

FRIENDS OF GUILDFORD MUSEUM

NEWSLETTER

June 2008



Issue 26



From the Editor

Marjorie Williams MBE

We were all absolutely delighted to find in the New Years honour list that the Queen had seen fit to recognise Marjorie Williams tireless work for Guildford with an MBE. Marjorie has lived in Guildford for many years. She soon joined the Surrey Archaeological Society and has been an active member of it ever since. In 1981 Matthew Alexander asked for volunteers to train as guides to take visitors around the town. Marjorie is a founder member Town Guides and took over the running of the group almost immediately. After a few years Marjorie felt that we ought to offer more to visitors and residents and so embarked on increasing the repertoire each year with a new walk. The Guides now offer at least ten and many of these Marjorie largely researched herself. She made it possible for the Museum to stage exhibitions at Salters by finding stewards and continues to do the same for the Undercroft. Also until last year she found stewards for many of the buildings on Heritage Day which has added to the enjoyment of so many people. In 1994 Matthew Alexander called Marjorie and myself to his office and asked us to help him form a "Friends of the Museum". A steering committee was formed and at our first public meeting the following year Marjorie became our first secretary. She continues as a very active member of our committee. We send her and Richard our very best wishes.

Cover

Our cover photo by Roger Nicholas shows an enduring symbol of Guildford's past. It can be seen when stopped by the traffic lights at the top of North Street and refers to Marion Jacks Ladies Fashion shop. It has fond memories for me as my wife bought a lovely sun dress there. Roger has extensively researched this subject and his fascinating article starts on page 10

The Editor welcomes items for the Newsletter or comments. Please send them to Eric Morgan 21 St Michael's Avenue, Guildford GU3 3LY. Tel No. (01483) 233344. Copy date for next Newsletter is 1st November 2008

Our Museum Manager Asks

Would you like to join us behind the scenes at the Museum?

If you have some hours to spare on a fairly regular basis you might like to become a volunteer at Guildford Museum. The Museum would welcome help from members of the Friends in packing artefacts, entering catalogue records onto the computer and acting as stewards in this summer's Living Memory exhibition. It's a chance to see a bit more of what goes on behind the scenes at the Museum and to play a part in improving services.

If you are interested in finding out more please contact Mary Witton 01483 444750, mary.witton@guildford.gov.uk.

Museum Events by email

It is not always possible for the Friends mailings to cover every event that the museum organises. Some events occur at short notice or publicity for them does not fit easily with our post dates. So rather than miss an event email Mary Witton and ask her to keep you up to date with what is happening at the museum. mary.witton@guildford.gov.uk

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 D. Somner, Friends of Guildford Museum
18 Abbot Road, Guildford, GU1 3TA

Subscription rates for 2008

Individual £6

Family £12

Youth £3

Corporate £25

Individual Life £100

Please make cheques payable to

FRIENDS OF GUILDFORD MUSEUM

History of Guildford – Second year course

Matthew Alexander will be running the Level 2 History of Guildford course this year, after two years of the teaching the Level 1 course. It is not necessary to have done the Level 1 course to sign up for this year's series of lectures. In the past, the Level 2 course has covered the following topics and visits:

Guildford Borough Council
Hospitals
Schools
Police and Fire Brigade
Castle Excavations
Charities and Poor Law
Courts and Prisons
Patrician Families
Customs and Traditions
Shops
Pubs and Breweries
North Street

John Russell
Theatres and Cinemas
Churches and Chapels
Dapdune Wharf
St Catherine's
St Martha's
Henley Fort and the Mount
Chilworth Powder Mills
Quarries
Medieval Trade
Henry Peak and Victorian
Development

The course will take place on Tuesday mornings at 10am to 12 noon, starting as always with a talk in the classroom before a visit to a place of relevant interest. The series will begin on September 23rd and there will be 10 sessions in the Autumn Term and 10 sessions in the Spring Term. The course will cost £90 and may be split into two payments of £45, payable at the beginning of each term.

The first session will be spent deciding which topics people would like to cover in the following 19 meetings and then continue with a slide show of 'Monro's Guildford', a series of pencil sketches of the 1830s depicting the town just before the railway changed it forever.

If you would like to join the group, please contact Mary Witton at the Museum on 01483 444750.

LIVING MEMORY: GUILDFORD 1962-1973

On 21st June Guildford Museum will be opening its latest in its series of exhibitions based on the memories of local residents. It will cover life in Guildford between 1962 and 1973. This timespan has been chosen because it begins with a sustained period of modern building, and ends with the local government reorganisation that ended the town's existence as a separate entity from the rural district that surrounded it. Having said that, there are wider national changes that coincided with the same start and end dates. For example, the social impact of the contraceptive pill and an emerging youth culture (especially centred around fashion and music) coincided with a period of economic prosperity which came to an end in the early 1970s.

During this period, Guildford was rapidly developing. Male unemployment rates were less than half the national average, but house prices rose correspondingly higher. (In 1967 it was noted that ordinary houses which had sold for around £3,500 a few years earlier now fetched around £4,500). The social makeup of the population was changing, too. By 1971, the percentage of those with university degrees or the equivalent was 60% above the national average. This reflects the growing proportion of residents defined as belonging to social classes 1&2. Increasing affluence had the effect of increased car ownership - and consequent parking difficulties. Local periodicals repeatedly refer to this problem; as in May 1963, when the *Guildford Outlook* noted that the council estates built in the 1950s had made no provision for the tenants' owning cars. Now many did, and struggled to find places to put them. Multi-storey car parks were built in Sydenham Road (1963) and York Road (1969), the former being universally denounced as an eyesore (it has since been rebuilt).

"The changing face of Guildford" was a phrase much used at the time, and it was most visible in the new buildings that were being constructed. Bridge House near the station and the Central Electricity Generating Board offices on the Portsmouth

were among the first high-rise buildings to affect the skyline (both have since been demolished).



Despite changing ownerships and the arrival of national chains, the historic High Street retained much of its ancient character. However, great changes were afoot elsewhere. Plummers department store opened on Millbrook in 1967 (renamed Debenhams in December 1972). The Yvonne Arnaud Theatre was opened in 1965, largely paid for by local funding. Guildford Borough Council contributed several landmark buildings: the Library in North Street and the Civic Hall were both completed in 1962, and the Sports Centre in Bedford Road replaced the old Castle Street baths in 1971.

In early 1966 plans were revealed for a complete remodelling of the traffic pattern in central Guildford, based on a 'gyratory' which required a new bridge, the rebuilding of Friary Street as a pedestrian precinct and a new road continuing Millbrook to Onslow Street. The scheme was largely completed in the summer of 1973. The old Town Bridge at the bottom of the High Street was then closed to road traffic and most of the High Street was made pedestrian-only for much of the working day.

The greatest building project of all was the University of Surrey, constructed on the slopes of Stag Hill, below the cathedral. Work began in October 1966 and the first students arrived exactly two years later (though the final move from the former Battersea College was not completed until 1970).



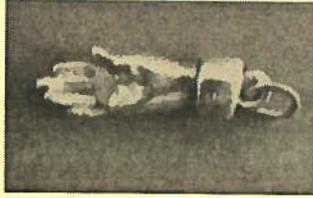
The University hosted the first concert by the iconic band Led Zeppelin in October 1968. The Rolling Stones had been a feature of the Guildford rock scene from the time they got together: one of their first

gigs was at the Wooden Bridge pub in March 1963 and they subsequently performed at the Odeon and the Civic Hall.

Memorable events in the town included the fire that destroyed the Guildford Repertory Theatre in North Street in April 1963, the Queen opening the WRAC barracks at Stoughton in October 1964, and the Betatron at St Luke's Hospital, opened by Princess Alexandra in 1966. John Wilkin had launched the Betatron Cancer Appeal Trust in 1964, which raised £215,000 locally. Perhaps the most memorable event of all was the great flood of September 1968, which swamped the area around the town bridge and completely filled the basement of Plummer's store (now Debenhams).

Matthew Alexander

Miniature Textiles Exhibition



Did you go to the Miniature Needlework Exhibition at the Museum? It was quite amazing with samples of the finest embroidery, knitting and patchwork I have ever seen. The products of all this expert embroidery were to various scales and the little silver guild badge in the shape of a hand at 1/12 scale shows if the work is being done correctly if laid on the embroidery.

Sue Rakher a retired teacher and designer started on miniatures in 1986 and the old fashioned pram, rather like the Queen rode on as a baby, with the little occupant in beautifully knitted clothes quite took my attention.



Ann Crompton discovered that her extreme short sightedness made miniature needlework the obvious choice for her and produced at 1/12 size Elizabeth I in her Armada dress.

However what I found really amazing was the 7mm little white Teddy bear knitted by **Jackie Mathewman** on size 24 needles. Nearby was a troupe of the same little bears doing "Swan Lake". You could not cuddle these in bed. They would disappear never to be seen again!



Rosemary Conway-Jones produced a beautiful four poster with Florentine hangings based on a bed at Parham House. Also two 17c chairs covered in silk and using a tent stitch. The full size original is in the Victoria and Albert Museum.

Totally different but just as beautiful were the quilts

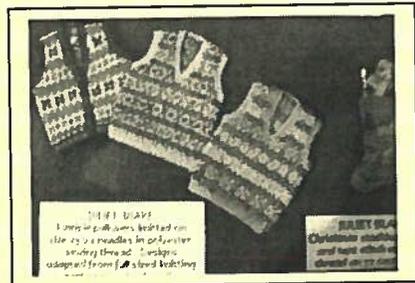
made by **Sheila Grantham** who won first prize in the 1999 and 2000 competitions.

The log cabin quilt was made in red, white and blue and grandmothers flower garden quilt was made in different softly coloured pastel shades. Both quite amazing to see.

Three final jewels were the 1" cassock made by Dora Lockyer, Three 2" Fairisle pullovers made on 23/24 needles and a little Christmas sock made by Juliet Blake.

I am so glad I did not miss this exhibition. The next one is on Guildford in the 1960's. As we arrived in 1957 I am looking forward to reliving my old memories.

Sandra Morgan



The first woman's magazine was The Ladies Mercury, in 1693. It promised answers to all "the most nice and curious questions concerning love, marriage, behaviour, dress and humour of the female sex, whether virgins, wives or widows".

making a large and important trousseau, but the reader was coyly informed that it was not permitted to reveal the name of the customer at that time, only that the collection contained 'several dainty confections'! The centre of activities of the partnership continued in Charlotteville until 1910 when the business is found in the street directory to be occupying number 151 High Street, an address which was to be associated with the name of Marian Jacks for the next half century.

In 1918, the business was also occupying 144a High Street beneath the County Club, but by 1922 this address was in the sole occupation of Florence Taylor. It therefore appears that sometime between these dates the partnership was dissolved, and it was about this period that a drastic change in the appearance of 151 High Street came to pass. Having been standing there, quietly showing its age for a century or two, the shop was given a 'Tudorised' face-lift (a fate that befell several

other shops in High Street about this time) and was also embellished with the M.J. monograph and the silhouette of a crinoline lady that adorns the façade to this day.

THERE'S A SALE
at
Marian Jacks
LTD.



This week is Saletime at Marian Jacks' famous shop in High Street, Guildford. All the fascinating accessories that you've admired in the past—undergarments light as foam, nighties, amusing little bad jackets, featherweight cami-knickers. Today you can buy them at sale prices. Please come in and look through the collection! You'll be surprised at the wonderful inexpensiveness of Marian Jacks' creations. As always, you'll be enchanted by their beauty.

MARIAN JACKS LTD. 151 HIGH STREET, GUILDFORD * PHONE: 478

From the evidence of the Guildford and District Outlook, (later to be named the Guildford City Outlook) which was the popular 'freebie' delivered to every house in the borough during the interwar years, the 1930s were the peak years for Marion Jacks: her advertisements, which

first started to appear at the beginning of the decade, projected a rather stolid aspect.

As time went by, they became much more ambitious, with an eye-catching panache which really caught the atmosphere of dress designs in the years running up to the Second World War.

Belatedly, I have come to the conclusion that these advertisements were the product of her own hand. One presumes that as a dress designer she would have had in her armoury of talents the ability to present her thoughts pictorially on paper, and the fact that a fresh full-page advertisement latterly appeared every month suggests that she would not, in those relatively lean years, have been financing a commercial artist to do the work for her. Perhaps the most convincing argument for this theory is that, following her death in 1938, no further examples of this art-form appeared in the Outlook.

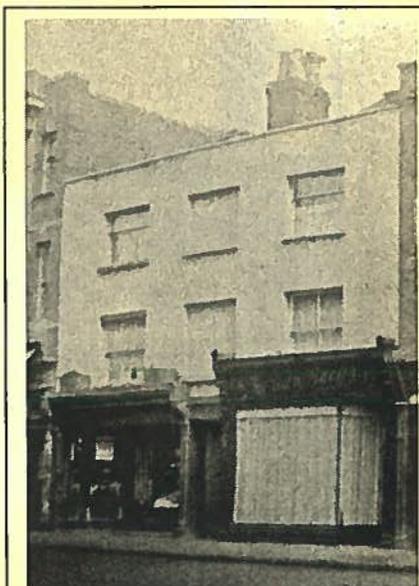
From 1928, much emphasis was given in the publicity of the business to the acquisition of premises in London: firstly in Dover Street, then to 30 Bond Street and in 1933 along the same road to Atkinson House. From these addresses, many of the orders were passed to the Guildford branch to execute and it was there that my aunt, still hail and hearty, recalls working on the wearing apparel of both the night-club loving Duchess of Kent and the homely Duchess of Gloucester.

As mentioned, the personal involvement of Marian Jacks in the company came to an end with her death at the Chateau Bertha, Herne Bay, on 26 July 1938 at the relatively early age of 57 years. Her obituary refers to her having 'personally conducted the whole of her business and inspired her staff by her business acumen and diligence'. As a practising Roman Catholic her funeral service, attended by 150 past and present employees, was held at St Joseph's Church in Chertsey Street and she was buried in the Mount Cemetery. Wreaths were sent by the staffs of her shops in Guildford and Bond Street, and also by the directors of Vogue magazine. In contrast to

garments depicted in her advertisements, her obituary places a degree of emphasis on her pioneering work in the design of surgical supports of various kinds. Her estate was valued at £18,405 – 2s – 2d.

Marian Jacks was born during the summer of 1881 in Devizes, Wiltshire, the town in which her father, Richard Harry, had married her mother, Selina Lavington, just a year before. At registration, her names were given as Louise Marian, but later in life she dropped the Louise and adopted Lavington as her second Christian name. Her mother lived briefly in York Road, Guildford until her death in St Olave, Bermondsey, in 1905; her father died in Guildford in 1914 at the age of 60 years.

There is no record of the departure of Florence Taylor from the business. She was about ten years older than her erstwhile partner and, in their early days she appeared to be the senior member. Significantly, when Miss Taylor died in 1951 at the age of 81 years, she was buried in the same cemetery in a plot which had been paid for by the partnership in 1918. Marian Jacks, on the other hand, was buried in a plot some way distant, apparently at her personal expense.



151 High Street c 1920

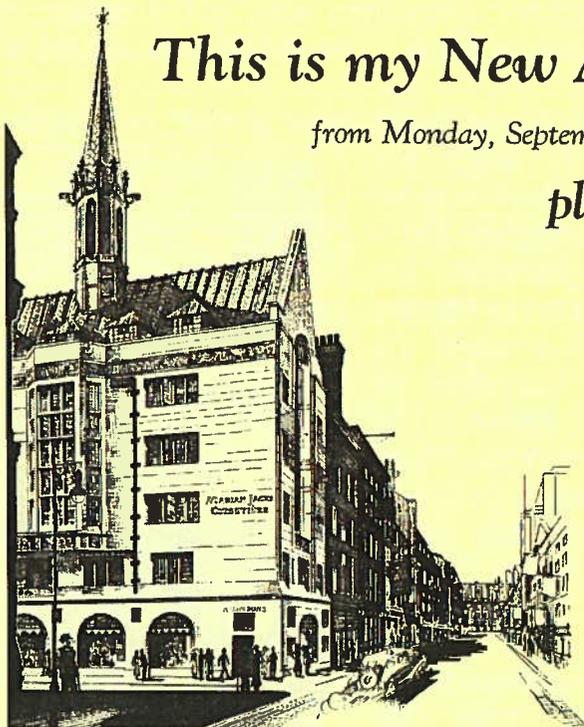
The business continued as a limited company into the 1960s when the shop in Upper High Street closed. Fortunately the slightly over-the-top half timbering and the silhouette still remain to remind us of the golden age of the High Street when most of the businesses were the product of local enterprise and not just other branches of nation-wide conglomerates.

Roger Nicholas

This is my New Address . . .

from Monday, September 25th, 1933

please note . . .



From what might be termed a most humble beginning many years ago when I opened my first salon in Guildford, this business has shown such a consistently steady development that it has necessitated expansion of premises on no less than three separate occasions.

In 1928 I opened a salon in London at 48, Dover Street, and one year later, with a steadily increasing clientele, I found it necessary to move to 30, Old Bond Street, and on September 25th of this year I am moving again; this time to one of London's most beautiful modern buildings—Atkinson House, 24, Old Bond Street, W. 1.



I want my clients in Guildford to benefit by this steady growth, and to know that they can always expect the same standard of advice and co-operation on any problem relating to scientific corsetry at my Guildford salon as at my spacious new salon in Atkinson House.

Marian Jacks
LTD
CORSETIÈRE

Atkinson House, 24, Old Bond Street, W. 1
151, High Street, Guildford.

Telephone: Regent 0542-3
Telephone: Guildford 478

British Association of Museums

There is no doubt that we have plenty of museums within a days trip to visit in the South East. One unusual one is the British Balloon Museum in Newbury. Berkshire is one of the birth places of modern ballooning and the new Chairman has been flying his own balloon for nearly twenty years.

Sturminster in North Dorset is mentioned in the Domesday book and has been chartered to hold fairs and markets since the time of Henry III in 1219. They had a museum in a disused old Union Workhouse Chapel but this was proving to be not



attracting very many visitors being on the outskirts of the Town. In late 2006 the Town Council announced it was moving to larger premises and the beautiful picturesque thatched building with much of its original 16c structure was up for sale. Being in the centre of Sturminster it was perfect for a museum. With a mortgage from the Charity Bank, the museum raised the deposit of £57,000 towards the price of £150,000. A lottery grant also helped in their fund raising. The museum is not fully opened as yet but is well on the way.

Close at hand is the Rural Life Centre who were in difficulties with the recent foot and mouth outbreak in Pirbright. Their resident sheep caused them sleepless nights but DEFRA allowed them to stay open and the opening by Mrs Mills of the extension to the Old Kiln Light Railway to Mills Wood Station (named in honour of her late son, Les) went ahead.

The Friends of Elmbridge Museum invited Dr Nick Barrett, researcher to the BBC programme "Who do you think you are" to tell them how it was made. It was obvious great care was taken and was often a great surprise to the celebrities to find out about their ancestors.

Aldershot was the first great military camp and recently the Friends were invited by the Project Wellington Committee to set up the "Friends of Wellington Statue". They are working on improvements to the landscape around the Statue and to the path leading to the top of the mount to enable visitors to see the great statue at close quarters. This summer there will be the "Guns and Drums" special commemoration day. Also an exhibition celebrating the centenary of the first powered flight in Great Britain by Samuel Cody.

If you would like a trip to London why not visit the new London Transport Museum. On 22 November 2007 the former Mayor of London, Ken Livingstone and designer Vivienne Westwood formerly opened the museum and the Friends organised a special evening opening on 23 November. There are many spectacular new displays and facilities in the wonderfully refurbished flower market. The friends have a membership of 1600 and have raised £700,000 towards the re-display project.

The 35th Annual Conference and AGM of the BAFM is being hosted by the Friends of Penlee House Gallery and Museum, Penzance from Friday 3rd of October to Sunday 5th October 2008. Outings have been arranged for Friday afternoon and Sunday morning. The Dinner Speaker on Friday is Tim Smit, Chief Executive of the Eden Project and discoverer of the Lost Gardens of Heligan and the Keynote speech on Saturday is by Sir Neil Cossons, past chairman of English Heritage. For further details ring 01483 233344.

(Abstracted by Sandra Morgan)

The British Association of Friends of Museums provides a list of events throughout the country. Here are some that are not too far away.

“A Pen Portrays” is the title of an exhibition at the Rural Life Centre at Tilford. It runs from *June 14th to August 3rd* – This is the museum's first ever art exhibition and portrays the work of the enigmatic Marshall Barnes - a watercolour and pen & ink artist who recorded local life in the 1950's. From August 10th to October 26th is an exhibition entitled **“Tilhill Economic Forestry”** which shows how this national company (UPM Tilhill) started locally and changed the very face of today's countryside. For those interested in mechanical vehicles there is a Citroën and Renault rally on the 6th July and a Stationary Engine rally on 2nd August.

“Bright Young Things” is an exhibition at the Chertsey Museum.. This display showcases some of the most glamorous garments in the Olive Matthews Collection. A selection of men's and women's evening and day wear from the 1920s and '30s are displayed alongside accessories from the era.

The Friends of **Carshalton Water Tower** look after a very unusual early 18th century garden building. As the name suggests, this contained a water-powered pump which supplied water to Carshalton House and the fountains in its garden. However, the building was and is much more than this as it contains a splendid early 18th century cold bath lined with Delft tiles. It is open on Sundays from April to September. If you wish to go further a field why not try the **Quex Museum** near Canterbury? The home of the Powell-Cotton family and its extraordinary collection of treasures. It was established in 1896 to house natural history specimens and cultural objects collected on expeditions to Asia and Africa. Major Powell-Cotton was a pioneer in the use of the diorama to display mounted mammals in representations of their natural habitats.

At the Museum

June 21st to August 25th

“Living Memory Exhibition”

The Changing face of Guildford 1962-1973

June 28th at 2pm.

“Guildford in the Swinging Sixties”

Talk by Matthew Alexander in the Museum Classroom.
Admission free but booking essential due to limited space.

July 5th – Pastfinders event “Were the Victorians Really Vile”

Junior Museum Club Meeting. Contact museum for details

August 1st to August 31st - FIND the LOST SHEEP-

Museum treasure hunt for the school holidays with clues and prize.

September 6th to November 1st

Hidden House Histories Exhibition

Staged in conjunction with the Textile Conservation Centre.

September 20th at 2pm.- The Making of Guildford Blue

Talk by Matthew Alexander in Classroom

During the Summer Festival the Museum will have a craft stall in the High Street.

Free Guided Walks of Guildford

The Town Guides offer a Historic tour of Guildford from May to September on Monday at 11am, Wednesday and Sunday at 2.30pm and Thursday at 7pm (until end of August). In addition they offer these extra walks during the Summer Festival

Hidden Guildford

Friday June 20 7.00pm
Monday June 23 7.00pm
Friday July 4 7.00pm
Monday July 7 7.00pm
Friday July 11 7.00pm
Friday July 18 7.00pm
Tuesday July 29 2.30pm
Friday August 1 7.00pm

Life in Medieval Guildford

Tuesday June 24 2.30pm
Tuesday July 1 2.30pm

Ghosts and Legends

Tuesday July 1 7.00pm
Tuesday July 8 7.00pm
Tuesday July 15 7.00pm
Tuesday July 22 7.00pm

The River Wey & St Catherines

Meet at Town Bridge
Sunday June 29 11.00am
Sunday July 27 11.00am

Lewis Carroll in Guildford

Tuesday June 24 7.00pm
Monday July 14 7.00pm

Guildhall & Guildford House

Tuesday July 8 2.30pm
Tuesday July 15 2.30pm
Tuesday July 22 2.30pm

Guildford's Old industries

Sunday July 6 11.00am (note time)

Kings, Worthies and Scoundrels

Monday June 30 7.00pm
Monday July 21 7.00pm

St Nicolas and Buryfields

Meet at Town Bridge
Monday July 28 7.00pm

The Mount Cemetery

Friday July 25 7.00pm
Meet by Chapel at entrance to the Mount Cemetery.

New Members

We are delighted to welcome the following new members
And look forward to meeting them at the events.

Mr R & Mrs M Bloom Mrs C Chattaway
Mr D Calow (Life Member) Miss J R McLeod
Mr R Lansdowne, member since 1997, is now a Life Member

Make a note in your Diary

Events 2008

Full details of these events are included on a separate sheet

Tuesday 15th July

Surrey Villages – East Horsley
Meet in Duke of Wellington on A246 at 10.30am
All day . Cost £9

Friday 18th July

Southampton – Three River Cruise
Depart 8.30am cost £27

Wednesday 13th August

Surrey Villages – Hambledon
Meet in the Merry Harriers at 10.30am.
Afternoon visit to Oakhurst Cottage.
Cost £14 National Trust Members £9

Sunday 19th October

London Spitalfields
A “do it yourself” outing . Depart 9.30am. Cost £12.50

Saturday 8th November

Museum of London and external tour of some Roman
Archaeological sites
Depart 9am. Cost £19

**Tickets from Derek Somner
18 Abbot Road, Guildford, GU1 3TA (01483 539447)**