

# The Friends of Colchester Museums

Newsletter - January 2010



# The Friends of Colchester Museums

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## ROMAN CIRCUS APPEAL

Members will no doubt have read recent press reports about the Roman Circus appeal. It has been launched by the Colchester Archaeological Trust and Destination Colchester in a bid to purchase the old Sergeants' Mess and its garden containing the circus's starting gates.

Of the £750,000 needed to match Taylor Wimpey's asking price, some £550,000 has already been raised. The remaining £200,000 needs to be found by the end of January if this significant part of Colchester's heritage is to be preserved properly for posterity. There is a lot of public interest.

As the Museum Service will be integrally involved in this important project, your committee has agreed that the Friends should pledge £2,000 specifically towards the purchase of the garden and interpretative facilities for the circus. Every pound will count!

If you would like to add to this contribution by making a personal pledge or donation, however large or small, please contact our Treasurer, Peter Evans, immediately.

MARK DAVIES  
*Chairman*

## MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

The Friends of Colchester Museums continues to attract increasing interest among the community with our membership having risen to over 720 for the first time ever. Keep up the good work in promoting the benefits of becoming a Friend - especially the fact that it allows for unlimited access to the Castle Museum during the period of membership. But perhaps even more importantly, it is also an excellent way of adding your own individual support to the local museum service as they strive to add important items of historical interest to their collection of historical artefacts.

## SUBSCRIPTIONS

Subscriptions for 2010 are now due for renewal. Current charges are £7.50 for a single member, £12 for a couple and £18 for a family. Please note that a remittance form is enclosed with this newsletter for your payment to be attached to. It would greatly assist our Treasurer if members could be prompt in sending their payment as this will lighten his workload considerably in the coming weeks.

For those who pay by standing order, please ensure that you are paying the correct amount. If you would like to begin paying your subscription by standing order, (which again would help to reduce administration activities), please complete the enclosed Standing Order Form.

Please send all payments, to Mr Peter Evans at 5 Grimston Road, Colchester CO2 7RN. Tel: 01206 540990. Make cheques payable to The Friends of Colchester Museums.

PLEASE NOTE that your MEMBERSHIP CARD FOR 2010, which allows free entry to the Castle Museum, IS INCLUDED WITH THIS NEWSLETTER, but please also remember that payment for 2010 is still owing!

If you no longer wish to remain a member of the Friends of Colchester Museums, please be kind enough to return your membership card to the Treasurer.

PATRICK DENNEY  
*Hon. Secretary*

## TREASURER'S TOPICS

### Gift Aid News

We are still able to reclaim tax on subscriptions paid if you (or a spouse or partner) is taxpayer. We have now reclaimed £11,000 and 2010 will be our 10th claim. HM Customs & Revenues currently pay us at a rate higher than the current tax rate, so it is a very good deal for everybody.

A big thank you to those of you who have

already signed a Gift Aid certificate. If you have not done so, a blank Gift Aid form is enclosed for completion and return. It really is easy to help the Friends in this manner and costs you nothing!

### **Donations**

If you send us a donation on top of your subscription, we can reclaim Gift Aid on that as well.

### **Charity Commission**

As a registered charity we have to make a declaration to the Charity Commission each year based on the audited accounts. You can check the details on the Charity Commission website [www.charitycommission.gov.uk](http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk) <<http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk/>> which also shows the trustees. Our registration number is 310669.

PETER EVANS  
*Hon. Treasurer*

### **LECTURE SERIES 2010**

Your Committee has arranged another exciting programme of lectures for the coming year. For further details, please refer to the full listing of talks presented on the back cover of this newsletter.

Looking ahead to 2011, we are always pleased to receive recommendations from our members regarding individual speakers or a particular subject matter that you would like to see covered in one of our programmes. If you have any ideas in this regard please inform the Secretary on 01206 796822, or any other member of the committee.

### **OUTINGS DURING 2010**

#### **Visit to the British Museum & British Library, Tuesday, 15th June**

This trip is being organised in conjunction with the Colchester Recalled Oral History Group. Upon arrival at the British Museum there will be free time for everyone to browse

the magnificent exhibits at their leisure. Lunch may then be taken at the Museum, or elsewhere, before we move on to the British Library in the afternoon. You may, of course, prefer to make some use of your time in London exploring other venues or even doing some shopping.

There is a limited number of places available for this trip so early booking is essential to guarantee your place.

The trip will cost £16.00 per person which will only cover your coach travel. Any other costs for guided tours etc will have to be paid separately. However, there is no entrance fee to either the British Museum or British Library.

To book your place please contact Patrick Denney at 247 Old Heath Road, Colchester, CO2 8BN. Tel: 01206 796822. Cheques should be made payable to the Friends of Colchester Museums.

The coach will depart from Osborne Street (close to the Gala Bingo centre) at 9am and return early evening.

#### **Visit to Lavenham, Tuesday, 22nd June**

We have arranged for an evening visit to Lavenham on Tuesday, 22nd June. Upon arrival at the Guildhall we will be given an introductory talk about the origins of the historic building before being allowed to browse the exhibits at our leisure. In addition to this we will also be visiting the adjacent Little Hall, (a building with its own fascinating history), before embarking upon a short walking tour through the nearby streets of this historic town. This will be followed by light refreshments back at the Guildhall and the opportunity to spend some time browsing in the well stocked gift shop.

This is a wonderful opportunity to become better acquainted with Lavenham and its unique buildings whilst in the company of other Friends.

The trip will cost £14.50 per person inclusive of all travel, entry and guiding fees. To book your place please contact Patrick Denney at 247 Old Heath Road, Colchester, CO2 8BN. Tel: 01206 796822. Cheques should be made payable to the Friends of Colchester Museums.

The coach will depart from the Sheepen Road car park at 6.15pm and return between 9.30-10pm. We will also be a picking up point at North Station upon request.

### **Visit to Audley End House & Gardens, Wednesday, 14th July**

Our final excursion for 2010 will take us to Audley End House & Gardens where we will have a full day to enjoy the sumptuous splendour of one England's finest stately homes.

Included in this trip will be a special guided tour of the main house with its magnificent state apartments and impressive collection of paintings. Other areas to visit include the vividly presented service wing where you will gain a real sense of life below stairs in the late Victorian period, as well as being able to explore the massive walled kitchen garden and the rest of the grounds and parkland. This promises to be an exciting day out for all. Refreshments are available on site or you may wish to bring your own packed lunch. The trip will cost £20.00 per person inclusive of all travel, entry and guiding fees.

To book your place please contact Patrick Denney at 247 Old Heath Road, Colchester, CO2 8BN. Tel: 01206 796822. Cheques should be made payable to the Friends of Colchester Museums.

The coach will depart from Osborne Street, (close to the Gala Bingo centre), at 9am and return late afternoon.

PATRICK DENNEY  
*Hon. Secretary*

### **THE MEDIAEVAL MIND**

It was a pleasure for me to open this exhibition which is on until July. It will not be

the crowd-pleaser that the Chinese Warriors were but all Friends of Castle Museum will want to see it. There are many stars but the 1413 Charter from Henry V stands out or me. It shows the first known example of the Borough Arms. See item under Museum News and tell your friends.

HENRY SPYVEE  
*Mayor of Colchester*

### **THE FIRST FRIENDS OF MUSEUMS**

There was an exhibition at the Fitzwilliam Museum at Cambridge on the career of a previous director, William Cockerell, ending in March 2009. During his 29 years at the Fitzwilliam, Cockerell encouraged many gifts to the Museum and was able to buy other exhibits but using funds provided by the Friends of the Fitzwilliam. I discovered that he founded the first Friends organisation in Britain, copying 'Amis de Louvre', the supporters of the Louvre in Paris. He invited many people with Cambridge connections to support the Museum. This was in 1909, so the Fitzwilliam Friends were 100 years old last year.

True, we are 40 years behind the Fitzwilliam Museum, but the 60th Anniversary of the Friends of Colchester Museums is still a great achievement - and we are in good company!

PETER EVANS  
*Hon. Treasurer*

### **THE MAYOR'S CHARITIES EVENTS Fridays 15th and 22nd January**

Beer Tasting in the Moot Hall.  
7 for 7.30pm Tickets: £25 A choice of four beers out of 16 with good food.

### **Saturday 16th January**

The Mayor's Charity Gala at the Mercury Theatre at 7.30pm. All star cast. Tickets: £14 from Box Office. Telephone 01206 573948.

**Sunday 24th January**

Teddy Bear's Concert in the Moot Hall at 2.30pm. Tickets: £5 (under 16's £3.50, under 2's free). A delightful afternoon for young and old. Bring a teddy bear.

**Saturday 30th January**

Curry Supper at the Oaktree Centre, Harwich Road at 7pm. A special evening with entertainment. Tickets: £15.

**Thursdays 11th and 25th February, and 11th and 25th March**

Mayor's Lectures in the Mayoral Suite in the Town Hall at 7.30pm Tickets: £5 for each event. Please see feature on the inside back cover.

**Saturday 27th February**

Bach Choir Concert at St Botolphs Church at

7pm. Classical but not just Bach. Tickets: £10 (students £3).

**Friday 14th May**

The Mayor's May Banquet in the Moot Hall. Details to be announced.

Latest information on Council website - [www.colchester.gov.uk](http://www.colchester.gov.uk)  
<<http://www.colchester.gov.uk>>  
Bookings except as indicated - 282206.

Beneficiaries of The Mayor's Appeal Fund are The Army Benevolent Fund, Christian Youth Outreach, Colchester Emergency Night Shelter, CO1 and St Helena Hospice.

HENRY SPYVEE  
*Mayor of Colchester*

BELOW

*Philip Wise, Curator of Archaeology, explaining an exhibit to members during our visit to Ipswich Museum, by invitation of the Friends of Ipswich Museums, on Friday 9th October.*



# Museum News

## A RARE IRON AGE COIN FROM WEST MERSEA

The coin was discovered in July 2009 by Mr R N Humphrey when he was digging footings for a garage. On one side is a beardless head wearing a laurel wreath, while on the other there is a horse. There is some wear evident on both sides. The coin weighs 1.88g, and measures 14.9 by 15.4 mm. This weight and size indicates that the coin is a quarter-stater.

Coins such as these are Gallo-Belgic A, the earliest significant type of Iron Age coinage in Britain. The start date of Gallo-Belgic A is now thought to be around 200BC in France. When these coins first reached Britain is uncertain, but once here they remained in circulation long after they had been withdrawn in Gaul, until the time of the invasions of Britain by Julius Caesar in 55 and 54BC. The length of time they were in circulation accounts for the level of wear on so many examples from Britain.



This coin has been purchased outright by the Friends and will go on display in Colchester Castle Museum soon.

## OTHER RECENT ACQUISITIONS

A gold quarter-stater, a type of small Iron Age gold coin, was found recently at Colchester. It was issued by Cunobelin, known

to the Romans as 'King of the Britons', around AD10-39/40. Of later date is an **Anglo-Saxon strapend**, a metal sheath used to prevent the end of a leather strap from fraying and to be a piece of personal adornment. It is made of silvered bronze and is decorated with a distinctive animal design which suggests that it was made in the 9th century. Lastly the Museum Service has been given a **late medieval pilgrim badge** decorated with a scene of a kneeling figure praying before the Lamb of God. It is a souvenir of an unknown religious shrine which could have been in England or abroad. This object is currently on display in 'The Medieval Mind' temporary exhibition at Colchester Castle.

## COLCHESTER ROMAN CIRCUS

Following the rejection of the Heritage Lottery Fund bid earlier in the year, this project has been reviewed in consultation with Headland Design Associates. Under the new interpretation scheme it is planned to create a single information point on the Circus site as a first step. Discussions have taken place with Taylor Wimpey, the site's owner, and Essex County Highways, and Headland have revised their design concept. It is planned to have the information point in position during 2010.

## COLCHESTER TOWN WALLS

The masonry repairs on the Roman Road stretch of Colchester's Town Wall are largely completed with only one small area still outstanding. Attention has now moved to two small areas of emergency repairs at Priory Street. An assessment of the Middleborough to Balmerne Way stretch has concluded that a further £323,000 of repair work is required.

## COLCHESTER CASTLE MUSEUM - WINS AT ESSEX TOURISM AWARDS!

**Best Festival/Event Category -  
Guardians to the King  
Colchester Castle**

Colchester Castle has been recognised at the Essex Tourism Awards in the category for best event for the ‘Guardians to the King - Terracotta Treasures from Ancient China’ Exhibition

This award is aimed at recognising the organisers of special events created or developed in Essex that make a real difference. Whether providing increased national awareness for Essex or simply motivating a community to raise its game, the judges look for innovation and the return on investment relative to the size of the event. The Tourism in Essex Awards organised by Archant, publishers of the *East Anglian Daily Times* and *Essex Life*, were launched in conjunction with Essex County Council to showcase the high quality and professionalism of the Essex tourism industry.

The exhibition that won the award was from 19th July – 2nd November 2008 when Colchester Castle showcased and proudly gave the opportunity for all to experience a genuine, once in a lifetime opportunity in the Eastern region. Over 20,000 extra visitors came to the Castle over 15 weeks to see this unique exhibition.

Colchester Castle Museum hosted the exhibition of 43 miniature terracotta figures from Xuzhou Museum in Jiangsu Province, China. This offered visitors a rare, breath-taking experience, seeing objects and discovering stories from the Chinese Han Dynasty period. The terracotta figures were more than 2000 years old and represented soldiers, officials, dancers, musicians and cavalry horses. The objects had been excavated in the last 25 years from a series of royal tombs which belonged to the Kings of Chu discovered at Xuzhou, in Jiangsu Province.

The award was judged on several categories and the Museum Service had to

provide evidence for how mature markets were expanded, how new motivation was created to visit Essex for the first time or encourage visits to a new part of Essex for existing residents, how visitor-time spent in Essex was increased, the ability to influence local/national/international perception, event management, evidence of interaction and working with local tourism industry and, lastly, the return on investment.

This exhibition has created a legacy that will further the museum’s commitment to international exhibitions and a long term partnership with China. The service is already in the planning stage of another larger scale and important exhibition coming to the Castle and Essex in 2012. The project also aims to further enhance and grow the established outreach and audience development work which will be ongoing over the next few years with the Chinese community in Colchester and Ipswich, using this opportunity to establish new links and partnerships with communities via outreach work planned around this project.

The exhibition has further strengthened the partnership working between Colchester and Ipswich Museum Service and Essex and opened up a whole series of opportunities that are being explored in China. The exhibition was the flagship activity of a year-long festival which celebrated 20 years of friendship between Essex and Jiangsu and kick-started the Essex-wide Jiangsu Chinese festival, headed up by Essex County Council.

**FIRST DIVISION PROMOTION FOR MENTAL HEALTH!**

Colchester and Ipswich Museum Service have mental health safely in the back of the net, by helping to devise and kick off the launch of a unique Stadium Legends Project.

Stadium Legends is an inter-generational community project co-ordinated by Colchester United Community Sports Trust working in



partnership with the Museum Service, local mental health groups from The Haven and Oxford Road Project, Age Concern, and the Gilbert and Boudica local schools.

This project will bring diverse groups of people together by working on creative projects that link the importance of football to emotional well-being. This will include participants' stories (including those from present and former Colchester United players and fans,) that relate to the club and to the personal impact football has had on their lives, as well as looking at the benefits that football has played in the lives of people experiencing mental health problems.

Partnering is key to this project and is as always about building a strong team with many skills and talents that come together to deliver a project that 'pitches' mental health at a high level and firmly in the back of the net. This is a first and significant goal that gives something back and raises the profile of a diverse and under-represented subject delivered in a new and very accessible way.

Over seven sessions participants will work together producing a film, a sculpture, and an exhibition, culminating in a celebration on 19th December at the home match with Carlisle. The exhibition strand of the project will move on to Hollytrees Museum Colchester in January 2010. It is hoped that the sculpture created during the project will eventually have a permanent home at the Weston Homes Community Stadium.

## **EXHIBITIONS**

### **The Medieval Mind: Part 1**

#### **Art Treasures from East Anglia**

**5th December 2009 – 3rd July 2010**

#### **Colchester Castle**

Visitors can explore the ideas and beliefs of people of the Middle Ages through the variety of art objects they left behind.

Journey back to medieval times via this

rich and alluring exhibition and discover over 400 years of great artistry and skill. Dispelling the myth of an era of darkness and barbarity, and revealing the true colour and achievement of a fascinating period in our history. This wide ranging exploration of the medieval psyche explores themes such as civic pride, the regal image, religious art and the natural world.

Covering the period from the Norman Conquest in 1066 to the Dissolution of the Monasteries in 1539, this exhibition showcases stunning objects which allow us to explore the workings of the medieval mind. These include jewellery, coins, illuminated manuscripts, paintings, sculpture, ceramics, exquisite examples of church art and personal items owned by ordinary individuals.

Many of these objects have not been on public display in Colchester before. They are drawn from museums and collections all over East Anglia, including the Fitzwilliam Museum Cambridge, Norwich Castle Museum and Ipswich School. Art from the local area is a particular theme, highlighted are the mysterious painting of the Green Lady of St Osyth, the Colchester Town Charter of Henry V, the memorial brass of an Ipswich merchant and some rare early reading glasses from Norwich.

'It has been a great privilege to work on this exhibition' said Philip Wise, Heritage Manager. 'It is truly remarkable what is held in store in East Anglia's museums and collections and this has been a welcome opportunity to put these treasures on public display'.

The exhibition will be displayed in two phases, the second of which will run from July 2010 to January 2011.

### **Costume On Parade**

**11th December 2009 - April 2010**

#### **Colchester Garrison Community Centre**

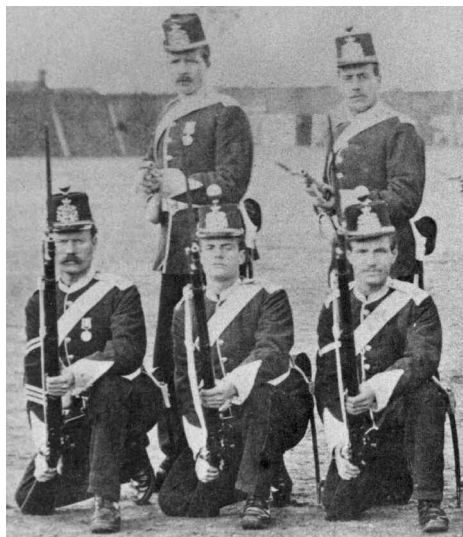
Following the success of the 'Objects on Parade' project at Colchester Garrison Community Centre, the community history

team have installed a new display featuring items of military costume and old photographs of the Garrison.

The display is a direct response to feedback from local residents who asked to know more about the history of the armed forces in Colchester and will provide a rare treat to see items not permanently on display.



*A Shako Military Cap c.1875*



*Essex Militia in full uniform 1875*

## ADULT EVENTS

### Out of the Box series

#### Conservation

Thursday 4th February

Natural History Museum

This is a chance to meet conservation staff and learn about the broad and varying nature of their work, looking after the wide range of artefacts within the museum collections. This

could include how we correctly store vintage textiles or household items, and how we deal with insect infestations and archaeological finds. This will include the chance to look at objects through microscopes and other forms of examination.

Drop-in 2pm-4pm. Free event.

### Decorative Art on Ceramics

Thursday 4th March

Hollytrees Museum

Join our Curator of Art to get up close to ceramics by William de Morgan (1839-1917) and Arthur Heygate Mackmurdo (1851-1942). Everything from pottery cats, plates to tiles. Draw inspiration from the arts and crafts designs in Colchester's collection, or look at the bold Victorian colours and decorative figures.

Drop-in 2pm-4pm. Free event.

### Brewing and Beverages in Colchester's History

Thursday 1st April

Hollytrees Museum

To coincide with National Pub Day in the same week, objects from the stores will include beer bottles from Colchester breweries, wine bottles and Colchester wine seals, as well as old photographs of some of Colchester's pubs and a silhouette of a Colchester wine merchant, along with his brewing jar.

Drop-in 2pm-4pm. Free event.

### Hello Dolly

Thursday 6th May

Hollytrees Museum

This will be a chance to take a closer look at some of the wonderful dolls from our collection. Highlights include a Dutch doll, paper dolls from the early 1800s, a male doll in military costume, 1960s Cindy dolls and much more!

Drop-in 2pm-4pm. Free event. British Sign Language - interpreter available 2-4pm.

## **Shoes**

**Thursday 3rd June**

### **Hollytrees Museum**

Join our Curator of Costume as she brings out of the stores some of the museum service's collection of shoes. From the practical to outrageous, and the plain to the pretty, visitors can get up close to shoes and patterns from the 18th century to present.

Drop-in 2pm-4pm. Free event.

## **TEA AND TALKS**

### **Colchester Castle Museum**

All talks will have a British Sign Language interpreter available 2-4pm.

To tie in with the Medieval Mind exhibition, this special series is based on the medieval period. All talks start at 3pm. Tea is served at the end of the talk. Ticket holders can come into the Castle from 2.30pm at no extra charge (otherwise normal admission). £3.50 per talk (£3 for Friends of the Museum). 5 talk passes are £14 (£12 for Friends of the Museums)

Places can be booked - 01206 282940, or by calling in to Hollytrees Museum (10am-4.45pm). Payment must be made in advance.

### **St John's Abbey Colchester**

**Saturday 23rd January**

JOHN ASHDOWN HILL

St John's Abbey was probably the grandest and most prestigious building in medieval Colchester. In the later Middle Ages, royal visitors to the town stayed there, rather than at the old-fashioned and run-down Castle, with its leaky roof. St John's Abbey possessed very impressive rights of sanctuary, equal to those of Westminster Abbey - making it one of the safest places in the kingdom for men on the run. The Abbot of Colchester was one of the great men of England, with a seat in the House of Lords.

Tragically the abbey was destroyed by

Henry VIII; its riches seized, its great church demolished. Today St John's Abbey is very little-known, and its site - long occupied by Colchester Garrison, and separated from the town centre by Southway - is rarely visited. Many tourists are unaware of its existence, and few Colchester residents have any clear notion of the large and splendid buildings which once occupied the site.

This talk explores the pre-Reformation history of the abbey, attempts to evoke its long-vanished structure and furnishings, and explores who lived there, its visitors, and how it functioned.

### **The Medieval Mind**

**Saturday 30th January**

PHILIP WISE, Heritage Manager, Colchester and Ipswich Museum Service

This talk by the curator of the Medieval Mind exhibition explores in detail some of the fascinating objects on display. This wide ranging exploration of the medieval psyche includes civic pride, the regal image, religious art and the natural world. Come and find out the answers to the questions like Why did Edward IV put a ship design on the back of one of his gold coins? What is the significance of St Helena in medieval Colchester? Who was the Green Lady of St Osyth? How did a gold ring protect its wearer from disease? What is an aquamanile and why is it shaped like a sheep? All will be revealed in this illustrated talk.

### **Not Just Noble Knights, Suffering Saints, and Pouting Princesses: Medieval Romanticism in 19th & 20th Century Art'** **6th February 2010**

EMMA ROODHOUSE, Curator of Art, Colchester and Ipswich Museum Service

A look at how the influence of medieval art, architecture, stories and songs were romanticised by a later generation of artists, who wanted to create a new style. Highlighting

the work of the Pre-Raphaelite brotherhood and art works in the Ipswich and Colchester collections by William de Morgan, Christopher Dresser, Arthur Mackmurdo and Thomas Woolner.

### **The Role of the Falcon in Medieval Life Saturday 13th February**

ANDREA KEYLAND – falconer

The Art of Falconry during the Medieval period had a distinct hierarchy, with only the most wealthy of nobleman allowed to fly the best birds and how the peasantry were given the less suited birds. What bird would the King of England fly? Hear the poem *Sing a Song of Sixpence* and find out who the ‘four and twenty blackbirds’ were for. Do you know why the ‘Mantlepiece’ is so called and find out what ‘no robbery in a fair exchange’ means. Also discover what you would have thrown over your shoulder as a Medieval bride!

This talk involves live birds of prey.

### **Women (and Men) in the Middle Ages Saturday 20th February**

DR KATHERINE LEWIS, Senior Lecturer in History, Huddersfield University

This talk explores the lives of medieval women, considering the extent to which their lives were governed and limited by the various theories which held them to be inferior to men. A survey of the experiences and achievements of women drawn from across the social spectrum reveals that despite being denied access to virtually all forms of public office-holding they could be far more powerful and active than the romanticised image of the lady in a tower would suggest. Medieval women who governed kingdoms, lectured popes, wrote books and led armies were exceptional in many respects, but their exploits, and those of women lower down the social scale, led some contemporary authors to question whether men really were superior.

### **Dark Tours of Colchester Castle**

#### **Friday 5th February**

Back by popular demand! Hear stories of Colchester Castle’s darkest days!

Here is a rare opportunity to hear the stories of prisons, death, disease and more, on a guided tour.

All this happens after the museum is closed to the public, so there are no distractions and visitors can experience the very different atmosphere of the Castle after dark.

This tour will include the vaults, the great stairs, the roof, and other locations in the Castle.

Tours will take place at 6pm, 7pm and 8pm, and last 45–60 minutes. Tickets cost £4. Book in advance at Hollytrees Museum or call 01206 282940. We anticipate that these tours will be popular, so book early. Places must be paid for in advance.

Tickets will only be available on the day if not already sold. Please bring a torch with you!

This event is for ages 16 and over only.

#### **Touching the Past**

##### **Wednesday 10th February**

Enjoy a guided tour with Philip Wise curator of The Medieval Mind exhibition, followed by an audio described tour and handling session that will bring the Medieval Mind to life.

Tour at 2pm. Open to all. This event also has a British Sign Language interpreter available aimed at providing access for the deaf to enjoy and join in.

3pm Tour of exhibition and object handling session which will be delivered in a lively way to experience the exhibition through words and touch.

Open to all to enjoy and a particularly good event for those with visual impairments. BOTH tours are open to all. FREE after admission to the Castle.

## **FAMILY EVENTS**

### **Falconry**

#### **Colchester Castle**

**Saturday 13th February**

Come and see some beautiful birds of prey perched within the Castle. Hear about these wonderful creatures in an informal atmosphere, and how they were used in medieval times.

Drop-in 11am-1pm. Free event after normal admission to the Castle.

### **Medieval Tales of Marvel and Mirth**

#### **Colchester Castle**

**Monday 15th – Friday 19th February**

Our lively storyteller will take you on a journey through medieval life with tales of wise fools and the foolish wise, friars, greedy monks, scolding wives, pedlars in search of their fortunes, kings, knights and even Death himself. Enjoy a fabulous mix of moral, sometimes scary, and often silly tales.

Sessions at 11am, 12pm, 1pm, 2.30pm and 3.30pm. British Sign Language interpreted sessions Thursday 18th February at 11am and 1pm. Free event after normal entry to the Castle.

### **The Wild Man of the Woods**

#### **Natural History Museum**

**Tuesday 16th and Wednesday 17th February**

Come and meet the Green Man, who celebrates the nature and history of our land with music and lore, songs and stories, and humour.

The show explores our changing relationship with nature and the landscape – ancient and modern.

Shows take place at 11.30am, 1.30pm and 3pm. British Sign Language –interpreted sessions Wednesday 17th February at 11.30am and 1.30pm. This event is free.

### **Punch and Judy Puppets**

#### **Hollytrees Museum**

**Monday 15th – Wednesday 17th February**

You can make your collection of Punch and Judy puppets, based on the popular seaside show. Monday – make Punch and his stick. Tuesday – make Judy and the baby. Wednesday – make the crocodile and sausages.

Booked sessions at 11am, 12pm, 1pm, 2.30pm and 3.30pm. £1.50 per person. Book on 01206 282940, or call into Hollytrees Museum. Sorry, we are unable to take large group bookings.

### **Nature on Our Doorstep**

#### **Natural History Museum and Castle Park (Hollytrees Lawn)**

**Saturday 13 March**

To tie in with National Science and Engineering Week, Colchester and Ipswich Museum Service and Castle Park Rangers present a day of fun.

Visitors can learn about local nature while seeing live native animals including live bats, stag beetles and birds of prey. There will also be shows by Mr Beetle, the singing and story-telling beetle, activities including potting, bird feeders and bee homes making, walks and more.

Free event, 10.30am – 4pm.

### **Knights and Knaves, Lords and Ladies**

#### **Colchester Castle**

**Tuesday 6th – Friday 9th April**

A collection of lively medieval tales suitable for all ages are brought to life in the Castle. Whether you are courtier or commoner you'll love these fabulous fables about life 500 years ago.

Sessions take place at 11am, 12pm, 1pm, 2.30pm and 3.30pm. British Sign Language – interpreted sessions Wednesday 7th April at 11am and 1pm. Free event after normal admission to the Castle.

## **Chick and Bunny Pop-up Puppets Hollytrees Museum**

**Tuesday 6th – Friday 9th April**

Celebrate the spring in the air with seasonal Victorian toy making. Make a pop-up chicken or pop-up rabbit puppet, using various materials. Once you have finished decorating and putting together your puppet, it will make a great toy.

Booked sessions at 11am, 12pm, 1pm, 2.30pm and 3.30pm. £1.50 per person. Please book your place on 01206 282940, or call into Hollytrees Museum. Sorry, we are unable to accept large group bookings.

## **Medieval Pottery Colchester Castle**

**Monday 12th – Friday 16th April?**

Inspired by the 'Medieval Mind' exhibition, get messy with some clay to create medieval faces in relief in tiles.

£1.50 per person after normal admission to the Castle. Booked sessions take place at 11am, 12pm, 1pm, 2.30pm and 3.30pm. Book your place on 01206 282940, or call into Hollytrees Museum. Sorry, we are unable to accept large group bookings.

## **Illuminated Spring Flowers Natural History Museum Wednesday 14th and Thursday 15th April**

Following last summer's extraordinary conversion of plastic bottles into illuminated sea animals, this Easter you can cut and decorate a recycled plastic bottle to make a flower, then illuminate on a light box to create a light drawing.

You will be amazed with the results.

£1.50 per person. Booked sessions at 10.30am, 11.30am, 12.30pm, 2.30pm and 3.30pm. Book your place on 01206 282940, or call into Hollytrees Museum. Sorry, we are unable to accept large group bookings.

## **The Fall of the Roman Empire – The Roman Soldier and the Saxon Invader Colchester Castle**

**Tuesday 1st – Friday 4th June**

It is 410AD (1600 years ago), and the Roman Empire is in trouble. In Britain, resources are being withdrawn, leaving it vulnerable. The Saxons start raiding the British east coast. Visitors to the Castle will see the Roman soldier and Saxon invader during this changing time in European history, as the might of Rome begins to crumble.

Shows at 11am, 12pm, 1pm, 2.30pm and 3.30pm. British Sign Language interpreted sessions Thursday 3rd June at 11am and 1pm. Free event after normal admission to the Castle.

## **Bird Feeders Natural History Museum**

**Thursday 3rd and Friday 4th June**

The sun is out, the birds are singing and summer is in the air. Here's a chance to give our feathery friends a helping hand, as you make bird feeders in the surroundings of the Natural History Museum. Using recycled materials and bird food, you get creative, take your item home and see the natural world benefit in your back garden.

Booked sessions at 10.30am, 11.30am, 12.30pm, 2.30pm and 3.30pm. £1.50 per person. Please book your place on 01206 282940, or call into Hollytrees Museum. Sorry, we are unable to accept large group bookings.

## **Foam Top Hats and Bonnets Hollytrees Museum**

**Tuesday 1st – Thursday 3rd June**

Make a top hat or bonnet out of foam, to create a fun piece of Victorian headgear.

Booked sessions take place at 11am, 12pm, 1pm, 2.30pm and 3.30pm. £1.50 per person. Please book your place on 01206 282940, or call into Hollytrees Museum. Sorry, we are unable to accept large group bookings.

# The Mayor of Colchester's Lecture Series 2010

"Our Town: Its History, Development and Future".

## Thursday 11th February

by PHILIP CRUMMY

## Thursday 25th February

by COLCHESTER FILM CLUB

## Thursday 11th March

by JOHN GRIMSHAW

## Thursday 25th March

Lecturer to be arranged

The Lectures start at 7.30pm in the Mayoral Suite at the Town Hall, High Street. Admission £5.00 each to include a glass of wine and nibbles.

Tickets obtainable from the Mayoral Officer, at the Town Hall. Telephone: 01206 282206. Please Make cheques payable to The Mayor's Appeal Fund. Latest information from [www.colchester.gov.uk](http://www.colchester.gov.uk)

## Colchester Recalled

If you have an interest in Colchester's history, you might enjoy the meetings of Colchester Recalled, the local oral history society.

Meetings take place on Thursday evenings in the Board Room of the Colchester Institute at 7pm. Recent recordings of peoples' reminiscences are played, followed by refreshments, then a talk from those listed. All are welcome. Admission £1.

In June an outing has been organised to the National Archives and the British Museum (see page 2 for details).

On Thursday mornings the archive group meets at the Museum accessing and indexing all new tapes. Computer literate volunteers are needed to digitise the 2500+ recordings, and literate volunteers to listen to tapes and summarise their contents!

For further details contact Andrew Phillips on 01206 546775.

The programme for 2010 is as follows

### 14th January

*The Great Depression in Colchester*

by Dr. PAUL RUSIECKI

### 18th February

*The Railway Comes to Colchester*

by ROBERT THORNHILL

### 18th March

*The Story of BX Plastics*

by MICK SURRELL

### 15th April

*Shipyards of the Colne*

by JOHN COLLINS and JAMIE DODDS

### 13th May

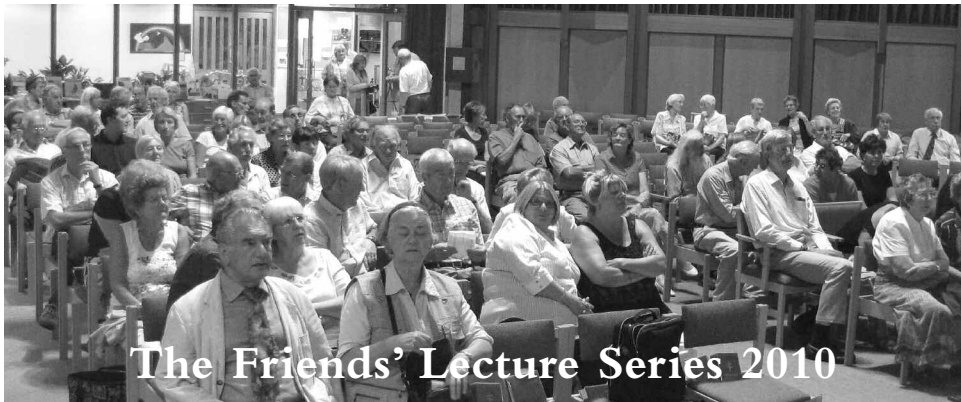
*Understanding Timber Framed Buildings in Essex*

by DAVE STENNING

### 17th June

*Recording WW2 Memories in Colchester*

by COLCHESTER AGE CONCERN



## The Friends' Lecture Series 2010

All at Lion Walk Church at 7.30pm

### **Tuesday 13th April**

COUNCILLOR HENRY SPYVEE - Mayor of Colchester

*The Mayor of Colchester - Nearly the Last in Line?*

### **Tuesday 27th April**

MARK DAVIES

*The Roman Temple of Claudius*

### **Tuesday 11th May**

JOHN ASHDOWN HILL

*Sir John Howard and Sir John Marney:  
Local Gentry in the Wars of the Roses*

### **Tuesday 25th May**

ANTHONY ROBERTS

*The History of the Colchester Arts Centre*

### **Tuesday 8th June**

HOWARD BROOKS

*Who We Are and Where Do We Come From?  
New Genetic Evidence for Human Origins*

### **Tuesday 29th June**

Annual General Meeting at 7pm followed by PHILIP CRUMMY and possibly some friends

*The Puzzle of Mr H G Polley, Draper of St Botolph's Street: Hear the Evidence, Weigh Up the Facts, You the Jury Decide!*

### **Tuesday 7th September**

EMMA ROODHOUSE

*Arts for All: An Introduction to the Fine Art Collections in Colchester and Ipswich*

### **Tuesday 21st September**

PAUL DIGGENS

*Behind the Scenes of Local Life Television*

### **Tuesday 5th October**

PATRICK DENNEY

*Colchester Voices: Local History from Oral Sources*

### **Tuesday 19th October**

CIARA CANNING AND CATHERINE NEWLEY

*Leading the Way - The Influence of the Suffragettes and the Girl Guiding Association on the Women of North East Essex*

### **Tuesday 2nd November**

MARK DAVIES

*The Old Moot Hall, the New Town Hall and a Bottle of Champagne*

### **Tuesday 16th November**

PETER BERRIDGE

*The People of Colchester Castle*

Admission prices per lecture:

Members £1 - Non Members £2.

For details contact: Patrick Denney  
on 01206 796822