

Surrey Heath Museum

2017/18 Report



Surrey Heath Museum, Knoll Road, Camberley, GU15 3HD.

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Open Wednesday to Saturday 11.00 a.m. – 5.00 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. It remains in this location.



Newstead, Knoll Road



Frimley and Camberley UDC Offices, London Road

2.0 Mission Statement

“The Preservation, management and enhancement of a representative local collection for the Borough of Surrey Heath’.

3.0 The Collections



Museum Shop and farming display



Mammoth Tooth

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 c.16,500 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) are in the museum’s ownership. 10 of George Kenner’s paintings are currently on loan to Galleries of Justice, Nottingham for an exhibition on 1WW Internment Camps in UK. The museum has connections with San Francisco University (photographs by Edward Mendell, international wildlife

and tribespeople, who lived in Windlesham) and the Imperial War Museum (collections by George Kenner, WWI German prisoner of war based in Frith Hill). The permanent displays tell the story of the industrial and social history of Surrey Heath and have been in situ since c. 1987. A very small percentage of the museum collection is currently on display although the exhibitions programme has 2 to 3 collection based exhibitions yearly. The displays need updating, however, there are regular plans to move/develop the museum which never materialise and the establishment remains in a state of flux.

There are 2 collection stores – one in the basement of Surrey Heath House and the second at the back of Bagshot Library. The museum was removed from the Arts Council registration scheme in October 2010. The reasons are unclear - possibly due to legal ownership, responsibility of the collection and cataloguing standards. For the last 4 years the museum team and group of volunteers have been auditing the collection and preparing the museum for registration..

4.0 The Closing of the Museum

In 2017, the museum team began a consultation period to find out what visitors and non-visitors wanted from the service. Holding community meetings and a consultation survey. There were three choices;

1. Close down the location and have a moveable museum.
2. Change the location to the Mall, Camberley.
3. Stay as we are and redevelop the displays.

A visitor and non-visitor survey was completed with 327 returns. The results are at the end of the report. As a result of the consultation, a SHBC full council report in December 2017 put forward the closure of the museum in its current location, to identify a future location/s and work towards the future 'museum without walls' concept; improving the on-line presence and support for a separate website, accreditation application and a new 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 exhibition, events, outreach and research access”.

The above council decision was difficult and met with upset amongst some stakeholders and local societies. SHMAG already occupied the Heritage Gallery at 33 Obelisk Way and were considering closure. The museum team were asked to look for new venues in the town centre and entered discussions with SHMAG to join together in the same location. This concept was met positively by SHBC, SHMAG and the local community. There was no agreed time limit for the closing of museum and amalgamation with SHMAG.

A selection of new acquisitions for 2017/18

Due to the uncertainty of the future the museum did not take on any new acquisitions, however, focussed on the collection audit work.

5.0 2017/18 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	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18
Visitor Numbers	4148	4567	4613	3364	
School Children taught	1011	932	1290	1058	
Web Hits	7180	9747	3230	undetermined	Undetermined
Events attendees	980 (33)	1534 (47) 268 (7)	1719 (49)	1670 (49)	1387
External Talks attendees	453 (13)	268 (7)	165 (6)	183	173
Enquiries	367	380	349	423	327
Income					
Schools	£860.14	970	1726		1190
Sales of items	£2281.02	3018	2856	2147	2109
Donations/Other	£305.56	1440	113	1157	1157
Grant	£1,500	13939	2911	1848	1848
Commission	£127				
Fees & Charges		978.37	1584	992	992
Total Income	£5074.17	£19,367.	£9190	£8,434	£7296
	Maintaining shop sales	High figure due to funding to clean war memorial.	High shop sales and increased income from education workshops.		

6.0 Staffing

Gill Barnes-Riding, Senior Heritage Officer – 30 hours per week.

Kathy Joice – Heritage and Outreach Officer – 28 hours per week.

Mick Bacon – Heritage Assistant – 14 hours per week.

Our Heritage Assistant, Kathy Joice, was promoted to Heritage and Outreach Officer, after Verity Kerins' departure. Mick Bacon, a volunteer, successfully applied for the Heritage Assistant position. We were sorry to see Verity go, however, she secured a position nearer her home of Southampton. There are 20 volunteers helping with archive work, collection work, front desk duties and exhibition/events. Three volunteer 'get togethers' have been organised seeking their feedback on progress - summer picnic, Christmas meal and bacon and bagels morning. Volunteer hours equate to c. 1000 staff hours per year.

We have also taken on work experience placements from a number of schools locally including Farnborough College of Technology, Travel and Tourism and Coppice Spring School.

7.0 The Friends of Surrey Heath Museum and Surrey Heath Museum Action Group

The Friends of Surrey Heath Museum have existed since 1987. As the committee is becoming older and not able to commit the same, plus the closure of the museum, it was felt the time had come for them to disband and hand the reigns over to a new 'Heritage Supporters' Group'.

Surrey Heath Museum Action Group (SHMAG)

SHMAG was set up to prevent the feared closure of the Museum and to expand Museum facilities by providing greater display areas (including art, photography and archaeology), research facilities, and increasing local involvement.

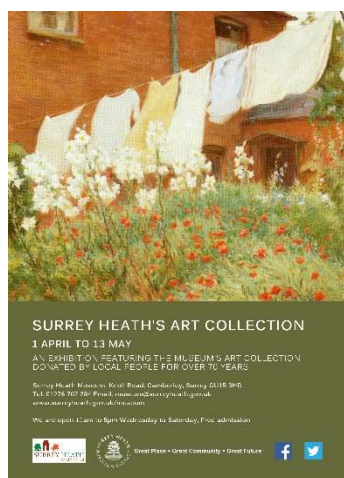
Since Aug 2009 SHMAG has run a Heritage Gallery in the Mall in vacant premises leased to Surrey Heath Archaeology and Heritage Trust. They have had four locations (The Mall Square, Park Street and 3 units in Obelisk Way) and were closed for 18 months in 2012/13 when the Mall lacked vacant commercial premises. The group exists to promote the museum and has a two floor display area with local history, art and photography displays from over 45 local societies. DVDs produced locally on historical themes are played continuously on the first floor. There is a programme of weekly lectures by local speakers on a range of topics. SHMAG also works closely with the Museum to produce an annual calendar. Funds are generated and used to provide the Museum with specific help.

April 2015 to March 2016 = 6641 visitors

April 2016 to March 2017 = 6100 visitors

No visitor number for April 2017 to March 2018.

8.0 Exhibition and Event Programme



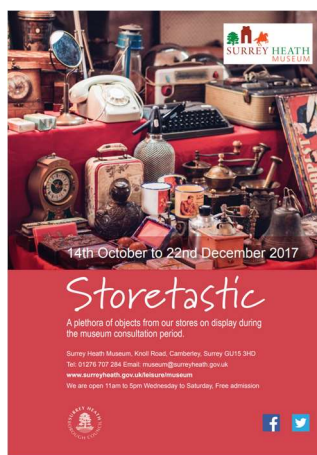
An exhibition using the museum's varied and interesting art collection. It was an opportunity to bring out a lot of the paintings rarely exhibited and covered 150 years.



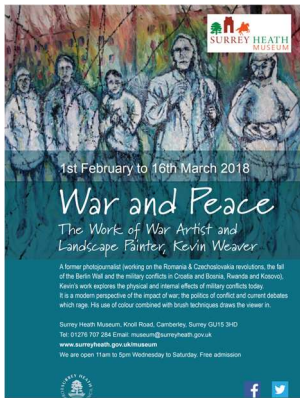
The Ron Francis collection dates from 1946 to mid 1990s and covers the events, passports, townscapes etc. His collection has been catalogued by the U3A and is now available online.



A community engagement exhibition on the cultural make up of the area with 10 people from different countries, who have made Surrey Heath their home.



The Museum has spent 5 years auditing the collection. The exhibition displayed a diverse range of material and some of our most special items.



Kevin Weaver was a war correspondent during the Croatian War. His work is inspired by his experiences and the emotional impact. It was a thought provoking and evocative exhibition with hard hitting work. He also held a talk on his work. The exhibition was the last one held at the Surrey Heath House venue.

Events:

Events and Activities 2017

Local History Events

May – Local and Community History Month will be celebrated throughout May on our social media sites, so follow us on Facebook and Twitter

Sat 20 May – Behind the Scenes Store Tour
Free tours every hour from 11am til 2pm

Heritage Open Days 7–9 Sept
See our website for more details about our HOD events

Surrey Heath Heritage Walks

Find out about the history of our area on these walking tours. Please book in advance

- Fri 19 May – National Rifle Association Walk, Bisley** 6–8pm, £3
- Thurs 25 May – North Camberley** 6–7.30pm, £2.50
- Thurs 15 June – Central Camberley** 6–7.30pm, £2.50
- Thurs 22 June – Bagshot** 6–7.30pm, £2.50
- Wed 5 July – RMA Monuments and Memorials**
9.30am–12.30pm, £25 includes light refreshments
- Thursday 6 July – South Camberley** 6–7.30pm, £2.50
- Wed 19 July – Basingstoke Canal** 6–8pm, £5
- Thurs 24 Aug – Inbetween Walk – Camberley to Yorktown** 6–7.30pm, £2.50
- Thurs 21 Sept – Frimley** 5.30–7pm £2.50

Children's Activities

Family Fun: school holiday and special activities for children aged 4–12yrs

- Fri 2 June – Cultural Clothes** Exploring costumes from around the world through craft and dress-up Drop-in 11am–4.30pm, Free

Toddler Tuesdays

Free drop-in fun and craft sessions for the under 5s, 10.30am – 12noon (50p per child suggested donation)

- 13 June – Father's Day Card**
- 11 July – Finger Puppets**

Toddlers' Saturday Spin-offs

It's like Toddler Tuesdays but on a Saturday, older kids welcome too, 10.30am 12noon (50p per child suggested donation)

- 27 May – Ramadan: Lanterns and Advent Calendars**
- 1 July – Flags**

9.0 Complete Results from Sept to Dec 2017 Consultation (Summary as at 12-01-18)

The comments and figures identified have been gathered from both the Internet (271) and paper (153) copy completed surveys submitted, a combined total of 424 surveys were completed. The main figures are shown as a percentage with the actual number of people in brackets.

Q1 & Q2. Were you aware Surrey Heath had a Museum and where it was located? Answered 424, Skipped 0, % Answered 100% for both questions.

Of the 424 responses 97% said they were aware of the museum of which 91% knew where it was.

Q3. Have you visited Surrey Heath Museum (Internet only Question)? Answered 141, Skipped 130, % Answered 27% (Total of internet surveys is 271)

This question was answered by 52% (141) with 48% (130) choosing not to answer the question.

Of those that did 70% (89) said yes.

Q4. If you said Yes to Q3, how often have you visited Surrey Heath Museum? (Internet only question). Answered 78 Skipped 193 % Answered 29%

Only 29% (78) answered this question, with the highest percent of 37% (29) saying they had only visited once. With 28% (22) visiting up to four times a year.

Q5. Surrey Heath Museum Services – Answered 410, Skipped 14, % Answered 97%

The services that people were aware of ranged from 68% (278) knowing that the museum changed its exhibits and events, 52% (213) knew the museum carried out School Holiday Activities and Family Fun events (50% 203) and 58% (236) were aware of the school learning sessions. At the bottom end of the spectrum only 25% (100) knew the museum provided education loan boxes, with 25% (102) knowing they could look up the museum collection online.

Q6. What would encourage them to come to the museum? Answered 413, Skipped 11, % Answered 97%

67% (278) wanted more talks about local history, 65% (267) said that the museum needed to improve on the publicity for exhibits and events. A further 62% (255) wanting more guided tours in other local areas (across county boundaries). Whilst 53% (218) would like to see more information available for researching local history. However, at the other end of the table only 15% (60) wanted any form of audio narration, most preferred to talk to a member of the museum staff.

Other ideas of note where: - Answered 211, Skipped 202, %-Answered 49%

83% (175) Wanted to see more photographs and artefacts of the local area. 68% (144) thought that they would prefer hands on sessions for children and adults where they can learn about artefacts and what their relevance is to the local area. 68% (144) wanted to include cross boundary publicity to encourage those close by in other counties to benefit from the services provided by the museum.

78% (165) thought that a timeline through history of Camberley and its surrounding areas would encourage more people to visit. 71% (149) would like to see more local history books specific to Camberley and Surrey Heath and include postcards of Camberley and the surrounding areas, which may include other artists work i.e. from the Ron Francis collection.

65% (138) Thought the museum should become the main focus for Arts and Culture in and around Camberley and that a way forward is to host special evenings where local artists can hold showings of their works and be available for guests to talk to.

Other comments included, the museum moving to a more central location (43% (91)), Improve signage to include more in the town and on the A30 40% (85) and incorporate local historical buildings/monuments that link into displays at the museum.

Q7. Themes and Topics, they would like to see at the museum Answered 422, Skipped 2, % Answered 100.

78%, (324) wanted information on local historic buildings/architecture linked into museum displays or historic events (73%, (307)). Other areas such as archaeology (65%, (276)), Famous local personalities (65%, (276)), Education (school life) 56% (235) Domestic Past 54%, (229) and natural history (54%, (227)) where what people would like to see in the museum displays.

However, the figures show that only 27% (113) wanted to see exhibits/displays for medical/surgical and only 27% (112) wanted to see any display on Commerce and trades.

Other: Answered by 198, % Answered 47% Ideas of note were:

- 93% (1167) wanted to see a timeline of the origin of Camberley town which identifies the beginning as Cambridge Town to what it is now. The timeline should highlight important events and how they affected the change in the local areas.
- 75% (152) A scheme of buildings/historic sites having a plaque to identify the structure which then leads them to the museum and further information on what they have seen.
- 61% (125) Suggested that the museum includes cross boundary publicity to encourage those close by in other counties to benefit from the services provided by the museum.
- 60% (99) would like to see more Reminiscence sessions, both individually and as a group.
- 54% (93) For the museum hosts special evenings where local artists can show off their works and be available for guests to talk to.

Q8. Visiting Other Museums – Answered 237, Skipped 187, % Answered 56%

This information identifies many museums both in the UK and Europe to USA and other countries. There is not much we can glean from this question other than the people that answered this question (56%), most had already visited Surrey Heath Museum.

Q9. What Features of other Museums did they like? Answered 154, Skipped 270, % Answered 36%

There were 33 different points raised, the key ones identified were those that were listed by 60% plus and that have not already been mentioned:

- Talking to staff about the exhibits/displays
- Identifying the Roman history in the local area.
- Showing the domestic past and comparing to current times.
- Hands on, learning more about artefacts held in the museum by touch and listening to the experts.
- Historical facts about the local area.
- Good permanent displays, well light and appropriate to local area.
- Natural History of the area.

Q10. Where would you look for information on the Surrey Heath Museum? Answered 345, Skipped 79, % Answered 81%

The main place they would look is the local libraries (74%, (254)) and Surrey Heath Borough Council website (73%, (252)). Whilst only 27% (93) would look at Surrey Heath Borough Boards because they felt the boards were not kept up to date, 16% (63) would use the Community Facebook pages. and only 12% (40) would use twitter.

30% (104) came up with other places of note they would look at:

- Camberley Theatre Booklet/Programs 84% (87)
- Talking to staff at the museum 71% (74)
- Camberley News Paper (64%) 67
- Newsletter 63% (66)
- Email 54% (56)

Q11. Comments or suggestions on how Surrey Heath Museum can improve Answered 209, Skipped 215, % Answered 49%

Just under half (49%) of people answered this question which resulted in 30+ ideas. Although several suggested that the Museum should be moved to a more central location which would give the museum a higher profile and improve accessibility, the rest could be summed up in to the areas below:

- **Communication/Publicity** – expand our audience to include those in Hampshire and Berkshire which are located near to the museum by use of local radio programmes/newspapers, flyers and by keeping notice boards up to date and make the information ‘standout’ from the rest.
- **Produce a monthly /quarterly booklet** to show off what the museum does, encourage local societies to advertise for a small fee and in return hold special events in the museum so they can show off their work, e.g. Photographic, Local History and Archaeology groups. This booklet can then be emailed to the Museum’s email list and included local schools, churches and colleges, scouts/cubs etc.
- **Carryout workshops** based on old crafts/trades and/or teaching how to carryout research using the museums and libraries facilities.
- **Exhibits/Displays** - The other ideas/suggestions featured improve both to the permanent displays in the form of a time line as suggested earlier and get local societies more involved which help expand current mailing lists.
- **Hold charity events** to bring money into Surrey Heath Museum to help pay for extra publicity and to give to local charities.

Q12. Are you Male or Female? Answered 410, Skipped 14, % Answered 97%

This was answered by 97% of those surveyed and identified a good spread, males 41% (168) and females at 48% (198) and 11% (44) preferred not to say.

Q13. What is your Age Group? Answered 376, Skipped 48, % Answered 89%

89% (376) answered this question of which 70% (263) where in the age group 55-64 and above. Only 30% (113) were under 55 with only 5% (18) being under 25.

Q14 + Q15. Do you have children? If so what age?

Q14. Answered 353, Skipped 71, % Answered 83% - Yes 63% (224) No 37% (129)

Q15. Answered 276, Skipped 148, % Answered 65%

Unfortunately, these figures are miss-leading as those in the higher age groups have said yes, but marked them as 13 & Over (70%, (193), and over when in fact their children are now adults (unless Camberley has a high number of 65-year olds with young children).

Q16. Would you be interested in receiving information about Surrey Heath Museum? Answered 349, Skipped 75, % Answered 82%

77% (268) of those who answered said yes to this question and their details will be added to the Surrey Heath Museum mailing list.

Summary

People want a museum in which they can interact between the staff, artefacts and exhibits whilst getting to know the area that Surrey Heath Borough covers. The museum needs to improve its communication and use the technology available to encourage other county towns close to Camberley, as well as attracting younger people to visit and use their Museum.

This can only be achieved with the help of the relevant departments within Surrey Heath Borough Council to talk to their counter parts in Hampshire and Berkshire and by using the assets available such as Camberley Theatre to improving the messages the museum sends out to its target audience and probably the most important, better signage from the A30 and around Camberley to let those passing know Surrey Heath Has a Museum and it is located in Camberley.

The figures quoted above can be found on the excel spreadsheet (on the museums main drive) which shows all the results to each question in percentages, actual numbers of those answering the questions both by numbers and graphs.

Results and Summary compiled by Mick Bacon