



Friends of the Windsor & Royal Borough Museum

Charity No. 1115540

NEWSLETTER 97



See page 7 for a story about the ferry boats

Chair's Report

Well, we didn't manage to hold the AGM after all.

Government restrictions prohibited the gathering of more than six people so all our hard work was for nought. At present there is little light at the end of the tunnel, so what the future holds is purely conjecture.

We did manage to circulate the annual accounts for your perusal and as we had no nominations for the Committee the current members have all stood again. We decided not to go on-line because I know that there are a significant number of Friends who are not 'au fait' with the technology and we did not want to exclude anybody from an 'electronic' meeting. If you do have any issues or points you wish to discuss then do not hesitate to contact me.

There seems to be no opening date set for the museum at the time of writing. The Council are reluctant to commit themselves or even answer questions about the promised 'review' despite their stated objectives of promoting the town as a 'staycation' destination and the 'Discover Your Royal Borough' campaign in which the museum has surely a vital part.

Meanwhile the staff are very busy with on-line projects etc as you will see from the museum report in this issue and I trust everyone will support all their efforts. Do please continue to harass your local councillors to try and force some kind of decision.

Friends Christmas Cards are available, both the 'Corgies' and 'Guildhall' designs. If you want some you can send me £5 per pack to 27 Bourne Avenue, Windsor SL4 3JP and I will either post them or deliver them to a local address.

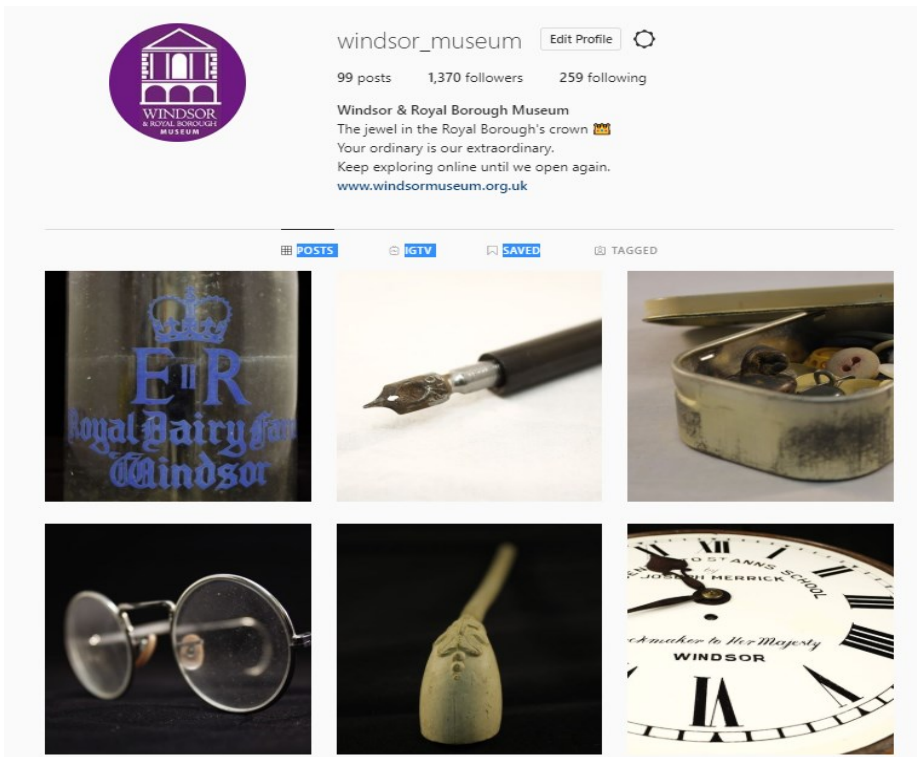
Please help the Friends by renewing your subscription if you have not already done so. If you have not renewed, this will be your last Newsletter. Stay safe.

Len Nash

70 years of the collection

Had you realised that the museum collection is 70 years old? The collection started when a local resident, Maitland Underhill, decided to create an exhibition about the history of Windsor for the 1951 national Festival of Britain celebrations. Many local people donated objects to be displayed and the exhibition stayed at Windsor Guildhall for 31 years. The collection continued to grow and after some time spent in storage, and with small displays at other locations, the museum returned home to the Guildhall in 2011 when it was opened by her Majesty the Queen. We believe we are the jewel in the Royal Borough's crown.

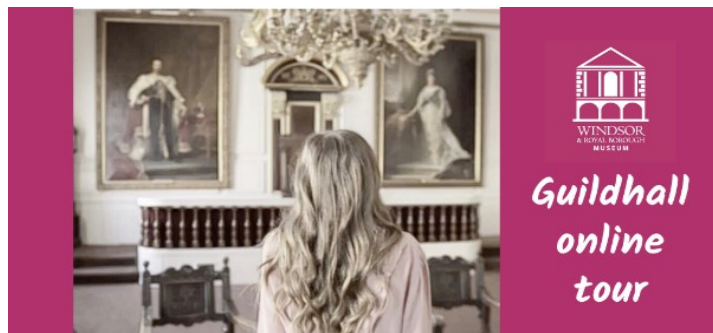
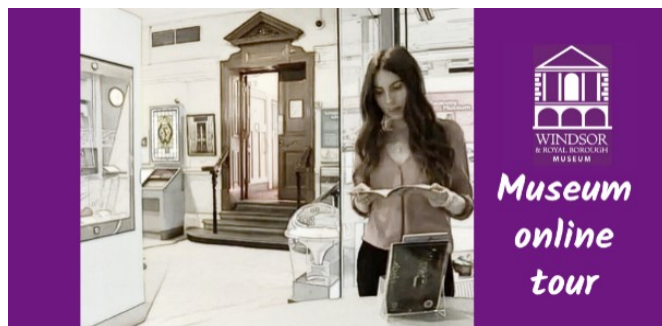
During October we are highlighting objects that make us passionate about working with objects and showing our online visitors how their ordinary is our extraordinary. Look out for a Minute Wonder video from Louisa, a podcast from Becky interviewing the team about their favourite objects and a downloadable activity for the children to encourage them to be a curator.



Windsor & Royal Borough Museum news

October 2020 Online tours

The museum, arts and local studies team continue to work hard on our online offer until the museum can open again. We recently launched our new online tours of the museum and Guildhall as part of Heritage Open Days. They give visitors a glimpse behind the museum doors, highlighting key objects, people and events. The Guildhall tour takes you on a journey through the rooms, sharing some facts about the portraits and furniture. These tours will be available in six different languages soon.



<https://youtu.be/9y0CFH8jPlU>

<https://youtu.be/2OB5uV6Okb8>

80th Anniversary of the Battle of Britain

We put together a programme to mark the 80th anniversary of the Battle of Britain. You can hear Louisa tell us more about Sir Sydney Camm and his legacy; listen to Becky interviewing Bob Ambrose on a podcast and if you're feeling creative, you can make your own Hawker Hurricane by downloading the template. (Thank you Committee members Sue & Chrissie for such a great design.)



<http://windsormuseum.org.uk/podcasts>



<http://windsormuseum.org.uk/explore>

Leslie's Piece:

You pays your money.....

I wonder how many of you remember the overhead cash railway at Daniels? This was a network of wires running from each counter to a central cash office. When a purchase was made the money and bill would be placed in a wooden cup-like receptacle and fastened to an overhead holder. The assistant would then pull a chord and the cup would shot along the wire to the office. There the money was taken and the receipt and any change shot back to the assistant. If I went shopping with mother I would often ask if we could go and watch it before catching the bus back home. When a store in Birmingham no longer needed its apparatus it was carefully dismantled and installed in the Museum of Science & Industry.

A different mechanism was used at Suters which at one time had a branch in St. Leonards Road. This time the receptacle was a hollow wooden ball which was unscrewed, the money placed inside then sent to the upstairs office.

Larger stores had a pneumatic system; money was placed in a small metal tube which was then shot along a pipe by means of compressed air. Jacksons of Reading was still using this system when the store closed not that many years ago.

Leslie Grout

Front cover picture:



Many years ago a friend of mine was due to marry an American and go to live in the States. Just in case she never came back, she asked me for some of my photos of places she remembered. She did not choose this one because of the Castle, but because, as a child, she enjoyed going across the river on the ferry. I also had been on this ferry many times when we went to paddle in the river at the Brocas. I think that it cost one penny for a child and two pence for an adult. (If you remember differently please let me know)

Many years later I had to interview a ninety-year-old at Sawyers Close flats about her time at Holy Trinity School because it had just closed. She talked and talked and I was quite exhausted by the time we finished. I was able to check up on many of the things she told me from the school's log book. Everything she told me checked out. Her surname was Windsor and she told me that her father was the man who operated the ferry. Many of the boys who came from Eton College used the ferry and they called him Mr, Windsor, so the whole family took the name.

Pamela Marson

Flash

I'm sure most of you are familiar with the wonderful steam fair run by the Carter family from their base at White Waltham. Founded in 1975 by the late John Carter, known to most as 'Flash', it has provided family entertainment ever since.

However, my acquaintance and friendship with Flash began some years beforehand. Since the mid-fifties I have been a fan of Stock Car Racing and always wanted to have a go myself. About 15 years later I met a colleague of my Dad's by the name of Tony Gleave. Tony was a racer until he was injured and now helped this chap John 'Flash' Carter with his racing. I had seen Flash racing on many occasions and was delighted when Tony introduced us. Flash was a BIG guy in both build and character. I was later to discover that he said what he thought and didn't suffer fools gladly but he was always friendly towards me and we got on well, (most of the time!).

His racing was based in a car breakers yard adjacent to White Waltham airfield along with two other drivers. One of them was about to retire and, to my astonishment, Flash suggested that I took over his car. So I got my competition licence and went racing with Flash and the other driver, John Astley. Flash and I had 'old school' cars. Basically Ford 'Y' types with wings and glass removed and a lot of armour. John, on the other hand, had a great looking low-slung special with a highly tuned engine and was one of the precursors of the current style. We acquired an old Fordson car transporter on which we could get one car over the cab and the other two on the back. We raced at most of the local tracks every week and were kept busy juggling work and racing.

One day we heard that racing was starting at the New Cross stadium in London and to encourage a good field for the opening they were offering £20 appearance money each. Normally it was £2 if you were lucky! It was a bit of a long haul but we decided to go, which meant a rush from work to get there on time. We loaded the cars quickly and unusually Flash's car ended up over the cab. Normally John's special went there as it was the lowest. Having arrived at the stadium we had to drive through a tunnel under the track to reach the pits in the centre. As we drove along the tunnel we noticed that the lights along it's roof were going out. Arriving at the pits we were greeted by an irate official who informed us that we had smashed every light in the tunnel! Flash's car had hit every one and we hadn't heard anything over the roar of the old Fordson. It took so long to remove all the glass from the car that we missed the first race and had to forfeit our appearance money to pay for the damage.

By now racing was becoming more and more expensive and professional, and the yard was under closure so flash and I decided to quit.

What happened next?

You will have to wait for the next Newsletter to find out.

Volunteering with us

We continue to work with our volunteers in a virtual way and a small group of volunteers are currently working on a contemporary collecting project, particularly relating to Covid-19. There are also opportunities to research our collection remotely, so if you would like to get involved please email museum@rbwm.gov.uk.



Dates to Remember

There may be a Farmers Market in Peascod Street on Saturday 9th December. If there is, the Windsor Local History Group hope to have a stall and they will be selling our Christmas Cards. Those available are 'Corgies' and 'The Guildhall'

Friends meetings are usually held at the Community Room in Dedworth Library, Smiths Lane, Dedworth at 7.30 pm on selected Thursday evenings. The Library is in the grounds of the Dedworth Schools and there is ample free parking for those attending.

Postponed:

Thursday 19th November 2020
Tracing Family Trees
Talk by Brigitte Mitchell

At the mercy of the Corona Virus:

Thursday 8th April 2021
Camel Trekking in Northern Kenya
Talk by Richard Snailham

Thursday 17th June 2021
AGM

16th September 2021
The History of Cumberland Lodge
Talk by Darren Bowyer

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