

NEWS RELEASE

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Announcing the Wood Show 2015 A special weekend at the Weald & Downland Museum 20 – 21 June 2015

Celebrate the many uses of wood – from woodland crafts, horse logging and charcoal burning, right through to finished products for the home and garden.

Timber and wood are very much at the heart of the Museum, and this two-day event will celebrate its many traditional uses – as seen in the Museum’s timber framed buildings, plus the crafts and skills associated with building them and also in rural life.

Tickets to the event are just £5 each and visitors to the Wood Show, 20 – 21 June, will enjoy a range of wood craft demonstrations, a working wood yard, a traditional charcoal burn, teams of heavy horses carrying out forestry tasks, exhibitors and displays. From viewing the Museum’s own timber-framed buildings to crafted bowls, furniture, tools, toys and other wood products – there will be plenty to see, do and buy. A fascinating day out to celebrate Father’s Day.

Heavy horses

Museum Horseman, Mark Buxton, will demonstrate the use of a timber forwarder (loaned by Wests of East Dean) and timber loading demonstrations together with Frankie Woodgate. Frankie is a specialist in sustainable woodland management who, with her horses, will be working in and around the Museum’s woodland. Robert Sampson, who

recently appeared on BBC TV's Countryfile, will be carrying out a range of forestry tasks around the site with his magnificent Percherons.

Wood working

Visitors to the Museum's wood yard (and stands around the site) will see traditional demonstrations from members of the Association of Pole Lathe Turners and Greenwood workers, and the Sussex & Surrey, Hampshire and Dorset coppice groups. Their members will demonstrate crafts from hedge laying to twig pencil making, and besom broom making to spoon making. Traditional woodworker Mervyn Mewis will be showcasing his skills in making stunning furniture and musical instruments sourced from local woodlands and conservation projects. Master clog maker, Jeremy Atkinson, specialises in making traditional nineteenth-century style clogs and will be demonstrating his skills. He is the last person in England following this traditional craft. Local woodsman, Alan Waters, will be demonstrating the unusual spectacle of a traditional charcoal burn.

Wood carving and carpentry

The Museum's conservation workshop, the Downland Gridshell, will be full of interesting demonstrations, stands and activities, including the Daywood Carvers and the Solent Guild of Wood Carvers. Former Museum Carpenter, Roger Champion, will be re-erecting his hand-made model of the Museum's Medieval House from North Cray over the weekend. Visitors can also enjoy viewing the Museum's collection of historic tools and artefacts, which are on display in the Gridshell artefact store.

Tours and more

There will be talks and tours of the woodland, plus visitors can learn the secrets of some of the Museum's timber framed buildings. Join in with Summer Solstice maypole dancing, with teaching and music from folk performers 'Trads'. Horse drawn wagon rides will take place throughout the weekend driven by John McDermott and his Percherons.

“The Wood Show will be a wonderful event for all of the family and will make a perfect day out – particularly for Father’s Day,” said Museum Director Richard Pailthorpe. “It offers a fantastic opportunity to discover the journey that wood takes: the wonderful woodland in which it grows; the skills, tools and crafts used to work with wood; the end products which we have in our homes and gardens.”

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Notes to editors

Reporters and photographers welcome. For further information and photographs contact Jenny Rudd on 01243 811014 or email marketing2@wealddown.co.uk. Further details about the Museum and its activities are available at www.wealddown.co.uk.

Background information

Located in the heart of the South Downs National Park, the award-winning Weald & Downland Open Air Museum has 50 historic building exhibits and is designated by the Government for the outstanding importance of its collections. Exhibits include a medieval farmstead; a working watermill producing wholemeal stoneground flour; exhibitions focusing on traditional building techniques and agriculture; historic gardens, farm livestock and a working Tudor kitchen. The Museum runs a well-established schools programme, and an award winning adult learning programme of courses in building conservation and rural crafts. There is a café which uses the Museum’s own flour and a shop with gifts and books on countryside and buildings themes. The modern Downland Gridshell houses the Museum’s building conservation centre and artefact collection; there is a daily tour at 1.30pm when the Museum is open and an appointments system for visits to the collections for research purposes.