

The Friends of Colchester Museums

Fifty Seventh Annual Report
2005 - 2006



The Friends of Colchester Museums

OFFICERS

<i>President</i>	His Worship the Mayor
<i>Vice Presidents</i>	Mrs Jean Baker Mrs Barbara Napper Mark Davies Len Drinkell Paul Spendlove
<i>Honorary Members</i>	Mrs R J Bristow Len Drinkell
<i>Honorary Treasurer</i>	Peter Evans 5 Grimston Road Colchester CO2 7RN Telephone 01206 540990
<i>Honorary Secretary</i>	Patrick Denney 247 Old Heath Road Colchester CO3 8BN Telephone 01206 796822 Email patrick.denney@ntlworld.com
<i>Honorary Auditor</i>	Roy Anderson
<i>Committee</i>	Andrew Phillips (Chairman) Mrs Jean Blowers Harry Carlo Peter Constable Patrick Denney Len Drinkell Peter Evans Andrew Miller
<i>Ex Officio</i>	Peter Berridge (General Manager, Colchester Museums) Tom Hodgson (Curator of Social History) Philip Wise (Curator of Archaeology)
<i>Museum Office</i>	Colchester Museums Resource Centre 14 Ryegate Road Colchester CO1 1TW

Fifty Seventh Annual Report 2005-2006

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The AGM took place on Tuesday 13 June at Lion Walk Church, with our President, the Mayor of Colchester, Councillor Richard Gower taking the chair.

Audited Accounts for the year were presented and are featured on pages 4 and 5.

Following the business part of the meeting, David Cawdell (right), gave an excellent lecture entitled *The History of Lexden Mill*, which featured the superb model of the mill, pictured below.



The first year that we claimed the Inland Revenue sent us £409, but I expect that we will be able to claim over £1,400 for the year ended 31 March 2006. Most members have signed up for the scheme, but if you have not done so already, you will be receiving a reminder. Once you have signed a certificate, you do not need to complete any further forms - and we can backdate claims to cover any contributions made since 2000.

To sign the form, you do need to be a UK tax payer, but apart from that, there are no other qualifications. The Society holds your authority and can use this to claim back Gift Aid on all contributions on subscriptions. If you make any donations at any time, we can claim on those as well.

Peter Evans *Hon. Treasurer*

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE (at July 2006)

Single	288
Couples	151
Families	141
Other	9
Total	589

If we were to break down the couple and family members into individual numbers, our total membership would be 1,163.

LECTURE SERIES 2006

The first part of our current lecture series has gone very well with attendance averaging in the region of 120 per meeting. The talks are obviously attracting widespread interest from both our members and the general public and we hope for more of the same in the autumn.

The series continues at Lion Walk Church on Tuesday 12 September at 7.30pm, when our Chairman, Andrew Phillips' lecture is entitled *Colchester Garrison; from Napoleon to the Kaiser*. Andrew's talks are always well presented and another entertaining evening is in prospect.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Subscriptions for 2006 became due on 1st January - single £7.50, couple £12, and family £18.

If you pay by Standing Order, please check that you are paying the correct amount and make any adjustments with your bank as necessary.

Please contact the Treasurer, Peter Evans on 01206 540990 if you are not sure of the status of your membership.

GIFT AID

You may be surprised to learn that we have raised £4,663 from Gift Aid claimed on annual subscriptions since the scheme started in 2000.

Following on from this are equally interesting subjects and speakers. Jane Pearson on the local Victorian artist John Vine; our Hon Secretary Patrick Denney on his own residential area *Old Heath - the Road to Suburbia*; Mick Brown on *Mile End Memories*; and two lectures by staff members of Colchester Museums, Tom Hodgson *What the Papers Say - from the Museum Archives*; and Peter Berridge *The Darker Side of Colchester Castle*.

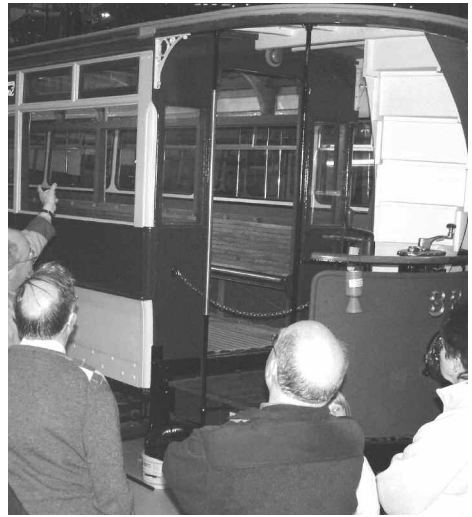
Complete details, including dates, can be found on the back cover.

IPSWICH TRANSPORT MUSEUM

In May 2006, around 35 members shared in an evening visit to the Ipswich Transport Museum, (see picture below of the party arriving at the Museum).

Not knowing quite what to expect we were pleasantly surprised when we were ushered into a vast warehouse-type building which was crammed full of vehicles of every description. From horse-drawn carriages and trams to trolley buses and fire engines - they were all there.

After being given a guided tour of the main exhibits, (see picture above of members looking at an ancient tram), we were then let loose to spend the remaining time scrambling



on and off all manner of archive vehicles.

The evening concluded with some light refreshments and a chance to pick up souvenirs from the well-stocked gift shop.

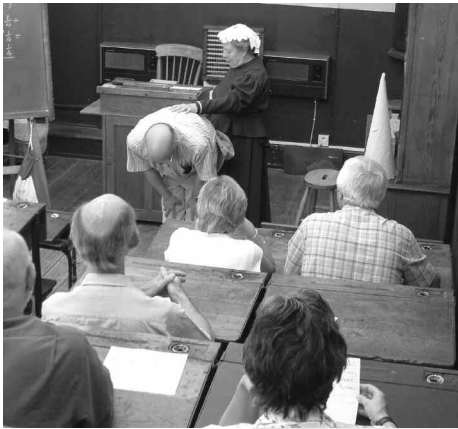
Patrick Denney

VISIT TO HITCHIN

In July a coach party of members enjoyed a sizzling hot, but otherwise enjoyable day out at Hitchin in Hertfordshire.

Our main activity of the day was a pre-planned visit to the famous British Schools





Museum which dates from the early 1800s. We were first treated to a lecture and grand tour of the complex before being given the Victorian classroom experience!

We were quickly reminded that writing with a leaky ink pen is not as easy as it looks, and were also reminded what happens to those 'pupils' who do not behave themselves - as shown in the supporting pictures!

Patrick Denney

SOUND PROBLEMS

The Committee is aware that some members have been experiencing difficulties in hearing some of our speakers. We are striving to remedy the situation and would like to thank everyone for their patience in this matter.

CASTLE OPEN EVENING

The Open Evening is on 13 December from 4.30-8.30pm. Mince pies, mulled wine, Christmas carols and 10% off stock in the shop are among the features on offer.

COLCHESTER RECALLED

Colchester's oral history group, Colchester Recalled, whose members include many Friends, restarts its monthly meetings in September 2006 in the Board Room at the Colchester Institute at 7pm.

The first three dates are - 14 September when John Ashdown-Hill relates a medieval detective story, *The Bones of Margaret of York*; 12 October when Ann Wise talks on the last



days of the Braintree silk industry and 16 November when Natalie Cain recounts an Essex Oral History.

Don't miss them!

NEW HISTORY GROUP IN LEXDEN

A new history group has recently been launched in Lexden. The aim of The Lexden History Group is to arrange an interesting programme of winter talks and summer walks and encourage a cross-flow of information to help members with their own researches. The Group meet on the second Wednesday of each month at Lexden Church Hall at 7.45pm.

The Hon Secretary is Jane Thornhill, telephone 01206 523767.

The Friends of Colchester Museums

Income and Expenditure Account

INCOME	2005/6	2004/5
Note	(£s)	(£s)
Subscriptions	6381.00	5443.21
Donations	98.50	130.00
Lectures (net of expenses)	870.00	870.00
1. Trips (net profit)	124.85	279.00
Gift Aid	1363.78	1103.06
Interest	655.76	473.96
Sales	3.00	3.00
TOTAL	£9497.64	£8302.23

Balance Sheet as

ACCUMULATED FUND	(£s)	(£s)
Balance bought forward	20627.05	14330.60
Add: Surplus for year	6017.15	6296.45
SUB TOTAL	26644.20	20627.05
CREDITORS: Fees for trips	494.00	572.00
Other		130.00
TOTAL	£27138.20	£ 21284.05

Notes to the Accounts:

1. Relates to trips to Gressenhall and Sutton Hoo
2. The contribution to the Colchester Museums was £1850.
Made up as follows:
Medieval ring £200;
Medieval lion mount £600;
Coin of Tasciovanus £550;
Disability conference £500

Annual Accounts 2005-2006

for the year ended 31 March 2006

EXPENDITURE	2005/6	2004/5
Note	(£s)	(£s)
Operating Expenses	1134.66	1342.01
Subscriptions and Insurance (BAFM)	325.83	323.92
Events (Christmas Open Evening)	170.00	135.00
2. Purchases and Grants	1850.00	204.85
Surplus of Income over Expenditure	6017.15	6296.45
TOTAL	£9497.64	£8302.23


at 31 March 2006

NET CURRENT ASSETS	(£s)	(£s)
Cash at Bank		
Current Account	523.12	1360.72
Building Society Account	26399.08	19743.33
SUB-TOTAL	26922.20	21104.05
DEBTOR: Room hire	216.00	180.00
TOTAL	£27138.20	£21284.05

I have examined the accounts of The Friends of Colchester Museums for the year ended 31 March 2006 and confirm that they appear to be in accordance with the Books of Account and Vouchers produced to me for the purpose of this audit.

Signed  Roy Anderson *Hon. Auditor*

Dated: 7 June 2006

Signed  Peter Evans *FMAAT Hon. Treasurer*

Museum News

The Friends have supported the Museum with several significant archaeological acquisitions in recent months. Perhaps the single most important is a very rare Iron Age coin from Manningtree. This is a small gold coin, a quarter stater, issued by King Tasciovanus of the Catuvellauni tribe of Hertfordshire around 20 BC. The coin is one of the first to be issued by Tasciovanus; the letters CAML (short for Camulodunum, meaning ‘the fortress of the war god Camulos’) above the horse on one side suggests that at the beginning of his reign this king seized control of Colchester for a brief period before withdrawing. The circumstances of his withdrawal are not known. The significance of this coin lies in the fact that it is the oldest known version of the ancient name of Colchester and is therefore of paramount importance for the history of the town.

Also of great interest is an Anglo-Saxon sword pommel cap found near Ardleigh. This is essentially a thin gold sheath that fitted over the sword pommel, which was probably of wood. The Ardleigh find is an example of a ‘cocked hat’ pommel. This form of high status pommel was fashionable around 700 AD and has a distribution concentrated in eastern Scandinavia, with single finds in Kent, east and north-east England, the Danube headwaters and northern Italy. Indeed it is likely to have been made in what is now Sweden. It is decorated with mythical beasts and knots. The purchase of this find was also supported by The Art Fund and the MLA/V&A Purchase Grant Fund.

Other archaeological objects purchased with the assistance of the Friends are a 17th-

century mourning ring from Great Bromley, a group of Iron Age coins from Weeley, a late Bronze Age hoard of axes and ingot fragments from Little Bromley and a Roman 4th century gold finger ring from Great Bromley. It is planned to put all these items on show shortly in the Castle Museum.

The opportunity to acquire prints by Blair Hughes-Stanton arose at the end of last year.

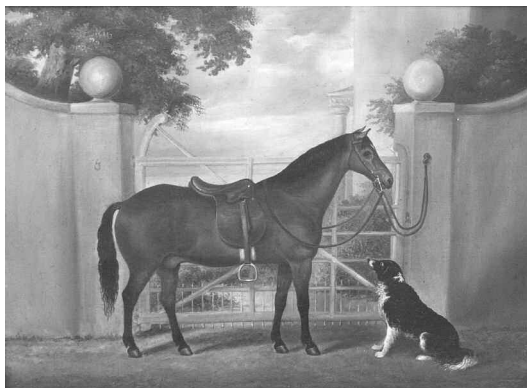
Blair Hughes-Stanton (1902–1981) was a painter and engraver who moved to Manningtree following the Second World War and taught at the Colchester School of Art. He was an important printmaker and designer of the mid-20th century and is best known for his book illustrations of the 1920s and 30s, including works by his friend, DH Lawrence. The museum bought 10 prints and a further three were kindly donated. Together they give a flavour of Hughes-Stanton’s output as a print maker and



now form a part of the museum’s print collecting initiative which represents the work of local printmakers. The Friends have helped by paying for the mounting of the prints and ‘The Wonder’, an illustration for an edition of *The Revelations of St John the Divine* in 1933, is illustrated above.

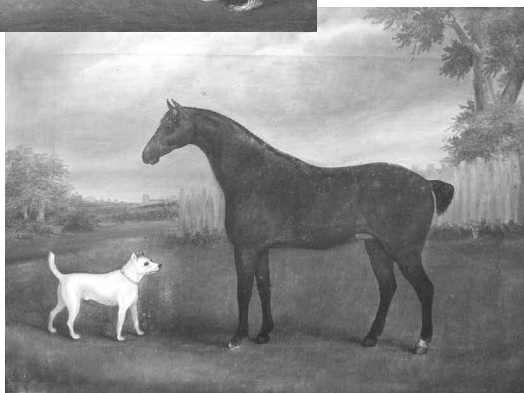
Continuing the art theme, the museum was successful in acquiring two oil paintings of horses and dogs by John Vine in original wood frames. The paintings were auctioned at Reemans on the 6 June and were secured with a bid £6,400. The purchase was generously supported by the MLA/V&A Purchase Grant Fund and the Friends. One painting is titled ‘A favourite mare and terrier of J.S. Surridge

Feering 1841' and the other shows a chestnut horse and a black and white collie dog in front of the gateway to a country house, (see pictures). They were commissioned by Joseph Smith Surridge of Inworth Hall which is almost certainly the house in the first painting.



The centrepiece to the display is the work of Gary Thrusell who will be remembered for his excellent steel sculptures of invertebrates which grace the mantelpieces of many members. This time Gary has

John Vine is of particular interest to Colchester Museums not just because he was a local artist, but because of his disability. The museum is carrying out pioneering work nationally into disability representation, uncovering the hidden histories of people with disabilities. Following conservation, the paintings will be displayed in Hollytrees Museum.



People living in the Colchester area will be familiar with Britain's largest beetle, the Stag Beetle (*Lucanus cervus*). To celebrate this fascinating insect an exciting new permanent display is now open at the town's Natural History Museum. The display focuses on all aspects of Britain's largest land beetle and Colchester speciality - its life-cycle, enemies, distribution, conservation, folklore and its appearance in art. It appeals to all the senses with interactive experiences to touch, smell, hear and learn about this most fascinating insect.

exceeded himself by creating a metre long stag beetle which moves! Working with his son Thomas the pair dissected a specimen so that they could accurately create an enlarged replica of the exoskeleton and then fit an electric motor to supply movement. Museum display officer Darren Stevens designed the eye-catching surround and display units.



The exhibition was opened on the 20 June by the Mayor and Jimmy Doherty of the Essex Pig Company (familiar to many from the TV series 'Jimmy's Farm' and the ceremony was filmed for possible

use in the second series). As Jimmy unveiled the stag beetle sculpture a loud gasp of appreciation went up from the audience. The exhibition has been well received and marks the start of a phased redisplay of the Museum over the next few years. (See picture on previous page).

VICTORIAN DAY

On Saturday 22 July St Botolphs Priory and Church were alive to the sights and sounds of the Victorian era. Queen Victoria herself was on site to meet and greet visitors, and also hold audiences throughout the day! Over 1,300

visitors enjoyed the Punch and Judy show, art activities, the Victorian school room and Victorian plays. They were also treated to the sounds of the Salvation Army band and Theatre Fun, while a fairground organ provided the backdrop to the day.

Visitors also had a chance to touch real Victorian objects, try on costumes, learn about the railways in the area, and attend the popular slide shows given by local historian and secretary of the Friends, Patrick Denney.

**Philip Wise, Tom Hodgson, Jerry Bowdrey,
Marie Taylor and Clive Stacey**

A Joint Museum Service for Colchester and Ipswich

Colchester Borough Council and Ipswich Borough Council are exploring the unique idea of creating a joint museum service.

The first part of a two stage decision-making process has just been taken, through Colchester Borough Council's Cabinet on 12 July and the Executive of Ipswich Borough Council on 18 July. At these meetings both Council's agreed 'in principle' to the formation of a new merged museum service subject to a further final decision in early December, when a detailed business plan will be considered.

Subject to that second stage decision the current intention is to have the new organisation in place by 1 April 2007.

Both local authorities consider merging the current museum services offers a range of benefits including:

- Be to the mutual benefit of both organisations and the communities they serve as well as offering an exciting and unique opportunity of a different way of working breaking across traditional organisational boundaries.
- Create a museum service that could react to challenges more effectively and quickly.
- Increase opportunities of partnership working

and leveraging in substantial additional amounts of external funding.

- Lead to more efficient ways of working.
- Significantly enhance influence both regionally and nationally.
- Improve quality, enjoyment and range of services for museum and heritage customers.

In relation to the new organisation it is intended that it would be led by Colchester Borough Council and build on the great success of the museum service in Colchester and allow the approach used here to be spread to Ipswich.

Over the next few weeks, as the detailed business plan is produced, an in-depth process of staff engagement and involvement will be conducted (building on the work already undertaken) as well as a wider consultation process with key individuals and organisations locally, regionally and nationally. As part of this consultation process if anyone would like to discuss the proposal please do not hesitate to make contact with me. (Tel. 01206 282931). E-mail peter.berridge@colchester.gov.uk.

Peter Berridge *General Manager*

Local and Family History Courses starting in September 2006

STUDY FAMILY HISTORY WITH CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY

Meeting Your Ancestors: Basic Sources for Family History (Part One) The course will cover all the basics of family history research and allow learners to examine a variety of primary sources. Topics for discussion will include - Census Returns, Parish Registers, Civil Registration, Oral History, Wills and Probate, Maps and Tithe records. Also included will be a visit to the Local Studies Library and the Essex Record Office.

Time: 12 meetings and 2 field trips on Wednesday evenings at 7pm
Start date: Wednesday 20 September 2006.
Tutor: Patrick Denney
Venue: The Adult Community College, Wilson Marriage Centre, Colchester
Enrollment: Contact Libby Hammond (Wilson Marriage Centre).
Telephone 01206 798488

Family History Using Computers A course designed to provide the learner with a knowledge of the main computer-based sources available for researching family history. Although primarily aimed at the beginner, the course should also be of interest to more experienced family historians who would like to gain experience using computer-based sources.

Time: 4 meetings on Saturday mornings 10am
Start date: Saturday 23 September 2006.
Tutor: Patrick Denney
Venue: The Adult Community College, Wilson Marriage Centre, Colchester
Enrollment: Contact Libby Hammond (Wilson Marriage Centre).
Telephone 01206 798488

Local History Short Courses

The University of Essex Local History Centre are beginning new 10-week, 2-hour evening courses. For those who wish to, after 4 courses students will gain the Certificate in Local History. Provisional cost: £110 per course.

From October 2006

A History of Colchester by Andrew Phillips

From January 2007

Introduction to the Archaeology of East Anglia by Howard Brooks

Family and Community in 19th Century Colchester and Essex by Paul Glenister

Details from Lisa West, Department of History, University of Essex,
Wivenhoe Park, Colchester CO4 3SQ.
Telephone: 01206 872190

Friends' Lecture Series 2006

Tuesday 12 September *Andrew Phillips*
**The Colchester Garrison:
From Napoleon to the Kaiser**

All at Lion Walk Church, Colchester at 7.30pm.
Admission prices per lecture:
Members £1 per person. Non-Members £2.

Tuesday 26 September *Jane Pearson*
**On the Trail of the Lonesome Vine:
John Vine, Colchester Artist**

TEA AND TALKS OFFER

Special offer to Friends only - £2.50 per lecture or £10 for the series (usual prices £3 and £12). Each lecture starts at 3pm, lasts approximately 1hour 30 minutes and includes a cup of tea.

Tuesday 10 October *Patrick Denney*
Old Heath: The Road to Suburbia

Please see the flyer included with this Annual Report for full details.

Tuesday 24 October *Mick Brown*
Mile End Memories

Tuesday 7 November *Tom Hodgson*
**What the Papers Say: Tales from
Colchester Museum's Archives**

SPECIAL TALK FOR MEMBERS ONLY

Tuesday 20 February 2007 at 7.30pm.
Charles Gray Room, Colchester Castle.
Further details to be published in the January 2007 edition of the Newsletter.
Admission £1 per person

Tuesday 21 November *Peter Berridge*
The Darker Side of Colchester Castle



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