

2017

Forge Mill Needle Museum

Events

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Celebration Event Day - Relive an 80s Childhood
Sunday 7th May 2017



On Sunday 7th May 2017 from 11.00am to 4.00pm we had our first event of the year 'Retro Kids Cartoons Celebration Event'. This allowed the young at heart (and their children) to relive their 80s childhood with lots of fun and activities.

The activities included Laser Tag (which as a 70+yearold I had no idea what it was and, after seeing it, I am no clearer), Retro gaming with the Retro Computer Museum (now that I understand), 80s soundtracks provided by Vintage Trax (a local company with a real passion for music), Marshmallow Man and Ghostbusters (excellent!), Marc Silk - voice artist behind Scooby Doo and others, Retro Cartoons Exhibition and artist Lee Bradley in the gallery (Lee is a really nice guy and well worth talking to), 80s cartoons costume competition and Willy Wonka's Sausage Factory.

The event attracted about 400 visitors, in the ratio 60/40 adults/children, which is good for a new event.

National Mills Day
Sunday 13th May 2017



Forge Mill Needle Museum was open for National Mills Day on Sunday 13th May 2017 from 11.00am to 4.00pm.

For the weekend the museum offered a visit to the needle museum at a reduced rate giving access to the world's only surviving water powered scouring mill.

Forge Mill Needle Museum **REMEMBERING THE FORTIES DAY** **Sunday 22nd May 2017**



On Sunday, 21st May, we had another excellent event at Forge Mill today with our annual 'Remembering the 40s' day.

The weather was kind to us with light cloud and sunshine and, as always, the 40s team are very nice people who show a real commitment to their interest. There was some excellent 'hardware' on show with cars, military vehicles, model planes and equipment in first class condition and their owners were very willing to talk to enthusiasts both young and old. We also had members of the local Royal Enfield owners club with a wide range of period motorbikes.

Music was provided by Indigo Arts and the Violettes giving excellent performances of 1940s songs throughout the day. We had our 'shuttle' bus from the Abbey Stadium overspill car park which significantly helped our parking problems for events and was thoroughly enjoyed by visitors.

We had over 300 visitors on the day, mostly adults including the Mayor, Joe Baker, and Leader of the Council, Bill Hartnett, who visited the event before continuing to the Redditch Faith Walk which, this year, began at the Bordesley Abbey ruins.

Farm Day
Sunday 11th June 2017



Our annual Forge Mill Farm Day on Sunday 11th June was a well-supported event with over 1000 visitors. The weather was dry, if a bit windy, and everyone had a good time.

There was a wide range of activities for both adults and children including cute & cuddly animals, Punch & Judy show, Vintage Tractors, Music from 'Revenge of the Wrinklies', Woodworking & Spinning demos, Morris Dancing, a Bouncy Castle & Face Painting.

We had many visitors telling us on the gate as they were leaving, how much they had enjoyed the event and what good value it was.

**National Archaeology Weekend.
Saturday 15th and Sunday 16th July 2017.**



On Saturday 15th and Sunday 16th July 2017 from 11.00am to 4.00pm we had our National Archaeology Weekend which included Medieval activities enhancing our celebration of Bordesley Abbey.

In our two days of fun archaeology themed activities for all the family there was a Medieval Knight's encampment, weaponry demonstrations, medieval music and have-a-go instruments, tours of Bordesley Abbey, a 'Big Dig' in the museum's sandpit, making a Bordesley tile, St George and the Dragon Puppet Show on Sunday.

For some reason, probably the word 'archaeology' in the title, this is the least well supported of our events, but those who did come had a terrific time and it was surprising how many people spent most of the day on the site visiting the encampment, watching the various events, going on tours of the Abbey and visiting the museum.

This really is a terrific event for children of all ages and, to fully describe the range of activities available, perhaps should really be entitled 'Medieval Weekend'.

**Pirates Weekend
Saturday 29th and Sunday 30th July 2017.**



Pirates weekend (29th/30th July 2017) was another well organised and enjoyable event at Forge Mill Museum.

As well as enjoying the museum's latest exhibition, 'Pirates Fact or Fiction', visitors had a wide range of activities to enjoy over the weekend.

There was the chance to meet the pirate crew, the River Rogues, as well as a puppet show for the whole family, sailor knot and rope work demonstrations, shanty singing and a blacksmithing demonstration.

On the Saturday, there was a live demonstration of cannon and musket firing.

Scarecrow Day
Sunday 27th August 2017



It was excellent weather for Scarecrow Day on Sunday 27th August.

Although this was not organised and run by the Museum, the Forge Mill Volunteers were on hand to give support and there was access to all the Museum facilities including the Pirates exhibition in the gallery.

There were some very good scarecrows made and there was a wide range of attractions for visitors.

Forge Mill Museum Heritage Open Day
10th September 2017 11.00am to 4.00pm



Despite the depressing weather forecast we had over 270 visitors to our Heritage Open Day, mostly adults but also quite a few children.

We had put everyone attending under cover in the Visitor Centre, Indigo Arts, Radford Model Boat Club and the Royal Enfield Owners Club in the 'Cloisters' and the Redditch History Society farming history exhibition in the 'Education Room'.

Indigo Arts gave terrific performances throughout the day of songs from their 'Eye of the Needle' review, the Radford Model Boat Club had a large display of exceptionally detailed model boats, the local Royal Enfield Owners Club had some beautifully maintained bikes on show and the 'now and then' farming history display by the History Society intrigued many people, and children were fascinated to find that where they now live was once a field!

The tours were well attended with each of the two Mill tours attracting around 20 visitors and the Abbey ruins tour, amazingly considering the threatening dark clouds, had nearly 30 participants.

In the event, despite the dire warning from the Met Office, we managed to survive the day without any serious rain and everyone, visitors, participants and volunteers had a very enjoyable time.

Christmas Craft fair
Saturday/Sunday 2nd and 3rd December 2017



Despite the rather damp and chilly day on Saturday 2nd December and the dull start to Sunday 3rd December they were excellent days for the annual Forge Mill Needle Museum VICTORIAN CHRISTMAS CRAFT FAIR.

There was a good attendance for our Victorian entertainment with a variety of food and craft stalls to choose unique Christmas gifts.

In addition to over 20 craft stalls, there was toy soldier making and blacksmithing displays, a juggler on Saturday and a magician on Sunday, the Alcester Victoria Silver Band, traditional carols with Indigo Arts, Father Christmas (11am to 3pm), Children's swing boats, hot drinks and mince pies from coffee bar and mulled wine and chestnuts.

Many of our visitors are 'regulars' who look forward to visiting the excellent craft stalls every year for their very special Christmas gifts.

It is a truly traditional Christmas event for all ages!

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