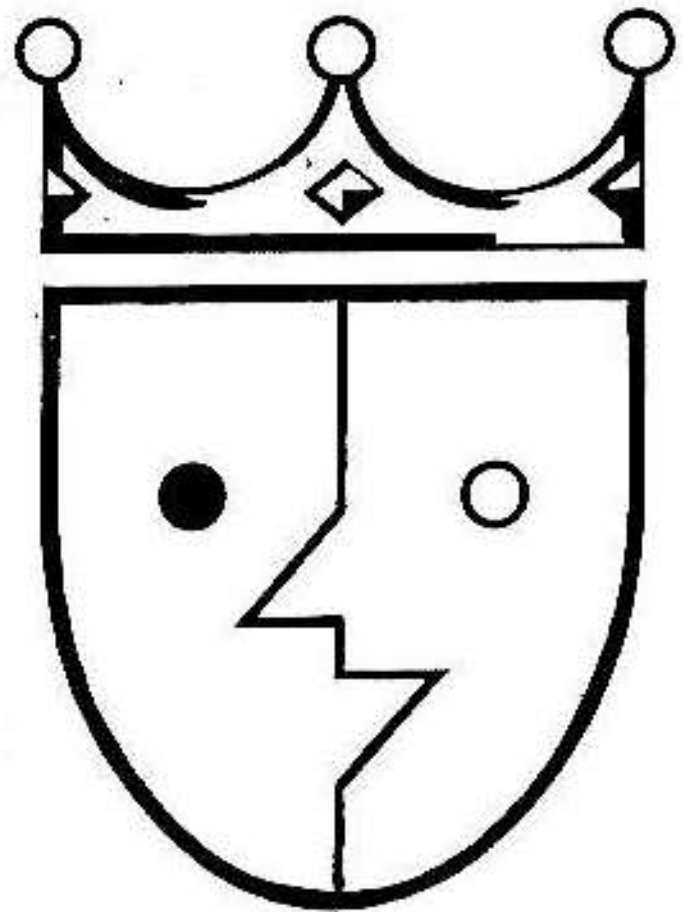


FRIENDS OF GUILDFORD MUSEUM
NEWSLETTER

January 1997

issue 3



From the Editor

Welcome to the first of our Newsletters for 1997. Details of outings and events are enclosed in a separate sheet but a brief mention of them is included on page 8 for completeness. An interesting series of lectures at Shalford organised by the Surrey Archaeological Society are mentioned on page 6 and advance notice of two future events are given on the back page.

I have thoroughly enjoyed the 'Pl of History' displays from excavations in Tunsgate. The display is changed about every two months and will be continuing throughout the year. If you are not a regular visitor to these displays then do try and pop into the Museum next time you are in town. The exhibit is held in the cabinet at the foot of the stairs leading to the needlework and toys.

I would also like to draw your attention to the exhibitions to be held at Salter's mentioned on page 11. Salter's is only two minutes from the Museum. If you are not quite certain where it is, then go along Quarry Street towards the Museum and turn left into Castle Street at the "King's Head" and Salter's is about 50 yards up on the left. It has a green door with the number 13 1/2

COMMITTEE

Chairman
Vice-Chairman
Treasurer
Secretary
Membership Secretary
Editor

Elizabeth Cobbett
Bill Bellerby
Tim Bryers
Marjorie Williams
Derek Somner
Eric Morgan
Matthew Alexander
Heather Anderson
Maureen Newman
Brian Alexander-O'Neill
Jennifer Powell

Message from our Chairman

Dear Friends:-

A New Year is upon us once more and with this thought in mind I know you would like to join me in showing our appreciation to Marjorie Williams in particular, for all the hard work she does for us, far beyond the call of duty. She and all the Committee have worked so hard to make sure that we have had and will continue to have for the foreseeable future a very exciting and varied Programme of Events for us to pursue, they have been well supported and we hope the future programme will continue in this vein.

We are still building up on Membership and look forward to not only seeing all our old friends but new ones too in the New Year to come.

My very best wishes for the New Year to the Committee and all the friends - neither of which could do without the other.

Sincerely

Elizabeth Cobbett.

A Chat from our Secretary

Our one hundred and sixty members have given invaluable support to the Guildford Museum. Apart from the financial help, details of which are given in the treasurer's report, they have enabled the splendid mediaeval Undercroft to be open to the public on three afternoons a week from the April to the end of September. They have also provided stewards for the Museum's special exhibitions.

A very varied programme of activities was arranged for them by the committee :- in June, Ann Watson gave a very interesting guided tour of the ancient Ockham Church and this was followed by a superb tea party with lashings of Welsh cakes - given by Councillor Jennifer Powell in her lovely garden.

The Museum Curator, Matthew Alexander, arranged two most enjoyable events; in July a preview of his exhibition "Georgian Guildford" and in August a Victorian Croquet Party. (Needless to say he was dressed in the appropriate period for both of these.) In September, Ron Shettle gave a talk at the Guildhall "The Borough Goes to Blazes", a most masterly and entertaining history of fire fighting in Guildford.

In October, members enjoyed a hilarious "Quiz/Cheese and Wine Evening". The winning team members were each awarded a tube of "Smarties" and everyone else presented with a "Jelly Baby".

Our thanks are due to all those who have helped to make these events enjoyable and especially to thank Derek Somner for his help in not only posters and tickets but also update to membership registers.

"The Friends of the Guildford Museum Association" is indeed fortunate in having two such distinguished and supportive leaders in their Chairman and Vice-Chairman Honorary Aldermen, Elizabeth Cobbett and Bill Bellerby.

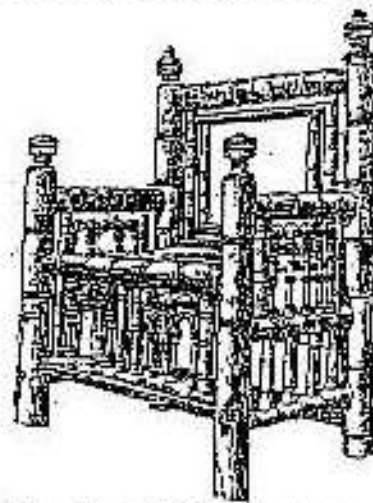
Marjorie Williams.

Curator's Corner

THE HEREFORD CHAIR

In the choir of Hereford Cathedral stands an ancient wooden chair. Apart from the board that forms the seat, it is made entirely of turned lengths of oak, now almost black with age. It was no doubt made on a pole-lathe in a woodland clearing, for the finish is rather rough. Nevertheless the design is intricate and has been carried out with great skill. Its significance, though, lies in the Romanesque arcading along the front. If this was the contemporary style when it was made, then we would expect a date before the last quarter of the 12th century. If this is so, then this chair is the oldest piece of wooden furniture in England.

There is a tradition at Hereford that the chair was used by King Stephen (1135 - 1154) when he visited the cathedral. Such local traditions are rarely reliable, in my experience, but there would have to be some special reason why an otherwise undistinguished chair should be preserved in a cathedral church. Such turned chairs are well documented from the later Middle Ages and well into post-mediaeval times - in fact, the style was revived and elaborated in the last century in Wales for the bardic chairs of the *Eisteddfodau*. Some



scholars have accordingly argued a later date for the Hereford chair, but I cannot see that the carefully-carved Romanesque arcade would have been a normal style after c.1175.

I much like the replica of this chair as part of the furnishing of the undercroft - with an eye to the possibility of moving it to the Castle keep at some future time. The chair would complement the copy of the Stoke d'Abernon chest we already have. I am very grateful to the Friends for the opportunity to acquire this replica: something we couldn't otherwise afford.

Matthew Alexander Curator, Guildford Museum.

SURREY ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY LECTURE SERIES

At Shalford Village Hall on the following Tuesday Evenings.

8th April 1997	Windmills and Watermills	Kenneth Gravett
15th April 1997	Smaller Houses and Dwellings	George Howard
22nd April 1997	Greater Houses	Nigel Barker
29th April 1997	Churches in the Landscape	Richard Morris
6th May 1997	Farms and their Buildings	Annabelle Hughes
13th May 1997	Village Industries	Peter Tarplee

TICKETS Further information from Marjorie Williams ☎ 01483- 569794
£3 a lecture
£15 for all six lectures

Money Matters

The Friends' finances are in a healthy position. We have paid John Brearley for the materials he is using to carve the Hereford Chair and have promised to pay him the remainder due when the work is completed. We hope that Matthew will allow us to attach a plaque to the chair when it arrives to indicate that it has been provided with the help of the Friends.

Apart from membership subscriptions our main source of income has come from the Guided Walks which are so much enjoyed by visitors to Guildford and by the various bodies which come to learn something of our history. Membership is increasing steadily and at the time of writing, totals 161. Let us hope that by the time of the AGM in May, we will have brought the number up to 200.

The British Association of Friends of Museums, known to its friends as BAFM, recommended that we should insure ourselves against all sorts of unlikely possibilities and this we have done. Your Committee felt that this was an essential precaution in these litigious times.

Lastly, I should like to thank Marjorie Williams for the wonderful example she has set to us all. We are hoping that at least some of the load will be lifted from her shoulders during the next year.

Tom Bryers Hon. Treasurer.

To become a member of the Friends of Guildford Museum, please send a cheque with the appropriate subscription to Mr T.C. Bryers, Friends of Guildford Museum, 2 Southbury, Lawn Road, Guildford, GU2 5DD.

Subscription rates for 1996/7 Individual £5: Family £10: Under 18's £2:
Corporate £25: Individual Life £100:

Please make cheques payable to **FRIENDS OF GUILDFORD MUSEUM**

Surrey Young Archaeologists Club

Sun 26th January 2-15
- VISIT
to HORSLEY TOWERS
Sold Out

Mon 24th February
OPEN EVENING at
GUILDFORD MUSEUM
Just turn up - Free
7.30pm

Sat 19th April 1997
FUND RAISING COFFEE
& BRING and BUY SALE
at the Undercroft
10.30 to 12.30

Wed 7th May 1997
Coach trip to
Southwark Cathedral and
the Globe Theatre £12
includes coach fare and guided
tour of both sites

2.30pm, 1st June 1997
TOUR of CHILWORTH
GUNPOWDER WORKS
by Prof & Mrs Crocker
Tickets £1 in advance

Bookings for this
must be received by
JANUARY 31st.

Evening private view of TUDOR
Exhibition
4th July 1997

Annual General Meeting
8pm, May 29th 1997
at the Guildhall

Further details from Hon. Sec. Marjorie Williams 20, Shalford Road,
Guildford, GU4 8BL

☎ 01483-569794 (Evenings)

Cheques payable to "The Friends of Guildford Museum"

The Autumn programme of the club began in September with "Hunting Magic". This was a study of Prehistoric art and the possible uses of hunting masks. The Juniors made a copy of the antler mask from Star Carr, and then one of their own design, for which prizes were awarded. The Seniors also looked at the art of Prehistory, but also had a practical session on classifying flints, using material from the Museum's collections.

In October, there was a demonstration of natural dyeing with Heather and Hillary. The YACs had an opportunity to tie dye material, learned about the possibilities of nettle, madder, snow berries, and indigo as dyes, and their effect on different materials, natural and man made.

In November Steve Dyer and Julie Wilman led the sessions on the Cocks Farm excavation. This was a useful exercise in explaining what happens to the excavated materials and what are the latest ideas about the site. The YACs were also reminded about their good fortune in being able to be part of such an excavation.

December is usually a light hearted session. This year the YACs made traditional Christmas Crafts. We also hope that some of the Seniors will be able to attend the annual Christmas lecture at the Society of Antiquaries in Burlington House.

Membership remains very healthy, and we are pleased that many new members enjoy it enough to recommend it to their friends.

Our Membership Secretary, Kathleen Needham, has regrettably decided to resign. Sue and I have appreciated her ability to make sense of our sometimes cryptic notes, her thoroughness in ensuring that the Club runs smoothly behind the scenes, and her unfailing good humour. We wish her well in her new house and most especially her new garden.

Christine Hardman.

*For further details about the Club contact Sue Roggero or
Christine Hardman at the Museum
Tel No (01483 444752)*

RESEARCH ON GUILDFORD CASTLE KEEP

Some of the Friends already know that I have, perhaps in a rather foolhardy way, embarked on studying part-time for a Ph.D. on the history of Guildford Castle. I am registered at the University of Reading, where I undertook an M.A. in Mediaeval Studies, also part-time. As my raw material, i.e. the castle, is here I do not need to go to Reading very often and fortunately the research fits in well with my other work.

At present I am concentrating on the keep. Surprisingly little has been done on the keep (or any part of the castle) so I am starting at a very basic level by studying the fabric carefully. We do not even know when the keep was built, though it must have been some time in the 12th century. It is important to establish the date if possible so that I can link it in to other events in national and local history, and with other buildings both locally and more generally. Unfortunately, the keep is very plain, with little architectural detail that could date it closely. The only exception to this is an L-shaped room in the thickness of the wall, at the south-west corner of the first floor. At present it is not accessible to the public but can be viewed over an iron railing. The best preserved part is here, but the more important part was round the corner originally. This would have been the chapel of the keep; perhaps the only chapel at first, though by the 13th century there were two others. The outer wall of the chapel, and the ante-chapel at right angles to it, was decorated with blind arcading. This was always completely gone in the chapel, having been destroyed by a Tudor style window, but enough survives to show that it did run along this south wall.

The inner wall of both parts of the wall has also been much disturbed and it is not possible at present to say whether there was any arcading on this face. The main surviving stretch is the west wall of the ante-chapel. Here were four arcades, with five whole or partial capitals to the dividing columns, each with a different design. It is these designs which are likely to be the only method of dating the keep closely. I am looking for parallels, without success so far, and have enlisted the help of the country's top expert on Romanesque sculpture. I am eagerly awaiting his opinion as I hope that it will narrow down the date of the keep. The general style of the keep could be anywhere between c.1120 - 1180, but we need a much more precise date and I hope that I will find it before long.

Mary Alexander

EXHIBITIONS AT SALTER'S

RICHES FROM THE EARTH

MAN and the GEOLOGY of SURREY

14th to 22nd March 1997

Tudor Exhibition

28th June to 12th July 1997

Border Ware

One of our tasks for 1997 is to catalogue over one hundred boxes of pottery in preparation for our summer exhibition - 'The Tudor Kitchen'. The pottery comes from excavations undertaken by former Guildford Museum curator Felix Holling, at Farnborough Hill on the Surrey/Hants border and provides evidence for a flourishing pottery industry spanning several hundred years from the late mediaeval to post-mediaeval times.

It was the clay beds of the Surrey/Hants borders which encouraged potters to the area; the pockets of coarse clay could be dug without payment if the potter was a Freeholder of Cove and clay for finer work was available from the claypit at Farnham Park. On old maps of the area Claycart Road shows the route taken when transporting the clay from Farnham to the site at Farnborough. The other essential raw materials for producing pottery was also readily available - turf for firing the kiln was taken from Cove Common and Frimley, and timber could also be found locally. The pottery, known as Border ware was well-made with a choice of either a red or white clay body. It was decorated in green, yellow or brown glaze and came in a range of forms including porringers, skillets, drinking mugs, platters, flanged bowls, pipkins and money boxes and whistles. The famous fine white, green-glazed 'Tudor Green' was made at Farnborough.

During the 17th century the Border ware industry was one of the principle suppliers of good quality household pottery to London and south-east England, and of considerable importance to the economy of the region. Pottery from Farnborough Hill would have been used in the Kitchens of Windsor, Basing House and Hampton Court Palace.

Until the early 18th century the Surrey/Hants border potteries probably produced around 60% of London's household pottery but the rise of the Staffordshire potteries and the taste for European tin-glazed wares forced this important local industry into decline. Examples of Border Ware can be seen in the Museum's archaeology gallery, but for a more comprehensive display don't forget to visit Sater's later in the year.

Sue Rogers

JANE AUSTEN

I am sure some of you are Jane Austen fans and no doubt enjoyed *Pride and Prejudice*, and *Persuasion* on television or may even have seen *Sense and Sensibility* or *Emma* at the Pictures. What you may not have realised is that Jane Austen often travelled through Guildford and knew the area well. Jane's father had a wealthy cousin Thomas Knight who lived at Godmersham in Kent. Thomas' son virtually adopted Jane's brother Edward and made him heir to the Knight fortunes on condition that Edward changed his surname to Knight. Edward not surprisingly did so in 1812 and hence secured himself a comfortable life style but nevertheless did not forget his family. So Godmersham was one of the places that Jane knew and the route to it from her home at Chawton near Alton took her through Guildford. Jane was born at Steventon near Basingstoke, the seventh of eight children. At the age of twenty five the family moved to Bath. When her father died in 1805 they moved to Southampton and then to Chawton in 1809 where Edward provided a house for them. Her novels took her often to London on business and she stayed there at her brother Henry's house in Sloane Street. Her godfather was Mr Cooke the vicar of Great Bookham. Mr Cooke had married a cousin of Jane's Mother. All these places were reached through Guildford. Although this was the hey day of coaching, with a coach passing through the town every half hour Jane almost certainly travelled in a private coach probably supplied by her brother Henry who was a Banker.

Jane was a prolific letter writer and it from her letters that we learn of her travels. She wrote many letters to her sister Cassandra, chatty letters much in the style that we today

converse over the telephone. On the nineteenth of May 1813 Miss Austen sets out from Chawton at about six thirty in the morning to travel to London. The following day she writes a letter to her sister Cassandra. She had travelled the previous day in a curricule which is a two wheeled carriage with probably two horses abreast pulling. It starts in a charming way with the typical banter that one might expect between sisters. This is what she says:-

My dear Cassandra,

Before I say anything else, I claim a paper full of Halfpence on the Drawingroom Mantlepiece. I put them there myself and forgot to bring them with me.- I cannot say that I have yet been in any distress for money, but I chuse to have my due as well as the Devil.-How lucky we were in our weather yesterday! This wet morning makes one more sensible of it, we had no rain of any consequence. The head of the curricule was put up three or four times, but our share of the showers was very trifling, though they seemed to be heavy all round us, when we were on the Hogs-back, and I fancied it might then be raining so hard at Chawton as to make you feel for us so much more than we deserved. Three and a quarter hours took us to Guildford, where we stayed barely two hours, and had only just time enough for all we had to do there; that is, eating a long comfortable breakfast, watching the carriages, paying Mr Herington, and taking a little stroll afterwards. From some views which that stroll gave us, I think most highly of the situation of Guildford. We wanted all our brothers and sisters to be standing with us in the bowling green, and looking towards Horsham...I was very lucky in my gloves, got them at the first shop I went to, though I went into it rather because it was near than

because it looked at all like a glove shop and gave only four Shillings for them;-upon hearing which, everybody at Chawton will be hoping and predicting that they cannot be good for anything, and their worth certainly remains to be proved but I think they look very well.-We left Guildford at twenty minutes before twelve (I hope somebody cares for these minutiae), and were at Esher in about two hours more. I was very much pleased with

the country in general. Between Guildford and Ripley I thought it particularly pretty, also about Painshill, and everywhere else; and from a Mr Spicer's grounds at Esher which we walked into before our dinner, the views were beautiful. I cannot say what we did not see, but I should think that there could not be a wood, or a meadow, or palace, or a remarkable spot in England that was not spread out before us on one side or the other. Claremont is going to be sold: a Mr Ellis has it now. It is a house that seems never to have prospered.

At three we were dining upon veal cutlets and cold ham, all very good, and after dinner we walked forward to be overtaken at the coachman's time, and before he did overtake us we were very near Kington.-I fancy it was about half past six when we reached this house - a twelve hours' business and the horses did not appear more than reasonably tired. I was very tired too, and very glad to get to bed early, but am quite well today. Upon the whole it was an excellent journey and very thoroughly enjoyed by me; the weather was delightful the greatest part of the day. Henry found it too warm, and talked of it being close sometimes, but to my capacity it was perfection. I never saw the country from the Hogs-back so advantageously...

I am very snug with the front drawing -room all to myself, and would not say "Thank you" for any companion but you. The quietness of it does me good.- Henry and I are disposed to wonder that the Guildford road should not be oftener preferred to the Bagshott, it is not longer, has much more beauty and not more hills.- If I were Charles, I should chuse it; and having him in our thoughts we made enquiries at Esher as to their posting distances.. - From Guildford to Esher 14 miles, from Esher to Hyde Park corner 16 - which makes it exactly the same as from Bagshott to H.P. corner, changing at Bedfont, 49 miles altogether, each way.-

(I am grateful to Mr John Burgess for drawing my attention to this letter - Ed.)

Make a note in your Diary

- 31st August 1997 Historical and Archaeological Tour of River Wey
from Guildford to Godalming - led by Steve Dyer
- 16th September 1997 Talk on Guildford's Police Force
by Richard Ford
- 10th October 1997 Quiz Evening