

FRIENDS OF GUILDFORD MUSEUM

# NEWSLETTER

June 2005



Issue 20

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★**10th Anniversary**★  
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★**of the Friends**★  
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## ***From the Editor***

### **10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**

We look forward to seeing you all at our celebrations which will be held on Saturday July 16<sup>th</sup> starting at 6pm. In the Castle Keep or Great Tower as we now call it. If you have not visited the keep recently now that it has a roof and floors then this is a great opportunity to do so. See you there.

It was back in 1994 that Matthew Alexander gathered us together for the purpose of forming a Friends of the Museum. The Town Guides threw their full support behind the project and kindly offered to give any donations they received for walks, to the Friends. This ensured that the Friends started off on a firm footing. We obtained a sample constitution form the British Association of Friends of Museums and came to our first public meeting the following year. Our Chairman was Councillor Elizabeth Cobbett, Vice Chairman Honorary Freeman Alderman Bill Bellerby, Treasurer Tim Bryers, Secretary Marjorie Williams, with committee members, Councillor Jennifer Powell, Pat Cousins, Brian Alexander – O'Neil and myself, Eric Morgan. Heather Anderson (who became our Chairman in 1998), Maureen Newman and Derek Somner (Secretary 1998/9) joined the committee in 1996. Peter Hattersley (Chairman from 2002) in 1997, Richard Sinker (Secretary from 1998) and Sheila Stirling in 1997. Jonathan Jessup (2001) and John Wilkins (2002). Only Bill Bellerby, Brian Alexander –O'Neil, Elizabeth Cobbett and Sheila Stirling have for various reasons left the committee.

Our aim is to support and improve our Museum, not only for the next ten years, but for future generations. If you would care to help us by joining the committee then please telephone our secretary on 01483 502207.

### **60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the End of WWII**

Our wartime cover picture shows that the Guildhall clock has been removed for safety and on this occasion replaced by an advertisement for a National Savings week entitled "Salute the Soldier Week" 10<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> June 1944.

On page 5 Maureen Wells tells us about a happy wartime trip around the Guildford country side.

An article on the Home Front Exhibition by Matthew appears on page 16

# Secretary's Letter

In this our tenth celebration year, renewal of subscriptions is again well under way for the next twelve months. We had, on March 31, 256 members, just a shade fewer than at the same time last year. So far in mid May, there have been 185 renewals; an encouraging situation; the first reminder has just been sent out to some 50 members, which I very much hope will prompt them to renew their membership. The Friends have an enviable record in renewal rate which has increased from 85% to 92% since we started keeping such records seven years ago. The less good news, that I have alluded to earlier, is that during last year there were only 12 new members which is only about half the previous lowest annual intake. On the other hand, there has been a good start to the current year as 5 new members have joined since March 31. In my letter in last December's issue, I suggested that *each current member tries to recruit a new member during 2005*. There has been some response to this proposal but I do ask that each of you tries to persuade a new member to join; we would like to see membership hit the 300 mark. As you will, no doubt, be reading elsewhere in this newsletter, the next few years will be an exciting time for the museum. We all hope that the new development plans will result in an upgraded museum befitting our historically important town. Therefore particularly during this time, the Friends need all the support they can muster, so do please help us in the recruitment of new members.

As you will have been aware, the AGM was for the second time held in the Brewhouse on a Saturday afternoon, May 21. In planning the meeting, your committee felt that last year's experiment had not only been successful but also economical, as there had been no rental to pay! We hope that all of you, who managed to attend, enjoyed the talk by Rob Poulton on the Friary Excavations, the display of photographs and also the selection of items that have been purchased with the help of funds generated by the Friends. We were very pleased that the Mayor, Tamsy Baker, was able to be present.

The new season of outings started in March with a visit to Wootton House, attended by no less than 75 members, the highest number on record for the Friends! This was followed by a visit to Automotive

Technik of Guildford where the world renowned Pinzgauer all terrain vehicle is assembled. A British management buyout of the Austrian manufacturer some years ago has led to a very successful engineering venture in the heart of Guildford where up to ten of these remarkable vehicles are constructed every week. The 35 members who were present were treated to an amusing and interesting talk by the MD, David Findlay, followed by a visit over the factory and then a buffet lunch. We all came away heartened by what we had seen and heard. Sadly, it became necessary in mid May to cancel the Vintage Bus Tour, (in a Safeguard 1956 AEC Reliance if you are an aficionado), as there were insufficient members, who had booked, to make the event viable. It was only the fourth time in ten years that an event had to be cancelled. In June there will be a guided walk in Wonersh and a visit to Sixpenny Handley in Dorset; later in the summer there are more interesting outings for you to enjoy, so please book if you have not already done so.

At the beginning of February there was an open evening at the museum at which members heard from Jim Miles, Director of Leisure for GBC, about the encouraging current status of the planned development of the museum. We were pleased also to welcome the new regional coordinator, Jean Knight, of the Association of Friends of Museums. The regular annual Skittles Lunch, organised by Heather Anderson, took place a couple of weeks later, attended by the group of enthusiastic regulars.

You have all received the flyer that advertises the 10 year celebration of the Friends that is being held in the restored Great Tower of Guildford Castle on Saturday, July 16, between 6 and 8 pm. This promises to be a special social event and your committee very much hopes that a great number of members will attend. Also you may like to know that membership of the Friends allows free entry to the Great Tower on presentation of your membership card; those of you that have not seen the restored inside, take the opportunity soon!

Finally, on behalf of the committee, I would again like to thank you all for your support and we look forward to seeing as many of you as possible over the coming months on the events and outings that have been organised for our collective benefit and pleasure.

*Richard Sinker* Hon. Secretary, tel. 01483 502207

## *Entertaining Eric*

Maureen Wells has very kindly allowed me to publish letters from her book "Entertaining Eric". Two have appeared in previous editions of the Newsletter and to commemorate the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of the war I have chosen some more of her letters. They are in her typical cheerful style and I can do no better than quote from the back cover of the book." Like thousands of young women, Maureen Bolster played a rich and varied part in the war effort, first as billeting officer in Surrey (Vokes at Henley Park, Normandy); then as a Wren courier, delivering secret documents nationwide; and finally as a Wren stoker as the Royal Navy geared up for D-Day. But as a trained fashion designer, she never lost her eye for lively, colourful detail - evident in the 300 letters she wrote to her boyfriend Eric Wells, stationed in the Middle East." The book is published by PAN books and available from the Imperial War Museum. If you enjoy the book as much as I did then you are in for a real treat. Maureen lives in Australia and we send her our very best wishes and hope she enjoys our Newsletter. These two letters were written when Maureen was billeting officer for Vokes and she was given the use of a small motor bike on which to travel. Another item by Maureen appears on page 14

### **3<sup>rd</sup> March 1942**

Yesterday was a glorious sunny springlike day here. Up at 6, I somehow couldn't get dressed quick enough and had to run for the bus, hair flying, case in one hand, toast and marmalade in the other. Had a lot of people to see at my office over one thing or another. At about 11.30 I put on my various scarves, gloves etc and sallied forth on Rudolph. One of the men had cleaned him up for me and he was shining in his red paint with gold and black lettering.

Rudolf and I were both in good moods. He ran perfectly and I sang at the top of my voice as I flew past trees and woods and fields and through villages to Guildford. Arriving there, I visited our other branch and parking the bike, set off for the Ministry of Labour, where I did my



business and chatted a bit with my friends. Then off down the High Street to the Rural District Council offices.

It was Mummy's birthday so bought her some bath salts, having also given her a library subscription for a year. Sent an air letter to you from the main post office, went to another place on business, then set off again on Rudolph. It really was lovely weather. Rode about seven miles looking for a certain empty house, then off to see a complaining landlady, going by a very pretty route. I must learn some more songs as Rudolph must be getting sick of my repertoire!

When I got back I at once applied to the Rural District Council for a requisitioning order to be brought against the house I'd found. Then I went to our weekly Ensa concert. It was a good one this week. A man who sang "Over the Rainbow" rather well and played the saxophone, a couple of good tap dancers and a pianist. An amusing sketch was done. I've been over to Ripley today - fourteen miles there, fourteen back. It's been another beautiful day and I sang lustily all the way. Rudolph appeared to be a bit off colour - squeaked and groaned rather and at intervals shot forward in a most alarming manner. I haven't the faintest idea how he works. If he breaks down I'm helpless!

### **16<sup>th</sup> September 1942**

I had a terrific day yesterday. I arose at 7.15 dressed in a pretty cotton frock and long coat and set off for Guildford by the 8.40 bus. Had a little time to fill in before I was due for my medical at 9.15. Met one or two friends *en route* for work and hobnobbed with them. Very punctually I wandered into the big building by Trinity Church. I sat on a row of chairs with some other girls all trying for the Wrens. They were a queer lot - a VAD from Aldershot, a miss who had been brought up in Singapore, a girl from a leather factory, a professional tailoress, one or two who looked like servants and a few others.

After a short wait I had to go into another room and be interviewed by a welfare officer. Had I ever had TB? Mental disorders? Nerve trouble? Rheumatic fever? Had my parents ever had any of these? Were there any of these in the family? What illnesses had my brother had? What did my father die of? Had any of us ever been in an asylum? Was I receiving any compensation for injuries? And a whole lot of similar enquiries. When we'd all been interviewed we were marshalled upstairs to a great hall. We were each given a small cubical and told to undress entirely keeping only our topcoats on. Then we were all sat on a row of chairs at the back of the hall. They started with me (B for Bolster) and I was sent in to see the woman doctor. She was about fifty something and very horsey. She went

all over my back and front with a stethoscope and I deep-breathed interminably. I had to do heaven knows how many exercises—*toe touching, leg kicking, arm waving, stretching and bending.* Then she made me lie flat on the bed while she pummelled my tummy.

"Does that hurt?" she asked.

"No" said I bravely

"Well it should!" she snapped.

She got all excited about the scar on my knee (souvenir of a fall from a cliff in Ireland when I was six) and made me do all sorts of things to prove that the joint wasn't affected.

By the time she had finished with me I was exhausted.

Then I was pulled into another cubicle to be weighed and measured. I was 9 stone 11 lb. Have gone up a bit.

I was just going back to my chair when I was sent into another cubicle for something unexpected and unmentionable. At least I didn't have to drink nearly a jug of water as one girl did!

At last I was ushered into the August Presence. She was as ugly as can be but so nice. She really couldn't have been kinder. She began by saying, "I see you want to be a dispatch rider."

"Yes," I said.

"My dear, isn't that rather a waste with your domestic economy and welfare experience?"

I explained it was that I was trying to get away from!

She asked me what books I read and all sorts of questions. I was with her about

twenty min-

utes. Then I

escaped and

fled down the

High Street as

fast as my

legs could

carry me.

I'm hoping to

be called up

in a couple of

weeks and

may have to

go at a mo-

ments notice.



*Old beige top coat  
got for Tennis parties  
began to look  
shabby.  
Last yr, cut off  
the bottom, shortened  
sleeves, took off  
collar & dyed  
a beautiful shade  
of blue.*



**MUSEUM UPDATE**  
**BY**  
**MIKE BECKWITH**  
**(MUSEUM & GALLERIES MANAGER)**

Following the production of a report by Consultants on the best approach to improve the facilities and service provided by Guildford Museum, on the 24 February an item was taken to the Council's Executive Committee to agree the most appropriate way forward.

At the meeting the Executive agreed the following;

1. The option to develop new and improved facilities on the existing Museum site to be pursued by the Officers.
2. That discussions continue with the Heritage Lottery Fund with the intention of making a future grant aid bid for up to £2m.
3. The Trust option for the running of the Museum be not pursued for the present.
4. A new staffing structure for the Museum be introduced which will help to improve the range of services provided to the public and specialists interested in the local history of Guildford and Surrey.
5. Progress the possibility of physically linking the Museum with the Castle Grounds.
6. Continue discussions regarding the possibility of using part of The Spike for Museum use.
7. Undertake the necessary structural repair works on the existing buildings.



These actions will be progressed and introduced as quickly as practically possible. It is likely however that the earliest the new development will be completed, given a successful grant application, is in 5-7 years.

This agreement to progress the proposals is a significant step by the Executive and was extremely well received by all those involved with the Museum.

Cllr. Jen Powell (Lead Member, People & Partnership) said after the meeting " A tremendous amount of hard work has taken us to this point. The enthusiasm to move forward with the project has delighted and excited all those involved with the future of the Museum".

## **Urgent**

Can you spare 2½ hours or perhaps even less to help steward the museums HOME FRONT GUILDFORD exhibition when it is held at Salters between 1<sup>st</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> August?

Exhibitions are always great fun and you meet such interesting people. If you have not tried it before, give it a whirl.

Mary Witton at the museum would love to hear from you. 01483 444750

## **NEW MEMBERS**

We are delighted to welcome the following new members to our Association and look forward to meeting them at the functions.

Mrs Elsie Crawford	Miss Joan McGuire	Mr Felix Holling
Ms Janet Johnston	Mrs Joanna Keeling	Mrs N E Leach
Ms Frances Leach	Mrs Margaret Milner	Mr Norman Roberts
Mr Peter Tarplee	Cllr Keith and Mrs Lucy Taylor	

## **Guildford Museum Pastfinders Club**

*Exciting plans are in place to launch a new Guildford Museum club for young people aged 8-16. The new club will be known as the Pastfinders Club and will be run by the Museum's Deputy Curator & Administrator, Sue Roggero, and Margaret Jackson who is a qualified teacher currently employed in the Museum's Victorian Schoolroom.*

*On 31<sup>st</sup> March, Sue and Margaret joined in a lively meeting with members of the Young Archaeologists' Club, where it was agreed that the new Pastfinders Club will operate on similar lines to the YAC but with a broader remit which will include sessions on archaeology, history and world cultures. On the whole, the younger children were happy with the existing YAC session format but wanted a creative element to the sessions, whereas the older members wanted a more serious, academic approach! In an attempt to accommodate everyone's wishes we have agreed the following session format for each group.*

*The junior group of 8-12 year olds will meet once a month for a two hour session which will include an introductory talk, a handling session using museum objects followed by a practical activity. Full day trips to museums and other places of interest will also be included in the annual programme.*

*In an attempt to meet requests from older members, the arrangements for the senior group will be slightly different. Whilst senior members will be more than welcome to attend junior sessions and trips where these are felt to be appropriate, they will meet three times a year for what may be described as more academic activities. Such activities might include archaeological / historical research, archaeological fieldwork and finds processing, behind-the-scenes visits to the Museum of London or the British Museum and work placements at Guildford Museum and / or the Museum of London.*

*We all agreed that the children should be represented at any meetings where Pastfinders issues are to be discussed. The children will agree amongst themselves who might fulfill this role, and elect a willing volunteer on to the Pastfinders Committee.*

*Margaret will produce a Pastfinders Newsletter three times a year, keeping members up to date with current events and information on things to do and places to visit. Members who submit an article, which is subsequently published in the newsletter, will receive a £5 book token- although I hear some members have a good money-making system, selling their book tokens to parents! The children will also participate in the formulation of the annual club programme, which will be published at the beginning of each year, enabling them to plan their busy lives well in advance!*

*The new club will be launched on 11<sup>th</sup> June and a provisional programme for June 2005 until March 2006 is in place. The programme includes a session on period food from the Neolithic, Roman, Tudor and Victorian periods and trips to Stonehenge and the Royal Armouries. In October a team of educationalists from Mexicolore will bring the Aztecs to life through music, dance and object handling workshops. We are also keeping our fingers crossed that older members will be able to participate in an HLFdig with Sutton Youth and Heritage Service during the holidays.*

*Margaret and I are looking forward to getting the club off to a good start. We have been hugely encouraged by the positive response from our existing YAC members who clearly want the Museum to continue to provide a club for young people. We both look forward to renewing friendships and making new ones.*

## *The Museum's Victorian Playroom*

The Victorian Schoolroom, offering children between the ages of 7 and 11 an authentic experience of school life in Victorian times, is very successful, operating three days a week during term time. It was decided that appropriate provision should be made for infant pupils aged 5 and 7 and so the Victorian Playroom was started last year. The activities provided closely match the demands of the History curriculum for Key Stage 1.

Children are met by the nurserymaid and led to the Playroom in Salters where they are introduced to their governess. They are helped to step back in time by being costumed in either a pinafore or waistcoat and join in songs, rhymes and games from the Victorian era.

Presented with an assortment of toys from Victorian times, the 1950s and the present day, they sort them according to period, discovering that chipped and well worn does not necessarily mean old, just loved and played with! They also sort Victorian toys by material, feeling the delicacy of a china doll and noting the absence of plastic.

The children are able to experience the environment of the Schoolroom when in groups they follow instructions from the nurserymaid to make individual feathered hats for playing as soldiers with hobby horses.

Time is allowed for free play to enjoy the variety of Victorian toys available, including Noah's Ark, marble alleys, tumbling clowns, puppets and a zetrope.

Drawing on their experience of the toys, the children are helped to make a temporary 'museum display', learning the various information that might be provided, for example, date, material, usage.

Children are encouraged to bring an authentic Victorian lunch, which, weather permitting, is eaten in the Castle Grounds. This time provides an opportunity for playing with outdoor toys such as hoops, skittles and skipping ropes.

It is suggested that school groups complete their outing with a visit to the Toy Galleries in the Museum and many are introduced for the first time to the Museum's delights. Some children have even brought their families back for more!

Anne Teideman

Schoolroom Manager

***The Victorian Schoolroom was purchased by the Friends in 2001***

# 8 Quarry Street

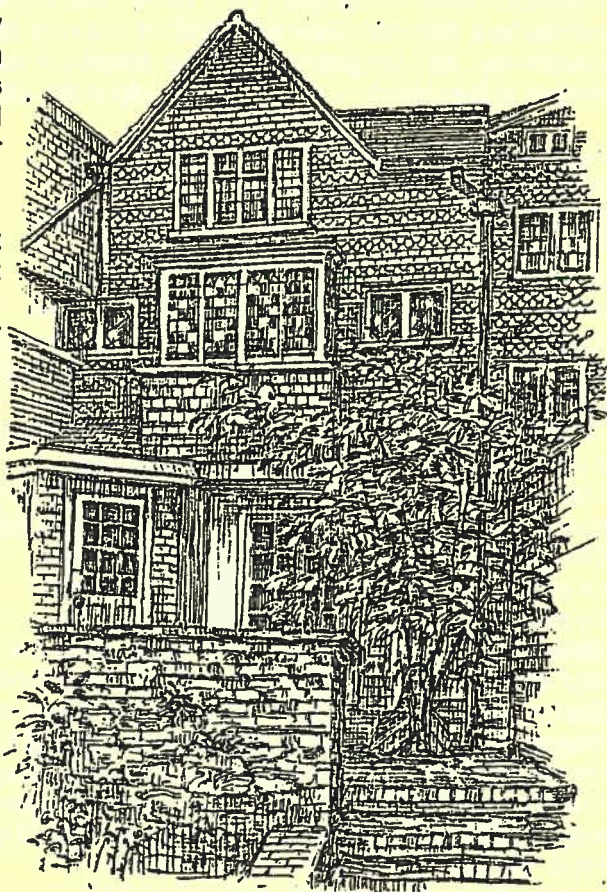
GUILDFORD - 8 QUARRY ST.

This drawing of the rear of 8 Quarry Street by Mary Butts who died a few months ago, was presented to Guildford Museum by her brother.

Mary Butts trained at the Slade School of Art before taking a degree in English and was for many years head of the English Department at Tormead School. A valued member of the Domestic Buildings Research Group in her retirement, Mary researched this house which, as her drawing skilfully illustrates, shows alterations made throughout the centuries.

The Friends paid for the drawing to be framed and it now hangs in the museum.

*My thanks to Marjorie Williams for producing this note.*



E.M. BUTTS 1984

## **COURIER POEM**

**By  
Maureen Wells**

*This poem really wrote itself. On a warm June day in 1943 I was somewhere between Crew and Stafford in a very old train which rattled mercilessly. As I sat gazing out of the window in contemplative mood the rhythm of the wheels - dig a dig dig...dig a dig dig - took form:*

Here I am, here I am, here I am again,  
What could be nicer than sitting in a train?  
Rattling on to Birmingham, Manchester or Crewe,  
It's all so exciting I don't know what to do!  
Shall I go to Liverpool, Hull or Plymouth Hoe?  
It's even further still to go right up to Scapa Flow.  
And Ponders End's 'experience' and Glossop may lack charm,  
But a job in Milford Haven would not do me any harm.  
Perhaps I'll go to Greenock and go aboard a ship,  
Though dispatches to the Admiralty 's a most exciting trip.  
If I go across to Derry I may well be very sick,  
The Isle of Man is just as bad, it's not the job I'd pick  
Nothing can compare, of course, with the COLLOSSAL fun  
Of sitting in a train all night digesting tea and bun,  
Or arriving where I have to go at o four oo hours,  
To charm the factory manager or PRDFO.  
While wondering how quickly he is going to let me go.  
And naturally it's much more fun to have in my fond charge  
Enormous quantities of gear, both small and very large.  
Twenty something hundredweight means nothing to me now,  
I'm the darling of the porters from Aberdeen to Slough.  
Travelling first is very nice and makes me feel quite grand,  
And I've met some funny people as I'm sure you'll understand.  
I find the army stolid, while the RAF is not,  
And the Royal Navy is quite definitely HOT!  
I'm a great success with business men, and gold braid I adore,  
But the glamour does wear rather thin when they begin to snore.  
Now why not be a courier? I leave you with this thought,  
I can guarantee excitement, though never mind what sort!  
So pack your bag and follow me and very soon you'll be,  
If not a perfect Bradshaw, then a walking ABC.

# British Association of Friends of Museums

Reading through the pages of the BAFM Newsletter fills me with amazement at the hundreds of people over the British Isles who gladly give their time to fund raise for their local museums—general and specialised. You can nearly always find a museum to read about that you have visited in other areas. For me this time the report on the farewell to Stephen Sartin who was in charge of the Judges Lodgings in Lancaster brought back memories of an interesting morning looking round the very comfortable rooms.. Chertsey museum has received a Highly Commended award for their community garden. I'm sure many of you have visited the delightful museum in an old house in Chertsey. If ever I am up in the Leeds area I shall most certainly try and visit the Oakwell Hall and Country Park. The Friends have worked hard to restore the 17<sup>th</sup> century garden and judging by the picture they have most certainly succeeded. The beautifully clipped box hedge behind which the herbaceous borders are beginning to grow outline the path down to the hall. Hours of research went into the project and it is now one of only two authentically restored 17<sup>th</sup> C gardens in the country. The other is at Tredegar House, Newport, South Wales. The Friends of Fordingbridge Museum helped last year with the Roman Living History weekend, at Rockbourne Roman Villa. It was a scorching day but this did not deter the visitors from enjoying the gladiatorial skills, military drills and explanations of Roman Law and Customs by a 'Senator'. Surely one of the most northerly group of Friends must be the Orkney Boat Museum founded in 2004. They are fundraising to restore the Hall of Clestrian which is the birthplace of John Rae the Arctic explorer who discovered the North West Passage. This hall stands in the Orphir in Orkney. Their long term plan is to keep supporting the boat museum which will be established in the walled garden of the Hall of Clestrain. The interesting bit about the museum is that it will be a working museum with a resident boat builder offering an apprenticeship in traditional boat building and repair of wooden boats. I'm sure everyone will wish the best of luck to this enthusiastic group of Friends.

*Sandra Morgan*

## **BAFM Annual Conference Oct 7<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> 2005 at Bowes Museum—Barnard Castle, County Durham**

**This looks to be a fascinating weekend with visits to the castle, a reception at Raby Castle and a tour of Rokeby Castle.. Admission to the AGM itself is free but the whole weekend 2 pm Friday—12 noon Sunday costs £120. Details from our secretary—502207**

# HOME FRONT GUILDFORD

by

**Matthew Alexander**

This summer will be the 60<sup>th</sup> since the end of the Second World War. Guildford Museum will mark the occasion with an exhibition on life in the town during the war years, together with an educational CD for teachers and a special events day 'The Home Front Revisited' on 13<sup>th</sup> August.

The exhibition 'Home Front Guildford' marks a departure from our usual practice of having a two-week exhibition in Salters in the summer. At first, 'Home Front Guildford' will be in the old Muniment Room from 30<sup>th</sup> April to 23<sup>rd</sup> July, at the museum, then an enlarged version will be displayed in Salters throughout August.

The Second World War was by far the worst war in history, and its aftermath dominated global politics for nearly half a century. Tens of thousands of men and women left Britain to serve in uniform, and of those many never returned. Without the help of those who stayed at home to 'do their bit' for the war effort, though, victory would have been impossible.

Guildford's experience was relatively tranquil compared to those towns and cities that were heavily bombed. There was no planned German air raid on the town, even though Dennis Brothers' works at Woodbridge would have been a legitimate target. There were 542 air-raid alerts throughout the war and bombs were dropped on 31 occasions. These were mostly from stray aircraft that were probably lost. Four people were killed in total, the worst incident being in Cline Road. In addition, four more were killed just beyond the Borough boundary in Rydes Avenue.

When war broke out, heavy bombing of cities was expected and children from threatened areas were evacuated to towns such as Guildford which were considered to be safe havens. At the beginning of September 1939, nearly 4,500 children arrived from London by train. Even more came after May 1940, when towns on the south coast were evacuated because of the threat of German invasion. Like everyone else, Guildfordians had to carry identity cards and gasmasks, though



fortunately the expected attacks with poison gas never occurred.

At night, firewatchers would man observation posts on high buildings – for example the gate tower of Abbot's Hospital - to report any fires that were started. The Guildford Borough Fire Brigade became part of the National Fire Service. They were helped by the Auxiliary Fire Service, which was made up of volunteers. Instead of fire engines, the AFS had trailer pumps towed by cars. Guildford's fire fighters were kept busy. They often travelled long distances to other towns and cities to help fight fires caused by enemy bombing raids.

In the summer of 1944, V1 flying bombs were launched against south-east England. Five landed in Guildford. Most were on the outskirts, but one killed two people in Aldersey Road. On 28 June another fell. By great good luck, it exploded in the middle of Stoke Recreation Ground. If it had fallen even a short distance on either side it would have killed many people living in the busy streets around.

The typical meal of a Guildfordian would have become increasingly restricted. The range of rationed foods increased during the war, and people relied to a great extent on vegetables. The " Dig for Victory" campaign encouraged people to grow their own. By mid July 1940, it was reported that every available piece of land in Guildford was taken over for food production. A meal could be bought cheaply in British Restaurants, like the one in the Upper High Street, serving good but simple food. People were encouraged to eat in such restaurants to save fuel, lighting and time.

The Queen's Royal (West Surrey) Regiment was based at Stoughton Barracks to the north of Guildford, and many local men were in its ranks. The two regular battalions were overseas when war broke out. Both fought in the east, particularly in the tough jungle campaign in Burma. The six reserve battalions - the Territorials - fought first in France and then as part of the Eighth Army in North Africa and Italy. Stoughton Barracks itself became a mobilisation centre, where many local recruits who volunteered – or were conscripted – were received into the army.

In May 1940 it seemed likely that Britain would be invaded and Local Defence Volunteers were raised to help the regular forces. On 18 May, 300 volunteers assembled at the County Police Station in Woodbridge Road. They were commanded by Lt Colonel Geddes, a distinguished retired soldier. Some older volunteers were veterans of the First World War and helped to train the inexperienced ones. They only had 150 rifles, and no uniforms other than home-made armbands marked "LDV". At night they patrolled and guarded important places like the waterworks at Millmead. Uniforms and more weapons were issued and at the end of July the LDV was reorganised as the "Home Guard".

During the summer of 1940, a chain of pillboxes was constructed south of Guildford as part of the "GHQ Stopline". They covered the banks of the



**A Churchill tank, named Guldford and made at the Dennis Factory, seen here entering Germany in 1945**

Tillingbourne and the Wey. This line was to be quite literally the last ditch

in the defences against an invader advancing inland from the south coast.

As in the First World War, many Canadian troops were stationed in camps on the heathlands of west Surrey. Guildford pubs were often full of off-duty Canadians who could become quite boisterous. This sometimes led to tension with the local population. Friendships with local girls soon developed. Several married their sweethearts and took them back to Canada after the war.

The Royal Grammar School had a reputation for modern science, and consequently many older boys joined the Royal Air Force when they left the school. However, aircrew in Bomber Command suffered high casualties and the school saw more former pupils killed in the Second World War than in the First.

Women could join the Auxiliary Territorial Service, with its base at Queen's Camp, next to Stoughton Barracks. They could also serve as firewomen in the AFS, not only manning control rooms, but also operating pumps and riding motorcycles as messengers. They acted as ARP wardens, and even as auxiliary police constables - to the disapproval of Guildford's Chief Constable, Walter Oliver.

The Women's Voluntary Service provided desperately needed refreshments at Guildford station to soldiers evacuated from Dunkirk at the end of May 1940.

The Women's Land Army provided labour to replace the farm workers now serving in the forces. Wynne Norton was a Guildford shop assistant who joined the WLA in 1941. She notes the ups and downs of work on the land, but concludes "*on the whole it was grand*". With male workers away, women had to take their places in factories as well. Dennis Brothers' motor works made army lorries, tanks, trailer fire pumps and other products for the war effort.

When the war ended with victory first in Europe and then over Japan, many Guildford people celebrated with street parties, conscious that they had experienced one of the most momentous periods of history. I hope the 'Home Front Guildford' exhibition will help to revive the memories of those that lived through those days, and to inform those that were born after them.

**Exhibition**

**HOME FRONT GUILDFORD**

**Guildford life during the Second World War**

**At Guildford Museum now until the 23<sup>rd</sup> July 11am -4pm**

**At Salters Gallery , Castle Street from 1<sup>st</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> August**

**Closed Sundays**

***Admission Free***

**FREE ADMISSION TO THE GREAT TOWER  
OF GUILDFORD CASTLE FOR FRIENDS**

We are delighted to announce that Guildford Borough Council have generously offered the Friends free admission to the Great Tower on production of their membership card.

So come along ,enjoy the displays and view the magnificent scenery from the top.

**Don't forget to show this Newsletter to a friend and encourage them to join!**

## **Home Front Guildford Special Events Day Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> August 2005**

This year's Special Events Day will provide a nostalgic trip down memory lane as the Museum celebrates life on the Home Front, but the sacrifice made by so many will not be forgotten, as the British Legion will join our re-enactors for a Victory Parade in the High Street. Edna Firs, the daughter of the wartime Mayor, will be amongst those on the balcony at the Guildhall saluting the veterans.

Castle Green will echo to the sounds of popular wartime songs, re-enactors will demonstrate life on the home front, visitors can take part in dance workshops, see fashions of the 40's and much more. Children will be able to join in the fun as well, with free activities going on all day.

The Parks Department are making a special wartime garden for us, this will be on display in front of the main castle entrance and lots will be going on in the castle (entrance to the castle will be free for the day).

As usual we will be having a cake stand and any donations will be gratefully received – we do have wartime recipe books if you want to make a 40's style cake!

The Events Day takes place on 13<sup>th</sup> August 11.00 am – 4.00 pm on Castle Green and in the Great Tower. Admission Free.

### **FRIENDS COMMITTEE FOR 2005/2006**

**Chairman Peter Hattersley, Vice Chairman Heather Anderson  
Secretary Richard Sinker, Treasurer Tim Bryers,  
Museum Manager Mike Beckwith, Events Booking Derek Somner  
Events Publicity John Wilkins, Volunteer Organizer Marjorie Williams  
Newsletter Editor Eric Morgan, Jonathan Jessup,  
Maureen Newman, Cllr Jennifer Powell**

# 60<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE END OF THE WAR

As we have read from the previous page the staff of the Museum will be celebrating the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the ending of the Second World War in style this year. In particular they have secured a grant from Home Front Recall, a special division of the Lottery Fund set up for funding such events. The Museum had already decided to mount an exhibition about Guildford Home Front during the war years, and hold a special events day in August, but the grant of almost £20,000 means that we can now really make it special. We will use some of the money towards the cost of new display cases, which in turn will help us to start a 20<sup>th</sup> century Gallery which we desperately need.

Also planned as part of the summer long project are school sessions in which a panel of veterans (Land Girl, service men, factory workers etc. and a German soldier ) will share their experiences in unique school-workshops. They will then answer questions from the children and war-time uniforms, clothes and objects will be made available to the children to handle. The grant also means that the museum can produce a Teachers Pack based on oral testimonies and objects used in the exhibition, and upgrade the World War 2 school loan box.

A series of free talks will be given in July and the Museum is particularly pleased that Henry Metelmann, a former member of Hitler Youth and a soldier in a German Tank Regiment will be giving one of the talks and taking part in the school sessions. The Grant Awarding Officer was pleased to see that the museum is bringing together former enemies and also bridging the generations with their activities.

The climax of the summer will be a special events day, mentioned previously, which take place on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> August on the Castle Green. Re-enactors will demonstrate what life was like on the Home Front and there will be activities for all the family. The choice of the date, the nearest Saturday to VJ Day, also brought praise from the Grant Awarding Officer and the British Legion, as many veterans felt that this was being ignored. The Government announced that instead of celebrating both VE and VJ days there would be one official celebration on July 10<sup>th</sup>.

## Summer Talks at the Museum

- 2<sup>nd</sup> July: Guildford at War  
Matthew Alexander
- 23<sup>rd</sup> July: Women at War  
Carol Brown
- 30<sup>th</sup> July: Into Hell for Hitler  
Henry Mettleman
- 6<sup>th</sup> August: The War through Music  
Jean Flemming

NB: All talks are on a Saturday and start at 2.30pm. They are free but booking is essential as places are limited.



Guildford Museum (01483)444750

### **FRIENDS OF GUILDFORD MUSEUM**

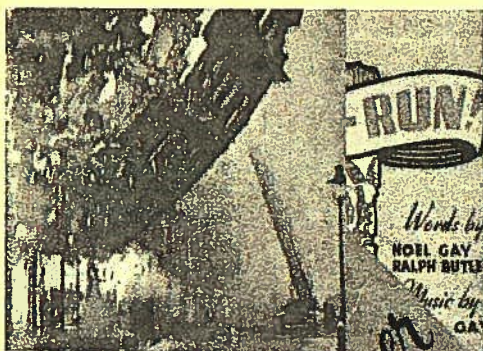
If you are not a member we would love you to join us  
Please send a cheque with the appropriate subscription to

Mr R. Sinker, Friends of Guildford Museum  
2 The Ridgeway, Guildford, GU1 2DG

Subscription rates for 2004/2005

Individual £6	Family £12	Youth £3
Corporate £25	Individual Life	£100

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



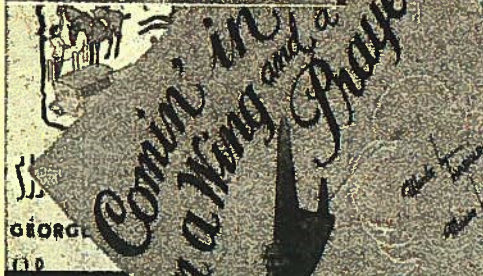
Words by  
NOEL GAY  
RALPH BUTLER  
Music by  
GAY

# IN THE MOOD

by JOE GARLAND

Presented on RCA TV

Glenn Miller



Comin' in  
on a Mong and a Prayer



GEORGE

WORDS BY  
ERIC MASCHWITZ  
MUSIC BY  
GEORGE POSTFORD

FROM  
ERIC MASCHWITZ  
REVUE  
NEW F  
PRESENTED BY  
ARCHIE PA  
AND  
JACK D  
JUDY GARLAND

Always be  
an  
England

Music by  
HETTY PARKER & AUGUST CHARLES



CHAPPELL



**60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration of the end of the Second World War  
August 13<sup>th</sup>**

**Programme of Events**

- 10.30 am**            **Victory Salute and Parade  
(at the Guildhall, High Street)**
- 11 am**                **The Parade arrives at the Castle Green and the  
event opens**
- 11.10 am**            **1940's singers start the day with a swing**
- 11.30 am**            **Fashions of the war years**
- 12.15 pm**            **'Swing Louis' Let Louis take you back with the  
sounds of the 40's**
- 1 pm**                 **Jitterbugs and Jives! Dance display**
- 1.45 pm**            **'Get Fell In' Soldiers Drill Display**
- 2.15 pm**            **'Swing Louis'**
- 3 pm**                 **Fashions and Dance of the War Years**
- 3.40 pm**            **Wave your flags and join in with our final sing-a-  
long of popular wartime songs.**
- 4 pm**                 **Event Closes**

Throughout the day in the grounds: Dig for Victory, Life on the Home Front, WI Stand, meet the Veterans, British Legion Stand, Soldiers encampment, Learn how to jive, meet the re-enactors, Wartime Vehicles, Children's Activities, Cake Stand, Museum Stall, see how evacuees were billeted and much more. What will you do if the Air aid siren goes off?

Visit the Castle ( free for this day only) and see the wartime vegetable garden—can you guess who the scarecrow is meant to be? Take a look at the Castle—for one day only it will show more than medieval life.

**Bring a picnic and stay all day!!!**



## FINDS IDENTIFICATION SATURDAYS AT GUILDFORD MUSEUM

GUILDFORD



MUSEUM

**Guildford Museum** has launched a series of Finds Identification Days which run on the second Saturday of every month from 11.00am until 1.00pm. Visitors are encouraged to bring along items found locally, often while out walking, or while digging in the garden.

Finds Liaison Officer for the Portable Antiquities Scheme, David Williams, will be able to provide advice on the importance of the find, its conservation and storage and how it relates to the Treasure Act.

If you have come across an archaeological find whilst out walking or using a metal detector, bring your find along for assessment and find out more about it. Pottery, flints and metalwork are all welcome, however, we do not provide information on fossils. Could that piece of metal provide a clue to Guildford's past? Bring it along and find out.

Further information about the Finds Identification Days, contact Guildford Museum on 01483 444750 or visit [www.guildfordmuseum.co.uk](http://www.guildfordmuseum.co.uk)

## **Make a Note in your Diary**

**EVENTS     JUNE -DECEMBER 2005**

**Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> June 10.30 am—Sixpenny Handley/Cranbourne Chase**

**Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> July - 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration**

**6pm**

**In the Great Tower of Guildford Castle**

**Tuesday 5th July 10.30am—Surrey Villages (Bletchingly)**

**Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> July 8am—Oxford**

**Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> August 9am—Lancing College Chapel & St Mary's**

**Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> September an - Cirencester & river trip**

**Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> November 8.30am - Swindon GWR Museum &  
Science Museum tour**

The Editor welcomes items for the Newsletter or comments. Please send them to Eric Morgan, 21 St Michael's Avenue , Guildford, GU3 3LY. Telephone number (01483) 233344.

Copy date for next Newsletter is November 1<sup>st</sup> 2005