

MUSEUM 4 WATTON

Museum 4 Watton locked down on the second day of its second Birthday event, 15th. March 2020, due to possible Corona Virus contamination of the building. This was followed a few days later by the national lock-down. To that date, in two years we had had almost ten thousand visitors. We re-opened with a trial two days a week on August 15th. and once again were 'locked-down' on the 5th. November and have remained closed to the public ever since.

It is not all doom and gloom, things have been happening behind the scenes, hopefully for the better. In order to raise much needed funds for running costs we started 'e-baying' donated antiques and bric-a-brac that we usually have on sale in one of ground floor cabinets, to date this has raised in advance of £1000.

We have spent a considerable time completely re-displaying the 1st. floor exhibition room, many items previously not displayed are now exhibited and the whole area has been rearranged in a better chronological order. If you have been before, come again when we re-open, it's totally different.

Our military displays have been evaluated and as a result we are to be included in a new database of Aviation Heritage and we have become members of the East Anglia Aviation Heritage Network.

Prior to the lock-down period we signed a contract with Norfolk Record Office to join a Community Archive group being trained and mentored in archival recording, storage and display, 5 of our volunteers have been involved with many zoom meetings and a great deal has been learned. We have been given a lap-top and sound recording equipment so that we can add spoken records to the written ones that we have, and are to be given £200 worth of conservation materials.

One of our trustees found out, at very short notice, that the Antique Council Chamber furniture from Sheringham was to be auctioned, in the space of only 3 or 4 days having talked with Town Council representatives, and the Auctioneers, we managed to buy the most important parts of it. The Mayors 'throne' and 12 matching carved, carver chairs, 8 further, similar but not matching, carved, carvers and a massive, horse-shoe shaped debating table were obtained for a little under £2900, the Museum raising £2000 as a gift to the Council, and the Council the balance. This furniture was made in or around 1904 and is very substantial as well as antique, the table alone weighs an impressive 300kg. The Councillors to date have only seen photos, however it is all installed in our Council Chamber and may be viewed when the Museum re-opens. We hope everyone will agree that it is entirely suited to the room and building that it is in.

All being well, the Museum will re-open, initially Wednesday and Saturday, from May 19th. and Wednesday to Saturday by the end of June. Come and see us and the wonderful, new Council Chamber furniture, everything has changed, but entry is still free!

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