

The Friends of Colchester Museums

Registered Charity No. 310669

Newsletter - January 2016

Officers

AS ELECTED AT THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING ON 16TH JUNE 2015

- President* Her Worship the Mayor, COUNCILLOR THERESA HIGGINS
- Vice Presidents* MRS JEAN BAKER MARK DAVIES
MRS JEAN BLOWERS PATRICK DENNEY
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MRS JENNY JONES ANDREW MILLAR
MRS AVRIL LANKESTER ANDREW PHILLIPS
PHILIP BEETON DAVID WALTON
HARRY CARLO
- Ex Officio* BILL SEAMAN (*Museums, Arts and Culture Manager*)
TOM HODGSON (*Colchester Museums Manager*)
PHILIP WISE (*Heritage Manager*)
- Honorary Auditor* ROY ANDERSON
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Newsletter January 2016

FROM THE CHAIRMAN

During the past year The Friends' various activities have again proved very popular among the members, who have continued to give strong support both to our society and through it to our local museums. With the New Year already upon us, we now look forward to a programme of interesting lectures, outings and special events for 2016. Details of all these will be found in the following pages, as well as news about themselves and Museum activities by two new members of the curatorial team, Jess Dowdell and Emma Reeve.

The first event will be a specially arranged evening at the Castle Museum to view the exciting Fenwick Treasure, which was excavated a year ago by the Colchester Archaeological Trust at Williams and Griffin's in the High Street. Following conservation and preliminary display at Fenwick's London store in Bond Street, the firm's directors have agreed that this important deposit of first century jewellery should be placed into Colchester Museum's care in perpetuity. It is remarkable that these highly prized contents of a Roman lady's jewellery box should have survived the town's utter destruction by Boudicca and her followers and all those involved in contributing to their public display in the Castle Museum are to be congratulated. Please see the enclosed booking form for further details of this event on Wednesday 23rd March 2016.

All our other activities for 2016, including the lecture programme and summer outings, are listed below. I would also like to draw attention to an illustrated article by our Treasurer, Peter Evans, about our latest gift to the Museum. This is a photographic album, entitled *Colchester Illustrated*, which was published at his own expense by Alderman Wilson Marriage in 1892, the year after he had become Chairman of the Museum Committee. We are very grateful to

Peter for pursuing this acquisition and negotiating its purchase.

Now that so many more people are able to take photographs with their digital cameras and mobile phones, there must be a lot of interesting shots that members have taken at Friends' or museum-related events. We are endeavouring to create an archive of suitable images. If you have any relevant examples either now or in the future, I would be very pleased to hear from you (see inside front cover for details).

Can I remind you about John Constable's masterpiece *Salisbury Cathedral from the Meadows 1831*, which is currently on display at Ipswich's Christchurch Mansion until the end of January 2016. This is the most spectacular of all his monumental 'six footer' canvasses and if you have not seen it already, you are strongly advised to do so while there is still time. There are also many other works in the permanent collection by Constable and Gainsborough, which are the best to be found outside London. Colchester has a few drawings by John Constable too!

MARK DAVIES *Chairman*

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

November	2015	2014
Single	341	343
Couple	242	242
Family	121	127
Other	12	14
Total	716	726

As can be seen from the figures presented our membership numbers are slightly down over the same period for 2014, although we have experienced a modest upturn in recent months after hitting a five year low of 701 at our recent AGM. So as we enter 2016, please spread the word about the benefits of becoming a member of The Friends which

includes, of course, the continued benefit of being able to visit the Castle Museum at no additional cost.

PATRICK DENNEY *Hon Membership Secretary*

TREASURER’S TOPICS

Membership Fees

Membership fees for 2016 are;

Single members - £10

Couples - £15

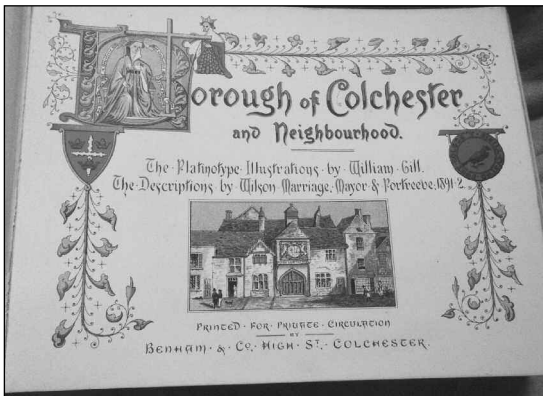
Family Membership - £21

Bankers Orders are very convenient but it seems to be complicated to get them changed! Many members who pay through this method have amended their standing orders at their bank, but we will not know until the credit appears on our bank statement in January that the bank will have paid the correct amount.

Season Tickets for the Lectures

These proved popular in 2015. You can buy a season ticket for our series of 12 talks for £20 - fees on the door are £2 so this offers a worthwhile saving. Please use the Order Form enclosed with this Newsletter.

PETER EVANS *Hon Treasurer*



PHOTOGRAPH COLLECTION TO BE PRESENTED TO THE CASTLE MUSEUM

Wilson Marriage, Mayor of Colchester 1891-2, collected 40 images of Colchester and district and published them privately in 1892, along with his comments. A copy of this book entitled *Colchester Illustrated* has been found in City Books, a bookshop in Davey Place, Norwich and has been

If we did not receive the correct amount from your bank in 2015 there will be a note in with this newsletter asking you to check the amount paid on your bank statement, so that we can resolve the situation.

Of course, many members will have successfully changed their bankers order and have had the correct amount deducted from their account - if this includes you - thank you!



purchased for the Museum by The Friends for £150.

Apart from the link to Wilson Marriage, one of Colchester's most distinguished citizens of his time, the images, by local photographer William Gill, are interesting in themselves.

Some the views may be familiar, but they are not photographs but platinotypes, which are more rare. They were developed in the 1870's and platinum was used in the development process, giving a better definition of the image. The process ceased in the 1920s due to the high costs.

The book has been bound in red leather and has an illuminated front page.

PETER EVANS

OUR OUTINGS 2016

Tuesday 5th July

Evening trip to The Mayflower Project, Harwich

£15.00 per person

We depart from the lay-by in front of the Roman Wall, between the bottom of North Hill and Balkerne Hill at 6.10pm.

The cost includes travel, guided tour of the site and a tip for the driver. We are hopeful that visitors will be able to buy a drink locally.

The Mayflower Project was launched in 2010, the aim of which is to build an identical ship to the *Mayflower*. We will be shown the history of the *Mayflower*, how the project was set up and its place in the history of Harwich. We will then be shown the workshops, the current position in its construction and what is planned for the future.

We depart from Harwich at approximately 9.30pm for our return to Colchester.

Please complete the Order Form and return with your payment and contact details to Peter Evans, 5 Grimston Road, Colchester CO2 7RN.

Note: Parking at Middleborough multi-storey costs 50p from 6pm to 6am.

AVRIL LANKESTER

Tuesday 19th July

Day trip to Hever Castle

£32 per person

Pick up in Crouch Street or at Marks Tey Hotel. For those boarding the coach at the Marks Tey Hotel there will be an extra charge of £1 per car. You need to park round the back of the hotel in the far car park.

Leaving Colchester at about 9am we hope to arrive at Hever Castle in Kent at about 11am. We will be leaving Kent at 4.30 pm to arrive back in the Colchester area at about 6.30pm.

Hever Castle and gardens is the perfect setting for a day out. It is an attractive fortified manor house surrounded by a moat. The original moated castle was built in 1270 and consisted of a massive gatehouse and walled bailey approached by a wooden drawbridge.

In the late 15th century the castle became home to the Bullen (Boleyn) family who built a comfortable Tudor house within the walls. The splendid rooms contain





Hever Castle

fine furniture, tapestries, antiques and an important collection of Tudor paintings. There are also two prayer books inscribed and signed by Anne Boleyn, second wife of Henry VIII.

This is a magnificent place to learn about the Tudors as well as the Astor family, who were the owners for 80 years from 1903 and were responsible for most of what we see today.

The award winning gardens are set in 125 acres of glorious grounds, with statues and various ornamental ponds. There is a fascinating collection of miniature houses and a beautiful lake and there are gift shops and restaurants on site.

Please complete the Order Form and return with your payment and contact details to Peter Evans, 5 Grimston Road, Colchester CO2 7RN.

JENNY JONES

The Colchester Civic Society will inform us of trips they are planning and details will be provided either in the next mailing, or at the April lectures.

THE AGM OF THE FRIENDS OF COLCHESTER ROMAN WALL will be held in the Mayoral Suite in the Town Hall on Thursday, 18th February 2016 at 7.30pm. You will get an up to the minute report on achievements and plans for our historic Wall and a talk by Mark Davies entitled *Roman Walls - the Bigger Picture in Britain and Europe*.

**HERITAGE OPEN DAYS 2016
Saturday 10th and Sunday 11th September.**

This is when Colchester's interesting but usually inaccessible buildings are open to the public. If you feel that you can help by manning a building for a session (normally about three hours), please contact Ann Turner on 01206 250894 for details.

THANK YOU!

The Editor would like to thank all those members who kindly assisted on staffing The Friends' stall at the Castle Open Evening on Wednesday 9th December.

Museum News

COLCHESTER CASTLE

Introducing Jess Dowdell and Emma Reeve, Collections and Learning Curators.

As Tom Hodgson outlined in the last edition, Emma Reeve and I have recently started with Colchester Museums as Collections and Learning Curators. This challenging new role will ensure that we embed engagement and learning into all our activities. My background is within university museums, notably the University of Queensland where I worked with Mediterranean collections for over six years. I have relocated from down under (Australia) to expand my opportunities in the museum sector and indulge my love for prehistory and Roman material culture. My professional and academic background has focused on learning and engagement with historical collections and I am excited to bring this experience to an

organization with this at its core.

Some notable current projects I am involved with include the display of the Burnham-on-Crouch Bronze Age hoard, documentation of the Roman glass collections and 'Out of the Box' curator engagement events.

The display of the Burnham-on-Crouch hoard is long overdue as it was first uncovered in 2010. This hoard includes over 214 metal items as well as associated pottery. In a display in Colchester Castle's community case from mid-December, I hope to highlight not only this magnificent hoard, but also the importance of the portable antiquities scheme and treasure act in ensuring that these objects are available for public consumption. Along with our current Finds Liaison Officer, Ben Paites, we will be hosting a lecture presentation in conjunction with the display in January.



Emma Reeve (left) and Jess Dowdell

The Roman glass being documented over the next few months includes a large amount of material excavated in the 1970s-80s by the Colchester Archeological Trust, as well as a few items noted in Hawkes and Hull from the 1930s. The aim is to increase the accessibility of the collection for researchers and the wider public. I also hope to engage volunteers and students in later parts of the project. I will be providing fortnightly updates on a collections blog that can be accessed via our website www.cimuseums.org.uk/article/16919.

The 'Out of the Box' curator engagement events are nothing revolutionary. They seek to connect audiences with objects that are not on display. Each month one member of our Collections and Learning team will prepare a handling table, tour, or event in one of three venues. In October I was in the Castle looking at objects connected to individuals who created the Castle we know today. I have enjoyed learning about historical characters including Eudo, Edward the Elder and Charles Grey. However, by far the greatest adventure has been getting to know former museum curator Rex Hull through his diaries, photos, and beautiful illustrations. In November Emma Reeve brought out one of the collection's most significant manuscripts. Further details of events will be posted on the 'what's on' page on our website www.cimuseums.org.uk/whatson.

JESS DOWDELL
Collections and Learning Curator

I am thrilled to be working for Colchester and Ipswich Museums, especially in a role which allows me to experience the full breadth of the collections alongside creating fantastic events and working with schools. Our team is working to re-invigorate the adult events programme, alongside keeping the current high-quality events for children.

In my first few weeks I was heavily involved with Heritage Open Days, which

were fantastic ways for a new Colcestrian to get to know the town and its rich history. Currently, I am working with a colleague to catalogue an archive of Colchester photographs which has come to the museum from Newsquest, a group of local newspapers. I have relished the opportunity to learn more about Colchester's recent past and the events many local people hold dear. I am also working on an exhibition for the space in Hollytrees, which will begin in March 2016.

I am originally from Nottingham, and moved to Norwich in 2008. I graduated from Norwich University of the Arts in 2011 with a degree in Visual Studies. Following this I organised art exhibitions in Norwich and the surrounding area, including a garden at the Bergh Apton sculpture trail.

In 2013 I joined Norfolk Museums Service's Teaching Museum scheme and worked on the Castle Keep redisplay at Norwich. This project, similarly to Colchester, was part-funded by the EU through Norman Connections. Through this I was lucky enough to meet several colleagues from CIMS and visit Colchester Castle during its redevelopment. Following the end of my time at Norwich Castle, I ran 'Norfolk 2000', an Arts Council funded project which combined art and archaeology on the theme of immigration.

Alongside this, I worked at Norwich's Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts as part of an MA in Museum Studies, which I completed in June of this year.

I'm excited about promoting inclusive and accessible museums and along with art and archaeology I also have experience in social media marketing. I hope to work with the team at CIMS to increase our online interaction with new audiences, and strengthen connections with our existing followers.

EMMA REEVE
Collections and Learning Curator

RECENT ACQUISITION:

Second World War German POW prints

One of the Museum Service's most recent acquisitions is a collection of material relating to a German prisoner of war, who was held from 1945 at P.O.W Camp 186 at Berechurch Hall in Colchester.

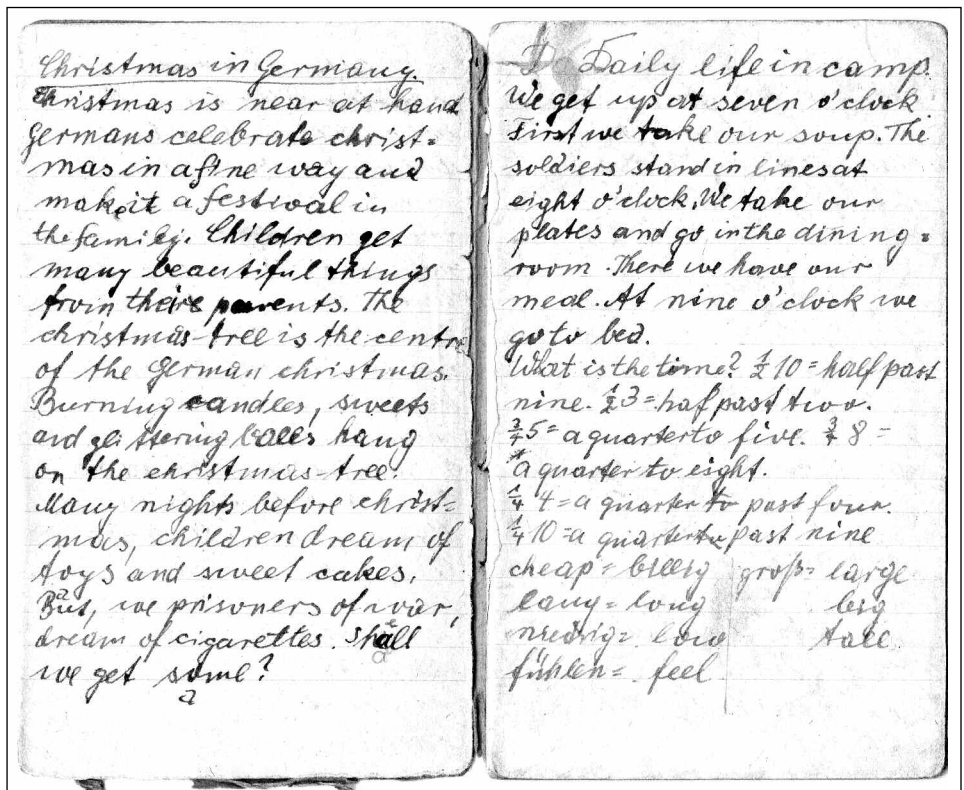
Kurt Stichling worked in the camp's print room, resulting in a fascinating collection of small woodcut prints. The print shown here is entitled *The Infirmary*.

Along with the prints are a number of postcards that show correspondence between Kurt and his wife Nelly back in Germany, and notebooks filled with writing in English, showing that Kurt was learning the language during his time in the camp. The double page spread shown below is entitled *Christmas in*



Germany and Daily Life in Camp, a contrast between Kurt's homeland and his present situation.

Emma Reeve



What's On at Colchester Museums

Alice in Wonderland, Exhibition, Hollytrees Museum
From 27th Nov 2015 - 28th February 2016
More informatio: cimuseums.org.uk/wonderland

Curious Corvids, Exhibition, Natural History Museum
From 1st December 2015 - 4th March 2016
More information: cimuseums.org.uk/naturalhistorymuseum

Prehistoric Treasure, Burnham-on-Crouch hoard, Exhibition, Colchester Castle
From 15th December 2015 - May 2016
Exhibition talk on Bronze Age Essex, Sunday 24th January
More information: cimuseums.org.uk/prehistorictreasure

Fenwick Hoard, Exhibition, Colchester Castle
Friends evening event, 23rd March 2016
Opportunity for Friends of the Museum to see the recently installed display
More details and associated events: cimuseums.org.uk/fenwickhoard

Faces of Colchester, Exhibition, Hollytrees Museum
From 12th March 2016 - July 2016
More information released closer to the date

Great Gathering, Art Exhibition, Natural History Museum
From 5th March - July 2016
More information released closer to the date

Colchester+Ipswich
Museums



 /ColchesterCastle

 @ColMuseums

UNIVERSITY OF ESSEX

Family and Community History

Meeting Your Ancestors (Part 1)

Learn how to research your family history

Topics covered are:

- Census Records, Parish Registers and Civil Registration
- Wills and Probate Records, Tithe Records and Land Tax
- Maps, Town Plans and Photographs

Tutor: Patrick Denney

Where: Colchester Campus, University of Essex, Wivenhoe Park, Colchester

When: Monday evenings from 11 January 2016 - 7-9pm for 10 weeks

Fee: £105 **Code:** HR 180

To enrol or for more information: Telephone Beatrix Lopez on 01206 872302 or email bmllope@essex.ac.uk **Website:** essex.ac.uk/history/certificate

Colchester Recalled Lectures until June 2016

January 14th

COLCHESTER'S BIG DIG.

Howard Brooks on the inside story of Colchester's archaeology in the 1970s, when Colchester was the largest archaeological site in Europe!

February 11th

CAMP 186: GERMAN PRISONERS OF WAR IN COLCHESTER.

Ken Free tells their story using government archive photos hitherto unknown.

March 17th

COLCHESTER VOICES.

Patrick Denney discusses Colchester's 20th Century History from his oral history work.

April 14th

'ESSEX BOYS'.

Karen Bowman looks at historical views of living in Essex, based on her recent book.

May 12th

MEMBERS' EVENING.

Three more members recount tales from their life and times.

June 9th -

A.G.M. Followed by

'18 YEARS AT WESTMINSTER'.

Our President **Sir Bob Russell** looks back at life in the 'Westminster village'.

Meetings are on Thursday evenings
at 7pm.

in the Main Lecture Theatre,
Colchester Institute, Sheepen Road.

All are welcome.

Admission £2 per person.

Further details are available from

ANDREW PHILLIPS,

Telephone 01206 546775



Welcomes all members of The Friends of Colchester Museums
with a **10% discount on all purchases*** in the Cafe Bar,
including breakfast, the á la carte menu and Chef's Daily Specials
in the Restaurant - simply produce your Membership Card.

MUSSI'S CAFE BAR & RESTAURANT
5-7 Museum Street | Colchester | Essex | CO1 1TN
t: 01206 762000 | e. info@mussis.co.uk
www.mussis.co.uk

**Please note: This offer does not include Chef's Choice or any special events*



The Friends' New Lecture Series for 2016

12th April

James Wills

Editor in Chief of Newsquest NE

MY LIFE IN NEWSPAPERS

26th April

Tony Tuckwell

NEW HALL – A ROYAL PALACE

IN ESSEX

10th May

Alan Skinner

IT'S NEVER TOO LATE - 50 YEARS OF
ADULT EDUCATION IN COLCHESTER

Including an update on 'Grey Friars Sharing
Heritage' project

24th May

Philip Crummy

UPDATE ON COLCHESTER'S
ROMAN CIRCUS

7th June

The AGM at 7pm followed by

Dorian Kelly

THE THREE COLCHESTER
SKATING RINKS

21st June

Will Tyler

THE FIRST DAY OF THE SOMME

6th September

Patrick Denney

COLCHESTER VOICES – STORIES
FROM THE ARCHIVES

20th September

Dr Robert Beaken

CIVILIANS, SOLDIERS AND RELIGION
IN WARTIME COLCHESTER 1914-1918

4th October

Peter Jones

ZEPPELINS OVER ESSEX

18th October

Sir Bob Russell

18 YEARS IN PARLIAMENT

1st November

Dr Fabrizio Casale

HISTORY OF ESSEX COUNTY
HOSPITAL

15th November

Mark Davies

COLCHESTER BOROUGH REGALIA
AND OTHER CIVIC GIFTS

All at Lion Walk Church at 7.30pm

Admission: Members £2. Non members £4.

Memners' Season ticket price £20 - see page 1

Further details from: David Walton, The Friends of Colchester Museums

14 Ryegate Road, Colchester CO1 1YG

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