

**The Friends of  
Colchester Museums**

*Registered Charity No. 310669*

Newsletter and  
Sixty Seventh Annual Report  
2015-2016

# Officers

AS ELECTED AT THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING ON 21ST JUNE 2016

<i>President</i>	Her Worship the Mayor, COUNCILLOR JULIE YOUNG	
<i>Vice Presidents</i>	MRS JEAN BAKER	MARK DAVIES
	MRS JEAN BLOWERS	PATRICK DENNEY
	MRS BARBARA NAPPER	ANDREW PHILLIPS
	PETER BERRIDGE	PAUL SPENDLOVE
<i>Chairman</i>	MARK DAVIES 19 Oxley Parker Drive Colchester CO4 5XQ Telephone 01206 842032 Email: gmarkrdavies@btinternet.com	
<i>Honorary Treasurer</i>	PETER EVANS 5 Grimston Road Colchester CO2 7RN Telephone 01206 540990 Email: peter.evans7978@btinternet.com	
<i>Honorary Secretary</i>	JANET FULFORD 301 Mile End Road Colchester CO4 5EA Telephone 01206 851593 Email: jif301@btinternet.com	
<i>Membership Secretary</i>	PATRICK DENNEY 247 Old Heath Road Colchester CO2 8BN Telephone 01206 796822 Email: patrick.denney@sky.com	
<i>Newsletter Editor</i>	PETER CONSTABLE 12 Claremont Heights Essex Hall Road Colchester CO1 1UZ Telephone 01206 517788 Email: design.constables@btinternet.com	
<i>Other Committee Members</i>	MARY DALE	HARRY CARLO
	JENNY JONES	CHRIS HALL
	AVRIL LANKESTER	ANDREW MILLAR
	JANITA LE FEVRE	ANDREW PHILLIPS
	PHILIP BEETON	DAVID WALTON
<i>Ex Officio</i>	BILL SEAMAN ( <i>Museums, Arts and Culture Manager</i> ) TOM HODGSON ( <i>Colchester Museums Manager</i> ) PHILIP WISE ( <i>Heritage Manager</i> )	
<i>Honorary Auditor</i>	ROY ANDERSON	
<i>Museum Office</i>	Museum Resource Centre 14 Ryegate Road Colchester CO1 1YG Telephone 01206 282931/2 www.cims.org.uk	

# Sixty Seventh Annual Report 2015-2016

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting took place on Tuesday 21st June at Lion Walk Church, with the Mayor of Colchester, Councillor Julie Young in the chair. The meeting was followed by Will Tyler's lecture entitled *The First Day of the Somme*.

## FROM THE CHAIRMAN

At the Friends' Annual General Meeting, held on Tuesday 21st June 2016, the usual reports were made about the Society's recent activities and achievements. Of special interest are several important acquisitions. These include two items of treasure arising from the Portable Antiquities Scheme – a medieval gold finger ring and a later medieval silver 'vervel' or hawking ring – for whose retention we provided £400 and £450 respectively. Both of these rings are local finds which will help to embellish the collections.

There is also a fine red leather-bound book of photographs by William Gill of Colchester scenes entitled *Colchester Illustrated* which was compiled and published privately with his own personal comments by Alderman Wilson Marriage. It was discovered in a Norwich

bookshop by our eagle-eyed Treasurer and purchased for £150. At the end of the meeting this book and the following items were formally presented to the Mayor, Cllr. Julie Young, and members were able to inspect them afterwards.

Our latest acquisitions were generously bequeathed by the late Richard Cooper. They comprise two portraits of children by John Vine, the local artist, and items of memorabilia relating to the local Co-operative Society – namely, the presentation trowel and key from the opening of the Co-op premises in Long Wyre Street.

These various items illustrate just some of the different ways in which the Friends can help in ensuring that objects of local historical interest will be safeguarded for future generations. Bequests of suitable objects for collection or financial gifts of any amount are always welcome and help us to be ever ready in meeting our obligations.

Colchester's museums provide excellent activities and plenty of interest as reflected in the healthy visitor figures, which point strongly to the quality of our local heritage and museums. However, with the Museum Resource Centre



*Peter Evans presenting the Wilson Marriage book to the Mayor, Councillor Julie Young at the Annual General Meeting, with Mark Davies on the left and Tom Hodgson on the right*

facing imminent closure and a workable solution still to be found, the major concern for the future success of Colchester's Museum Service lies firmly with the will and ability of Colchester Borough Council to make adequate long-term provision for the all-important support services on which it all depends.

MARK DAVIES *Chairman*

## FROM THE MUSEUMS MANAGER

I was pleased to see such a good turnout at the Friends AGM, where I shared the good news that the Castle Museum continues to attract around 100,000 visits which is a rise of around 25% compared with the last year before the major refurbishment.

One of the highlights of the year was the launch of the Fenwick Treasure. This remarkable Colchester find makes a significant contribution to the story of the devastating Boudican revolt and adds a particularly human element to the narrative. It was also a good example of a strong partnership between business and heritage with the continued support and encouragement from the Fenwick Group and Mr Hugo Fenwick in particular.

Friends may have heard that the bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund to create a new collections centre in the St Botolph's development was not successful. Nevertheless the aspiration remains to make the Colchester collections more accessible to a wider range of people and we are pursuing other options.

Friends may have noticed that the events and activities in the museums have been supported by lively and enthusiastic trainees with the museum service. With funding from the Arts Council England, the trainees have given a real boost to the service and have broadened the appeal of our programme. Please have a look at their Blogs and the Training Museum short film on the CIMS Website <http://www.cimuseums.org.uk/trainingmuseum>

May I finally thank the Friends for their

invaluable support as both users of the museums, fundraisers and ambassadors for Colchester's outstanding heritage.

BILL SEAMAN

*Museums, Arts and Culture Manager*

## TREASURERS'S TOPICS

**Season Tickets.** If you want to buy a season ticket for the Autumn season of 6 lectures, please send me a cheque for £10 (payable to Friends of Colchester Museums) c/o 5 Grimston Road, Colchester with an SAE.

**Subscriptions.** If your subscription is unpaid or has been paid through your bank at the wrong rate, a note will be enclosed. We still have a number of bank standing orders being paid at the wrong rate. As payment is made by standing order and NOT direct debit, we cannot arrange the amendment for you.

**Gift Aid.** We have had a problem claiming this but we have been in touch with the British Association of Friends of Museums (BAfM) and have been advised that we can claim. This will take some time and at some stage I will need to contact newer members to see if they can complete a certificate for us. This is one of the advantages of being affiliated to BAfM and they have been helpful to us in the past.

PETER EVANS *Hon. Treasurer*

## MEMBERSHIP UPDATE 2016

Our membership figures currently total 673 across all categories (July 2016). This represents a small decline in numbers from our 2015 total of 701, and indeed our 2014 figure of 716. The current breakdown compared with our 2015 figures are as follows:- Single 318 (335), Couples 232 (235), Family 112 (119) and other 11 (12). It can thus be seen that the greater loss in numbers is from our single members – 17 fewer than last year. However, the aggregate figure taken from across all membership

categories, still exceeds over 1,200 members, which is a healthy total taken as a whole.

The Committee and I would like to thank the membership for their continued support and hope to see you all at the commencement of our new lecture series in September 2016.

PATRICK DENNEY *Membership Secretary*

## INVITATION TO A 'CINEMATIC EXPERIENCE'

**Wednesday 21st September 2016**

Colchester Civic Society have arranged a trip to London to the Regent Street Cinema for a guided tour. Newly restored, it is the oldest cinema in Britain, built in 1848 as a theatre. After a short film, the coach goes on to the Cinema Museum in Lambeth, where there is a huge collection of posters and memorabilia, including uniforms, ashtrays and 17 million feet of film! The building itself was the workhouse where Charlie Chaplin lived as a child. The coach leaves East Hill (by St James' Church) at 9am. Cost £39. Cheque payable to Colchester Civic Society. Inquiries to Jo Edwards on 01206 868254. Payment to Jo at 43 Priory Street, Colchester CO1 2QB. (Peter Evans also has some information.)

## THE LECTURE SERIES 2016

We are half way through our programme having had a series of varied talks starting with James Wills' *My Life in Newspapers* and ending

with an extremely intense and emotive talk by Will Tyler *The First Day of the Somme*. Grateful thanks to Andrew Phillips for his *Victorian Colchester Entrepreneurs*. He stepped in at short notice when the original speaker fell ill.

Lectures restart on Tuesday 6th September at 7.30pm with Patrick Denney's *Colchester Voices* and finishes on 15th November and includes talks by stalwarts Mark Davies and Peter Jones plus Sir Bob Russell, Dr Robert Beaken and Dr Fabrizio Casale. We hope you will enjoy the rest of the series..

JENNY JONES

## TRIP TO THE MAYFLOWER PROJECT Tuesday 5th July 2016

The evening trip to The Mayflower Project in Harwich was different as the site is a 'work in progress'. A full coach plus ten extra people met at the site and were greeted by Sean Day, the Tourism and Marketing Manager, for the project. However, Sean is so much more as his enthusiasm, energy and forward thinking drives the project on. We visited the building which shows the history of the Mayflower trip in 1620 to the Americas; the work which has been done by more than 600 young local people and the murals which reflect the boats and specialist work being done. There is still much to do and funds to secure but they expect to sail on time.

*continued on page 6*



# The Friends of Colchester Museum

## Income and Expenditure Account for

INCOME	2015/16 (£s)	2014/15 (£s)
Subscriptions	8290.50	8562.00
Lectures (net of expenses)	1651.20	903.65
Trips (net profit)	781.50	652.50
Interest	409.28	507.94
Donations	155.00	103.00
Castle Open Evening	1002.81	1206.72
Surplus of Expenditure over Income	<u>£12290.29</u>	<u>3794.20</u> 15730.01

## Balance Sheet as at

ACCUMULATED FUND	(£s)	(£s)
Balance brought forward	26271.05	30065.25
Surplus/Loss for year	6651.52	-3794.20
<b>TOTAL</b>	<u>£32922.57</u>	<u>26271.05</u>
<b>CREDITORS:</b>		
Fees for Trips (note 3)	3105.00	4117.50
Season Tickets 2015	450.00	480.00
	<u>£36477.57</u>	<u>30868.55</u>

### Notes to the Accounts

- Note 1. Purchases 2015/6 - Colchester Book £150 and preparation of Castle Guidebook £2000  
Purchases 2014/15 Final payment of grant towards Castle Refurbishment £10000  
Contribution to purchase of Gold Ring and plaque for William Wire
- Note 2 Contribution to Museum Service to compensate for free admission for members
- Note 3 Payments received in advance annual trips
- Note 4 Payment made to Lion Walk Church for Spring Lectures

# Museums Annual Accounts 2015-2016

for the year ended 31st March 2016

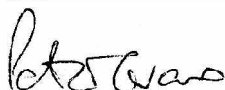
EXPENDITURE	2015/16 (£s)	2014/15 (£s)
Operating Expenses	1353.77	2463.51
Subscriptions and Insurance (British Association of Friends of Museums and British Association of Local History))	215.00	215.00
Events - Christmas Open Evening	220.00	124.00
Purchases (note 1)	2150.00	10527.50
Contribution to Museum (note 2)	1700.00	2400.00
Surplus of Income over Expenditure	6651.52	
	<u>£12290.29</u>	<u>15730.01</u>

at 31st March 2016

NET CURRENT ASSETS	(£s)	(£s)
Bank		
Current Account	4021.51	7600.12
Building Society	32046.06	22858.43
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>36067.57</b>
DEBTORS: Room Hire (note 4)	410.00	410.00
	<u>£36477.57</u>	<u>30868.55</u>

I have examined the accounts of The Friends of Colchester Museums for the year ended 31st March 2016 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: 21st May 2016

Signed  PETER EVANS *FMAAT Hon. Treasurer*

*continued from page 3*

The evening finished with a most welcome drink and cream scone at Treo, a bar/cafe opposite.

This is a project worth visiting again to watch the progress being made, either as a group or by individual members.

AVRIL LANKESTER

## **TRIP TO HEVER CASTLE**

**Tuesday 19th July 2016**

On the hottest day of the year so far, 95 people boarded the two coaches. We had a good journey and started our visit just after 11 am. As we walked down the hill the Castle came into view nestling in the valley.



After a quick drink in the café most people entered the attractive fortified manor house by way of the wooden bridge. The rooms were beautifully set out with fine furniture, tapestries, antiques and an important collection of Tudor paintings.

There is a well-stocked library and long gallery with a beautiful ceiling. Among other things we saw were two prayer books inscribed and signed by Anne Boleyn.

For those who were brave enough to go out in the blazing sun the stunning gardens awaited.

The Italian garden was a delight and the architecture around the lake was very impressive.

Others also visited the collection of

miniature houses and the Yeomanry Military Museum.

We left at 4.30 pm for our journey home. Everyone agreed that although they were quite tired they had had an enjoyable day.

JENNY JONES

## **HERITAGE OPEN DAYS**

**Saturday 10th and Sunday 11th**

**September 2016**

When Colchester's interesting but usually inaccessible buildings are open to the public. For details see the Museum website.

## **CHRISTMAS AT THE CASTLE**

**Wednesday 14th December 3pm - 8pm**

This is the usual Open Evening when the public are invited to attend. Mince pies and mulled wine will be available with the usual festive fayre.

Offers of help by Committee members and volunteers to man The Friends' stall for an hour would be appreciated.

## **LOCAL & FAMILY HISTORY CLASSES AUTUMN 2016**

**Wilson Marriage Centre**

**Barrack Street, Colchester, CO1 2LR**

**HISTORY OF COLCHESTER (PART 1)**

Wednesday evenings for 10 weeks (7-9pm)

**Code: EWM5B09Y16**

**FAMILY HISTORY ON THE INTERNET (PART 1)**

Friday afternoons for 10 weeks (2-4pm)

**Code: EWM5B05Y16**

**Telephone: 0345 603 7635**

or book online at

<http://www.essex.gov.uk/adultlearning/Pages/Default.aspx>



# Museum News

## CASTLE NOTES

Last year turned out to be a record-breaker in terms of schools visits. Over the course of the year 20,600 schoolchildren came to the Castle, which is the highest figure in my 21 years at the museum.

We have added more content to the Castle app. There is now a 360 degree view of the prison as it would have appeared following its renovation in 1791. If you stand in the lunch area, the app will show you the prison building, yard and gaoler's house. See the gaoler's house on the right.

Following the great success of the launch of the Fenwick Treasure we have commissioned a jeweller, Nicky Wade, to produce copies of one of the gold bracelets and pendants and earrings based on the original designs. The bespoke jewellery is for sale in the museum shop.

TOM HODGSON

*Colchester Museums Manager*

## The Training Museum

Colchester and Ipswich Museums, supported by Arts Council England, are



currently delivering a project called The Training Museum. One element involves year-long traineeships and on Thursday 16th June, our 2015–16 Trainees became award winners.



*The trainees - Alex, Emily, Joe, Elisha, Scott, Sammi and Anton pictured outside Colchester Castle*

Anton, Alex, Elisha, Emily, Joe, Sammi and Scott won the Arts and Cultural Learning category at the Suffolk Adult Learning Awards. See photograph opposite. The organisers, LEAP, recognised the hard work, initiative and dedication that has made them invaluable team members.

Alongside practical experience, the Trainees have been learning about subjects from conservation to exhibition installation, ethics to marketing. They have taken on board an incredible amount in a relatively short period, sharing their learning experiences via an online blog <https://trainingmuseum.wordpress.com/>. They are even revisiting their former schools to talk to deliver activities and showcase museum careers.

“Being a Training Museum Trainee is an incredible experience and has opened my eyes to a world of opportunities!” says Scott.

LIB FOX

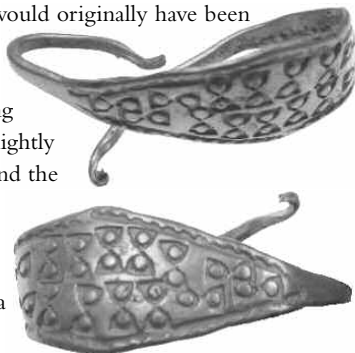
*Training Museum Project Officer*

## RECENT ACQUISITION:

### A Viking Gold Finger-ring from Tendring District

The Friends recently agreed to make a contribution of £300 towards the acquisition of a Treasure case – an unusual Viking finger ring from Tendring District, east of Colchester. The ring consists of a lozenge-shaped sheet which has been drawn into wires at each end. The ends of the wires are hooked, showing that they would originally have been

twisted together, but the ring has been slightly flattened and the ends have sprung apart. The central area has a



‘toothed’ border, within which there are a series of triangles arranged in rows which have been formed by a punch. The ring measures 23.7mm in length, 10.4mm in width (max) and weighs 2.0g.

Viking gold finger rings with punched triangle decoration are less common than the other main type made of twisted or plaited wire. Similar gold rings are, however, known from Beachamwell (Norfolk) and Whorlton (North Yorkshire) whilst a silver version was found at Wood Enderby (Lincolnshire) in 2011. A number of related rings in non-precious metal are also known. All date to the Viking Age from the late 9th–10th century.

This period is poorly represented in the Colchester archaeology collection and as a complete and recognisable type of object this local find is particularly significant. It is also an attractive piece of jewellery which represents a popular design amongst Viking women or at least those who adopted Viking fashions.

PHILIP WISE

*Heritage Manager*

## WHAT’S ON AT COLCHESTER MUSEUMS

New additions to the Castle App including 3D virtual reality reconstruction of the prison yard.

**New Resources:** Fenwick Treasure resources for teachers launched.

[www.cimuseums.org.uk/fenwickteachers](http://www.cimuseums.org.uk/fenwickteachers)  
<<http://www.cimuseums.org.uk/fenwick-teachers>>

**What’s in Store:** Delve behind the scenes and explore the museum’s stored collections with this new exhibition curated with students from Colchester Institute.

16th July- 20th November 2016,  
Hollytrees Museum.

# The Richard Cooper Bequest

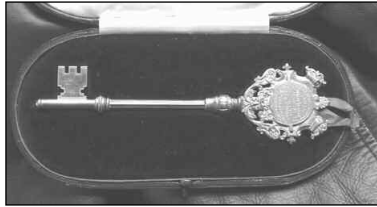
Early this year, we were contacted by the executors of Richard Cooper, a local auctioneer and member of the Friends of Colchester Museums.

In his will he had left the Friends two paintings of children, believed to be the work of disabled Colchester artist John Vine, dated about 1840 and two silver items, with cases, linked to the Colchester Co-operative Society.

These had originally been in the possession of John Thorrington, a relation of Mr Cooper.



There was a condition that the items should be displayed by the Museum, which has been agreed by Tom Hodgson, for Colchester and Ipswich Museums Service. The Museum has some examples of John Vine's work but



was keen to have more.

The other items are the engraved silver trowel used in the foundation

ceremony of the Co-op premises in Long Wyre Street and the silver key to the completed building.

Each comes with a velvet lined case.

The bequest was formally handed over to the Museum at the Annual General Meeting on Tuesday 21st June.

PETER EVANS

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## Colchester Recalled Autumn Programme

### SEPTEMBER 15th

**Colchester Cemetery and Crematorium 1856-2016.** An illustrated talk by PENNY STYLES of Colchester Cemetery.

### OCTOBER 13th

**Essex and the Napoleonic War.** An illustrated talk by Peter Jones.

### NOVEMBER 17th

**Marks Hall – the Stately Home Which Got Away.** A virtual visit conducted by Jane Pearson.

### DECEMBER 15th

**Seasonal Evening** with our traditional Local Landmarks Quiz and a historical video.

All to take place in the Lecture Theatre at Colchester Institute, Sheepen Road. All are welcome. Admission £2 per person.

The 2017 programme should be available at the Christmas at the Castle event on Wednesday 14th December.



Photo by Patrick Denney

## The Friends' Lecture Series Autumn 2016

### SEPTEMBER

- 6th COLCHESTER VOICES -  
STORIES FROM THE ARCHIVES  
Patrick Denney
- 20th CIVILIANS, SOLDIERS AND RELIGION  
IN WARTIME COLCHESTER  
1914-1918  
Dr Robert Beaken

### OCTOBER

- 4th ZEPPELINS OVER ESSEX  
Peter Jones
- 18th EIGHTEEN YEARS IN PARLIAMENT  
Sir Bob Russell

### NOVEMBER

- 1st COLCHESTER BOROUGH REGALIA  
AND OTHER CIVIC GIFTS  
Mark Davies
- 15th HISTORY OF ESSEX COUNTY  
HOSPITAL  
Dr Fabrizio Casale

**All at Lion Walk Church at 7.30pm**

Admission per lecture:

**Members £2 Non members £4**

**Member's Season Tickets for the autumn series are available at £10 each.**

Further information from David Walton  
The Friends of Colchester Museums  
c/o The Museum Resource Centre  
Email: davidpatrickwalton@gmail.com