

# Redlynch & District Local History Society

September 2019

Adrian Green, Director of the Salisbury Museum gave an excellent talk on George Heywood Maunoir Sumner (1853-1940) who was a nationally acknowledged artist and archaeologist. Heywood Sumner, by which name he is better known, was born into an Anglican family. His grandfather was the Bishop of Winchester and his father was also a churchman. He was educated at Eton and Christchurch College Oxford to become a barrister, however he became very interested in the arts and crafts movement and it is thought he had independent means to support his artistic activities. His wife was Agnes Benson and they had 5 children; she was the sister of his friend who also had similar interests.



Heywood's first interest was etching, a technically difficult technique. He produced a book of images of the Itchen from Tichborne (his home) to Southampton in 1880, and then the Avon from Naesby to Tewkesbury. His attention turned to wood engraving and illustrated volumes of novels by other authors as well as his own book recording folk songs. He was particularly associated with the Art Workers Guild and was Master of this in 1894; this was commemorated by a bronze engraving of his head in profile.

Another unusual technique Heywood explored was "sgraffito", a Roman method of using layers of plaster to produce colour wall murals. A number of these large works exist and are mainly on church walls: he also produced stained glass windows for churches. He also exclusively designed wallpapers for Jeffrey & Co, the quality of which was published in a book.

In 1902 the Sumner family bought an old cottage and parcels of land at Cuckoo Hill, Gorley. Heywood considerably extended and rebuilt this to his own design; as with much of his activities this was faithfully recorded. Heywood produced many illustrations both black and white, and colour of the New Forest and Cranborne Chase which appeared in various publications, perhaps the best known being Cuckoo Hill. Living in this area also inspired Heywood to archaeologically examine areas of Rockbourne Down, as well as Roman potteries in the New Forest, and the East Grimstead Roman Villa. Much of this was undertaken on his own and he acquired the title, the lone digger. For all these activities he is thought to have been self-taught albeit with the advice and support of his colleagues in the Movement; his illustrations often feature himself. Heywood is buried in Ibsley churchyard

Our next meeting at 7:30pm Morgan's Vale & Woodfalls Hall is the AGM followed by The Home Front in WW2 by Julie Davies, all welcome.