



The Friends of Colchester Museums

Registered Charity No. 310669

Newsletter - January 2018

Newsletter January 2018

FROM THE CHAIRMAN

I would like to begin these brief notes by offering a big thank you to our outgoing Chairman, Mark Davies, who stepped down from the position at the AGM in June 2017. Mark has served the Society extremely well over the last few years and will continue to offer his experience and expertise whilst serving as a member of the Committee.

We have just completed the first part of our 2017-18 lecture series and they were all well attended with an average of around 85 in attendance at each meeting. We were treated to a range of topics including Colchester in Old Picture Postcards, Memories of Thames Barges, Entertainment at Clacton and the wonderful local watercolours of Major Bale. And there is much more to come in the coming year.

See below for a full list of lectures planned for 2018.

As usual we also have an exciting programme of outings which are detailed in the report and we recommend that you book early to ensure your place by completing the enclosed booking form. As you will note some of the trips are in association with our colleagues at the Civic Society, which adds to the number of events that we are able to offer.

You will also note in this newsletter that we are planning to offer a short series of talks later in the year during the afternoons in addition to our regular evening events. This may appeal to some members who feel that they cannot attend the evening sessions, so please look out for further information on this initiative later in the year.

With regard to the ongoing support that we can offer to the Museum Service we have recently sanctioned the purchase of an early Medieval gold coin which was discovered locally by a metal detectorist. The coin dates to around 659 AD and was produced in the Provence region of modern day France. It is deemed to be part of a hoard of similar coins previously found in the area and it is hoped that the new coin will be added to the Museum's displays once the purchase has been finalised.

We are also edging ever closer to the launch of our new website and although this seems to have been dragging on for some time, we hope that the wait will have been well worth it. At the present time we are looking towards the spring of 2018 for our official launch date and there will be more news about in our spring mailing.

I would also like to mention that Peter Jones, one of our Committee members, has been appointed as Vice Chairman. Peter already works very hard for the benefit of the Society and I'm sure that his involvement will only add to the success of our future endeavours. And whilst we are on the subject of your Committee, we are always looking for new blood as it were and, in particular, someone who would like to take on the role of Membership Secretary. So please contact either myself or one of the Committee members if you think this role could be for you.

On a final note I would to say a big thank you to all of our Committee members who work tirelessly behind the scenes for the benefit of the Society. A lot of what they do remains unseen to many of our members but their contribution is critical to the ongoing success of the Society.

Patrick Denney, *Chairman*

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Our latest end of year membership figures have shown just a small increase over the last few months, although we are still a little down on our figures for the same period last year. In fact, it would seem that over the last couple of years or so we have settled on a figure of around 650 across all categories giving a combined membership of around 1,200 - so things are looking fairly good as we enter 2018. The Committee and I would like to thank you all for your continued support during 2017 and we look forward to see you again in New Year.

	December 2017	August 2017	December 2016
Single	307	303	327
Couple	226	223	237
Family	106	107	114
Other	11	11	11
Total	650	644	689

Subscriptions:

Single Members £10,
Couple Membership £15,
Family Membership £21.

Patrick Denney, *Membership Secretary*

TREASURER'S TOPICS

Gift Aid

We are intending to start claiming gift aid again but since we last claimed, new rules have come into force and we need to ask all members to complete a new certificate. When claiming gift aid, we have to give HM Customs and Revenues full details so that the fact that you have paid will reach your tax records.

A new certificate is enclosed, which is quite straightforward. I will be grateful if you will complete and return it to me, whether or not you have completed a form before. You can return it with your subscription or order form for trips.

Subscriptions

A few members have not corrected their standing order instructions since the membership rates increased in 2015. If this is the case, a notice is enclosed. As the rate paid is now incorrect, no membership card has been enclosed. Please contact me to let me know what rate of membership you require. My contact details are in the front of this newsletter.

Season Tickets

Season tickets of our meetings are again available. These give members 12 meetings for the price of 10. If you require a season ticket, please use the order form enclosed.

Peter Evans, *Hon. Treasurer*

MERCURY RISING APPEAL

On 19th September, Steve Mannix gave us a talk called "The History and Future of the Mercury Theatre". Doubtless you are aware that the Theatre has an appeal for a major improvement and renovation project. We always offer our guest speakers a fee but Steve asked for a donation to the Appeal in lieu. We have done this and our donation has bought us a Silver Brick, which will bear our name.

As we are a charity with specific aims, we cannot make gifts to other charities but in this case the Mercury is Steve's employer and we would have paid them in any case.

Peter Evans,
Hon. Treasurer



OUR OUTINGS 2018

Ingatestone Hall

- Tuesday 26 June 2018 at 2 pm
- Cost £24 (with private guided tour and refreshments)



Leaving Colchester we will travel by coach to Ingatestone Hall. This 16th century manor house was built by Sir William Petre, Secretary of State to four Tudor monarchs and is still occupied by his descendant. The Hall is still essentially as it was when Sir William built it with mullioned windows and oak panelled rooms. It is set in 10 acres of attractive gardens with an avenue of old lime trees, a stew pond and wide lawns augmented by a walled garden area. Among the rooms on view are the Summer Parlour which was the former ballroom, the oak panelled Stone Hall, the Old Kitchen featuring a huge Tudor fireplace, and two bedchambers – My Master's Lodging and the Queen Anne Room. You will also visit the Long Gallery, a long hallway lined with portraits and mementoes gathered by generations of the Petre family. There are two Priest's Holes set in the thickness of the walls.

We will be arriving at 2 pm for a guided tour of the Hall and afterwards there will be refreshments of tea/coffee and cakes in the tea room.

A Kings coach will pick up in Crouch Street at 12.30 pm and Marks Tey Hotel at 12.45 pm.

Book early to avoid disappointment and remember to state your pick up point and to include your car registration number and an extra £1 per car if you wish to park at Marks Tey Hotel.

Landguard Fort, Felixstowe

- Wednesday 11th July 2018 at 10 am
- Cost £18 (Heritage site but the Fort state that all group bookings are a set price)



Leaving Colchester we will travel by coach to Felixstowe where Landguard Fort stands at the entrance to the Port. We will have a guided tour of the Fort and there will then be time for you to get a drink and watch the informative DVD in the TV Room and investigate the Fort on your own.

Some areas of the Fort have uneven floors and there are a few steps – flat comfortable shoes are recommended and care should be taken at all times.

Just 150 yds from the Fort is the View Point Café where you can get soup, snacks, fish and chips, etc and drinks. You can sit in the café and eat your lunch watching the comings and goings of Felixstowe Port. Or you can bring a packed lunch and sit on one of the benches on the beach.

There have been a number of fortifications built on the Landguard Peninsula over the years from 1543 when Henry VIII had two blockhouses there. The walls of the 1717 brick Fort in the form of a pentagon with a bastion at each corner still remain. In 1871 the Fort was remodelled using yellow London bricks. The south east curtain wall facing the sea had one 12.5" and two 10" RML guns in casemates and the two land facing bastions had Barbette mounted 9" RML guns.

In 1901, because the existing armament became obsolete, new batteries were built in front of the Fort facing the sea and river. After the main guns were removed, for most of the 20th century the Fort was used as barrack accommodation and two of the old gun casemates were converted into a control room for 'cold war' use. In 1956 the Coastal Artillery was disbanded and after 10 years of military neglect the Fort was sealed up and left to disintegrate until 1998 when it was opened to the public and it is now maintained by the Landguard Fort Trust.

This is an unusual destination but well worth a visit. Book early to avoid disappointment.

The Kings coach will pick up at Mark Tey Hotel at 8.30 am and Crouch Street at 8.45 am.

When booking remember to state your pick up point and to include your car registration number and an extra £1 per car if you wish to park at Marks Tey Hotel.

Hatfield House

- Wednesday 18th July 2018 (day trip)
- Cost £36



Leaving Colchester we will travel by coach to Hatfield House in Hertfordshire, home of the 7th Marquess and Marchioness of Salisbury. Built in 1611 by Robert Cecil, 1st Earl of Salisbury this fine house shows superb examples of Jacobean craftsmanship such as the Grand Staircase with its fine carving and the rare stained glass window in the private chapel. Henry VIII used the Old Palace at Hatfield as a home for his children Elizabeth and Mary, and it was whilst living here that Elizabeth learned of her accession to the throne.

There are many rooms open for view including the Chinese Bedroom, Long Gallery, Winter Dining Room, Victorian Kitchen and the Armoury. There are extensive gardens for you to wander through and when you feel the need for refreshments the Coach House Restaurant offers different types of food and drink and there is the Stable Yard Coffee Shop.

This is a day trip and Kings coaches will pick up in Crouch Street at 9 am and Marks Tey Hotel at 9.15 am.

Book early to avoid disappointment and remember to state your pick up point and to include your car registration number and an extra £1 per car if you wish to park at Marks Tey Hotel.

COLCHESTER CIVIC SOCIETY EXCURSIONS

We have again been invited to join the CCS for the following events:

The Postal Museum, Mount Pleasant

- Sunday 11th February 2018
- Coach leaves bus stop outside East Hill House, East Hill at 8am
- Cost £48.50

Slots for this new Museum are difficult to get! We start with coffee in London and our guide will take us on a walk to hear the amazing history of the post, then we will be free to find lunch in the Exmouth Market area. After lunch, we will visit the Museum, with 500 years of postal history to see and ending with a ride through the tunnels of Rail Mail on the little underground trains used to carry post through central London to the Mount Pleasant Sorting Office, where a cup of tea can be bought before coming home.

The Great Stink - London, Cholera & Bazalgette

- Tuesday 17th April 2018
- Coach leaves bus stop outside East Hill House, East Hill at 8am
- Cost £52.50



A cartoon from Punch magazine in July 1858 showing Old Father Thames presenting his offspring (various diseases), to the city of London at the time of the Great Stink

We start in Chancery Lane, London for coffee in a pub (with wonderful loos) then our guide will tell us about "spending a Penny" in London, also the Roman sewage systems, the underground rivers and wells of London and the Thames. Gradually the pollution was so great that in 1858 the Great Stink from the Thames was so bad Parliament could not sit. Sir Joseph Bazalgette arrived with his amazing engineering feats and we end the day visiting his spectacular Cathedral of Sewage, the pumping station at Crossness.

At lunch time we will join a cruise from Westminster to Greenwich. There will be a bar on board but no food so a packed lunch is advised. Then by coach to Crossness. Please bring sensible shoes, as there is a spiral staircase at the Pumping Station.

Ouseden House, Suffolk

- Thursday 5th July 2018
- Coach leaves bus stop, outside Greyfriars, East Hill at 12.45pm
- Cost £31.00



A gentle afternoon visiting a Georgian stable and coach house near Stowmarket, converted to an elegant dwelling about 18 years ago. There is an 8 acre garden, with herbaceous borders, roses, a water garden, double crinkle yew hedge, a small lake and woodland. We will have a guided tour of the house and afternoon tea (sandwiches and cakes). We can explore the garden.

You can bring a snack lunch to eat on the coach if you wish.

Please contact Mrs Jo Edwards on 01206 868254 if you need any more information or want details of how to join the Society. Cheques should be made payable to COLCHESTER CIVIC SOCIETY and sent to Jo Edwards at 43 Priory Street, Colchester CO1 2QB

BOXTED SEAL MATRIX

The Friends have very generously supported the acquisition of this remarkable object found in September 2015 during a metal-detecting rally on farmland at Boxted, Essex. It is a seal matrix made of silver, set with a cornelian intaglio, or engraved gemstone, and dates to the period 1200 – 1400. It would have been used by its owner to authenticate documents; the matrix would have been pressed into a blob of wax to leave an impression.



Photograph thanks to Portable Antiquities Scheme

The seal matrix has a pointed oval shape and a loop for suspension from a chain. The cornelian gemstone is orange in colour with a yellow stripe. It is engraved with a lion facing left (right on impression) with a wide muzzle and with the tail arched over the back. The setting is surrounded by the words 'S:ANNEIS DE PINCENEIE', which may be translated as the 'Seal of Anne de Pinceney'. The inscription suggests that it belonged to a female member of the de Pinceney, or Pinkney, family who are recorded in London in 1184 and take their name from Picquigny in northern France.

The seal matrix measures 26.5mm long by 19.6mm wide, is 5.9mm thick and weighs 4.23g. A number of comparable seal matrices are known from Sussex, Wiltshire, Lincolnshire and elsewhere in England.

Although gem-set seal matrices of this type frequently include examples with reused Roman intaglios; Prof Martin Henig (University of Oxford) has commented that the style of this gem indicates that it is more likely to be medieval in date, but with an awareness of Roman models. The image of a lion is frequently seen on seal matrices and may be used as a charm to guard the owner from harm. John Cherry (formerly of The British Museum) has commented that gem-set seals belonging to women are comparatively rare and that, therefore, this example is particularly notable.

Philip Wise, *Heritage Manager*

BREAKING NEWS

We are planning afternoon lectures in April, May and June next year in Lion Walk Church. Remember to look in the March Newsletter for details of dates, time and subjects.

Jenny Jones

MUSEUM NEWS

This has been another very busy few months at the museums in Colchester. In October, we said goodbye to the Museum Resource Centre where the Museum Service had been based since 1982. We are now settling in to our new home at Heckworth Close on the Severalls Industrial Estate. It was a major operation to leave the MRC, but it was completed on time and on budget. At the same time, we maintained a full programme of events and activities at the Colchester museum venues and participated in three national celebrations: the Festival of Archaeology, Heritage Open Days and Kids in Museums.

On 25 July, during the national 'Festival of Archaeology', an 'Archaeology Day' was held at the Castle. This started off the summer holiday events which Roman lamp making, a wartime experience and 'Crime and Punishment'. The 'Festival of Archaeology' was also celebrated at the Natural History Museum with an event entitled 'Archaeology Detectives!' This was a day of free activities, giving visitors the opportunity to discover more about being an archaeologist and to try their hand at some investigating of their own.

Heritage Open Days in Colchester this year attracted nearly 8,000 visits to the town's historic buildings, an increase of over 17% compared to 2016. The Castle was again well supported with 2812 visitors taking advantage of free admission on the Saturday. New for 2017 were the 'Concrete Legacy', a guided tour of the distinctive murals in the Southway subways, the early 19th century 'The Turrets', now part of St Mary's School, and the Victorian farm buildings at Cuckoo Farm. Heritage Open Days are organised by the Museum Service with the support of volunteers including members of the Colchester Civic Society, Mersea Island Museum and the Colchester Catholic Heritage Society.

For the second year running the Museum Service took part in the nationwide 'Takeover Day' promoted by Kids in Museums. Year 5 pupils from Prettygate Primary School in Colchester 'took over' Hollytrees Museum on 17 November, working in a number of roles with museum and Visitor Information Centre teams. The children worked towards their Discover Arts Awards. One teacher commented, 'a fabulous day for adults and children. I learnt a lot so I'm sure that the children did too! A privilege to be involved'.

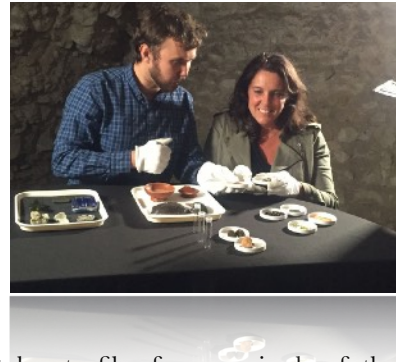


Two events at the Natural History Museum allowed visitors the chance to have their finds identified. 'Fantastic Fossils' was also an opportunity for people to find out more about local geology and to get hands-on with some of the museum collections. Volunteers from GeoSuffolk were on hand to answer questions and to inspire people to go fossil-hunting and make their own discoveries. 'Natural Colchester' was run in partnership with the Colchester Natural History Society and Essex Wildlife Trust, and encouraged visitors to find out how to become involved with local wildlife.

We also ventured outside our normal venues. From the 14th to 16th of July, two curators represented the Museum Service at the Latitude Festival in Suffolk. Working with the Museum of London, they ran archaeology sessions for children and object handling. The sessions included four elements: identifying pottery, comparing animal bones, sorting seeds and a mock excavation. In total over 1,200 people attended the sessions over the three days. Later in August Colchester Museums curators ran a stall at the first ever Colchester Pride event at Firstsite Art Gallery, organised by Outhouse. The Museum Service was also proud to raise the Pride flag on the Castle for the first time.

The wider heritage of Colchester was not neglected. 'Ancient Colchester', a companion guidebook to the award-winning 'Colchester Castle', was published in the summer and officially launched at Heritage Open Days in September. To date this has been selling well. Two further interpretation panels have been installed around the circuit of the Roman Wall at Headgate and at the south-west corner near St Mary at the Walls. These have been produced in partnership with the Friends of Colchester Roman Wall. Planning for a further panel at Sheepen Corner is at an advanced stage.

Colchester Castle has featured in two TV series in recent weeks. As part of the '8 Days that made Rome' series on Channel 5, Bettany Hughes spoke with Collections and Learning Curator, Ben Paites, about the Boudican destruction of Colchester and the discovery of the Fenwick Treasure. The episode focused on Boudicca's rampage throughout Britain, with several scenes being filmed around Colchester and in the Castle. The episode aired on Friday 24 November 2017.



Professor Alice Roberts visited Colchester Castle in October to film for an episode of the archaeology series, 'Digging for Britain', which was shown on BBC4 on 29 November. She interviewed Senior Curator, Glynn Davis, about Boudicca's destruction of Colchester in AD 60 in Roman vaults and finds from Lexden Tumulus which reveal the trading and diplomatic links between the Roman Empire and Iron Age Colchester 2000 years ago.

At Christchurch Mansion a major winter exhibition, 'Thomas Wolsey: Ipswich's Greatest Son', opened on 14 October. The exhibition includes Wolsey's portrait, on loan from London's National Portrait Gallery, and the spectacular angel figures made for his tomb. 'Wolsey's Angels' were acquired by the V&A in 2015 and this is the first time that they have been shown outside London. Also on display are two documents relating to Cardinal College, the school that Wolsey founded in Ipswich. These are the Foundation Charter of 1528 and the College's Statutes on loan from the National Archives and Christchurch College, Oxford respectively. These loans are accompanied by rarely seen Tudor objects from Ipswich Museum's collections including the architectural timbers from the town and several portraits of Wolsey

Tom Hodgson, *Colchester Museums Manager*
and Philip Wise, *Heritage Manager*

Colchester Recalled

Colchester Recalled is a voluntary group compiling an archive of recorded memories of Colchester and District over the past 120 years. We have to date completed more than 3,600 hours of recording, mostly interviews with over 1,500 local people.

We also arrange monthly meetings throughout the year at the Roman Circus Centre where our members (and visitors) can listen to extracts from our recordings and enjoy a talk on a local history theme. All meetings commence at 7pm

2018 Programme

- 18th January - **Peter Jones**: 'The Life and Times of the Eastern Counties Railway - *how the railway came to Colchester*'
- 15th February - **Hugh Frostick**: 'The Underground Army in Essex in World War II'
- 15th March - **Chris Strachan**: 'The rescue of the Electric Palace - the early cinema in Harwich'
- 12th April - **Ted Woodgate**: 'Rural North Essex and the campaign for agricultural labourers in the 1890s'
- 17th May - **James Grinter's Antiques Roadshow**: 'Reman & Dansie the Auctioneers' (bring your antiques)
- 14th June - **A.G.M.**: followed by a talk by **Dr Terry Smyth**: 'Your father is in the next room - Interviewing children of the Far East prisoners of war'

Visit www.colchesterrecalled.co.uk

Registered Charity No. 1000166

Colchester Archaeological Group



Winter Lecture Programme 2017 - 18

At Roman Circus House at 7:30pm unless otherwise stated

15th January - **The Oldest Road on Mersea Island?**

Oliver Hutchinson, Citizen and MoLA

22nd January - **The Archaeology of Woodgate, Aylsham**

Martin Brook, Britannia Archaeology

29th January - **Goldingham Hall - from Archaeological Excavation and Manorial Records**

Ashley Cooper, Landowner and local historian

5th February - **Members Activities**

Geophysics in the Stour Valley; Fordham Roman Villa

12th February - **Ancient Egyptian Jewellery; What the well-dressed men and women wore**

Frances Boardman, Independent Tutor

19th February - **Can you keep a secret? The history of Bawdsey Radar and it's role in WW2**

Lynette Burgess, Bawdsey Radar Trust

26th February - **Anatomy schools & bodysnatchers: The price of achievement at the London Hospital**

Don Walker, MoLA

5th March - **The Mayflower Project**

Sean Day, The Harwich Mayflower Project

Members - entrance per meeting £2, student members free

Non-members - entrance per meeting £4, students £1

Visit www.caguk.net

Registered Charity No. 1028434

Officers

As Elected at The Annual General Meeting on 20th June 2017

President His Worship the Mayor, Councillor Gerard Oxford

Vice Presidents

Jean Baker	Peter Berridge
Jean Blowers	Mark Davies
Patrick Denney	Barbara Napper
Andrew Phillips	Paul Spendlove

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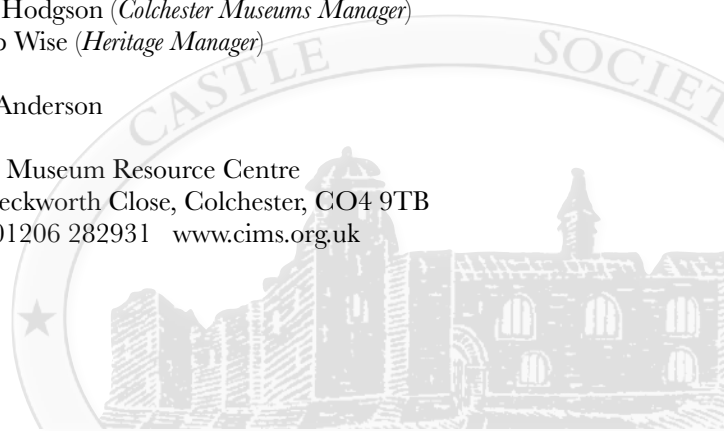
Other Committee Members

Harry Carlo	Mary Dale
Mark Davies	Chris Hall
Jenny Jones	Peter Jones (<i>Vice Chairman</i>)
Avril Lankester	Janita Le Fevre
Andrew Miller	Andrew Phillips
David Walton	

Ex Officio Bill Seaman (*Museums, Arts and Culture Manager*)
Tom Hodgson (*Colchester Museums Manager*)
Philip Wise (*Heritage Manager*)

Honorary Auditor Roy Anderson

Museum Office **New** Museum Resource Centre
40 Heckworth Close, Colchester, CO4 9TB
Tel: 01206 282931 www.cims.org.uk





FRIENDS OF COLCHESTER MUSEUMS LECTURE SERIES 2018

The Friends of Colchester Museums

All lectures held at Lion Walk Church, Lion Walk, Colchester at 7:30pm

Admission £2 (members), £4 (non-members) or by season ticket

10th April	History of the founding of The Headgate Theatre	Michael Poole & Dawn King
24th April	Moving to Heckworth Close <i>the practicalities of moving the museum service from A to B</i>	Tom Hodgson
8th May	Colchester Military Hospital	Paul Byrne
22nd May	Digging in Colchester <i>best of the best over the last decade</i>	Philip Crummy
5th June	The Life of James Parnell <i>the Quaker preacher who died in Colchester Castle in 1656</i>	Alice Goss
19th June	Annual General Meeting followed by: Colchester and the 1918 Armistice <i>how Colchester coped with the end of World War I</i>	Andrew Phillips
4th September	Essex Towns and Villages	Patrick Denney
18th September	Essex Crime Scenes <i>how crime prevention has changed over the years</i>	Chris Farndell
2nd October	Further Barging <i>more voyages along the Essex coast</i>	Jim Lawrence
16th October	A Concrete Legacy in the Underpasses <i>the murals of Colchester's Henry and Joyce Collins</i>	Katherine Wood
30th October	The Life and Times of the Eastern Counties Railway <i>how the Railway came to Colchester</i>	Peter Jones
13th November	A Wealth of Cash <i>the story behind Colchester's coin hoards</i>	Mark Davies

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