



# FRIENDS OF GOSPORT MUSEUM

[www.friendsofgosportmuseum.org.uk](http://www.friendsofgosportmuseum.org.uk)

## *NEWSLETTER*

*JULY/AUGUST 2016*

### Friends of Gosport Museum

#### Informal Coffee Meeting

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

#### Dates of Next Few Meetings

Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> July

Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> August

Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> September

meet at; Community Table in the  
Quiet Area past the café.

### Gosport Heritage Open Days 2016

Museum-on-the-Mezzanine floor of  
Gosport Discovery Centre on Thursday  
September 8<sup>th</sup> between 10.30 am and  
2.30pm. Please join the volunteers  
whenever you can! We may have our  
screen in time to do a short  
presentation. Maggie Ventham

### Museum Joint Management Committee Meeting 10 am June 28<sup>th</sup> '16 Report

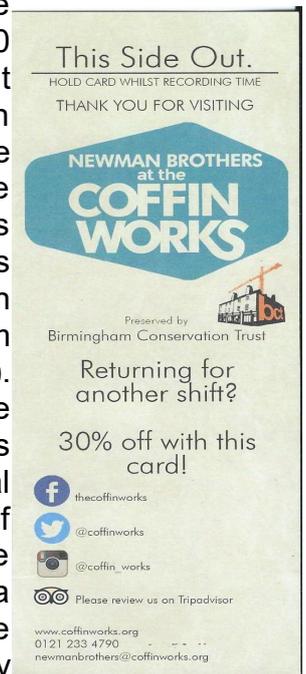
GBC Councillor Mrs Linda Batty attended the meeting. County and GBC Councillor Chris Carter was elected Chairman for this year. Minutes were recorded by GBC Secretary to the Committee Vicky Stone. Maggie Ventham FoGM Committee Representative and Dot Bedenham FoGM Committee Minutes Secretary attended the meeting as Secretary Ian Jeffery is unavailable for daytime meetings, Chairman Dr Aynsworth sent his apologies.

Cerian Trevant (replacing Museum Curator Erica Munro) explained her job title is **Community Museum Manager**. This is a more appropriate description for the work she will be doing in S.E Hants. Curating the collections is now a minor part of the management these days. Organising volunteers to host museums and getting involved with fund-raising events have become more important. Christine Taylor (HCT Natural Sciences Collections Officer) has been covering our museum, until Cerian took up her post. Christine presented the final 'Curator's Report'. Rebecca Parrant attended to represent **The Better Life Chances Team**, which was previously known as Community Engagement and Learning. Rebecca is responsible for education and museum offerings to schools across the county, her office is at Search Museum here in Gosport, where Janet Wildman was based before her retirement. (We continue to see Janet when she's needed for short contracts at SEARCH) Samantha Hetherington from GBC attended. Her job is in the department dealing with tourism and economic development. Tim Kelly HCT Financial Manager, presented Gosport Museum Budget Report. The next JMC meeting will be in October. This meeting closed at 11 am. Maggie Ventham Vice Chairman FoGM

## City of my Birth by Dot Bedenham FoGM Member

I am a Brummie by birth and most of my upbringing was in the city once described as 'The Workshop of the World'. What none of the family knew until my sister started researching our history was that my Mum's ancestors were in the city from at least 1750 and were doing the sort of jobs that Birmingham is famous for – making small metal products, jewellery and guns as well as making fireworks and selling beer. Every few years I go back to my roots with my sister, who now lives near Hull. This year we were able to visit Birmingham's new central library where we gaped at its amazing architecture and then tried to find more about the great-great grandfather who not only made fireworks in the 1860s but also put on artistic displays. We didn't have a lot of success but we had other plans! As some of our ancestors had lived and worked in Birmingham's Jewellery Quarter we decided to visit museums relating to the manufacture of metal objects. We had already been to the Museum of the Jewellery Quarter on another occasion (well worth a visit) but there were at least two more museums we wanted to see. One was Coffin Works.

'Coffin Works' is located in Fleet Street in the Jewellery Quarter. It's the home of what was once Newman Brothers, a factory that for almost 100 years manufactured coffin jewellery – handles, memorial plaques etc. It later branched out into producing coffin shrouds and evidence can be seen in a line of sewing machines still with the original thread. The visit to the Museum consists of an hour-long tour of what can still be seen of the original factory. Much of the building is now used to house the 70 volunteers who help with conservation, education, oral history recording as well as museum tours. It also houses the offices of the Birmingham Conservation Trust who were responsible for the factory's rescue (with money from Birmingham City Council, English Heritage and the Heritage Lottery Fund). Once we'd clocked on using the factory's old machine, Cornelius our guide explained the factory layout, showed us one of the machine rooms, took us to the offices, the sewing room, and showed us shelves still full of original stock. It was a fascinating hour and I would thoroughly recommend a visit if you are in the area. There is an excellent website you can visit in advance and look at Trip Advisor where you will see excellent reviews. There is a shop – I don't recall fridge magnets but we did buy pencils and erasers! The person serving us seemed to think that two members of FoGM had recently visited. Could this be true?



During our stay we also went to the 'Pen Museum'. Much as we enjoyed 'Coffin Works' it couldn't, because of its subject, evoke the same nostalgia as a museum that displayed the nib pens, fountain pens and ink bottles reminiscent of our childhood. Once again we had a guide, this time one who helped us to make our own nibs using the original machines. He proudly informed us that Birmingham supplied 75% of the world's pens during the 19<sup>th</sup> century and in return we told him about our relatives! To my mind there were a few too many nibs on display but there were also plenty of pens, blotters and inkwells as well as the later typewriters. There were pens for us to try out while seated at a bench watching a video of a woman who worked at one of Birmingham's pen factories in her early days.

Birmingham is a city steeped in history and well worth visiting. The main museum now has a room dedicated to the Staffordshire Hoard and has always been famous for its collection of Pre-Raphaelite paintings. You can take a trip along the canal basin or, highly recommended, go to the Jewellery Quarter. The city centre was a bit of a muddle while we were there and one reason was because a pedestrian route to the Quarter is now being built. Birmingham is proud of the trades that made it famous - rightly so because some of the people involved were my ancestors!  
By Dot Bedenham

## A Few Odds and Ends

As there is a bit of space left in this newsletter, I thought I would put in a few items, which I hope at least some will be of interest to you. Perhaps if there is something that you would like to see more of or other items of that type, or even if there are some items and items of that types that you would not like to see in future additions, you could let me know. Ian Jeffery (Editor)

All Friends of Gosport Museum newsletters since November 2007 with other information about FoGM can be found at [www.friendsofgosportmuseum.org.uk](http://www.friendsofgosportmuseum.org.uk) a job for me after I have done my accounts and tax return (by end of July) is to scan and add all the past newsletters, I believe I have them all back to the beginning of the Friends of Gosport Museum.

I understand that plans for the changes in the Ferry Gardens will be available at the Town Hall from the 11<sup>th</sup> July 2016.

I have heard that the Council and from other sources that there has recently been an increase in interest in the war graves in Anns Hill Cemetery. Back in 2007 Den Budden contacted me as he had carried out a lot of work in that field and had planned a book but was not able to do that so offered me the information to go on a web site. The information came from mostly War Graves Commission information and newspaper articles of the time. They are still there and can be found at <http://bit.ly/29dV7Rg> . As you will see some work is being carried out to improve the format after two changes in site design due to the changing of way to view the internet since the site was started in 2001, but the information is there.

Thank you to Maggie Ventham (Vice Chairman) for passing on the following information. Maggie Linda, Jack, and Dot met Rebecca Parrant at SEARCH when they were volunteering. Rebecca is based in Janet Wildman's former office but is **not** her replacement. This is because Rebecca will be doing similar work but covering the whole county!

A web site that has historical works and articles mainly by Joan Russell and David Maber is <http://www.gosporthistoryarchive.org.uk/> . It is the web site for the Gosport Local History Luncheon Club, which meet at Christchurch Hall on the third Thursday of the month except April, August and December (not during school holidays) from 12noon to 2pm.

This may seem a bit early, but now the AGM has been done and the committee for 2016/17 has been elected it may be the best time to look at the Christmas Party/ Event/ Meeting/ Do. That is one of the problems, finding a name and the purpose of it or should it be finding the purpose first. In the past it was a sort of tea party, with tea/ coffee food brought in by members, a raffle and held in SEARCH. In 2015 it was held in the area within the Museum-on-the-Mezzanine tea/ coffee and cakes ordered in advance by the Friends of Gosport Museum and those attending made a contribution towards the cost. A letter has been sent out in the past asking who will attend, I have not done this over the last few years as I found people would be able to say they will attend and were then unable and felt some would not say but perhaps be able to on the day but may not attend as have not said they will in advance. They number estimated has been close in those few years. If you have any suggestions they would be very welcome, let me or another committee member know your ideas.

I have revived an item from BaFM [www.bafm.org.uk](http://www.bafm.org.uk) just after the Referendum. I have not passed it on as they were asking us to look at future of our museum due to possible changes and cuts from leaving the EU. As we do not have any control over the running of the museum and I understand there were already cuts or re-organization due, I felt it would just cause confusions. I had already caused confusion over sending on an item from Caroline Dinenage about the Morrison's Fund for charities, FoGM is not a registered charity, so does not qualify.

## Items For The Future Newsletters

I would like to thank those who have sent in items to this and past newsletters. This newsletter includes Maggie Venham and Dot Bedenham.

If you have something that may be of interest to other members of the Friends of Gosport Museum, please send them to me either by post 11 Harcourt Road, Gosport, Hants PO12 3NR or email: [ian@gosport.info](mailto:ian@gosport.info) .

If you are not sure what to write about or other problems, you could give me a call.

As you will see in this and past newsletter, it could be about a place you have visited, some memories of the past (I suppose if they are memories they have to be from the past) or some historical item, event or person that you have researched.

Thank you for your future articles. Ian Jeffery

President

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Hon. Secretary

*Ian Jeffery*

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Committee Secretary

*Dot Bedenham*

Membership Secretary

*Linda Hedley*

Committee Members

*Mary Duly*

*Jack Poole*

*Yvonne Riddell*

### Subscription Reminder 2016/17

Subscriptions for Friends of Gosport Museum 2016/17 due from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016. £6 single £9 joint please send the Payments (cheques made to: Friends of Gosport Museum) to Linda Hedley, 7 Fairhome Close, Elson, Gosport, Hants PO12 4HZ.

Joined since 1<sup>st</sup> November 2015 your subscription lasts to 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017.

### Would You Like to Volunteer?

If you would like to volunteer for SEARCH it would be Wendy at [wendy.redman@hampshireculturaltrust.org.uk](mailto:wendy.redman@hampshireculturaltrust.org.uk) you need to contact. If it is for the Gosport Museum Collection then it would be Jacqui Ready [jacqui.ready@hampshireculturaltrust.org.uk](mailto:jacqui.ready@hampshireculturaltrust.org.uk) . If you would like to volunteer for the remainder of the Discovery Centre it would be Rose Redman [rosemary.redman@hants.gov.uk](mailto:rosemary.redman@hants.gov.uk) . Gosport Gallery volunteering contact Jen Manwaring [Jennifer.manwaring@hampshireculturaltrust.org.uk](mailto:Jennifer.manwaring@hampshireculturaltrust.org.uk)

If you have information, articles, events or photos that may be of interest to Friends of Gosport Museum, please let me have them by post or email. A big thank you to those who have contributed to this newsletter. If for the September Newsletter by 19<sup>th</sup> August or as soon as you can to : Ian Jeffery 11 Harcourt Rd, Gosport, Hants PO12 3NR – [ian@gosport.info](mailto:ian@gosport.info)

The Newsletter can be received by email (Adobe Reader .pdf) let me know if you would be happy to receive it this way. Ian

Please send contributions for the Newsletter to  
Ian Jeffery, FoGM Newsletter Editor  
11 Harcourt Road, PO12 3NR [ian@gosport.info](mailto:ian@gosport.info)  
If you would be happy to receive this Newsletter  
by email in .PDF, please let me know.  
The views expressed are not necessarily those of  
Hampshire Cultural Trust, GDC or its staff.

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