

FRIENDS OF GOSPORT MUSEUM

www.friendsofgosportmuseum.org.uk

NEWSLETTER

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2012

Christmas Party 10th December

The Studio Discovery Centre

2pm-4pm Tea/ Coffee Mince Pie and meet other members - voluntary contribution

Local Quiz by Jack Poole

Talk January 2013

See DC What's On Booklet 7:30pm

Studio Discovery Centre

Lawrence Exhibition FGM Members Free

Booking Essential at DC Reception

AGM 16th May 2013 DC 7:30pm

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 December

Thursday 10th January

Thursday 14th February

Thursday 14th March

For around 1 hour

meet at Bookworm Café

Subscription Reminder

Thank you to all who have paid your suscriptions for the year from April 2012 to March 2013. If you have not sent the £5 for a single or £7.50 joint to Linda Hedley and wish to continue to be a member of the Friends of Gosport Museum please pay your subscription soon, If not paid by the time of the next newsletter it will be assumed that you no longer wish to be a member.

Christmas Party

The annual Friends of Gosport Museum Christmas Party will take place in The Studio of The Discovery Centre on the 10th December from 2pm. Details in the box above. There will be tea/coffee mince pies. There will not be a charge, but there will be a plate for contributions towards the cost at the event. 20 places have been booked, but if you are able to let me know that you will attend, it will be a great help with the numbers, but do not worry if you are not able to advise.

Chairman's Letter October 2012

Another 3 months have gone by very quickly. I trust that you enjoyed the all too brief moments of sunshine we were allowed. I managed to enjoy the sun for 1 week at the end of August with my son and his family on the Jurassic Coast; my grandson is an avid fossil collector and he was thrilled to find many ammonite and belemite fossils albeit that they were quite small. Get along to Charmouth if you want any fossils and when you bring them home compare them with those in the Geology Gallery.

Ian Jeffery and I attended the Southern Area meeting of the Association of Museum Friends held at the Royal Marine Museum early in September. This was a most interesting meeting and also

thought provoking. We are not the only Friends Group who is having difficulties. The common factor seems to be falling membership with increasing ageing of those remaining members and thus the difficulty in getting new blood on to the committee and the rationale of changing the Officers of the Committee every 4 or 5 years. It appears that in this time of cutbacks in Budgets and personnel all our Museums are suffering. It is only with the help of volunteers from among the Friends that many Museums are able to continue. I thank all of you who give up your time to help the professional staff here in Gosport, without you I think the Museum would not be so viable. Bring along friends to our meetings and think about becoming an active rather than a passive Friend of our Museum.

Again there have been some very successful Exhibitions in the Gallery. The Snape Exhibition was especially good and showed the depth of talent, a father and two sons in the same family. We have also had some interesting talks. There are more Exhibitions and talks to come which I am sure you will equally enjoy.

Following the success of the Green Token scheme at Waitrose which raised money for the Mammoth, I have written to Asda asking to be included in their scheme so that we can add sound. Unfortunately I have, up to writing this letter, had no response, let us hope that we shall soon receive a favourable reply.

Christmas will soon be upon us and our Christmas Party. (It will be on the 10th December) do come along and make the Festivities "go with a swing".
My best wishes to all of you, Sydney Aynsworth.

AGM Brief Report Chairman's Report To AGM 17th May

This is end of the first year of the re-organisation of the Museum Services and everyone is now beginning to adjust to the changes with alacrity. To this end the efforts of the whole staff of the Discovery Centre i.e. Museum, SEARCH, Local Studies and the Library have seen their hard work acknowledged and rewarded by the fact, that the Gosport Discovery Centre has become the model for such Centres in Local Authorities Areas, both here in the UK and abroad. Well done to all of you. I know we are Friends of the Museum but our activities are closely combined with the rest of the Discovery Centre especially SEARCH. Remember we need to be active and Volunteers are still needed to become Stewards and Facilitators in the Museum. Training will be given.

There have been successful Exhibitions in the Gallery, such as "The Treasures of the Town Hall" and the usual Art and Photographic Exhibitions, all of which were of a high standard and a credit to the Artists and Photographers of Gosport. The talks by Mary Duly, Margaret Venham, Joan Russell and Bob Whiteley were all very well received. As you know we received £215 from the "Green Token" collection at Waitrose and you can see the result of this in the Geology Gallery-the interactive Mammoth. It is hoped to have sound effects to complete the image (I, rather facetiously, suggested "smellies" also, as in the Jorvik Museum in York.) I shall be contacting the other Supermarkets in the area who also have "Green Token" schemes to consider the Museum for donations. The annual Christmas Party was again successful, a small, informal and intimate gathering. Do come along this year.

On a sad note I have to report the death of our long standing member and Committee Secretary, Joan Symonds. Her faithful and hard work for the Friends is sadly missed. I would also like to thank both Joan and Michael Adams, they have retired after many years on the Committee, for all their help and support. I must apologise for not having been very active in the last few months. I broke my hip earlier in the year and a few weeks ago my wife, Gisela, died unexpectedly. Consequently, I have been unable to attend to the affairs of the Friends as I would have liked.

On a happier note the Friends are continuing to be active and support our Museum. There are opportunities for us to become even more involved, to encourage people to use the Museum. Let us look forward to another successful year. I hereby submit my report. Sydney Aynsworth.

Secretary's Report- As Friends of Gosport Museum is a member of the BAFM (British Association of Friends of Museums) I receive 4 copies of their Journal produced 3 times a year, if you would like to be added to the list of those who wish to see one, please let me know. They are also available on their web site to read or download back to 2006 at www.bafm.org.

Treasurer's Report-Income for year £883.42 Expenditure £2,577.64 including £2,139.18 to Mammoth, leaving a balance of £385.34. Due to the large increase in postage from April, the committee propose to increase the subscription to £6 single and £9 joint, from 31st March 2013, agreed by the meeting.

Membership Secretary's Report-Currently have 52 paid up member, some still to pay, if you know anyone who has not renewed and wishes to continue to be a member, please give them a reminder. I would like to welcome some new members who have recently joined. Michael William, Mr Boxall, Dot Bedenham, Pamela and William Stirling. Thank you for joining and to our regular members for their continuing support.

Newsletter Editors Report-Due to increase in postage costs it was necessary to look at increasing subscription or reducing the number of newsletter, it was felt that a small increase in the subscription from next year would be put to the AGM. The full increase was not necessary as a number of members receive their newsletters by email.

Project Report-Joan Symonds history material sales raised £181, to go towards giving the mammoth sound. 20 bags of newspaper cuttings went to S Greenaway. Mammoth opening day went well.

Election of Committee-Mr R Whiteley took over the meeting read out nominations and asked to have the list proposed on block. J Lane proposed J Russell seconded, all agreed as follows:

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Chairman | Sydney Aynsworth |
| Vice Chairman | Margaret Ventham |
| Treasurer | David Moore |
| Secretary | Ian Jeffery |
| Membership Secretary | Linda Hedley |
| Newsletter Editor | Ian Jeffery |
| Other committee members: | Mary Duly, Joan Russell, David Taylor, Jack Poole, |

Museum Curator's Report-Staff

Tom de Wit- Community Museums Curator, SE Area

Janet Wildman- Learning & Community Engagement Officer, SE Area

Emma Hart- Assistant Learning & Community Engagement Officer, SE Area

Wendy Redman- Assistant Learning & Community Engagement Officer, SEARCH (part time)

Tim Wood- Premises Supervisor, SEARCH, Museum Stores and Gallery

Visitor Figures for Financial Year April 2011 – March 2012

| | | |
|--------------------------------|-------|---|
| Museum on the Mezzanine | 42896 | |
| Gosport Gallery | 11099 | |
| Local Studies/ Geology Gallery | 16225 | |
| SEARCH | 11736 | Total 81956 Including 7835 Children School Visits |

Exhibitions in Gosport Gallery April 2011 – March 2012

April to June – How Manga Took Over the World

July – Rapid pop-up exhibition by Bridgemary School

July – The Photographic Alliance of Great Britain Inter-federation Exhibition

August – Treasures of the Town Hall

September – St Vincent's Young Creatives

October to December – Tea Tales

January to March – Gosport Open Art

This varied programme included locally organised exhibitions, and ones put on by the Museum Service's exhibitions team. All had a programme of events attached to them.

Events & Activities

We have continued to offer a full programme of family activities, both drop-in style open days and booked workshops. The highlight was the Mammoth Day Out, to mark the unveiling of the Interactive Woolly Mammoth in the Geology Gallery which the Friends kindly raised funds for. The special open day attracted over 800 visits to the Gallery and Geology Gallery combined. The mammoth continues to draw in the crowds.

We also offered talks and visits for adults, and for community groups of adults and children, and some in-depth projects with schools and other service users including a series of reminiscence workshops and linked exhibitions at Juniper Court older persons' residence.

Volunteers

As well as members of the Friends acting as stewards at SEARCH open days and continuing to work on the stored collections, the EDGE youth group members and other volunteers at SEARCH have put in many hours of voluntary work.

April – May 2012

The EDGing Out youth art exhibition in April was a great success and the new Way of the Warrior exhibition is attracting good numbers and excellent feedback.

The Falklands commemorative programme has been popular and has included the Ghosts of the Falklands exhibition and talk, a special edition of Down Memory Lane, and a talk on the Hospital Ship Uganda.

The first 'drop in from the market' open morning at SEARCH attracted over 200 visitors and was run by volunteers including two of the Friends.

Please ask if you would like to see the much fuller quarterly JMC reports which detail all museum activity in much more depth. Tom de Wit and Janet Wildman, May 2012

AoB- More volunteers required to register and do the introduction for events.

Followed by Bursledon Windmill talk and video by Tom de Wit

Opportunities for Volunteering in Arts and Museums At Gosport Discovery Centre

The county services have been combined and reductions in staffing have taken effect. SEARCH Hands-On-Museum, the Gosport Museum-on-the-Mezzanine in the DC, the Geology Gallery along with the Local Studies Centre and Gosport Gallery facilities are being integrated into programming with the Discovery Centre. The issue of books will become automated and the building altered to accommodate the Post Office in summer 2013.

Wendy Redman (Education and Community Engagement Team) is managing SEARCH school

visits, with a part-time member of staff. The uses of the resources are being reassessed as curriculums have altered and travel costs have risen. Janet Wildman continues to be the officer in overall charge of this team for South East Hants Area.

Since the start of the DC, librarians have been working hourly rotas to staff the reception desks in Local Studies and the Exhibition Gallery. Changes next year will no doubt affect the staffing and their job descriptions. The hourly rotas will be unsustainable. Volunteers are needed to man the **reception desk** in the Gallery. The role would be a regular, weekly, 2 hour session when exhibitions are on. The Gallery will also be used for **events** involving volunteers. **Role Descriptions** will be available, for you to see what would be involved, and hopefully would encourage more of us to volunteer.

As you know, the **Museum-on-the-Mezzanine** has never been staffed by the librarians. It is a self-guided, storyboard exhibition with artefacts in show cases. The **Geology Gallery** was set up in the same way. The museum service is really keen to have volunteer stewards who would be there at busy times to help both the families using the games activity box (Museum Explorers) and other visitors. At the time of writing this report, there are just 6 members who are able to steward in the museum. Five of these did a total of 84 hours stewarding the 2 week Olympic Activities for Families, plus further hours covering the week of Diamond Jubilee Activities in June.

"**Family History Drop In Clinic**" at Local Studies needs help on Wednesday's. Anyone with extensive knowledge of tracing their own family tree, and willing to share their experience in this area, would be welcomed. Help is also needed to support the promotion of the **Naval History** collection and associated workshops.

To maintain and to improve our town's level of service, the county must make more use of the original building in Walpole Road. To this end there is currently an in-depth study of possible changes to maximise its use and broaden the activities offered there. To cope with the sincere aim to do more with fewer staff, there is an urgent need for local volunteers to help. Please consider how you could be involved.

Responsibilities for the Gallery Role

- 🕒 To welcome and interact with visitors to provide information about current exhibitions and events
- 🕒 To collect visitor statistics and postcodes as instructed and encourage them to complete the visitor comment book
- 🕒 To sell retail stock relating to exhibitions/events when required including cash handling, use of the till and replenishing stock
- 🕒 To monitor visitors to the Gallery to ensure security of the site and displays
- 🕒 To assist with the setting up and maintenance of events and exhibitions

Kathy Dawson

Henry Duncan Preston Cunningham R.N. J.P.(Part 2) cont. from March

Mr. Cunningham was a Captain and then a Major in the 3rd Hants Dockyard Volunteers. The 3rd Hants (Dockyard) Artillery Volunteers was composed entirely of civil servants or 'dockyard citizens'. They had a band which was often acclaimed in the local news. Their H.Q. and drill shed on Governors Green Portsmouth was opened on 26 August 1865.

The 6th battery of the 3rd Hants was based in Gosport and assembled regularly at Gosport under Captain H.D.P. Cunningham J.P. travelling across the water to Portsmouth for drill and parades. In

1869 this battery took second prize in a competition firing 32 pounders at Lumps Fort, Portsmouth. On Tuesday 18 May 1870 the Gosport volunteers drilled at Portsmouth on Governor's Green during which a serious incident occurred.

"While the battalion was at halt waiting for one of the large doors at the drill shed to be thrown open to admit the column, the horse of Major Cunningham gave a sudden bound forward, and then a terrific plunge, throwing him heavily on to the ground, with some severe injuries to his head and shoulder, though fortunately, no bones broken. Directly a sergeant of the corps stepped to the front and reported that he had seen one of the men in the ranks strike the Major's horse on the hind quarters with his carbine, whereupon Lieutenant Colonel Richards offered a reward of 10 shillings to any man who would give the name of the miscreant; but strange to say, the fellow has not yet been denounced for his treacherous act. True the sergeant who gave the information collared one of the men from the part of the column whence the act had been perpetrated, but he so stoutly denied any participation in the act, or knowledge of it, that he was set free; and it being twilight at the time, the chance of fixing on the actual delinquent was rendered the more difficult. Major Cunningham had a most miraculous escape, as the horse, after the bound and plunge by which he was thrown, bolted away; but it so happened that when he fell he fell clear, and thus escaped the fatal injuries which might have followed."

On 7th December 1870 Cunningham gained a Certificate of Efficiency at the close of the second course of instruction for Volunteer Artillerymen held at Artillery Institute at Woolwich.

On 13th December 1870 Cunningham was appointed as Major of the 1st Administrative Brigade of the Hampshire Artillery Volunteers by the Lord Lieutenant of Hampshire.

Mr Cunningham lived in Bury House and from 1861 was well known in Gosport as a local Magistrate



delivering justice to all manner of local miscreants as frequently reported in the local news. He was one of the founders of the Portsmouth Sailors' Home and a benefactor of the Gosport Army and Navy Institute. He occupied the chair in 1870 and "if not the originator was most prominent in securing its establishment, and became responsible for £200 and two year's rent in order that the institution might have a beginning, and whether he was looked upon as a soldier, a sailor, or a volunteer, he was certainly the best friend the Institution had." Cunningham was also the Chair of the Gosport and Alverstoke Young Men's Christian Association presiding over lectures and recitals of sacred music that were delivered at the "Star" assembly rooms, Gosport. Cunningham was a supporter of the South Street Ragged and Free School with which was connected with an industrial home for poor boys, a seaman's and poor peoples Bethel and a girl's free day school.

Cunningham died suddenly on January 19th 1875 aged 60 years. The local news reported that he had suffered, at times most acutely, from heart disease and his death was attributed to this. He was



buried in the churchyard of St. Mary's Church Rowner on 23 January 1875. His gravestone can be found on the green at the front of the church. It is adorned with a small carving of his famous self-reefing topsail and appears to have been moved from its former location in the churchyard, minus its railings.

His grandson Rear-Admiral John Henry Dacres Cunningham was made a companion of the Bath at the 1937 Coronation. He became the Royal Navy First Sea Lord from 1946 to 1948. by David Moore

Correction to November/ December 2011 Newsletter

To the 2nd Jessie Mario White article by Mary Duly - In the 1st line of the 3rd paragraph shows "JANE was a child of the 2nd marriage". – it should, of course, have been JESSIE.

BAfM - Divestment, closures and cut-backs

We have been receiving a small but regular number of enquiries from members looking for assistance and insights to help them deal with emerging circumstances where the current operations of bodies are subject to significant change and where Friends are being invited/encouraged to take on greater operational responsibilities.

BAfM itself can provide some feedback, but as each circumstance differs there is no single satisfactory response. I would like to encourage as many groups as possible to share their experiences where host organisations have been affected in a similar way. A greater understanding of different proposals and responses will really help others in their deliberations.

To facilitate this I have created a discussion topic in the BAfM Forum. You can access this from the website menu or directly at forum.bafm.org.uk. If you have not done so previously, you will need to register but please don't be deterred!

This is a stressful time for Friends groups and the best way forward is not always obvious, so I would be very grateful if you could help. Mike Fayle Chairman BAFM

Christmas Party 10th December

This years Friends of Gosport Museum Christmas Party will take place in The Studio (next to the Museum-on-the-Mezzanine) in the Gosport Discovery Centre from 2-4pm on Monday 10th December. There will be tea/ coffee, mince pies a chance to meet other members in relaxed surroundings. There will also be a local history (fun) quiz prepared by Jack Poole. I am not asking you to let me know in advance as to whether you will be able to attend, so you can decide on the day. There will not be a charge, but a plate or something similar for contributions towards the cost. I have booked for 20, around the number of the past few years, but there will not be a problem if more turn up, so whether you have been to the event in the past or not, please feel free to come this year. Perhaps it will be the highest attendance at this annual event for many years. Ian Jeffery

Late Newsletters

I am sorry that I am very behind with the Friends of Gosport Museum Newsletters. I have had a number of people who have contacted me and were concerned that they have not received one since May/June one with the AGM information. This is the last one that was produced so you have not missed any newsletters. If you are able to email items for the January or future newsletters, I can open most formats that would be a great help as I will not need to re-type items. ian@gosport.info

Subscription Renewal 1st April 2013

As the postage cost has increased, 2nd class post from 36p to 50p, the subscription renewal has increased from 1st April to £6 single and £9 joint. The increase has not needed to go up the full amount of the postage cost increase as a growing number of members receive their newsletter by email in the Adobe Reader PDF format. The Reader can be downloaded for free (let me know if you have any problems installing it). If you have an email address that you check at least once a week and would like to try receiving the newsletter by email, please let me know and the next one I will send by both email and post so that you can see if the email one suits you. ian@gosport.info

Volunteer Day at Chilcomb

Friends of Gosport
Museum

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Committee Chairman
Sidney Aynsworth
023 9258 0544

Vice Chairman
Margaret Ventham

Hon. Treasurer
David Moore
023 9258 6575

Hon. Secretary
Ian Jeffery
023 9252 3358

Membership Secretary
Linda Hedley

Committee Members
Mary Duly
Jack Poole
Joan Russell
David Taylor

Three members who stewarded the museum Jubilee and Olympic activities for families, were invited for a day out at Chilcomb House on October 19th. The venue is HQ for the county museum service. Chilcomb is a farmhouse with associated buildings at Bar End, Winchester. There were about 70 volunteers from all the county museums. We were mixed up into groups and set off on a 2 hour programme of 15 - 20 minute visits to each Collection. With staff to guide us and the "Keepers" ready to show us the wonderful artefacts in their stores, the morning passed all too quickly. After a splendid buffet lunch and a chance to chat with volunteers from other sites, there were 2 afternoon workshops. Each of our chosen areas of interest, gave us more detail of the range of tasks carried out by the staff. Hopefully we may be more able to help visitors understand the work and expertise of the museum service. Maggie Ventham

You will see that there are plenty of volunteering opportunities and benefits for the Museum Services, detailed in this newsletter. I hope that you will find something that interests you.

If you have any information, articles, events or photos that you think may be of interest to members of the Friends of Gosport Museum or others, please let me have them by post or email, details below, by 20th December for the January Newsletter. if you have something please let me have your item as soon as you can, thank you. Ian

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

Please send contributions for the Newsletter to
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If you would be happy to receive this Newsletter
by email please let me know.
The views expressed are not necessarily those
of Hampshire CC Museums Service or its staff.

Membership of Friends of Gosport Museum is
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member. Annual Subscription
Individuals £6 Families £9.00.
Due 1st April Each Year.
This Newsletter was printed and produced
with the help of the Discovery Centre.