

FRIENDS OF GOSPORT MUSEUM

www.friendsofgosportmuseum.org.uk

NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER/ DECEMBER 2009

FGM Christmas Party

Friday 11th December 2009

The Studio (Mezzanine)

Gosport Discovery Centre 2pm-4pm

£1 Contribution towards catering.

(Local History Quiz Based on the Display in the Mezzanine – Optional)

Details on the Attached Form.

Talk by Dr Chris Palmer

'Rock Star' Dave Kemp

25th March 7:30pm

The Studio Discovery Centre

Friends of Gosport Museum

Informal Coffee Meeting

In the Discovery Centre 10:30am

Every 2nd Thursday of the month

Meetings before next Newsletter

Thursday 12th November

Thursday 14th January

For around 1 hour meet at the

Readers' Rest Café

Meeting to discuss local heritage.

Topic for

January/ February/ March 2010

Gosport's 948AD Royal Saxon

Charter of Stoke.

Chairman's Letter

During the past few months we have had several interesting events. There were the successful Exhibitions in The Gallery, of the work of Martin Snape and of Portsmouth Harbour as seen by Colin Baxter, also an interesting exhibition showing the work of the art teachers and their pupils from Hampshire schools. In keeping with the celebrations of Darwin's anniversary, SEARCH has held an exhibition together with some talks on related topics. More recently Gill Arnott, from the Museum Service, gave a talk on the early maps of Hampshire. Behind the scenes some of our members have been helping to list items and records in the collections; this is both interesting and worthwhile and I hope that it will lead to easier access for study and more objects on view. It would be good if we could have volunteers to act as stewards at events in SEARCH and on the Mezzanine. I would like thank Bob Whitely for representing The Friends on the occasion of Alistair Penfold's retirement from the Museum Service. The day of our visit to the Cathedral and the Royal Marine's Museum coincided with the continuing Indian Summer; on a delightful warm day we had a most interesting tour of the Cathedral with a knowledgeable guide who regaled us to many anecdotes concerning the Cathedral. After lunch, taken in various local hostelrys, we concerning the to the R.M.Museum which has recently undergone a "facelift" and gives an insight into the history and present-day duties of that illustrious Corps. (Those of us who took tea outside the Café were "entertained" by a Marine wedding, complete with a Guard of Honour under the command of a General Officer, all in No1 Dress Uniform!) Our thanks are due to Mary Duly for providing another interesting day. Further afield may I mention the "Montezuma Exhibition" at the British Museum and the accompanying displays of the Art and Culture of Mexico, past and present.

Lastly, on behalf of The Friends, I wish to extend our Congratulations and Best Wishes to the Doyenne of The Friends of Gosport Museum - Joan Russell, who reaches her 90th Birthday early in November. HAPPY BIRTHDAY JOAN. Sydney Aynsworth. Chairman

Friends of Gosport Museum Summer Outing 2009 Report

Sept.26th, the day of our outing provided us with the best weather we could have hoped for. First of all, because some were not certain where it is, we deviated to locate the Charles Dickens Museum in the old Commercial Road (just as well we were in a 'coachlet', not a full sized coach). Its setting is now a Georgian oasis: hard to believe that not so long ago it was the main road into Portsmouth. Before we reached the Anglican Cathedral in Old Portsmouth, we identified the nearby house where the Duke of Buckingham, a friend of Charles !, was assassinated by a disgruntled soldier, and the Unitarian church named after the local cobbler, John Pound, whose work with deprived children in the area in the mid 19th century was an inspiration for the founding of the Ragged Schools. Then we spent the rest of the morning in the Anglican Cathedral with an excellent guide, and of course it wasn't surprising that, here and there, our Joan could enrich the guide's story. We 'did' our own things over lunch, (and in the nature of things, the recommended café across the road had closed a few weeks beforehand!). I rediscovered the pleasure of walking the ramparts which have been freshened up as part of Portsmouth's Millennium plans. After lunch we made our way to the Royal Marines Museum locating en route where Conan Doyle had set up his first medical practice, only a plaque to mark this site and the actual house, with plaque, where Rudyard Kipling, particularly Rudyard, and his sister had endured many years of unkind treatment from the couple entrusted with them while the parents were in India – the price of Empire building. The Museum was fascinating with excellent displays geared suitably for young visitors and the oldies (like most of us!) I particularly liked the Hall of Honour, displaying the portraits, medals and stories of those who had won the Victoria Cross. (The ladies in our party also enjoyed viewing – and judging - 3 weddings taking place at different venues across the city!) Our coach driver commented that the day had been an education for him! (It is sad that so few could join us, but perhaps we were too ambitious in view of our membership base. We will have to choose carefully next year whether to lay on an outing or not, because though all 12 of us thoroughly enjoyed the day there is an unfortunate loss for our funds, not what we would have wanted) By Mary Duly

Top Marks for Mary Duly's Portsmouth outing to Portsmouth Anglican Cathedral and The Royal Marines Museum

First Class organisation, first class guide to Portsmouth Cathedral, enlarged around the soaring medieval Chapel of Martyred St Thomas a Becket,(murdered in his own Canterbury Cathedral). Picnic lunches in the cathedral grounds watched the gradual arrival of Asian and English guests for a big Cathedral Wedding. Formally clad Ushers ushered exotically dressed seniors to scantily clad teenage guests.

Arrival at the Royal Marine Museum coincided with the arrival of a Royal Marine Wedding Party, complete with RM Band etc. Champagne and savouries served to the clicking of cameras as they waited outside in the lovely sunshine, and smart uniforms to banquet in the huge ornate RM Officers' Mess. As for the Museum itself, it was almost overwhelming in size and colour and content - I must go back again! JOAN RUSSELL

Penicillin for the Soldiers returned from the war (part 4) By Jean A Hill

Then came the day for me to report to main theatre. Once more what I had thought would be a traumatic experience proved to be just my cup of tea. Theatre Sister took one look at me on arrival and said to her charge nurse. "Good God, have we got her?" Two weeks later, perhaps to prove her point, she threw gloves at me and said, "You can scrub up and take this insertion of radium." I proved myself and never looked back. I respected and admired my Theatre Sister and would have gone to the ends of the earth for her. She was superb. She demanded a high standard and if she didn't get it you were out. I have never experienced such team-work anywhere else.

Penicillin was first used in regular treatment at the Radcliffe Infirmary. In her final look back to the immediate post war days in the wards Jean A. Hill - who was then Nurse Stone - tells of the wonder drug.

V.J. night July 1945 was celebrated while I was training at the Radcliffe and I remember vividly how we all rushed into town as soon as we came off duty that evening. We put on our overcoats over our uniforms breaking a rule and joined the crowds milling round Carfax watching the rubber road smouldering. I believe this road of rubber blocks has now been removed.

Other joyful occasions included St. Giles Fair, May Day, and Eights Week, all of which flourish today. But because of austerity as it was called the college balls had not recommended. The New Theatre and the Playhouse were most generous with complimentary tickets and I saw many good shows as a result.

My scrapbook also reminds me of other things such as the privileges of nursing serviceman, known as the Penicillin Boys, in Hut D. Professor T. Pomfret Kilner did their pedicle grafts and Professor Howard Florey and Lady Florey watched over their reaction to the new wonder drug - penicillin. Their dressings were done personally by Lady Florey or her husband and no other dressings or ward activity was permitted while this was going on. Extreme care was taken that everything in use was completely sterile and Lady Florey had special rules for the treatment of wounds with penicillin.

They took great care of these wonderful boys back from the war with so much pain and suffering and the boys took great care of us, particularly greenhorns like me. Taffy, Don, Jock and Mitch, all with the resilience of youth which infected the whole ward. My days at the Rad. were happy ones indeed. Of the 17 in our set who began their training in May 1945, eleven survived to take finals and celebrate their graduation at the Ritz cinema before taking their leave of each other.

There had been moments when we had been tempted to chuck it in and go for a more glamorous and remunerative life, but we were a cheerful crowd who helped each other through thick and thin, and sad was the day that we went our separate ways. Can any of our set remember our motto? *'Press on Regardless - Unless it is elephant pie for supper'*.

Discovery Centre Open Art Prize

The Friends of Gosport Museum have donated a prize for the Open Art Exhibition which opens on the 6th February for the piece of art work judged the best produced by a Gosport resident. Please advise Wendy Redman at SEARCH if you would like to enter. There is to be a special private view the evening before (5th 7pm-9pm) for those selected to exhibit. It is at this private view that we would like to give out the prize donated by yourselves. Winner to be selected by Friends of Gosport Museum Coffee Morning Group. Information provided by Wendy Redman.

Report on the October Meeting entitled "Mapping the Past"

We were most fortunate to hear Gill Arnott, keeper of the County's collection of maps, give her talk on the development of printed maps between 1575 and 1820. Gill illustrated her talk with maps of Hampshire. She had enlarged part of the maps to show our area in greater detail, which was particularly interesting. Printing had been in use for 100 years when the first recognisable map of the county was published. Known as Hampshire No.1 Map made by Christopher Saxton in 1575, it was commissioned for Elizabeth 1. By this time printing had improved and was cheaper, paper quality was better and larger sheets were made. For Elizabeth, maps implied control of her realm and her empire which was growing through exploration, unhindered by the belief in "flat Earth". Saxton spent 5 years surveying all the 34 English counties, travelling on horseback, with the force of the Law behind him to have access to any tower, hill or estate. This was ground breaking work. He was given a sort of copyright for a period of 10 years to sell the maps for his own profit.

Travelling in mediaeval times was a dangerous business. Verbal instructions guided people between stopping points but, as reading became more common, lists of instructions called Itineraries were printed and later these became Ribbon Maps showing routes at approx. 4 miles to 1 inch with details and illustrations. 1607 Norden had the idea for a road map and introduced the Key but lacked the cash and political backing to have it published. John Speed borrowed from Norden, he included maplets of

towns and a Scale in paces. Speed was a good surveyor and map maker. It was John Ogilby in 1675 who printed the itineraries in strips with compass points, motifs to represent the kind of landscape and the way clearly shown. In 1701 Robert Morden produced a very much more accurate map, to scale and beautiful to look at. Then in 1755 Thomas Kitchen produced his map followed by Isaac Taylor 1759 and Thomas Milne 1791.

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These maps were made as a result of the offer of a £ 100 prize to be awarded by the Royal Society of Arts for scale maps of the English counties. The criteria were precise – scale of 1 inch to the mile, topographical features to be shown, a key given and showing the administrative areas called Hundreds. Each map had to be surveyed and then produced within 2 years! These maps were printed in sections – Hampshire needed 6 plates. They were coloured by hand with water colour. In 1798 Milne did receive a prize for his accurate version with the best landscape features but he too ran out of money and Fadon stepped in to publish. This map, though not as charming as Taylor's, went on to be reprinted many times and was eventually compressed on to 1 plate so that the whole of the county was on 1 piece of paper. As time went on, more information was added to Milne's maps and travel was becoming safer. They became statements of the value of the land. Canals, contents of forests, distances etc. appeared on the maps as people looked with interest at estates, the uses of the land and the opportunities for travel. Finally John Carey produced his map in 1820 just before the railways came, which is a convenient place to end this era of cartography. At the time of writing this report, Taylor's very beautiful map of Hampshire is displayed at Havant Museum – a rare chance to see it – but take a hand lens and a pair of opera glasses, it's on a wall and 4 sections are above eye level. It's there until November 24th.

It was a great pity that only a dozen Friends were able (and remembered!) to attend and were not discouraged by the wet weather, Gill Arnott is an excellent speaker, a real expert in her field as librarian of maps and other two-dimensional artefacts relating to landscape. We were privileged to hear her presentation. M. Ventham

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 11th December for the January/ February Newsletter, please include any items for early March 2010.

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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