

Friends of Gosport Museum

Newsletter

Dear Friends of Gosport Museum

I had really hoped that this Newsletter might have some brief accounts of the lands that you have travelled in during the summer break, and the sights that you have seen. Perhaps during the long dark winter evenings you can persuade yourself to write down your sharpest impression of faraway places, to share with us in the next Newsletter?

In this issue you will find some more exciting news about Gosport Museum and its future, particularly in connection with the 1995 Victory Anniversaries. There is the usual mixed bag of reports on conferences attended and on the events we have organised for YOU - with varying degrees of success!

Joan Russell

Editor

Winter 1994

Chairmans Message

We are a little worried about the somewhat low level of support there has been for the last three evening lectures we have laid on for you in May, July and October. They were all very different, but ALL FIRST CLASS talks with loads of slides. We were rather thin on the ground to hear Sarah Quail whirl us through her exciting research on Portsmouth's Foundation 800 years ago, and even thinner to catch the gist of Peter Page's amusing insight into the way an artist's imagination shapes what he sees when he is looking at exactly the same thing as ordinary mortals like us. I have to admit that his Arrow of Time escaped me on the Morestead Road, which I can clearly recall more than 70 years ago! Our own David Kemp was terribly nice about the low turn-out for his brilliantly illustrated and knowledgeable presentation of the fossilised treasures which lie beneath our feet, and his own preoccupation with them. No wonder he has been appointed Keeper of Hampshire's Geological treasures by the Hampshire County Museums Service. Last but not least the Curator's invitation for some Gosport Friends to experience the "Hands-on" SEARCH programme, prepared at Gosport for the use of all Hampshire schoolchildren, had to be cancelled for lack of takers...

We KNOW that we have your support and interest, but we feel that perhaps you'd prefer a different kind of activity. The Curator has appealed for typing volunteers, singly or with a helper. Ian has also agreed to let Gosport Friends use the Meetings Room once a month for a HIGH STREET BUILDINGS project, provided of course there are enough Friends interested and free to come and join the party. Suggested day - the SECOND TUESDAY in each month, 2pm to 3.30pm, for 6 months, starting in January. Objective - to discuss and co-ordinate material on the old buildings in Gosport High Street.

I look forward to seeing you at our Friends Mince Pie Party and Quiz, 4pm till 5.30pm, on WEDNESDAY 7TH DECEMBER. Lesley has kindly agreed to be our Quiz-master!

Very sincerely yours

Joan Russell

Curators Report

Our present Temporary Exhibitions Gallery has served the museum very well for over twenty years, however it is quite small and therefore we can only display small exhibitions. This was brought home to me earlier in the year, when we were unable to show all of the wonderful 19th century quilts from the American Museum at Bath. We displayed the best, but that did mean about half a dozen had to be left out of the show.

I am sure that you will all be as pleased as I am that there is soon to be a new Art Gallery for Gosport Museum in the former school hall behind the museum. Work will shortly begin to convert the hall to become a regional gallery for the Hampshire County Council Museums Service. We are very fortunate that Hampshire County Council has agreed to fund most of the work, but we could not have done it without the additional financial support from Gosport Borough Council. The Gallery opens in May next year with an exhibition to commemorate the end of the Second World War. Anyway more about that in the next Newsletter.

Members may also be interested to know how we are proceeding with our programme of cataloguing the collections. Our volunteers may remember transferring all the old Mumby billheads into archival storage sleeves. The next step has been to catalogue these onto the computer. So far we have managed to complete 5 boxes, containing on average about 150 billheads. There are only another ten boxes to go, and then I can start on the rest of our collections for the same process. There are now 6,000 object records and 950 photograph\postcard records entered onto the computer database, but unfortunately there are many thousands more still to be processed !

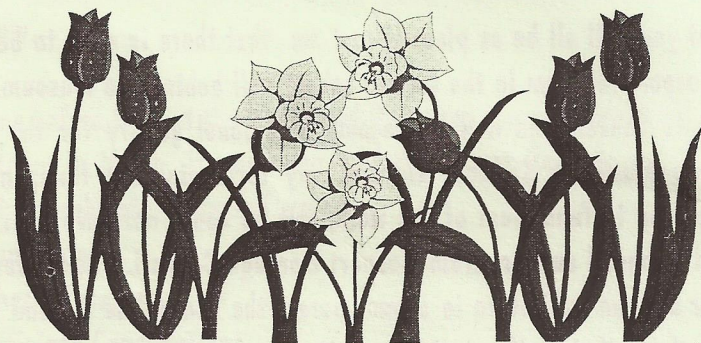
We are also looking for some help on the computer... see back page.

Thank you for your support during 1994.

Ian Edelman

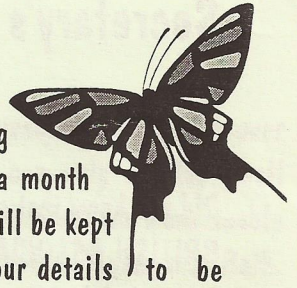
THE GOSPORT MUSEUM MINI-GARDEN

Please don't try to compare OUR little mini-garden with Fareham's splendid new Museum Garden, open to the public and featured prominently in the NEWS the last weekend in October 1994. They were designed for totally different purposes - theirs is for the public to stroll IN and to admire, while ours is for the public to stroll PAST and admire.

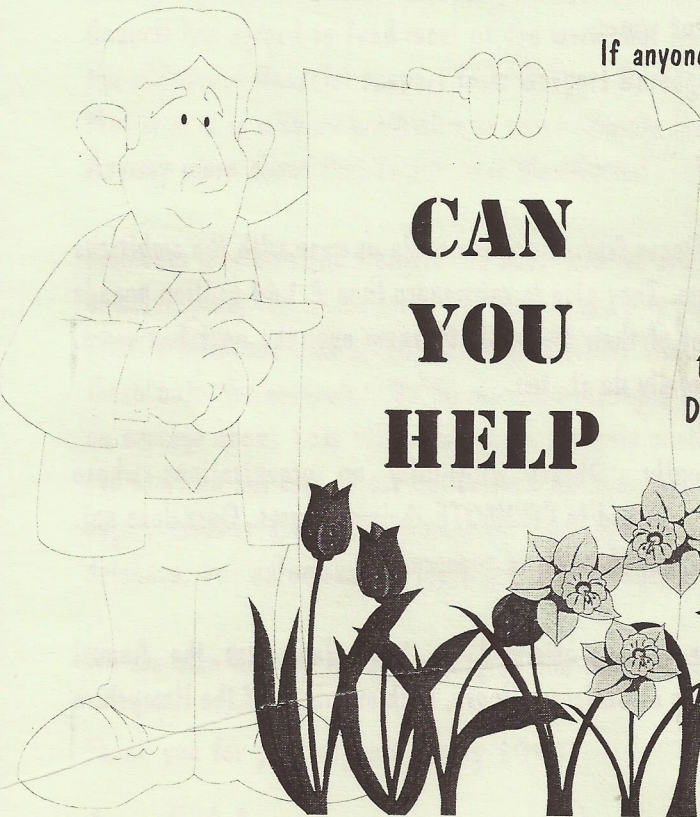


When the idea of our mini-garden was first put to the FRIENDS in May, a number of gardening enthusiasts volunteered to help maintain it. Unfortunately your officers thanked you all warmly, but failed to do anything more about it. Unknown to us, one of the Museum staff, Mrs Margaret Knapman made herself responsible for watering the shrubs, removing the weeds and keeping the new mini garden neat and tidy, so we thought no more about it until Margaret had to go sick for 10 weeks...The weeds flourished, and very soon passers-by stopped admiring, and took a short cut across the corner of the weedy patch. By the beginning of November the Gosport Museum Garden was looking decidedly TATTY. Your Chairman finally woke up and realised that action was needed. With Mr Mundy's expert help, our little garden was dug over, a sack of weeds removed and neatness restored. Margaret is back, but her major op. means a stop to her gardening activities - not before time, because it's really OUR job.

First, we need you to put your name on a Register of Gardening Friends willing to commit themselves to at least half an hour a month (obviously less in winter-time), for watering and weeding. This will be kept at the Reception desk, or you can ring 588035 and ask for your details to be placed on the Register. Secondly, we need to arrange a meeting to discuss the possibility of adding more eye-catching foliage to our shrubs and ground cover, so that eventually people will turn their heads to look again, and comment on the pleasing appearance of Gosport Museum's mini-garden. Otherwise there is little point in having one there at all.



If anyone can offer a striking piece from your own garden, please bring a sample or a description to the GOSPORT MINI-GARDEN MEETING, to be held at the Museum Meeting Room at 10.30 AM on Thursday December 1st.

A line drawing of a man with a beard and a suit, holding a large rectangular sign with both hands. The sign is the background for the 'CAN YOU HELP' text.

**CAN
YOU
HELP**



Secretary's Letter

Dear Friends

Did you know that our FRIENDS Group is linked in with the national group - THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION OF FRIENDS OF MUSEUMS? If any of you would be interested in attending one of the meetings of the BAFM for the South-East Region, please let us know, as the Chairman and I are not always free to attend, so we missed the last one on Saturday 10th September, at the Chiltern Open Air Museum.

The one before that, at the Weald and Downland Museum was held on a very cold, bright day in March. It was attended by Margaret Roberts and I.

The three subjects discussed were:-

- 1) Fund-raising
- 2) Charity Status
- 3) Efficient Constitutions

On Fund-raising Mr Mike Doran from Singleton made us gasp with the ambitious schemes of our host museum. They plan to raise more than £ 1/4 million pounds for the further development of their Open Air Museum over the next few years. One felt that they would really do it, too.

Charity status is apparently thrust willy-nilly on organisations whose constitutions state that they intend to PROMOTE their museums. Ours does not. End of story as far as Gosport Museum is concerned...

Another interesting gathering we attended on 16th June was the Annual "Friends' Officers" Meeting at Chilcomb House, with members of the Hampshire

County Museums Service staff. There were Friends from seven different museums including FRIENDS OF THE LYMINGTON MUSEUM TRUST, which is busy setting up its brand-new museum in the old St Barbe Schoolhouse, with the full blessing of the New Forest District Council.

We felt quite honoured to receive a phone call a month later from Paul Glasby, secretary of the Lymington Friends, telling us that the FRIENDS OF LYMINGTON MUSEUM have chosen Gosport Museum as the destination for their outing on Wednesday May 17th 1995. They have booked a talk with our curator, Ian Edelman, and naturally we hope that the FRIENDS OF GOSPORT MUSEUM will be able to host the visit. If you would like to join in, please put this date in your 1995 diary as soon as possible, and look out for further announcements.

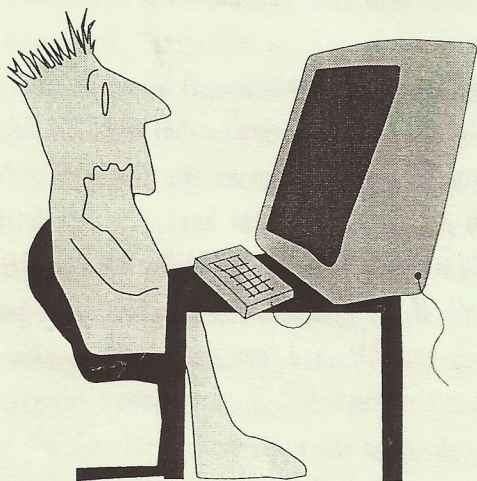
Sincerely yours

Mary Duly

SPECIAL INVITATION

*The Friends Mince Pie Party & Quiz
on Wednesday 7th December
at the Museum
4pm until 5.30pm
with Lesley Burton as Quiz-master*

WANTED



From January - Volunteers who can type and are willing to use a computer to enter data from the local Trade Directories into a new database for the Resources Room. Please leave your name and phone number at the Museum Reception.



Hampshire
COUNTY COUNCIL