

FRIENDS OF GOSPORT MUSEUM

Supporting Gosport Museum & Art Gallery
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or www.fogm.org.uk

NEWSLETTER JANUARY/ FEBRUARY 2022

Gosport Museum and Art Gallery
TAG-A-TILE available to 31st March 2022

Make your mark in history by donating and inscribing a clay tile for placement in the new outdoor courtyard. We only have space for a limited number of these tiles.

We are asking for a minimum donation of £30 per clay tile, with a maximum of three clay tiles available per person.

Once the building works have been completed you will be invited to a private view, ahead of the public re-opening, for the chance to see your inscribed tile installed in the courtyard.

www.hampshireculture.org.uk/event/tag-tile

Some Other Gosport Museums I hope that we will be able to visit in the next few months

Hovercraft Museum
www.hovercraft-museum.org

Explosion Museum
www.historicdockyard.co.uk

Submarine Museum
www.historicdockyard.co.uk

Daedalus Aviation & Heritage Group
www.daedalusaviation.org
(see top of page 4)

Report from the Chair

Welcome to our winter newsletter, best wishes for 2022 and fewer problems with Covid! Wendy's report will tell you about progress with the re-development of the Gosport Museum and Art Gallery building. The work to create a Cultural Hub may be done in stages so some volunteering in the stores could continue there. The venue's Gallery volunteers will be at the shop in the High St from February. It's important to keep in contact with them and with regular visitors. The premises are not far from the ferry, on the north side of the street. This rented shop needs professional repairing – the initial effort made by Wendy and her staff to move in before Xmas had to be abandoned.

Progress to re-home the collections in the Search room-sets is nearly over. Gosport Museum's own educational material and objects, which were used at Search, have been re-purposed or returned to the store rooms. To re-use some of this collection Wendy has created 'Memory Boxes'. These are themed collections. The 'Evening Out on The Town Box' for example contains clothes, accessories, theatre programmes etc. The Boxes will encourage conversation and exchange of memories between people and will be available for group meetings in communities and at the Hub. Dot Bedenham and I have been listing the contents of each box. The staff will track the objects for museum recording and make labels listing the contents for each box. When Janet Wildman who managed Search for a long time was helping Wendy, a few items in the boxes were mysteries to us but Janet came to our rescue and identified them. Do you have a 'runcible spoon' aka a spork? It's a spoon with 2 or 3 prongs at the tip for spearing and scooping simultaneously – it's in the Box of Curiosities!

The collections from Gosport, destined to be on show in the new museum, have been packed and transported to HQ at Chilcomb to be properly conserved ready for showing. Bryony Hope from the HCT Fundraising Team would like to meet us at some time to talk about the use of our donation, which was Margaret Roberts' bequest to us, and given for the new museum. Bryony is probably available on Tuesdays, and most likely we would meet at the shop unless there is a chance to see what has been done in the old building.

The Gosport Society will be publishing a book later this year about the Heritage and Conservation of Gosport. I was asked to contribute a chapter about the History of Gosport Museum and agreed to do so. This has been edited for inclusion, it remains to select 3 or 4 photos – do let me know asap if you have any suitable ones. Maggie Ventham 21/01/22

Venue Managers News (from Message to Volunteers)

Building update. We have exciting news with a confirmed date of 31st January for the building work to begin. The building will be closing down, and items being packed away week commencing 24th January so this will be a very busy week in the venue. The delivery of school sessions will continue up until 21st January in our venue then be moving to the Submarine Museum from February. Room hire will be continuing up until 27th January. The building will be re-opening in August 2022 as long as there are no major problems with the works. The Schools Loans Box service will be continuing throughout the move and relocation to the shop unit.

Work on the shop unit to get it fully up and running has started. The priority will be to get the front and middle part of the unit, which will be using for Creative retail and our activities, ready to open week commencing 7th February. The shop will be open Tuesday to Saturday 10am-4pm.

We have been approached by the University of Portsmouth to find volunteers to be involved in a focus group here in the venue. The University of Portsmouth in collaboration with Gosport Borough Council are conducting a Feasibility and Needs Analysis of Gosport heritage and community engagement. Wendy Redman

A Blast from the Past

Maggie Ventham and I often work together when we are volunteering at the Museum. We have recently been given the task of sorting through a collection of framed items. These include paintings but also certificates, posters and photographs. It's a task we have really enjoyed, finding the occasional delight and, for me, one very big surprise. I worked for Chelmsford Borough Council as a museum curator for 27 years, so you can imagine how I felt when we came across a letter headed "Borough of Chelmsford", dated June 1930 and signed by the then Mayor of Chelmsford, John Ockelford Thompson. The letter, ornately decorated and bearing the borough seal, was written to thank Mr James Taylor Beetson for his services to the town as Deputy Borough Accountant on the occasion of his departure to become Borough Treasurer of Gosport.

I know a lot about John Ockelford Thompson. I researched his life as part of a project in which I was involved. He was editor and part-proprietor of the local newspaper, the Essex Chronicle. He served on the town council for many years and was elected mayor of the town on seven occasions. He was about to become mayor for the eighth time when a German high explosive bomb was dropped on his house, killing Thompson and other members of his family. It was the night of 13th October 1940, the Battle of Britain was waging, and Chelmsford was the target that night. It was a sad end to a noble career.

I think I now need to find out more about James Taylor Beetson who moved down to Gosport from Chelmsford, just as I did but 82 years later. Dot Bedenham

Request for Photograph – North Street

I have received a letter from Robert Herbert who lives in California United States of America, who is a collector of British medals, mainly the Royal Navy.



He has a Great War trio of medals awarded to William John Gamblin, a former stoker in the Royal Navy. He was born and lived in Gosport, also from 1911 to 1942 (his death) was a Licensed Victualler at a pub called the Sun Tavern at 39 North Street Gosport. He has also sent information about his time in the Navy from 1893 and newspaper articles about his life, which I could add or send on to members who are interested.

Robert knows the North Street area has been redeveloped since then, but would like to see photographs of the North Street area from before the redevelopment but does not need to be back to 1946 or before. If you have any photos, and if able to attach a copy to an email to me, I will sent the email to him. If you have a photo but are not able to email me a copy, please would you be able to lend it to me, I will scan it send on the scan and return your photograph. Thank you Ian Jeffery ian@gosport.info 11 Harcourt Road, Gosport, Hants PO12 3NR

The second escape was when H.M.S. Good Hope sailed from Halifax Nova Scotia on her last voyage, leaving Mr. Gamblin and several other members of the crew behind.

Mr. Gamblin, who was Acting C.P.O. stoker, and several members of the crew took a steamboat ashore and when they returned the Good Hope had sailed.


At the end of his normal term of service—he retired in November 1907 and was recalled for the Great War—Mr. Gamblin was in the Submarine Service and was in B11 one of the earliest of the underwater craft. As well as serving in H.M.S. Good Hope he was also present at the Dardanelles during the campaign there and also the evacuation. He was demobilized in March 1919.

Mrs. Gamblin, recalling the experiences of the last war said: "He went out in the morning of August 2, 1914 and said, 'So long, shall be back to dinner,' and I did not see him again for three years and eight days."

Naval Disaster of 1893 Recalled

The tragedy of H.M.S. Victoria on June 22, 1893, when she was rammed by H.M.S. Camperdown and sunk in 82 fathoms off Tripoli, is recalled by the death at the age of 76 years of Mr. William John Gamblin, of 39, North Street, Gosport.

A native of Gosport, he joined the Royal Navy in April, 1885, retired in 1907, and being recalled in August, 1914, served



Mr. W. J. Gamblin

Fort Brockhurst – Royal Artillery 1950's Married Quarters

Ken Roper has sent an email advising that his dad, Georgia Roper served in the Royal Artillery at Fort Brockhurst in the 1950's.

He is trying to find anything on their old married quarters.

Ken said he went to Elson School.

Please do you have anything that could help him. Ian Jeffery

Daedalus Aviation and Heritage Group the former Gosport Aviation Society

Our aim is to create an Aviation heritage display at Solent Airport in co-operation with Gosport Borough Council and Fareham Borough Council who jointly own the site.

The majority of our talks are about aviation history.

Daedalus Aviation & Heritage Group – This is a great way to enjoy meeting up with people who have a common interest in aviation matters. You don't need any prior knowledge and you can attend the monthly meetings at the RNA Club on Gosport Road on the fourth Wednesday of each month at 7:30 for 8:00pm with fascinating speakers on current and heritage flying topics. Outings to places of aviation interest and airfields are also a feature of the Group. Full details are on our website www.daedalusaviation.org and also on Facebook – just search for Daedalus Aviation & Heritage Group.

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Subscription for Membership

Subscriptions for Friends of Gosport Museum due from 1st April each year at £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. Tel: 023 9258 6130

Joined since 1st November 2020 your subscription lasts to 1st April 2022.

Would You Like to Volunteer?

If you would like to volunteer for SEARCH it would be Wendy at wendy.redman@hampshireculturaltrust.org.uk or for the Museum and Gallery Katie Andrews VSA katie.andrews@hampshireculturaltrust.org.uk as Katie Andrews is part-time please allow her time to get back to you as she is not in every day. New Schools Manager Alex Bogard Alex.Bogard@hampshireculturaltrust.org.uk Thank you.

If you have information, articles, events or photos that may be of interest to Friends of Gosport Museum for the March Newsletter by the 19th February or earlier if you can to: Ian Jeffery 11 Harcourt Rd, Gosport, Hants PO12 3NR 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. This will help save FoGM cost, keeping the subscription down. Thank you Ian

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Ian Jeffery, FoGM Newsletter Editor
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