

FRIENDS OF GOSPORT MUSEUM

www.friendsofgosportmuseum.org.uk

NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER/ DECEMBER 2008

Friends of Gosport Museum

Christmas Party

Friday 12th Dec 2008

The Studio, Gosport Discovery Cntr

Please return the enclosed form

FREE, will be a raffle

2:30pm to 4:30pm

Thorngate Talks by Joan Russell

Thorngate Halls, Bury Rd

21st November 2008

2pm to 3:30pm - £1

Friends of Gosport Museum

Informal Coffee Meeting

In the Discovery Centre 10:30am

Every 2nd Thursday of the month

Meetings before next Newsletter

Thursday 13th November 2008

Thursday 11th December 2008

Thursday 10th January 2008

For around 1 hour meet at the

Readers' Rest Café

Informal meeting to discuss local heritage

and perhaps extras such as gallery visits

and opportunity to discover

what is available at the Discovery Centre.

Chairman's Report, Friends of Gosport Museum

Welcome back to a new season following the rather dismal summer break.

I hope that many of you did manage to find some sun. Laura Weston has left the Museum staff and taken up "pastures new," as Curator of Art, to the City of Portsmouth. I am sure, that we all wish her well in her new post. Her place has been taken by Wendy Redman from Search and we wish her a warm welcome. Another departure from the scene has been that of Caroline Dudley, Head of Museums and Archives for Hampshire; Gisela and I attended the Open Day at the Sir Harold Hillier Gardens in Romsey which was held to mark her leaving; we spent a pleasant afternoon enjoying the gardens and dodging showers! Joan Russell and Mary Duly organised a Local History Quiz in Studies Centre in August; this resulted in a good response and prizes were presented in September.

Once again we must thank Mary Duly for organising the trip to the Russell-Cotes Museum in Bournemouth. It was perfect autumn day, which was just as well, because the previous afternoon the museum was severely damaged in a rain storm and was closed; unfortunately ours was the only group not contacted and informed. None the less I am sure everyone managed to make the best of the situation. The "Titanic Exhibition" in the Gosport Gallery, the opening of which was attended by Gisela and myself, was very successful, with record attendance ; all the artefacts had been collected by one young man who started a life long interest in the Titanic when he was only 6 years old . Bob Harrop's recent slide show on "Old Gosport" was well attended by both members and many others. It brought back memories to many in the audience.

And finally a date for your diary! Friday 12th December, The Friends Christmas party, don't forget small presents for the patients in The War Memorial Hospital.

REPORT on our Summer Holiday Local History-Quiz Competition FOR ALL AGES at Gosport Discovery Centre

Thanks to a free issue of our “LOOK AT GOSPORT TOWN” booklet to Quiz enthusiasts, ex-Project Director Joan Russell was able to compile a Local History Competition for all. It was fun for Kids and Adults alike to search for the answers in a free issue of this RED 8-page booklet. It is a cartoon-style “potted history” funded by Hampshire and Gosport Councils in 1997. It briefly traces 750 years of Gosport Town’s long history from its foundation by a Bishop in 1204 up to 1922.

“Look at Gosport Town” describes how tiny Gosport had struggled through centuries of dramas - like receiving the very first terrifying bombardment of the 1642 Civil War from Portsmouth! Then a forced Union with Portsmouth in 1682! Followed by an accidental release from such *bondage* in 1688. Ups and downs as a fortified military seaport serving the British Empire for the next three centuries ended with Gosport rising to a Chartered Borough in 1922. The dramatic 1939-1945 World War 2 bombings destroyed much of Gosport’s quaint old streets and alleys, sometimes revealing medieval structures alongside ruined 18th C rubble. Steady 20th Century growth, then “Gosport, the Millennium Town” emerged as our modern 21st Century Gosport.

Although over 350 schoolchildren and Adults collected entry forms, less than a quarter of them were returned. Many children enjoyed reading the booklet. but forgot to hand in completed forms, or “messed them up”, as kids do...A bonus was that so many Adults expressed their surprise and pleasure at discovering that modern Gosport Town has such an interesting past tucked away behind its modern façades.



On Monday 15th September Angela Gill and Dr Aynsworth, Chairman of the Friends of Gosport Museum welcomed a good number of Adults and children with their parents to the Discovery Centre at 6pm. Local Historian David Maber of St Vincent Local History Club presented the Prizes and Certificates, congratulating them all.

He also emphasised our grateful thanks to the Friends of Gosport Museum for funding the costs of the prizes and certificates, etc. also to Discovery Centre Staff for their brilliant “Quiz Administration”. by Joan Russell.

Coach Visit to Russell-Cotes Saturday 13th September

Originally the plan was to visit the Russell-Cotes museum but unfortunately this was closed due to flooding. So a change of plan was necessary and essential to any thinking was a cup of coffee and an inspiration struck. I would explore. So I went to track down roads I had known years ago. The road to Westbourne was one as I had spent 5 years of the war there. However, so much had changed in the Square that I was confused about which direction to take.

I had great fun exploring and discovering such places as the library, and close to it was a sign pointing to Westbourne ... but by then I had no time to visit. There used to be a department store called Bobby’s where Debenham’s now stands but it was destroyed by a landmine. Not far from it was a shop called Forte’s where you could get Knickerbocker Glories. I never managed to buy one as I never had enough pocket money – Heaven knows what they were made of. !!

Now having covered a lot of ground, it was time to head for sea and a quiet sit down to enjoy the sun and people watch for half an hour before catching the coach back to Gosport after a lovely day in Bournemouth.
From Ann Lane

It could be judged an outing organiser's nightmare to find on arrival that the place you had planned to visit was SHUT – the reason for it was understandable, Russell-Cotes museum had been severely flooded the day before.

Fortunately the weather was lovely and Bournemouth being the kind of place it is, our party, a resilient lot, set out to enjoy themselves – which, by all the accounts I heard at the end of the day, they certainly did. Now the question is do I book for the Russell-Cotes next year, let me know what you think. Mary Duly.

All Mary Duly's careful plans and phone calls were sabotaged the day before the 13th September by a deluge of huge hail stones which broke through the Russell Cotes Gallery roof, letting rain run down their precious paintings, and SHUTTING the WHOLE place down. No one had let us know! We stood uncertainly, staring at the sparkling sea, sand and sunshine, waiting for plan B. There wasn't one, apart from "comfort visits"(courtesy of apologetic Museum Staff). Those not interested wandered off down the East Cliff in search of refreshment and something to do.

I fell in with a former FGM Chairman Jennie Hall who started to regale me with the tale of her latest hospitalisation, and recent move into Sheltered Care at Northcott House. She was with Carol Wright, her old school friend from Wykeham House. One of the greatest pleasures of the day for me was observing how Carol's training and career as a nurse prompted her to act spontaneously as "minder" to Jennie, but she also kept an anxious eye or hand on me, in case I might trip. Kind and reassuring Carol!

We turned in to the East Cliff entrance of the Royal Bath Hotel, and went up the steps to be served welcome cappuccinos on their Swimming pool balcony, overlooking the sea. Meanwhile Jennie enjoyed a swim in their indoor pool. Afterwards we walked down to the Gardens, and found a neat a little kiosk which sold us all we needed for a picnic lunch, sitting in the sun. Mine included fresh-cut sandwiches, fruit and ice-creams.

Afterwards we walked it all off in a nostalgic wander through the Gardens and main shops Then we were joined by Mary Duly and others for a classic cream tea on the same "Royal Bath" balcony where we had our morning cappuccinos. The coach ride home through the September countryside was as relaxing as the company. It was a shame about the Russell-Cotes Museum, but I DID enjoy Plan B. Thanks Mary! By Joan Russell.

Thorngate Talks by Joan Russell

A series of talks by Joan Russell's is planned to help the fund raising of £250,000 for the repair of Gosport's 50 year old THORNGATE HALLS, "Histories and Mysteries of the Founders of the Thorngate Halls 1885 - 1960"

The first is on Friday 21st November, 2.00 pm – 3.30pm you will be able to get home before dark, venue, Thorngate Halls Entry £1.00 - with Raffle. Ring 02392 580072 to book your seat.

The second is on Friday 23rd January expected to be at the Gosport Discovery Centre 7:30pm to 9pm.

Events Discovery Centre and Offer to Members of the Friends of Gosport Museum

If FGM members buy any two tickets for events to December we can offer a third one free (cheapest ticket free).

On Land and Sea - the Royal Marines in the First World War Thursday 13 November, 7.30pm-9pm
Historian Ian Maine will tell the story of the Royal Marines in the Great War, with illustrations and references to the Portsmouth Div of RM Light Infantry, which was based at Forton Barracks. Adults £3, young people £1

Stamping, Shouting & Singing Home - A Nuffield Th/Forest Forge production. Friday 14 November, 7.30-9.30
Story set in the Deep South in the 1950s about several generations of a black American family, starring a quartet of black female performers. Book early to avoid disappointment! Adults £5, under 18s £3

Screenwriting: The Universal Appeal of Film, with author Craig Batty Thursday 20 November, 7.30pm-9pm
Why do we love films? Discussing topics such as plot, character and theme, screenwriting expert Craig Batty
Craig's new book Writing for the Screen: Creative and Critical Approaches is published in October. Price tbc

Mary Rose Day, Gosport Discovery Centre Saturday 22 November, 10am-4pm. Talks for all 11.30am & 2.30pm. Drop in and meet characters from King Henry VIII's ill-fated ship the Mary Rose, which sunk in the Solent in 1545! Handle genuine artefacts from Tudor times! Free, just drop in

Meet a Nuclear Physicist! Thursday 27 Nov, 7.30pm-8.30pm Dr Paul Stephenson - who has given talks at the Royal Institute, will be talking about the practical applications and benefits of nuclear energy. Price tbc

Friends of Gosport
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Michael Adams
Mary Colyer
Mary Duly
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Giselle Aynsworth

Dickens at Christmas Thursday 4 December, 7.30pm-9.00pm Enjoy a mince pie, a glass of mulled wine (or fruit juice) and listen to Professor Tony Pointon and actress Susan Healey reveal the special Christmas magic of Dickens. £5 adults £2 young people (suitable for 12 and over)

Bruce Kent - Nuclear weapons - from creation to future abolition. Thursday 11 December, 7pm-8.15pm Former General Secretary of CND gives a talk about the past, present and future of nuclear weapons. Free.

I would like to say a big thank you to all of those who provided items for this Newsletter. If you or someone you know has not received this newsletter, but wish to receive future newsletters, please would they contact Linda Hedley 7 Fairhome Close, Gosport, Hants PO12 4HZ to confirm membership details. Ian Jeffery.

Some Meetings and Other Events That May be of Interest to Members

If you feel this section should not be in the Newsletter please let me know, or otherwise, if you come across other meetings or events that you feel may be of interest to other member, again just let me know.

From 25th October Kurt Jackson-The Solent Project Exhibition Gosport Gallery
19th November Gosport Society Talks
12th November/ 10th December Family History Society Meeting
21st November/ 19th December Gosport Railway Society Meeting

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 15th December for the November 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. I also hope to be able to put the past newsletters and membership form on the site.

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

Please send contributions for the Newsletter to
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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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Annual Subscription Individuals £5 Families £7.50

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