



The Friends of Colchester Museums

Registered Charity No. 310669

Summer Newsletter &
Seventieth Annual Report
2018 - 2019

Officers

As Elected at The Annual General Meeting on 18th June 2019

President His Worship the Mayor, Councillor Nick Cope

Vice Presidents

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

Chairman Patrick Denney (patrick.denney@sky.com)
247 Old Heath Road, Colchester, CO2 8BN
Telephone: 01206 796822,

Vice Chairman Peter Jones

Honorary Treasurer Peter Evans (peter.evans7978@btinternet.com)
5 Grimston Road, Colchester, CO2 7RN
Telephone: 01206 540990

Honorary Secretary Mary Dale (m.dale1955@live.co.uk)

Membership Secretary Roy Anderson (royandliz@outlook.com)

Programme Secretary Jenny Jones (jonesjp@outlook.com)

Newsletter Editor Ian Ahmet (ianahmet@gmail.com)

Website Editor Alan Skinner (a.v.skinner@btinternet.com)

Other Committee Members

Harry Carlo	Mark Davies
Chris Hall	Avril Lankester
Andrew Millar	Andrew Phillips

Ex Officio Frank Hargrave (*Colchester and Ipswich Museums and Arts Manager*)
Tom Hodgson (*Colchester Museums Manager*)
Philip Wise (*Heritage Manager*)

Honorary Auditor Roy Anderson

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

Spring Newsletter 2019

FROM THE CHAIRMAN

On Tuesday 18 June 2019 we held our seventieth Annual General Meeting at Lion Walk Church with about 40 members attending this part of the proceedings. After the formalities had been completed the numbers swelled to nearly 60 to hear an interesting lecture from our Vice-Chairman, Peter Jones. The subject of Peter's talk was *Wind & Water: A brief history of milling* and proved to be a fitting end to yet another successful lecture series which had begun back in September 2018.

During our 12 meetings throughout the year our speakers had covered a wide range of subjects which were attended by a total of 1,044 members and friends, averaging 87 at each meeting. In addition to this, our 6 afternoon lectures attracted another combined total of 256 attendees, averaging about 43 for each meeting.

And we are now looking forward to the start of our 2019-20 lecture series which begins on **Tuesday 3 September 2019** with a talk entitled *A Portrait of Victorian Colchester*. Full details of the forthcoming lecture series can be found on the back cover of this Annual Report.

EVENTS & OUTINGS 2019

Our two planned summer outings, which included a tour of the Castle Park and a trip to Chatham Dockyard were both very well supported and a detailed review of these events is included below.

Once again I would like to thank our Programme Secretary, Jenny Jones, for making these events happen. And to conclude our current season of events, on Tuesday 30 July, around 50 Friends attended

a special evening viewing of the new Adorn exhibition which has just opened in the Castle Museum. The 300 or so items on display show how personal adornment, mainly in the form of jewellery, has played an important part in people's lives through the centuries. Further information regarding this exciting event is also included below.

WEBSITE NEWS - www.tfocm.org.uk

I am pleased to report that our new website continues to attract a lot of interest with around 1,500 visitors logging onto the site during the past year. An interesting aside to this activity reveals that 71% of users are accessing the site from a desktop, 18% from their mobiles and 11% from a tablet, which may suggest a measure of activity across the age groups.

In addition to the website, our Facebook page is also attracting a lot of interest which currently has 230 regular followers. Can we please ask that all our members who are Facebook users share as much content as possible about the Friends with their friends and family – particularly those of younger years so that we can continue to raise awareness of our activities with a wider audience.

I would like to thank Alan Skinner who continues to maintain our website and who has provided me with these latest figures. Alan has also asked me to mention that he would be happy to hear from any of our members who have relevant photographs featuring the Friends that he may be able to share on our website or Facebook page. If you have such images that you would like to share please send direct to Alan at - a.v.skinner@btinternet.com

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

As can be seen from the figures below, our membership figures are only very slightly down on the same period last year.

	August 2019	August 2018
Single	303	294
Couple	214	223
Family	102	106
Other	11	10
Total	630	633

Taking into account all categories this represents a total of 1,150 members currently associated with the group.

TOM HODGSON (RETIREMENT)

It is with some regret that I have to report that Tom Hodgson from the Museum Service will be retiring from his role at the end of September 2019. Tom was first introduced to the Committee in January 1995 after joining the museum staff in December 1994 so will have completed nearly 25 years in the role.

Tom has always been a great supporter of the Friends and we were pleased to be able to present him with a small leaving gift in the form of a book token and a book on Colchester Trams by Peter Jones, at the time of our private viewing of the Adorn exhibition. We wish Tom all the best for the future.

The Chairman of the Friends of Colchester Museums, Patrick Denney (left), presents a leaving gift to Tom Hodgson who is retiring from his role at the Museums Service

THANKS TO THE COMMITTEE

Finally, I would like to acknowledge the help and assistance received from all members of the committee during the past year. In particular I would like to thank Mary Dale for stepping into the breach as Secretary following Janet Fulford's recent illness. Janet has now decided to formerly retire from the committee and Mary has taken on the Secretary's role on a full time basis. Janet will be sorely missed by all concerned and I would like to thank her for her tireless work over the years in helping to keep things running smoothly.

Another change involves our auditor, Roy Anderson, who has now kindly agreed to take on the role of Membership Secretary in addition to his auditing activities.

My thanks is also due to Jenny and Peter Jones, Peter Evans, Ian Ahmet, Alan Skinner and Avril Lankester all of whom have been particularly active in their respective roles, but not forgetting the rest of the committee who have each played an important role in ensuring that the Society continues to prosper - Mark Davies, Harry Carlo, Chris Hall, Andrew Phillips, Andrew Millar and, until recently, Janita le Fevre who has now finally moved away from the area. Janita was a great help to the committee over the several years that she was involved.

We have also said farewell to David Walton who has resigned from the committee after a number of years of valued service – especially helping out at our meetings.

Patrick Denney, *Chairman*



COLCHESTER CIVIC SOCIETY EXCURSIONS 2019

The Civic Society is inviting Friends of Museums members to join them on the following events:

West Stow Anglo-Saxon Village Thursday 19th September 2019

Leaves East Hill House bus stop 10am -
£30.00

The Museum of Brands Sunday 17th November 2019

Leaves bus stop top of East Hill opposite
Greyfriars 8am - £54.00

For more details of these and other events, please visit the Colchester Civic Society website www.colchestercivicsociety.co.uk or phone Jo Edwards on 01206 868254

COLCHESTER'S HERITAGE OPEN DAYS 2019

Heritage Open Days - England's largest festival of history and culture – is celebrating twenty-five years this year. For much of this time HODs, as it is affectionately known, has been organised in Colchester by the Museum Service working in partnership with local organisations, principally the Colchester Civic Society and the Colchester Catholic Heritage Group.

In 2019 HODs will take place over ten days from 13-22 September and locally almost every day will see an event happening or a venue opening somewhere in Colchester and the surrounding area. An important date to note is that the free day at Colchester Castle is Saturday 14 September.

Over thirty locations are featured in the Colchester programme which, for the first time this year, covers the entire district from Sherman's House in Dedham to Mersea Barrow and Wivenhoe High Street to Boxted Airfield Museum. As ever there is also much going on in Colchester itself with many old favourites once again participating such as St John's Abbey Gatehouse, Sparlings in West

Stockwell Street and the Colchester Arts Centre.

This year sees the return of St Botolph's Priory after an absence of several years with a day of activities on Saturday 21 September. New for 2019 is a special interest guided tour of Colchester Castle focussing on the Iron Age story of Colchester led by Dr Frank Hargrave, the Colchester and Ipswich Museums Manager, on Saturday 21 September at 10.30 and 11.30.



The indispensable Heritage Open Days event programme is available from Colchester's Visitor Information Centre, Colchester Castle and from many of the venues who are participating this year as well as other places in the town.

Alternatively, an electronic version is available to download from the Visit Colchester website, www.visitcolchester.com/HODS19.

I hope that as many Friends as possible will take this opportunity to explore somewhere new or perhaps rediscover somewhere that they have not visited for some time.

Philip Wise, *Heritage Manager*



ADORN - JEWELLERY: THE HUMAN STORY

This summer sees Colchester Castle's first exhibition open seven years after "*Treasures of China*", and the first since the redevelopment of the Castle in 2014. Adorn: Jewellery, the Human Story has been almost three years in the making and we hope the results have been worth it!

As the lead curator for the exhibition, one of my key objectives was to showcase a considerable number of objects and specimens that are not normally on display. Adorn has achieved this with 70% of all museum objects exhibited having come from our reserve collections. In some instances, we have displayed objects for the very first time since their acquisition. The most recently acquired is a 15th century iconographic ring depicting St. Barbara, generously funded by the Friends of Colchester Museums.



Research into the collections has also revealed new stories to us. A personal favourite are two Roman, nicolo intaglios that bear the inscriptions of their makers – Eusebius and Eutyches – on their reverse. These are the only known intaglio maker's marks of the thousands excavated from

Roman Britain. Although only two objects, the similarity in material, design (the carving of Satyr in each example) and the servile Greek names suggest there could well have been a gem-cutting workshop operating in Roman Colchester.

Adorn also features 60 loans from several lending institutions from across the region and slightly further afield. The loan from the British Museum is one I am most proud of as this has enabled objects originally excavated in Colchester, some over 150 years ago, to return for the first time.



A catalytic object that inspired the section 'Fashions of the Empire' is the pair of gold ball earrings that were discovered as part of the Fenwick Hoard in 2014. Research into these earrings has revealed that they are almost unique, the only other one having been discovered in...Colchester! The style of these earrings directly parallels those found across the Empire, at its heart in Italy, Pompeii, and even on the edge of Empire in Roman Egypt.

The sections 'Made In Essex' and 'Your Stories' are where the human story is really brought to light and I hope inspires reflection on the historic and ancient objects display. The work here has been incredibly important to provide a contemporary and relevant lens for the exhibition and seems very popular with visitors already. 'Your Stories' will change twice during the exhibition's run and will feature another 12 Colcestrians and the stories behind their jewellery.



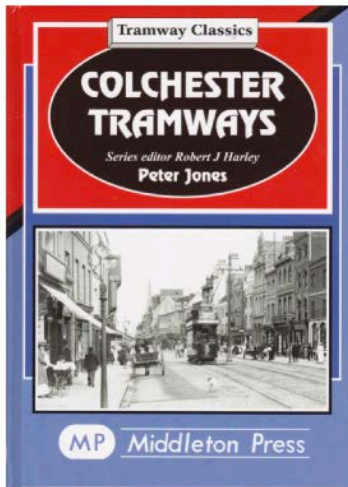
The loan of gold jewellery, including the fabulous serpent bracelets, from the British Museum is a focal point for the exhibition for me. I hope it places the Fenwick Hoard in even greater context, when we think of the original owner and wearer of these fabulous and precious items of jewellery that were never reclaimed after the Boudican destruction.

For more information about Colchester Castle and *Adorn: Jewellery, The Human Story*, visit: colchester.cimuseums.org.uk/adorn.

The exhibition will be running from July 27, 2019 until February 16, 2020.

This event is part of the Castle admission.

Glynn Davis,
Senior Collections & Learning Curator



Just Published

A new book by
Peter Jones

Includes 120 photographs of old Colchester

RRP £18.95

Special Offer to FOCM members

£17.50 inc P&P

**Send a cheque made payable to P Jones to
19 Heathfields, Eight Ash Green, Colchester, CO6 3QP**

**Friends of Colchester Museums
Income and Expenditure Account
for the year ended 31st March 2019**

INCOME	2018/19	2017/18
Subscriptions	£8,229.50	£7,554.00
Lectures (evening)	£1,185.10	£1,177.60
Lectures (afternoon) (Note 1)	£230.00	
Trips (Net of expenses)	£407.50	£791.00
Interest	£616.64	£475.44
Donations	£135.01	£141.00
	<u>£10,803.75</u>	<u>£10,139.04</u>

EXPENDITURE	2018/19	2017/18
Operating Expenses	£3,734.78	£2,860.74
Subscriptions and Insurance	£437.00	£407.00
Events - Christmas Open Evening	£308.29	£152.87
Purchases (Note 2)	£15.00	£3,000.00
Contribution to Museum (Note 3)	£1,425.00	£1,430.00
Surplus of income over expenditure	£4,883.68	£2,288.43
	<u>£10,803.75</u>	<u>£10,139.04</u>

Notes to the Accounts

- Note 1. Net income from the 12 evening lectures and 6 afternoon ones
- Note 2. Purchase of Colchester Bank poster from 1820s. We are committed to other purchases in 2019/20
- Note 3. Payment to Colchester Museums in lieu of admission

The Friends of Colchester Museums

Balance Sheet as at 31st March 2019

ACCUMULATED FUND	2018/19	2017/18
Balance brought forward	£39,862.42	£37,573.99
Surplus/Loss for the year	£4,883.68	£2,288.43
TOTAL:	£44,746.10	£39,862.42
Reserve (B. Colbron)	£805.60	£805.60
CREDITORS:		
Fees for trips (Note 4)	£1,284.00	£3,336.00
Season Tickets (Note 5)	£240.00	£340.00
	£47,075.70	£44,344.02


NET CURRENT ASSETS	2017/18	2017/18
BANK:		
Current Account	£6,673.94	£6,058.90
Building Society	£40,401.76	£38,285.12
TOTAL:	£47,075.70	£44,344.02

Notes to the Accounts

- Note 4. Advance payments for excursions
 Note 5. Season tickets for 2019 paid in advance

I have examined the accounts of The Friends of Colchester Museums for the year ended 31st March 2019 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  Peter Evans, FMAAT, Hon. Treasurer

Signed  Roy Anderson, Hon. Auditor

28th June 2019

LAYING THE FOUNDATIONS



The museum service has recently acquired the ceremonial trowel presented to the Duke of Cambridge when, on 31 October 1898, he laid the foundation stone for Colchester Town Hall. It came up for auction at Reeman Dansie and its purchase was generously supported by the Friends and Sir Bob Russell.



In the 1890s civic pride was at a high point in Colchester, so the ceremony of laying the foundation stone was a grand affair attended by the great and the good of the town - be-whiskered and top-hatted for the most part. The Duke of Cambridge, as now, was a member of the royal family, being a grandson of George III and a cousin of Queen Victoria. He served as Commander in Chief of the British Army which gave him a particular interest in the garrison town of Colchester.

The trowel was presented by the architect, John Belcher, who had won the competition to design the Town Hall. He commissioned the firm of Mappin and Webb to make the trowel in silver with a bone handle.

The front of the trowel is engraved with his winning architectural design. A glance shows that this is not the Town Hall with which we are all familiar today. The most obvious difference is the tower which was nowhere near as lofty and embellished as the one that James Paxman paid over £3,000 to have built.



Colchester Town Hall was opened by the Earl of Rosebery on 15 May 1902. For over a century it has been one the great landmarks of the town, decorated in statuary and stained glass that details the town's long history and memorialises those who created the building as much as those who are represented upon it.

The trowel has been on a different, largely unknown and unresearched, journey which, I am sure would have surprised John Belcher if he had known.

On the back of the trowel there is an inscription which reads:



Rear Admiral Sir Adolphus Fitz-George was the second son of the Duke of Cambridge. The Duke died on 22 March 1904 and Adolphus must have inherited the trowel, clearly not something to which he had any sentimental attachment. There are a number of ways to dispose of an unwanted ceremonial trowel, but giving it to a small girl as a christening present is quite inventive! What Joan or her parents thought, we do not know.

Recently, the foundation stone has been refurbished, so it is very apt that the trowel has now come to light and is to be displayed in the Town Hall.

Tom Hodgson, *Colchester Museums Manager*

The Dudley White Local History Lecture 2019

Saturday 16 November 2019, 2-4pm.

'Singing All Day Long?'

Oral History & The Colchester Rag Trade 1890-1950



**A lecture by Andrew Phillips (Community Fellow),
Department of History, University of Essex**

In the Ivor Crewe Lecture Hall, University of Essex, Wivenhoe Park, Colchester.

Car-parking and admission are FREE. The Lecture Hall will be signposted from the main visitors' car-park.

Castle Park, July 2nd



John and Kathryn

Following Jenny Jones excellent talk on the history of Castle Park a guided tour was arranged for a park visit with Blue Badge guides Kathryn Scholz and John Davies. Thirty-two members attended and were conducted around the park in two groups. Castle Park has the unique and conflicting distinction of being a classic Victorian Town Park but also a site of historical and significant archaeological interest.

There are many Roman remains just below the surface including house foundations, roman streets and drains and who knows what else. Among the ancient ruins we saw the tessellated floor of a Roman house or possibly a shop, part of the arcade wall that surrounded the Roman temple of Claudius, some Roman drains and we were also able to gain access Duncan's Gate.



Admiring the tessellated floor
where Roman feet once trod

From the town park perspective we were able to see the result of 120 years of applied horticulture. There are over 60 different varieties of trees. Even more amazing were the 48,000 seasonal bedding plants and 28,000 bulbs that are planted every year by a team of five gardeners under the control of a head gardener who are all employees of *idverdi*, the firm responsible for ground maintenance assisted by park rangers and volunteers from '*The Friends of Castle Park*'.

We also learnt that in one year the café serves 70,000 cups of tea and 20,000 ice creams!

Castle Park is very special, it is a unique and wonderful asset for the town. The general consensus of the members was most of us have been walking through the park for years and have only just come to realise how special it is.



Chatham Historic Dockyard

Another very enjoyable trip. 46 members joined us for the trip Chatham Historic Dockyard. This is a former Royal Naval dockyard on the River Medway. It came into existence as result of the reformation in the 16th century when relations with the catholic countries of Europe were at an all time low.



Royal Navy Sloop HMS Garnet, built 1878 with one of the massive sheds in the background in which ships used to be built

It was operational for over 400 years and in that time supplied the navy with over 500 ships and was at the forefront of shipbuilding and industrial and technical development. At its peak in the early 20th century it employed over 10,000 skilled artisans and covered over 400 acres, most of which was not even in Chatham but in neighbouring Gillingham.

The dockyard closed in 1984 and 84 acres were taken over and developed as a visitor attraction managed by the Chatham Dockyard Trust.

The site is now the most complete dockyard dedicated to the age of sail. The Steam, Steel and Submarine exhibition tells the dockyards story over the last 150 years of its operation, through an industrial revolution and two world wars. There are over 100 buildings, the largest collection of RNLI lifeboats in the UK and 3 historic warships including HM Submarine Ocelot, which was the last of the 57 submarines built at the dockyard for the Navy.



HMS Ocelot

The submarine was open for a guided tour and it was incredible how cramped it would have been for the crew of 67. It could stay submerged for up to 10 weeks and without any daylight, showers or bathroom that, to us, was not an enviable prospect. Surprisingly though, most sub mariners were volunteers.

We also visited the Ropery where rope has been made for the last 400 years and we watched a demonstration of rope making. The Ropery building is ¼ mile long and staff use bicycles to get from one end to the other. A lot of rope is still made here using the original machinery and techniques.



One of the rope making machines

Another successful trip for The Friends of Colchester Museums

FROM OUR ARCHIVE



This superb painting of Colchester High Street, by Charles Debenham, was acquired by the Museums Service in 2003 with the help of generous funding by the Friends. The painting, which shows the street as it appeared in the 1950s complete with two-way traffic and other memories of the period, was formerly presented to the Museum Service at the special meeting in the Castle Museum on Tuesday, 21 January 2003.



The presentation of the painting:
From the left: Charles Debenham (the artist), Andrew Phillips (Chairman of the Friends) and Phillip Wise (Colchester Museums).

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. Admission £2 for members and £3 for visitors. New visitors always welcome.

2019 Autumn Programme

- 12th September **The Genteel Class of Georgian Colchester & their Homes** *Patrick Denney*
- 10th October **An Evening with Steve Mannix, Director of the Mercury Theatre, discussing its new building, its 'big tent' on the Abbey Field and the busy life of the Theatre** *Steve Mannix*
- 14th November **'On the Buses' - how local bus services came to North Essex** *Alan Skinner*
- 12th December **Our Social Evening. Patrick will run our annual quiz, then mince pies, wine and two local films. The Jumbo Story, made this summer, and 'I married a stranger' oral histories of courtship and marriage in Edwardian times**
-



If you are 'Roman' around the town

Look into Claudius Gateway for a coffee

Claudius Gate Café and the exhibition of the Roman Temple Arcade have just reopened. Access from Museum Street or the Castle grounds

Friends of Castle Museums have you seen our website?

All the latest news on our lectures, trips and activities

tfocm.org.uk





FRIENDS OF COLCHESTER MUSEUMS AUTUMN LECTURE SERIES 2019

All lectures take place at Lion Walk Church, Lion Walk, Colchester
Admission £2 (members), £4 (non-members) or with a season ticket

Evening Lectures - Tuesday at 7:30pm

3rd September	A Portrait of Victorian Colchester <i>Based on old photographs and documentary evidence</i>	Patrick Denney
17th September	Maldon Salt Works <i>The history of salt extraction on the Blackwater</i>	David Newman
1st October	The True History of Tymperleys	Mark Davies
15th October	The Thames Through Time <i>River Thames in North Essex</i>	Ian and Ros Mercer
29th October	The History of The Avenue and Lexden	Dr Fab Casale
12th November	Oysters and Oilskins <i>The clothes of Victorian East Coast Fishermen</i>	Penny Youll and Jane Robinson

Afternoon Lectures - Thursday at 2:30pm

12th September	Colchester Trams <i>When rails ran down the High Street</i>	Peter Jones
17th October	Jumbo - Then and Now <i>The story of Colchester's famous landmark</i>	Brian Light
14th November	Colchester's River <i>Features and history of the River Colne</i>	Ray Cantrell

Further information from Jenny Jones, jonesjp@outlook.com or
c/o Friends of Colchester Museums,
19 Heathfields, Eight Ash Green, Colchester, CO6 3QP