



## **Friends of the Windsor & Royal Borough Museum**

**Registered Charity No 1115540**

### **NEWSLETTER 92**

**Autumn 2019**



This is the first Royal couple to be married in Windsor Castle. Find out about some of the scandals of other Royal marriages at the Castle when Brigitte Mitchell starts our talks programme this year at the Community Room, Dedworth Library on 19th September. (See page 3)

## CHAIR'S REPORT

Our A.G.M. in June saw a reasonable attendance of members and an excellent talk by Gerald Hyder. With a newly elected committee I hope that we can enjoy at least 12 months of stability! I would like to welcome Carol Dixon-Smith and Tony Heaton onto the committee and thank them for volunteering.

So that you all know who is doing what here is the current committee:-

Chair	Len Nash
Vice Chair	Brigitte Mitchell
Treasurer	Jean Pumphrey
Editor	Pamela Marson
Members Sec.	Carol Dixon-Smith
Com. Members	Beryl Hedges
	Janice Carter
	Tony Heaton

One of my aims for this year is to try and increase our membership, particularly younger people and this is something Carol will be pursuing. However a pressing concern, as I said at the AGM, is the lack of attendance at meetings. It really is embarrassing to introduce a guest speaker to an audience of just ten people, six of whom are the committee! We are very concerned about this trend and need to know why it's happening and what we can do about it. Please let us know your feelings. If the low attendances continue we may even have to consider the future of the meetings!

Finally, on a personal note, I am researching on behalf of the museum, the Specto factory that was in Vale Road. I already have a lot of detail regarding it's products and relevant dates but I would like to include some 'human interest'. Therefore if anyone has information about working for the company, anecdotes, etc. please contact me either via email or the museum. I would like to find out the number of employees, exactly when Specto closed and when the building was demolished.

That's all for now and I hope to be hearing from you.

Len.

## **Dates for your Diary.**

All friends meetings are held at the Community Room,  
Dedworth Library, Smith's Lane, Windsor commencing at 7.30 pm  
unless otherwise stated.

19th September. - '**Royal Weddings and Scandals**'. A talk by Brigitte Mitchell.

“My talk is about Royal Weddings at Windsor Castle 1121 to 2019, from Henry I and Adeliza of Louvain, who of course married in a chapel that pre-dates the present St George's Chapel, to Lady Gabriella Windsor and Thomas Kingston in May 2019.

There were not a few Royal scandals during 19th century Royal weddings, which had been arranged by good old Queen Vic, and the loveable German Kaiser!”

5th December. - '**History of the Household Cavalry**'. A talk by Peter Storer, curator of the Household Cavalry Museum, Windsor.

27th February 2020. - '**The Windsor Carriages**'. A talk by Rebecca Seear about the history of the well-known company that have been giving carriage rides in Windsor for many years.

## **A NOTE FROM THE TREASURER**

Thanks to all of you that have already paid your subscriptions, and a reminder to those who have not, that they are now due. They can be paid either at the museum or direct to :

The Treasurer  
27 Bourne Avenue,  
Windsor, SL4 3JP.

Individual membership £10                      Family Membership £15

Please make cheques payable to *Friends of the RBWM Museum* and don't send cash by post.

Thank you.

## GRANDAD AND THE V.1.

Many people know about the V.1. flying bomb that hit the Council incinerator at Dedworth during World War 2. However, my family has a personal connection with the incident.

At the time my Gran. owned a wool shop at the end of the parade of shops in Dedworth Road opposite the end of Vale Road. My Grandad, I believe, was working for Darvilles. On the day in question he had gone off to tend to his allotment which was close to the council site with strict orders not to be late home for dinner, (Gran was a bit like that!). Later Gran was serving in the shop when she heard the unmistakable sound of a 'buzz-bomb' followed by a huge explosion nearby. She rushed into the street to see a column of smoke and dust rising up from the 'tip'. Knowing Grandad was in the same area she rushed off to try and find him, fearing the worst.

Meanwhile, down at the allotment, Grandad was busy digging over his plot, oblivious of the time. Upon hearing the V.1. he looked up in time to see it strike the incinerator's chimney and explode. The blast knocked him down and rendered him temporarily deaf. As he lay there stunned the air became thick with choking brick dust which also stuck to him as he was rather sweaty from his digging efforts. After some time he cautiously picked himself up and finding that he was more or less unhurt, thought that he'd better get home. He slowly picked his way through the debris and back along Dedworth Road.

Gran saw him coming but was distraught to see that he was covered in blood. Relieved that he was alive and walking she rushed to him where she realised that he was actually smothered in red brick dust, not blood. She was so relieved that she gave Grandad a big hug and said, "You silly \*\*\*\*\*! If you'd come home when I said this would never have happened! Look at the state you're in! Next time do as you're told!"

No doubt Grandad was quite pleased that he was still deaf!

Len.

## . . . . . AND I SAW IT TOO

On 1st July 1944 my family went to the ICI Annual Fete at Petersfield opposite their paint factory in Wexham Road, Slough, but my father had already left to play bowls at the Alexandra Gardens, Windsor for the firm's team. They had all squeezed into one car because of petrol rationing.

We were watching an obstacle race in the main arena when we heard an odd noise coming from above the factory. Soon people began to recognise it as the sound of a doodlebug. It flew right over our heads and on across the railway line and everyone heaved a sigh of relief, but we continued to watch. It was not long before it appeared to stop. Cries went up "It's stopped!" "Where is that?" "Windsor?" "Oh no! My husband's in Windsor," shouted one of the bowls team's wives. It hung there for a while and then suddenly dropped to the ground and a cloud of pink dust rose up from the area.

My father came home safely that night and reported that they had seen it and it fell a long way from them. There was nothing about it in the newspapers, such reports were illegal. So it was never mentioned again.

Many years later I married and we bought a house in Dedworth. I joined Judith Hunter's Windsor History Group because I already knew her from Slough. At one of the meetings someone asked me what was my particular historical interest. I had not thought about it, so I said "Dedworth, because that is where I live."

"But nothing has ever happened in Dedworth" was the reply, "Oh! except the doodlebug, that is."

Pam.

Leslie's Piece

## **Lady Helena and her Family**

A WW1 display in the museum mentions Lady Helena Gleichen who, with Nina Hollings, ran a mobile X-ray unit in Italy in 1915.

Lady Helena was the daughter of Prince Victor of Hohenlohe-Langenburg, whose mother Feodora was Queen Victoria's half-sister.

Born in 1833, Victor came to England in 1848 seeking a career in the Royal Navy and served in various parts of the world including China, but retired owing to ill health. The following year he became Governor & Constable of Windsor Castle. From 1861 he used the title of Count Gleichen after his marriage to Laura, daughter of Admiral Sir George Seymour. This was because, according to the Hohenlohe-Langenburg house rules she was of unequal rank (only the great grand-daughter of a marquis) and so could not be styled Princess. In 1886, however, he reverted to his original title when Queen Victoria, who had no time for the niceties of the marriage rules of minor German Royal houses, granted Laura the rank of Princess.

In retirement, Victor took up sculpture and produced a number of notable pieces, his best known work being the statue of King Alfred at Wantage. He also carved statues of Queen Victoria and Mr & Mrs Holloway at Holloway College.

Prince Victor died on 31st December 1891 and in a way unwittingly changed the succession to the throne. His funeral at Sunningdale was attended by the Prince of Wales and his two sons. As a result of the bitter weather they all caught colds, Eddie's developing into pneumonia which proved fatal. A few days later Queen Victoria paid a private visit to the grave and laid a wreath.

Prince and Princess Victor had four children:

**Edward**, who had a distinguished military career in Egypt and North Africa. He later wrote about his time in the army and also published a book on London's open-air statues.

**Victoria Alice Ada (generally known as Valda)** married a soldier and lived in Westmorland.

**Helena**, who was awarded the Italian medal for military valour (as was Nina Hollings) was an artist who exhibited at the Royal Academy. She never married, neither did her elder sister

**Feodora** who trained at the Slade then followed in her father's footsteps as a sculptor with works in Paris, Cairo and Canada. Nearer to home she made the monument to her father in Sunningdale Church and the statue of Edward VII outside the Hospital in St Leonards Road.

Leslie Grout

## **Lightening behind the Castle**

Courtney managed to catch this flash of lightening behind the Round tower



## Ellis Journey 2019

Evelyn Ellis was a pioneer behind the development of the motorised car. He made the first recorded journey in a motorised carriage in the United Kingdom on 5 July 1895. He had a left-hand motor car made to his own specification from the Paris firm of Panhard-Levassour, powered by a Daimler engine. After it was transported by boat and train to Micheldever station in Hampshire, Ellis drove it to his home in Datchet. The 56 mile route took 5 hours 32 minutes at an average speed of 9.84 mph. The museum team took some Victorian objects along to the Ellis Journey event in Datchet on 30 June 2019 for visitors to explore. A highlight was sharing Evelyn Ellis' passport which had never been on display before. Over 140 people engaged with our stand and we hope to be involved next year for the 125 year anniversary of Ellis' journey in 2020.





**Victorian Windsor Walk**  
**22 September 2019: 10:00am – 12:00pm**

Join us on this family friendly walk around Windsor.

Discover what life was like in the town during the reign of Queen Victoria, celebrate the bicentenary of her birth and have a private view of the museum with our curator.

Places are free but limited, donations welcome.

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/victorian-windsor-walk-tickets-64162311200> to register.



**Windsor and Eton Living Advent Calendar**

Based on an original idea from Stockholm, The Windsor and Eton Living Advent Calendar is a collaborative project run with Windsor, Eton and Ascot Town Partnership and 24 local businesses to provide live entertainment every evening from 14 to 24 December. The museum will be opening the doors on 12 December at 6.15pm for a surprise event. We hope you will come and support us. If you would like to be involved with the event please do get in touch.

**Museum, Arts & Local Studies Team**

## Summer Holiday Activities



Our family activities over the summer holidays have been well supported with over 350 young people engaging in our activities during July and August

Our young people were inspired by our exhibition celebrating 200 years since the birth of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert and took part in some Victorian themed activities



Thank you to the volunteers who give up their time to help us plan and run these,  
We couldn't do what we do without you.

Following my piece on the beginnings of Caley's in Newsletter 91, Brigitte has sent in the story of their end

## **Why the Caley family sold their department store in Windsor.**

The demise of Caley's Department Store started with the Great War. Captain Hugh William Caley, the only son of Mr and Mrs Hugh Caley, of Thornbury House, Osborne Road, was destined to take over the store in Windsor. He became a chartered accountant after taking his degree at Pembroke College, Cambridge in 1908, and worked in both Brussels and Paris. At the outbreak of war he was financial controller of a firm in Paris, but in 1916 he was commissioned into the Army Service Corps and was soon back in France as Railway Transport Officer. In October 1917 he married his French sweetheart Suzanne Dufresne of Versailles. In July 1918 he was sent home for an operation, which was successful; but just before his discharge he was found to be suffering from nephritis, [kidney failure] which took a very rapid course. He died at Queen Alexandra Military Hospital, Millbank, on Monday, 16 September 1918. The funeral service was held at Windsor Parish Church, which all members of staff of Messrs Caley's attended. Hugh Caley is buried in Windsor Cemetery.

His death led to the sale of Caley's store to Selfridges after 100 years as a family business. The store was closed in 2006 by John Lewis, who had acquired it from Selfridges.

Windsor in the Great War p.78

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