

# FRIENDS OF GOSPORT MUSEUM

www.friendsofgosportmuseum.org.uk

## NEWSLETTER

JANUARY/ FEBRUARY 2012

### Talk-Lancelyn Green Collection

19th January 2012 7:30pm

Studio Gosport Discovery Centre

Sherlock Holmes By Michael Gunton

### Identifying Historic Highways

7:30pm 22nd March 2012

Studio Gosport Discovery Centre

PATHH project (Providing Access To Hampshire s Heritage) is a project that seeks to identify historic highways that might satisfy a modern need if they were to be reinstated.

Please book both Discovery Cntr

### Friends of Gosport Museum

#### Informal Coffee Meeting

in the Discovery Centre 10:30am  
every 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of the month.

Meetings before next Newsletter

Thursday 12th January 2012

Thursday 9th February 2012

Thursday 8th March 2012

For around 1 hour

meet at Bookworm Café

### Christmas Party

It's that time of year again. A new set-up for the Friends of Gosport Museum, we had our tea/ coffee, mince pies and cakes. With the Extras provided by the new (from October 2011) provider of the café in the Discovery Centre. There was a good turn-out, and we had a visit by both Janet Wildman and Tom De Witt, who were great, spending time explaining what had happened in the Museum Service and what was due

May I now thank everyone who contributed to the Community Funding Scheme at Waitrose in July, we received the magnificent sum of £215 which we shall give towards the cost of "Inter-active Mammoth" for the Geology Museum. I understand that work is in progress in producing it.

The recent talks, "Alverstoke's Charter of Liberty" by Joan Russell and Maggie Ventham and the talk on "Grange Farm" by Bob Whiteley, were both well received; unfortunately, much to my regret, I was unable to hear either of them.

On Monday 12th December 2011 The "The Friends" met for our Christmas Party. There was a good turn out and Janet Wildman and Tom De Witt arrived and were able to answer questions.

My best wishes, I hope that you had a Happy and Joyous Christmas.

Sydney Aynsworth, Chairman

I am sure everyone will be sorry to hear of the death of Joan Symonds in December and Jo Adams last week. There will be more about all they have done for FGM over the years in next Newsletter.

## Mammoth For Geology Gallery Progress

The mammoth project is certainly picking up speed! The mammoth build is under way and I've taken delivery of fur and a couple of glass eyes. Work has commenced in the gallery; the bench space has been lowered and the paint work is being tidied up. We're just about to order the cases for the mammoth remains (shoulder blade, part of a femur and two molars) and we'll start on the panels in the New Year. Mark Fenton is just drawing up the revised positions of the display. When this is done I'll send you a copy so that you are up to date with how the display will look.

I will need to pay for the perspex boxes up front, but will send the receipts to the Curry Fund for reclaiming the money.

### **Christine Taylor**

Keeper of Natural Sciences Hampshire County Council  
Culture, Communities and Business Services, Arts and Museums Service

Payment of £1,000 has been sent to Christine Taylor for the work that has been done so far.

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## The Future of Hampshire Arts and Museums 2012 – 2016 and Beyond

At the Joint Management Committee meeting, October 27<sup>th</sup> 2011, Dr Janet Owen (Director) presented **A Draft Strategic Plan** for the service. The FOGM Committee had also met Dr Owen the previous week to discuss the future with her. These presentations were carried out across the county and the service. Comments were fed back by December 2<sup>nd</sup>. The final version of the plan will have been presented to the relevant HCC executive member by January '12. In financial year '10-'11, the Phase 1 restructuring plan had to take into account the annual loss of £1m, from the old Renaissance funding system, **and** the cuts in central government funding for local authorities. The result that year was a loss of 8% of the museum service budget. Restructuring has been accomplished by staff redundancies, retirements, merging of responsibilities, eliminating some posts and reorganising the county into zones. This means less time will be spent on the traditional curatorial role of museum staff. Fewer staff in new jobs will require different management skills from the work force and must be seen as an opportunity to draw in partners from business and tourism to help support the development of museums. In financial year '12-'13 a further 8% must be cut from the budget. Phase 2 inevitably means loss of more staff and a reduction in hours of ancillary and care-taking attendance.

We know that future **central government** funding for museums, libraries and galleries will be administered by The Arts Council. There will be much less money than previously, the new system involves bidding for funds. Hampshire has entered a bid for funding, in partnership with others in the Solent area, the result should be known early in 2012. Meanwhile the service is holding on to its

priorities identified in Phase1:- stewardship of collections, education, promotion and publicity to generate income, widening participation in cultural activities.

For the future, in the **Draft Strategic Plan**, Dr Owen and her team have set out an integrated cultural vision for the 1.3 million local residents and 31 million visitors to the county each year. Museums are not isolated institutions. In April '11 the service for Culture, Communities and Rural Affairs was merged with Properties, Buildings and Regulatory Services to form "Culture, Communities and Business Services". This is just one of the changes suffered by our staff! Under this new umbrella, **Hampshire Arts and Museums have recently been merged to form one cultural service**. Until now they have been working to models established in the late 1980's, neither branch has been thoroughly reviewed for a decade. The service has to use its resources and expertise to create a 21<sup>st</sup> century, inclusive, accessible product for all who live in and visit the area. Hampshire has a good reputation, nationally, for innovation and changing public delivery, the challenge is to live up to these achievements in a vastly different financial climate. The Draft Plan is detailed, covering 31 sides of A4, this report gives you an impression of the contents.

In the Discovery Centre our town has the "Gosport Museum on the Mezzanine" with a photograph collection (copies can be bought) and two computer programs. Unlike other museums, ours is available for many hours a week. There is also the former Grammar School in Walpole Road (opposite). This building contains the Museum's stores and the research room. The latter is available to the public, by appointment, when a member of staff is able to attend. Also in this building are –

- Local Studies with the Geology Gallery and Family History Research
- SEARCH - the children's educational museum
- The Gosport Gallery (1 of 3 in the county, indemnified for valuable exhibitions).

The Strategic Plan takes a fresh look at everything. There will be changes and different ways of using these facilities. The Walpole Rd building is very expensive to maintain. The use of SEARCH is to be scaled down and fewer school visits will be made, the hope is to generate income from gradually expanding public activities, offering a venue to suitable users. Sharing with new users will call for very clear understanding of procedures. Development of the site will be as an arts centre.

The Gallery is a "Flagship" asset and it too will have to help pay for itself through sponsorship and donations. The county exhibitions team does excellent work but is an expense which has to be justified. At present, staff from the D.C. walk across to look after the reception desk.

The stored collections owned by GBC (ie objects acquired prior to 1991) have been digitally accessioned and a disk made available to the council. Some of these artefacts are at Chilcombe House, Winchester due to special conservation needs. Chilcombe is the headquarters of the museum service at the present time and houses the county collections. We lost our local museum

officer and community curator in phase1 cuts. A visiting curator has been on duty at our museum stores on 2 days per month since July, but has left the county to take a full-time post elsewhere. In

the interim, the senior keeper for Arts, Gill Arnott, has been asked to take on these visits. She is a busy woman may not have her help so often.

The whole question of what volunteers will be able to do in the future is in the melting pot. Already three sites in the county have registers of dozens of people, working in rotas, to keep the sites and their ancillary facilities open. The service has visited other authorities to observe and examine volunteer schemes. After the Strategic Plan has been accepted, there will be discussions on the roles and training of volunteers. Watch this space! Maggie Ventham (vice chairman and JMC rep.)

At the Xmas meeting we discussed what FOGMs can do. Janet reminded us we could encourage DC users to go up to the Museum. Members willing to steward the Museum on busy days are needed. David Taylor kindly offered to make a rota. An initial meeting for volunteers will be held Thursday January 12<sup>th</sup> 10.30am at the DC cafe. If we could increase membership this would provide more help and funds. Margaret Ventham

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Sarah Greenaway, the Events Officer at Gosport Discovery Centre has organised a new group called Down Memory Lane. An opportunity for people who are passionate about Gosport, love to talk about how it used to be. Bring along any photos or postcards of Gosport that they would like to share and chat about. It is intended as a very informal, friendly evening in the Local Studies Centre on the High Street, Gosport . It will run from 5 to 7pm starting Tuesday 17th January and the group will meet every third Tuesday of the month (a free event).

Please let me have items by post or email, details below, by 18th February for the March/ April Newsletter, include details for events in early May Thank you. Ian

Friends of Gosport Museum web site at  
[www.friendsofgosportmuseum.org.uk](http://www.friendsofgosportmuseum.org.uk)

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by email please let me know.  
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