

FRIENDS OF GOSPORT MUSEUM

www.friendsofgosportmuseum.org.uk

NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2009

Outing To Portsmouth Cathedral & RM Museum

Saturday 26th September
Contact Mrs M Duly for the
final few places.

Talk in The Discovery Centre by Gill Arnott

7th October 7:30pm
Mapping the Past', covers maps
from Saxton's 1575 map of
Hampshire
to the 20th century road maps

Friends of Gosport Museum
Informal Coffee Meeting
In the Discovery Centre 10:30am
Every 2nd Thursday of the month
Meetings before next Newsletter

Thursday 8th October
Thursday 12th November
For around 1 hour meet at the
Readers' Rest Café
Informal meeting to discuss local heritage
and perhaps extras such as gallery visits
and opportunities to discover
what is available at the Discovery Centre.

Subscription Reminder

All subscriptions are due on the 1st April and are the same as previous years, £5 single and £7.50 joint. If you are yet to pay your subscription and wish to continue as a member and receive this newsletter from November, please send your payment to Linda Hedley, 7 Fairhome Close, Elson, Gosport, Hants, PO12 4HZ, or if you wish to pay by standing order contact David Moore.

Get Involved!

We would like to build up a list of Friends we can contact for help with ongoing projects and one-off volunteering opportunities. There are plenty of ways to get involved, including:

- listing objects in the collections for our new audit (Wednesdays or Thursdays)
- local history enquiry research
- helping us steward special events at SEARCH, Gosport Gallery and the Museum on the Mezzanine
- identifying mystery objects and photos
- general office administration assistance (Wednesdays or Thursdays)

If you would like your name added, please contact the Museum Officer with any preference you may have for projects or activities. Erica Munro 02392 588 035, erica.munro@hants.gov.uk or leave a note at Local Studies)

Thank you to all the Friends who have donated pre-decimal coins to SEARCH. Keep them coming! We now have our Victorian teaset thanks to Joan Symonds. We still need a nice example of Art Deco china - preferably a cup, saucer and plate. Contact Janet Wildman if you want to donate anything to SEARCH for the handling sessions.'

BAFM Annual SE Western Counties Area Conference 2009

I attended this meeting on Monday, 7th September in the Princess Royal Conference room in the Portsmouth Royal Naval Museum. The meeting was very well organized with excellent speakers on interesting subjects – and an equally good buffet lunch. (The on-the-ground organization was in the hands of Sue Hall, the regional area organizer for BAFM with the support of the Friends of the Royal Naval Museum.) We first heard about the current work being done by much appreciated volunteers at the *Mary Rose Trust* from Mary Kinoulty, its Head of Learning and Trevor Sapey, the Volunteer Co-ordinator, friends being constructively used beside the professionals, some having risen to the challenge of helping raise the enormous amount needed for the next exciting stage of the site's development. Then we heard from Andrew Buchanan of the Royal Naval Submarine Museum. I found it interesting that here the Friends knew their place in the nicest kind of way, and possibly reflected the military background of the project. This approach worked for them. This museum too has been given a 'healthy' Heritage Lottery fund grant and members on average give more than the minimum, a useful point here, the subscription is stated as a minimum, not as a fixed amount. (This museum of course has the benefit of the support of a close-knit submarine camaraderie.) Then came LUNCH !!, after which we could wander or visit St. Ann, the C.of E. church which is, and it's a pity, is usually out of bounds to dockyard visitors. It is a lovely building and full of interesting things. The history was ably told us by Wendy Smith of the Portsmouth Museums and Records Society. (Interesting too that the architect was the versatile Thomas Telford, who was at work in the dockyard at that time. (That reminded me that once I was told that T.T. built?/lived in?one or both? of the 2 old houses opposite the Thorngate Hall, one the nursing home in Lodge Gardens , the other on Bury Road – a subject for research perhaps.?) . After lunch, we had a group discussion on the various ways Friends' relationships with their museum worked, focusing on Benefits and Bonuses. Not unexpectedly I did not have anything useful to contribute to this, seeing how things have been with us – I could say though that the situation looks brighter with the recent introduction of a new, supervisory system and new staff . Then followed 2 more talks, the first by Christine Piggot from the Brading Roman villa, IOW – she was splendid, and Michael Gunton, the Portsmouth Museum Service Archivist who is responsible for the prestigious Conan Doyle Collection which has been bequeathed to the Museum. Then came a short tea break before an open forum on the ever-present and knotty problems of 1) fund raising and 2) attracting new members. Again I had nothing helpful to contribute. The day ended with, what was a highlight to me, a visit to HMS Victory concentrating on a new approach to the presentation of this wonderful ship by the Curator, Peter Goodwin - highlighting the ship as a museum, in the course of which he has eliminated some excruciating anachronisms and added enormously to its interest – to those involved in museums, at least. I found it a most interesting day, though it gave me a restless night tossing and turning and thinking about us. (The only downside was the inefficient use of the microphone, I could not hear all the speakers.) By Mary Duly

News Flash:Gosport Living History Members move North East to Castle Acre and back 52 Years to 1590 - Tudor Visitors at Castle Acre Priory

When Ros and John Teague came to live in Norfolk, they visited many places of interest and Ros liked Castle Acre village and Priory very much.

Originally the village of Castle Acre, with 13 other manors, was given to William de Warenne by William the Conqueror, for his support at the Battle of Hastings in 1066. The lands were taken from Toki, Angle Saxon Lord and Landowner. William de Warenne and his wife Gundrada built the castle, now ruined, and enlarged the village. In 1089, the de Warenne obtained a royal charter to build the Priory Church and Monastery as their Cluniac monks found the Castle Chapel too small. De Warenne, who was made a Cluny in France. A splendid Church was built and Monastic buildings for 36 monks, with a farm, orchards and gardens worked by local villagers as the monks concentrated on services and prayers.

The Village was on a pilgrim route to the famous shrine at Walsingham. To visit this shrine twice 'equalled a pilgrimage to Rome and excused one from Purgatory after death. During the Middle Ages, Castle Acre was a market town, with a weekly market and annual fairs. Inns, Alehouses and probably

even the Prior's lodgings, were busy with pilgrims.

In 1537, at the time of the Dissolution of the Monasteries, the Priory was surrendered to the Crown, buildings were destroyed and lands sold off. By 1590, this must have caused problems for the villagers who used to work for the Monastery, as the monks were now dispersed and no more pilgrims came en route to Walsingham as the shrine there, was destroyed. Only the Prior's lodging was retained and used as a farmhouse.

The Castle and Priory are now owned by English Heritage, who have turned the cowshed and dairy into a museum, gallery and shop, and the barn into an area for exhibitions and games for school children with occasional Tudor historical interpreters and musicians.

When Ros told the staff at the Priory that she and her friends were historical interpreters with over 20 years experience at Gosport 17th C Village they invited her to present an interpretation at the Priory.

By this time I was living in Norfolk, so Ros, Mandy Christopher (nee Smith), occasionally Mary Knight and myself became "Mistress Sheffield and Friends" - Ros as Mistress Sheffield, Mandy as Toildy the pedlar, Mary as Mary Hewett, inkle and caddis weaver, and myself as the old Aunt, Mistress Hawkins, as a spice merchant and maker of herbal medicines.

We tell visitors about life after the Dissolution, with costumes, food and artefacts of the period . Ros, Mandy and Mary's clothes look much like those in scenes by painters Jan and Pieters Breughel and spend time in the Prior's lodgings. I wear the usual black of merchants wives and have my stall in the museum gallery beside the beautiful Herb Garden, planted with medicinal and culinary herbs in the style of a Monastery Garden.

We find our visitors of all ages enjoy meeting us and ask many questions, so we continue to study everyday life in the late 16th Century and research its customs and beliefs. Many of our adult visitors are very knowledgeable about social history (we guess some may come from Cambridge University or senior Clergy in holiday dress) we need to know our subject well. It is very interesting to be a "Time Traveller" and see how life changes over the centuries as political events affect the lives of ordinary people wherever they may be. Yet Castle Acre Priory still retains an atmosphere of peace and beauty among the the ruins, where children may happily play and families enjoy picnics, sheep may safely graze and there are trees, birds, butterflies and wild flowers aplenty. By Rosemarie Gibaud July 2009

Some Explanatory Notes on the Above By Mrs M Duly

Rosemarie Gibaud was a founder member of the Friends of Gosport Museum and left for Norfolk a few years ago to live near Roz Teague who had moved from Park Road, Gosport to Norfolk . They and Mandy Smith were active members of the 17th Century Village.

Incidentally, Roz's grandfather was the St John Ambulance man whom Mary Tyrell told us about in The War Memorial Hospital talk, at the AGM, who wheeled the injured rugby player over to the Royal Hospital in Portsmouth and began the whole War Memorial project.

In love with the casualty -a young nurse remembers (part 3) By Jean A Hill

This article was first published in the United Oxford Hospitals Chronicle December 1971.

The day Radcliffe casualty treated an entire football team. Jean Hill who was Nurse Stone - continues her series of articles about the lives of nurses just after the second world war.

One thing calculated to make my blood run cold was the sight of a small typed list pinned to the notice board in the nurses' dining room - the change list. "Nurse J. Stone. Casualty, 17/9/46

Nurse J. Stone. Main Theatre 19/9/47."

These two instances caused me to almost collapse with fear and apprehension. Yet had I but known it, here was my niche as I was to discover. Casualty became my first love and I was never happier than the times when we overflowed to the doors. How many can recall sitting on the big brass fire-guard of

the old gas fire in the evenings waiting for a casualty to be brought in? On one such occasion we appeared to have been invaded by an entire football team. I considered that my colleague and I had coped magnificently, sending this one to X-ray, that one to the plaster room and yet another to casualty theatre. As a second year nurse and the senior on duty I felt pretty good after we had closed the door on the last one and restored the dressing room to order. So I was somewhat abashed when a footballer put his head round the door and said, "Please can I have my boots back?"

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How was I to tell him - after describing them to me in details - that I had placed them in an ambulance returning the injured to Abingdon! Need I add that he belonged to the home team By Jean A. Hill

Some Information That May be of Interest to Members

Mrs. Marion Perry , has recently died, a most loyal founder member.

Drs. John and Margaret Exley, have moved to Yorkshire on their retirement., I have been advised also believed to be founder members.

Discovery debate on "Evolution v. Creationism" as the D.C. have roped in some top names for it, and I believe there are as yet many bookings.
Information provided by Mary Duly.

Thank you to Mary Duly for all the information sent in for this newsletter. I am sorry that there was not a newsletter for July/ August, mostly as I was not able to prepare it on time, though there was not much apart from the basics to add.

I will be very grateful for any items sent in for the November/ December newsletter. If you have an item for the first half of January, I could also add that as I have found it difficult to get out the Newsletter when I would like to each time.

If you have any information or photos that you think may be of interest to member of the Friends of Gosport Museum or others , please let me have them by post or email, details are below, by the 16th October for the November/ December Newsletter.

The Newsletters are also being put on the Friends of Gosport Museum web site after they have been delivered, so you will be able to look back at them. The past newsletters and membership form on the site in time.

Friends of Gosport Museum web site at www.friendsofgosportmuseum.org.uk.

Please send contributions for the Newsletter to
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11 Harcourt Road, PO12 3NR ian@gosport.info
If you use email and would be happy to receive this
Newsletter by email, please let me know.
The views expressed are not necessarily those of
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member.

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