

Surrey Heath Museum & Heritage Services 2021/22 Report



Surrey Heath Museum, 33 Obelisk Way, Camberley, GU15 3SG.

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Open Tuesday to Saturday 11.00 a.m. – 4.30.00 p.m – free entry

Great Place • Great Community • Great Future

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1.0 Brief History of the Service

Surrey Heath Museum dates back to the 1930s, when it was known as Camberley Museum and based on the collection of Mr. George Poulter, who was the first Curator. It was housed in the Frimley and Camberley Urban District Council Offices on London Road. In the 1960s the museum moved to Newstead, a Victorian house on Knoll Road in Camberley. In the 1970s it was closed and Newstead demolished. At that time a team of staff were employed to catalogue the whole collection. In 1987, the museum reopened in an annex of Surrey Heath Borough Council offices with a permanent display, exhibition area and on-site storage facilities. In June 2018, the Museum reopened in the shopping centre; the momentum created in the first year was restrained in 2020/21 due to the Covid pandemic. Although 2021/22 began with the third lock down, the museum has continued to develop and change. Surrey Heath Museum & Heritage Foundation (formed SHMAG) gained charitable status and are in negotiations to sign a 10 year lease with The Square management company, Montague Evans. Whether this turns into reality remains uncertain, however, the museum has a working agreement with the Trust giving them important status in any decision.



Newstead, Knoll Road



Frimley and Camberley UDC Offices, London Road



33 Obelisk Way, Camberley

2.0 Mission Statement

“Surrey Heath Heritage Services exist to preserve, manage and document the heritage of this Borough. We will promote our unique heritage via public exhibitions, events, outreach and research access”.

3.0 The Collections



West End, c.1900



Painted Ostrich Egg
– late 1800s



George Kenner W/C - 1915

The collections reflect the social and industrial history of the Borough's past and fit into the following categories – costume, furniture, accessories, craft, art, photographs, industrial, archaeology, geology, education, military and natural history. There is also a large amount of reference material. There are over 40,000 objects in the collection. Nationally important art collections include Percy Harland Fisher (1865 to 1944), George Edward Lodge (1860 to 1954) and George Kenner (1888 to 1971). The museum has connections with San Francisco University (photographs by Edward Mendell, international wildlife and tribespeople, who lived in Windlesham), the Imperial War Museum (collections by George Kenner, WWI German prisoner of war based in Frith Hill) and Knockaloe Internment Camp Visitor Centre on the Isle of Man.

The Museum volunteers began to return to the work in the stores from June onwards. We have 5 weekly volunteers who help with documentation of photographs, maps, paintings and social history. The museum collection has been transferred to an online database (Air Table) and after a period of development and familiarisation, the collection will go online. It will join the other online collections – Information Files and Ron Francis collection. The 1914 to 1920 newspapers were digitalised, thanks to funding from the old Friends of Surrey Heath Museum; these will also be online.

The Alf Tarry volunteers also returned and have spent 6 months updating an Alf Tarry database of his archive which includes house deeds, conveyance documents, sales catalogues and wills from mid 1800s in and around Bagshot. There is a planned exhibition in 2022. a

The main museum stores are still the basement of Surrey Heath House and now, the storage container at London Road Recreation Ground. The stores have been cleaned again, with emphasis on the creation of a separate archive store within the main store.

A selection of new acquisitions for 2021/22

The Museum has been kindly given a number of objects in the last year which are important to the heritage of the area;

Material from Watchett's Bowling Club

Shield from British Legion centre in Victoria Road, Camberley.

Jack's Fish & Chip Shop, Bagshot – signs, menus etc.

West End History Project material

4.0 2020/21 Performance Indicators

The performance indicators we collect help illustrate the work we are involved in, but also enable us to plan for future events, exhibitions and county engagement.

Performance Indicator	2020/2021	2021/2022
Visitor Numbers	804	4194
School Children taught	210	1156
Care Homes Reminiscence	280	150
Web Hits	25042 *(24828)	37039
Events attendees – museum based	142	233
Events attendees - outreach		868
Enquiries	336	230
Income		
Schools	60	
Sales of items	1222	
Donations/Other	61	
Grant	2492	
Commission	0	
Fees & Charges	294	
Total Income	5070	

5.0 Staffing

Gill Riding, Senior Heritage Officer – 30 hours week.

Kathy Joice – Heritage and Outreach Officer – 30 hours.

New Heritage and Outreach Assistant, Nick Clifton began in Summer 2021 – 21 hours.

6.0 Heritage Supporters' Group

The Friends of Surrey Heath Museum disbanded in March 2018 and replaced by Heritage Supporters' Group. We ran two trips this last year to Fair Oaks Airport and to Frimley Park. Memberships from 2019 rolled over to 2020.



With Captain William Matthews – Frimley Manor



With Stephen Woods – Fair Oaks

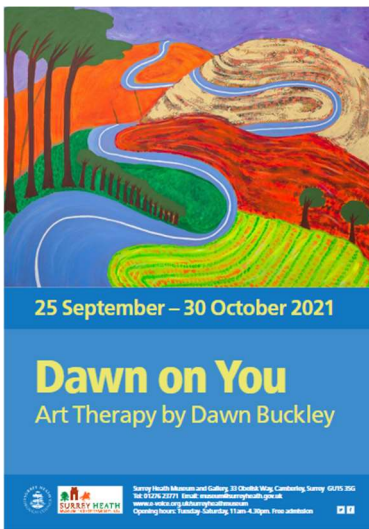
7.0 Exhibitions and Events



Local Art Collector, Luciano Cassaro lent one of his impressive contemporary collections - Mario Minarini.



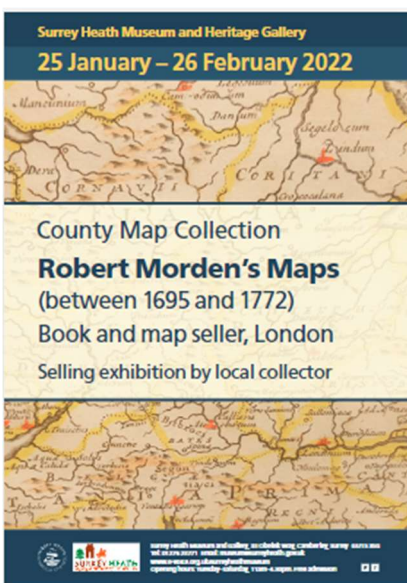
The Free French Forces exhibition covered the history of their camp on the Old Dean and the French citizens who were based locally. Exhibition talk and holiday events were organised.



Dawn Buckley is an Art Therapist and artist. Her work is vibrant and captivating and inspired by her own mental health awareness. Dawn gave a talk on her work and therapy.



'Crazy Art' paintings by Alex Webster, one of our volunteers who sadly passed away in 2021. A combined exhibition; retrospective of his work displayed alongside Christmas gifts and toys from the past.



Over 25 original maps created by Robert Morden formed the exhibition, each were the collection of retired Surveyor, Chris Hine. Chris kindly talked on his collection and love of the maps. 7 were sold to 'new collectors'

8.0 Outreach and Social Media

Our Education Officer, Kathy Joice has continued with the online provision for schools and care homes. The latter has not been as busy due to the lingering pandemic this year. She has worked on two major projects, Free French Workshops held in local schools (with Project Officer David Bedward) as part of the Free French Forces exhibition and 'war time memories' project with Adult Social Services – training volunteers to interview veterans next year.

The online presence has grown with regular Facebook posts and updating the museum website. We had between 400-500 Facebook engagements from our posts and over 37000 web hits.

Calendar 2021 and 2022

We work with our voluntary calendar committee to produce calendar on heritage themes.

2022 – The Royal Associations of Surrey Heath – celebrating the Queen's Platinum Jubilee and the Royal Associations of our area.