gardener who lived at Bateman's.
2. Which Sussex garden is home to wallabies?
3. What material does Coade immitate?
4. Who designed the famous pergola at West Dean Gardens?
5. Where is the Sylvia Standing Garden?

Email your answers, along with your name and address to: editorial@snakeriverpress.co.uk. The sender of the first set of correct answers received wins a copy of Inspiring Sussex Gardeners by Lorraine Harrison worth £8.99. The correct answers will be posted at www.snakeriverpress.co.uk next Saturday.



Sussex Celebrity

Sir Frederick Stern 1884-1967



All those who have visited the wonderful chalk garden at Highdown, Worthing, may be interested to know more about its maker. The appellations 'war hero', 'big game hunter' and 'fearless jockey' are not often listed alongside that of 'gardener', yet Sir Frederick Claude Stern was as much an accomplished plantsman as a man of action. A man as much of the mind as of the world, this polymath must surely be classed as a true Sussex gardener as he transformed an unpromising site into a flourishing garden, which is still today an inspiration for all those who garden on chalk.

Primarily a plantsman with a scientist's scholarly and empirical approach, Stern set out on something of a crusade to prove that plants worthy of garden status could grow, and indeed thrive, on downland chalk. An advocate of the 'right-plant, right place' philosophy, he tirelessly experimented with a wide range of material from all over the globe.

Read more in Inspiring Sussex Gardeners by Lorraine Harrison, illustrated by Sarah Young.

Lost words

Here is a miscellany of old Sussex words taken from A Dictionary of Sussex Dialect by the Reverend W.D. Parish published by Snake River Press at £8.99.

Chizzly: Gritty; harsh and dry under the teeth.

File: A cunning, deceitful person. In the same sense the word is used in speaking of a hare running her file.

Husser-and-squencher: A pot of beer with a dram of gin in it.

Lope-off: To go away in a secret, sly manner (probably connected to the word lope).

Ship: Sheep, seldom used in the singular.

Dark weekend

If any readers were prompted by a recent feature in Sussex Bookends to visit The Dark Monarch exhibition currently showing at Eastbourne's Towner Art Gallery, then they may wish to return for The Dark Weekend event. Held today and tomorrow it promises to be 'a magical weekend of dark film, activities, workshops and

conversation inspired by themes in The Dark Monarch'.

Tonight between 7-10pm there is The Dark Silent Disco which includes 'spooky' photography and Elizabethan punk fashion workshops. Dark Places and Mysterious Faces is a free drop-in event for all ages tomorrow from 11am - 5pm, call **01323 434670**.