

WINCHESTER HERITAGE OPEN DAYS

Our 2020 Festival Review

This year was always going to look and feel very different for us as a result of our decision in December 2019 to step back from some of the festival administration and focus more on the long term development of our organisational arrangements. However, the year turned out to be even more challenging than anyone in the heritage sector could have forecast as a result of Covid-19.

Thanks though to the support of students at the University of Winchester and the strength of our partnerships with many businesses, charities and other individuals and organisations in and around Winchester we kept the 'Heritage Open Days flame' burning bright throughout the year.

We also established in 2020 a brand new charity - Hampshire History Trust - to oversee Winchester Heritage Open Days. This exciting new development also offers us the opportunity to host an annual history festival and to run year round community history and heritage projects including our recently launched podcast channel - Hampshire Histbites.

We are immensely proud of the work we have accomplished in this turbulent year, and are enormously grateful for the support of our everyone who got involved with our events, films and podcasts.

We would particularly like to thank Winchester College and Winchester BID, whose financial support was key to the festival's survival.

PUTTING WINCHESTER ON THE MAP!

During the festival this year we had more than 13,000 visits to our website, and a further 12,000 views of the festival films, podcasts & live streamed events.

We also saw us going international. In 2019 only 2% of visitors to our website were from outside the UK, in 2020 it had jumped to 6%, of which the majority were from the USA. Our international visitors turned up to the live streamed events too, with many saying they plan to visit Winchester in the future.

We remain a favourite for local people, 44% of our audience for live streamed events were from Winchester, and 21% under the age of 50.

72% of all festival visitors say they will definitely be tuning in again for this year's festival.

HERITAGE OPEN DAYS
THIS YEAR WE'RE ONLINE
11-20 September 2020

WELCOME TO WINCHESTER'S HERITAGE OPEN DAYS

Winchester Heritage Open Days is now in its fifth year - a remarkable given the challenges of the past few months. However, we know it is the community spirit behind the festival that keeps it going and an opportunity when we can all pull together to produce something really rather magical.

What has delighted us is the overwhelming enthusiasm for so many to produce yet another amazing programme of events for you to enjoy. Most of these will be taking place online as there is still so much uncertainty surrounding Covid-19. However, you will still find a handful of outdoor and on-site events being run in line with government advice. Please be sure to check our website for updates nearer the time.

We are grateful to our lead sponsor, Winchester College, for sponsoring us again this year and for their sure you will enjoy all the very special events that they are generously hosting for us. A special thanks too to our sponsors at the University of Winchester BID for their sponsorship, and to the City of Winchester Trust and University of Winchester for their invaluable help.

Like so many other festivals at this time, Winchester Heritage Open Days faces an uncertain future. Run entirely by a small, enthusiastic team of volunteers who give up their time for free, the festival relies solely on grants and the generosity of local businesses, organisations and individuals for financial support to keep it afloat.

We remain committed to delivering a festival offering free events that can be enjoyed by the whole community, so please do continue to do so, we need your help. If you are able to offer sponsorship, please do consider it as a donation in any other way towards next year's Heritage Open Days, then do please get in touch - we would be delighted to hear from you.

This year's festival will be different in many ways, but we hope you will find much to interest you and very much look forward to welcoming you to the September.

Nicky & Becky
www.winchesterheritageopendays.org

DELVE INTO THE PAST...

The story of Winchester runs like a golden thread through the history of England. As we continue our quest to unravel Hampshire's wonderful past and share it with the masses of the internet, this year you can also discover new places and learn new things from the comfort of your own home. Sit back, relax and enjoy!

Hidden Nature

Don't miss Proudfoot & Co's online historical recipe demonstration. Join into the amazing escapism of the Scenes behind the Watercourse and see stunning warty portraits by artist Hugh Tunney. There's a talk on Gilbert White, An Outdoor Naturalist, and an interview with Alex Langlands exploring traditional crafts and sustainability.

Meet members of Winchester's Historic Allotment Society giving a virtual tour of one of Britain's unusual allotments. Discover Winchester's chalk geology in two Hidden Nature films, exploring English speaking wine and Rainbow Trout. And Mike Hall, our resident photographer, reveals a fabulous online photography exhibition of Hidden Winchester and the surrounding area.

Go Behind the Scenes...

A new video tour takes you to towers and rooftops in Hidden Winchester. Discovering the History, Art and Architecture of Winchester College and manual art books and medical manuscripts inside the Fellows' Library. Get an insight into Abbey House and the Mayor of Winchester and listen to Melissa Backer-Hansen talking about the social history of houses. Discover the Secrets of Cider Making, peer through the lens of the City of Winchester Trust to explore sixty years of change and explore extraordinary objects behind the scenes at Hampshire Cultural Trust.

Look, Listen and Learn!

Follow a virtual tour of the West Hill Cemetery with the University of Winchester. Take a closer look at some of Winchester's commercial heritage in Behind the Business and learn about the history of the Theatre Royal. Explore the story of the Theatre Royal with an amazing performance by Historical Hazards.

Family Fun

Examine The Hidden Nature of a Hampshire Chalk Stream. Travel Through Time to meet some of the characters that once populated the Theatre Royal with an amusing performance by Historical Hazards.

Out and About

Please do check the availability of live outdoor and on-site events on our website nearer the time. Here are a few...

Vehicle enthusiasts will love the Mig and a classic display and Classic Cars. More family events include a Hydroneed medieval tile workshop, a quiz at St Bartholomew's Churchyard, discovering the lost abbey at Hyde Abbey Gardens and the Support Beds Window wall of Hidden Nature window displays in Winchester. Further ahead there are open days at Bursledon Brickworks Museum and Romsey Signal Box.



LOOKING AHEAD TO 2021

Our focus for 2021 is to settle in the new charitable organisation Hampshire History Trust. We have already recruited a number of Trustees, and are currently in the early stages of setting up the organisation. We hope this year to be successful in our efforts to seek sufficient funding to appoint a festival manager.

In addition we will continue to

- Project manage and host Hampshire Histbites, the brand new podcast channel
- Support event organisers and festival volunteers by providing training and year round festival administration
- Explore with strategic partners opportunities to introduce Hampshire wide festival promotion and box office services
- Maintain our website and enhance our social media presence, enabling us to promote the festival to a younger and more diverse audience
- Reach a wider audience through enhanced publicity, year round heritage projects and other events



NICKY GOTTLIEB & BECKY BROWN

Founding Trustees of Hampshire History Trust, and both volunteers. They work year round, with a small team of other volunteers, to maintain and develop Winchester's largest heritage event.

WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR? GET INVOLVED!

I think the whole Heritage Open Days this year has been tremendous

ONE OF THE LARGEST HUBS

In a year of unprecedented change and challenges, Hampshire event organisers pulled together and created 127 events. Of which 68 were on our website, nearly 4% of the national total!

DIGITAL ENGAGEMENT

We're in the top percentile for our Twitter engagement rate

Our e-newsletter open rate is on average 63%, that is more than 3 times the average rate for UK charities.

Engaging speaker, and fascinating subject matter

THE SILVER LINING

92% found the online content "engaging, informative and entertaining", and many have shared how much they loved being able to watch from the comfort of their own home.

SPARKED THEIR CURIOSITY

Thanks to our live streamed events more than 25% plan to pick up a book or watch a documentary to find out more, and 18% will be visiting a gallery or museum.