## Friends of the Willis Museum Newsletter, September 2025





A wounded World War I soldier receives immediate treatment close to the front line before being evacuated by horse drawn ambulance, a scene realistically recreated at the Museum of Military Medicine visited by a group of Friends on August 7

'The Friends' was founded in 1978 to "promote, support and improve the Willis Museum." Meetings are held on the third Thursday of the month for ten months of the year, and other events are arranged from time to time. Registered Charity no 280406.

Annual subscription £15. Visitor for one meeting £5

Your committee: Derek Anthony (Chairman), David Wickens (Deputy Chairman and Programme Secretary); Ian Scott (Treasurer); Steve Crudge (Publicity and Minutes); John Hollands (Publicity and Newsletter); Barbara Johnson (Membership Secretary); Stuart Parker (Assistant Programme Secretary); Sophie McLean (General Manager, ex officio); Lynn Martin (Co-opted)

This newsletter was compiled and edited by John Hollands and proofread and distributed by Derek Anthony.

Contact us c/o the museum, or by email at enquiries@friendsofthewillis

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### From the Chairman, Derek Anthony

Welcome to the Autumn 2025 issue of our newsletter. I do hope that you have had a relaxing and enjoyable Summer.

Firstly, I would like to thank everyone who has renewed their membership for another 12 months. For anyone who has not yet renewed, it is not too late. Send your form and subscription to Barbara Johnson, Membership Secretary, before the end of September and she will be delighted to add your name to the list of this year's members. Barbara's contact details are as follows:-

3 Hillstead Court, Cliddesden Road, Basingstoke, RG21 3PT, Phone 01256 326191. Email <a href="mailto:edandbarbjohnson@gmail.com">edandbarbjohnson@gmail.com</a>

Once again this year our Programme Secretary, David Wickens, has arranged a varied and very interesting programme of talks, subjects include Charles I, Edwina Mountbatten and the Spitfire.

Please be sure to put the date of this year's Annual General Meeting into your diary – Thursday October 16<sup>th</sup> – at 7.30pm in the Willis Museum. All the relevant documents will be sent to you ahead of the meeting. The AGM is an important opportunity for us to look back over the past 12 months and into the future. After the formal AGM we are planning a special celebration to commemorate the birth of Jane Austen, 250 years ago in 1775. A celebration which will include refreshments.

We are always looking to add new blood and to strengthen our committee. If you think that you might be able to help please do contact me and I will be happy to explain what is involved. My phone number is 01256 322073 and my email address is <a href="mailto:derekganthony@btinternet.com">derekganthony@btinternet.com</a>

### A message from our new General Manager, Sophie McClean

Dear Friends.

I wanted to take this opportunity to introduce myself as the new General Manager at the Willis Museum & Sainsbury Gallery. I'm really excited to be joining the team and taking the helm at my local town museum!

After 14 years (and 20 years working for HCC/HCT) Jenny Stevens stepped down from her role, and I have been very lucky to have had the last two months to work with her since returning from maternity leave. This has really helped me to learn the ropes in preparation for me being handed responsibility for the museum.

I thought it would be helpful if I provided a bit more background on myself and my experience, and what I'll be focusing on in the next few months. I have a long history with the Willis Museum, as my

page 3 very first paid job in the museum sector was to run the EDGE Project, an initiative to engage young people with museums that was based here and managed by Hampshire Museum & Galleries Trust. This was back in 2009, and I worked for HMGT running various community engagement projects and initiatives, before taking over the day to day management of the Curtis Museum & Allen Gallery in Alton back in 2011. I learnt a lot about managing buildings and volunteer teams in this role, before I moved on to a position with what was then HCC's Museum & Archives service delivering the schools programme for Andover Museum / Museum of the Iron Age and the Willis Museum. I really enjoyed delivering sessions with school groups in the Archaeology Gallery, and I learnt a lot about the local area and history (albeit now I would be a little rusty!). I finished in that role in 2016, and I have worked at various HCT venues over the last few years, including a short term secondment to museum development which supported museums around Hampshire & the Isle of Wight. This was a great role to learn more about the challenges museums are facing at the moment, and also how other museums work. For the majority of that time though, I returned to Alton to manage the venues once again, this time with a larger remit. I am proud to have been involved in the set up work for the Allen Gallery's successful National Lottery Heritage Fund bid for a complete refurbishment, something which it has been in need of for a very long time.

I thought it would also be helpful to give you an update about what's happening in the museum going forward. We have had a really successful start to our *Michael Rosen The Illustrators* exhibition, which continues until 2 November. Then, it's all about Jane Austen! We have the *Beyond the Bonnets: Working Women in Jane Austen's Novels* exhibition opening on the 12 November, and we have a range of events and activities planned running until 2026. I am just in the process of finalising our October half term plans, which include the return of our Museum by Torchlight event, family museum trails and a day looking at the English Civil War with Alan Turton. Please do check our website for details and to book.

I'm really looking forward to getting to know the Friends of the Willis Museum over the next few months. lf would like to get in touch please feel free to email sophie.mclean@hampshireculturaltrust.org.uk. As I am part-time (3 days a week) and the Willis manager role is a full-time role, we have managerial support for the Museum being provided by Mark Allison 2 days a week. He is also leading at Aldershot Military Museum, so for the majority of queries you may have about the Willis, I will be your main contact.

Very best wishes

Sophie

### Visit to the Museum of Military Medicine, by Derek Anthony

On Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> August a group of 15 "Friends" and their guests visited the Museum of Military medicine in Keogh Barracks, Ash Vale, near Aldershot.

The Group was hosted by David Wiggins, the Curator and fellow Friend of the Willis Museum. The visit consisted of a conducted tour of the Museum followed by refreshments and a chance to question David about the Museum and its exhibits.

The displays in the Museum celebrate the dedication, hard work and courage of the men and women who have served in the Military Medical Services over the past 200 years and more. At the same time, the Museum holds a wealth of archival material which can be made available to serious scholars and researchers.

*Page 4* The group was intrigued to see one of the exhibits, a print of an English Civil War soldier, reproduced from a painting by our own Alan Turton. What is more Alan was with us and the print was properly attributed to him.

We were privileged to be the last formal group to visit the Museum in its present location. Soon after our visit the staff were due to begin the task of packing up all of the Museum's contents in preparation for a move to a new location yet to be finalised. Our grateful thanks go to David and the Museum staff for a very informative and enjoyable visit. We wish them every success in their new home, where-ever it may be.

Below left: teeth extracted from Rudolf Hess who needed dental surgery whilst awaiting trial at Nurenburg. Right: Some of the party enjoying tea and biscuits at the end of the visit.





Goldings - Nos 3 & 5 London Road, Basingstoke: The Anatomy of a Building, by Bill Fergie

### Some recent history



I had the privilege of working in one of Basingstoke's most important historic buildings for almost fifteen years, and during that period I got to know it quite well (Figure 1 left). However, there was a period in the mid-1970 when the future of Goldings was in the balance and I might well have ended up working in the new but rather less attractive Civic Offices building next door. I need to explain.

In 1961 the Town Development Agreement between the then London County Council, Hampshire County Council and Basingstoke Borough Council had set the scene for the major

expansion of the town under the Town Development Act of 1952. Much of that expansion was intended to accommodate overspill population from London. The expansion was in full swing when the new Basingstoke District Council, the product of a major national reorganisation of local government, came into being on 1st April 1974. The new council assumed responsibility for an area previously administered by three councils - the former Basingstoke Borough, Basingstoke Rural District and Kingsclere and Whitchurch Rural District. The new authority exercised a greater range of powers than its predecessors, including some planning powers previously the responsibility of county councils. It would additionally soon take over responsibility for the implementation of the Town Development Agreement from the Joint Committee of the three participating authorities when this was wound up in 1977. When I arrived in 1974 large swathes of the historic town centre had

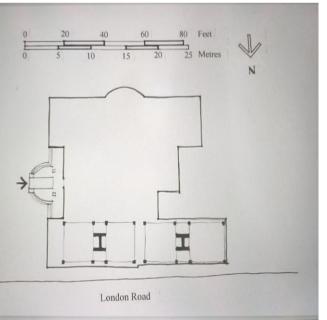
Page 5 already been demolished and redevelopment was well under way, together with a variety of new major infrastructure works around the town needed to accommodate all the planned growth.

The new district council not only had to absorb the employees of its three constituent authorities, located in a number of disparate offices, but also to recruit additional staff to carry out the new responsibilities it had been given. One of the buildings the new council inherited was Goldings, which had housed some of the staff of the former borough council. It also inherited the adjoining newly completed Civic Offices building. This had been conceived as a new home for the staff of the old borough, but the reorganisation of local government had intervened and it ended up housing staff of the new council. However, the new building was insufficient to meet all its needs and staff had to be accommodated in a number of locations around the town, including the offices of the former Basingstoke RDC in Eastlands on the opposite side of London Road. For some years the offices of the former Kingsclere and Whitchurch RDC, in Kingsclere, also had to be retained because of the shortage of space.

The elected representatives at the time were naturally very concerned with the "new" but rather less enthusiastic about conserving the "old". Although Goldings had housed some of the staff of the former borough, as well as the Mayor's Parlour, it was considered by some councillors, particularly a few who were newcomers to the town, to be a rather tired old building which had seen better days. They genuinely thought their staff should be housed in modern accommodation and there was a move to have it demolished. Fortunately Goldings was Grade 2 listed and because it was in the ownership of the local authority any formal application for demolition would have to be submitted to the Secretary of State. It was explained to the councillors that this would require the preparation of some form of cost/benefit analysis to justify demolition. To cut a long story short the councillors were persuaded that the case for demolition of a substantial listed building in reasonable repair might be quite difficult to make and opted for refurbishment. Perhaps because the planners had been prominent in promoting the case for the preservation of the building it was determined that they should be the ones to occupy it!

### The earliest buildings on the site.

Figure 2. (below) shows the present outline of the Goldings complex, and it will be noted that it incorporates two timber framed buildings on the London Road frontage, originally individually identified as Nos 3 and 5 London Road but now a little altered and incorporated within the larger building. Neither has been



scientifically dated and no written records of their construction have come to light. However, sufficient dating evidence now exists for such buildings for it to be predicted that they almost certainly date from the first quarter of the 17th century.1 The two houses are of a type known as "lobby-entry" houses, and this became a standard plan type locally from the second half of the 16th century until well into the 17th century. Its plan form was so successful that it was still being built when brick took over from timber as the main local building material. The two now incorporated into the Goldings complex represented the house in its basic form, with a small central bay containing the entrance lobby, the chimney stack and stairs, and a full bay on each side, one containing the hall/kitchen and the other the parlour. There were slight variations to this plan. The chimney often had back to back fireplaces, but some had just a single fireplace. Some houses had additional bays forming perhaps an additional service room or an inner room beyond the parlour.<sup>2</sup>

Both the lobby-entry houses at Goldings experienced major alteration over the years as they became part of the larger complex, but Figure 2 shows them diagrammatically in their original form.

### *Page 6* The mid-eighteenth century.

The first significant changes to the two lobby entry houses seem to have occurred from the middle of the eighteenth century. The more westerly house, No 3, lost its central chimney stack but two new chimneys,

with fireplaces at ground, first and attic floor levels, were built at either end just inside the gable timber frames. Apart from the changes necessitated by these alterations the timber frame of No 3 remained largely intact, as indicated in the photograph in Figure 3. (right). It should be noted that the western gable only became visible in the 1960s as a consequence of the demolition of adjoining properties to make way for highway improvements required as part of the town development scheme. Had there not been an adjoining building in the 18th century the west gable wall may well have been replaced in brickwork as was the



case with the street frontage. When the brickwork of that front elevation was given a rendered finish is not known, but the general desire to replace timber framing resulted in a number of Basingstoke's buildings having their frontages modernised in the 18th century, although their original internal framing behind often remained largely intact. Some of this modernisation was achieved by the addition of red mathematical tiles to give the impression of brickwork, and at No 3 a small part of the rear elevation was clad in such tiles. In this instance it may well have been as much to give weather protection to the exposed timber frame as to disguise it, because it was not visible from the street.

The other framed house, No 5, was rather more drastically modernised. Its frontage was similarly replaced in red brick, but it was given a rather more fashionable Georgian look with the incorporation of two Venetian windows to light ground floor rooms. However, the relatively low ceiling heights of the original timber frame did not lend themselves to such a relatively grand makeover and it was also decided to increase the floor to ceiling heights on both the ground and first floors. This was achieved by retaining the timber cross-frames and lifting the floors within them to give the additional height. As with No 3, the changes required the



demolition of the central chimney stack and the building of new chimneys. To accompany these changes the ground floor rooms were panelled and in the principal ground floor room the panelling included some fine paintings which have survived (see Figure 4, left). Pevsner suggests that the fittings in this room can be dated to c1765, and it was subsequently considered to be grand enough to serve as the Mayor's Parlour when the building was purchased for council offices in the 1920s. It is likely that there were also extensions to the rear, and this seems to be borne out by a map of 1762<sup>3</sup> which appears to show a building much larger than the original 17th century timber framed house. However, any evidence of the scale and form of such rear extensions was removed when even more extensive

building work was carried out at the end of the century.

It has always puzzled me that the extensive mid-century alterations to No5 to create a contemporary Georgian town house were carried out while retaining at least two of the four timber cross-frames of the early 17th century house. It undoubtedly made it very interesting for future building historians, but it must have been a nightmare devising a scaffolding system to hold it all together while still allowing the floors to be raised within the structure.





The creation of the mansion of c1800.

Although the precise date is not recorded, some time around the turn of the 18th century, perhaps a little prior to 1800, the complex was transformed into something much more akin to a Georgian country mansion. Richard Russell, a member of the family which owned the property between 1762 and the beginning of the 20th century, inherited the property in 1791 but died in 1795. He is likely to have been the person who initiated the major phase of extension as the dates seem entirely appropriate. The country mansion effect he probably sought to create was helped by the fact that Goldings was then located on the eastern edge of the town and a new owner was also able to create a fashionable landscaped park, complete with ha-ha to prevent grazing animals from encroaching onto the lawns and flowerbeds while giving the illusion of the park sweeping right up to the house. Both park and ha-ha are illustrated in Figure 5a and 5b (above). The park even incorporated the obligatory feature building in the distance. It is worth recording that after the park was acquired by the Council (to become the War Memorial Park in honour of those killed in the Great War) it was gradually municipalised by the introduction of formal flowerbeds and tennis courts surrounded by three metre high fencing. Additionally, a traditional cast iron bandstand was relocated to the centre of the park from its original location in the Fairfields area. Subsequent to the council's refurbishment of Goldings, the restoration of the park to something much closer to its original form was gradually achieved in consultation with the County Council's landscape architects.

The enlarging of the house was carried out in the then fashionable yellow bricks, and it has been suggested that they might have been the origin of the building's name. However, there is a record that the property was known as *Golds Plott* in 1683 and this is more likely to have been the origin of the name. Not only was the new construction work carried out in yellow brick, but mathematical tiles were produced in the same material so that the original house on the London Road frontage could be re-clad and old and new visually united. So called mathematical tiles are a form of tile hanging, but they were devised to imitate brickwork



and were therefore sometimes a means of updating old timber buildings to give the impression of solid brickwork. In the case of Goldings, it seems to have been a matter of covering up the red brick at modest expense and with the minimum encroachment onto the highway.

The changes made to the house at this time were on a grand scale and included the addition of two fine reception rooms on the south side. The photograph in Figure 6 (left) shows the interior of the salon with its fine Corinthian columns. The entrance was moved from London Road and a new entrance logia was

Page 8 created in the centre of a symmetrical east front. This entailed extending No 5 to the east by about two metres. Without knowing the financial resources of the owner it is difficult to know the full story, but there must be a suspicion that work on the south front was not completed in accordance with the original plans. The photograph shown in Figure 7, (left) taken before the Council's restoration/extension in 1979, seems to suggest that the original intention was for a symmetrical south front with three windows either side of a bowed central section. As the photograph shows, only one ground floor window was constructed to the left of the bowed section before the work stopped.

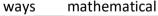
### The refurbishment of 'Goldings' in 1979.



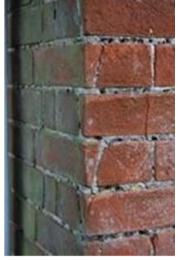
It is to the credit of the Council that once the decision had been taken to refurbish 'Goldings' to provide additional office space the work was carried out with care and to a good standard. The major new work followed a decision to complete the apparently unfinished work on the south front and provide a symmetrical facade. A yellow brick which closely matched the original was located from a demotion site in the south of the county and with the passage of time the photograph in Figure 8 (left) shows that the difference is now almost imperceptible. To lend authenticity the thickness of the walls of the extension matched that of the earlier work despite the fact that the extra

thickness was not structurally necessary. It did however allow sufficient depth for shutters to be provided to match the original work. The original Coade stone frieze of the original was also faithfully replicated in the parapet at roof level.

A slight amount of difficulty was experienced when an attempt was made to repair the mathematical tile cladding on the London Road frontage of No 5. Yellow brick mathematical tiles are relatively rare and were clearly originally specified to match the new building work. Corner mathematical tiles are even rarer because they are apparently extremely difficult to fire and end up distorting in the kiln. Despite this difficulty corner tiles were ordered to accommodate the slightly projecting central section of No 5's frontage. One of the







the facade.

tiles can be identified is by looking at window reveals and corners because of the usual lack of a corner tile. This is not the case at 'Goldings' however, and the double illustration in Figure 9 (left) compares its corner tile with a manufactured corner using plain red tiles. The red tile corner is in fact extremely neat but was probably only achieved by carefully trimming the tiles and breaking some of them in the process. Unfortunately, when the tiles were stripped from No 5 they were found to be in a very fragile state, and a large number were lost. The decision was therefore taken to re-use the salvaged tiles only to re-clad the projecting central section of the elevation, and to use brick slips (thin sections of brick) on the remainder of

Fortunately, the corner tiles proved to be rather more robust and were re-incorporated into the external corners of the re-clad central section.



the Council's in-house architects.

Page 9 The final challenge of the Council's refurbishment was to meet the legal requirement to provide ramped access to a public building. The main entrance on the eastern elevation was via a raised and colonnaded Portland stone logia with a Doric colonnade, with the logia being two steps above the adjacent ground level. The design solution was particularly sensitive as the photograph in Figure 10 (left) demonstrates. By adding a semi-circular extension to the logia and its steps in Portland stone sufficient space was provided to incorporate a short ramp. It is worth noting that the work to Goldings was designed and supervised by

For some years Goldings has been leased to Hampshire County Council and the ground floor rooms are currently in use as the local Register Office. This is an entirely appropriate use, and the grand interiors are much better suited to civil wedding ceremonies than merely providing space for the desks and filing cabinets associated with use as conventional office space.

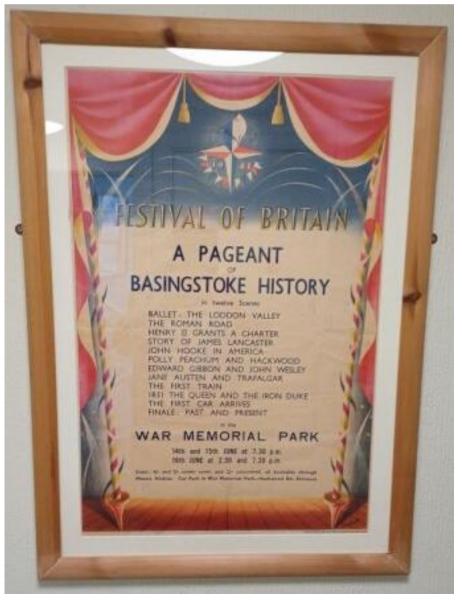
### Your attention is drawn ... to the Festival of Britain Pageant poster, by the Editor

The poster to which your attention is drawn occupies a strategic position on the first floor – opposite the public toilet!

Marking the centenary of the Great Exhibition of 1851, and largely funded by the government, the Festival was a

celebration of British achievements in the arts, sciences and industry, "aimed to uplift the spirits of a nation still recovering from the devastation of World War II", and "as a beacon of change" promoting modernity. Like the Editor older Friends may well recall being among the millions of visitors to the main London South Bank Festival site with its Dome of Discovery, 300 feet tall Skylon, and of course the Royal Festival Hall that still remains. Probably they also enjoyed the great festival fun fair in Battersea Park.

Undoubtedly the Festival really did uplift spirits everywhere in the country, and there must have been hundreds of local celebrations in the form of pageants, defined by *Chambers Dictionary* as a "spectacle" and "a series of tableaux or dramatic scenes connected with local history". This pageant was put on "at the request of the Mayor and Corporation of the Ancient Borough", and produced by the author and producer Stephen Usherwood. An article in the Hants and Berks Gazette of Friday June 22, 1951, contained in a scrapbook of local news items in the



### Page 10 museum archives, fills out some of the details.

The "stage" was the War Memorial Park lawn, and on it nearly three hundred persons appeared in costume. All the performances were by daylight, and the Gazette commented that this made it difficult to visualise the nighttime scenes with its flickering torches. Regarding costumes, "the kindness of interested persons" brought many old period clothes to light, so that only a quarter of them had to be hired, thus saving much expense.

The introductory ballet was performed by "pupils of Miss Peggy Raynbird". Then Members and friends of Worting Women's Institute presented a scene in which a Roman Centurion and his men oversaw a squad of ancient Britons building the road from Winchester to Silchester. Did this mean that some ladies acted male parts? The report does not say. ( Women did, of course, take on much manual work during the war.)

In the view of the Gazette the scene representing the granting of the royal charter by Henry III in 1296 to the Provost and Townspeople of Basingstoke lost some of its "dignity and solemnity" because of the emphasis placed on an entertainment for the royal party, taking the form of an enactment of St Michael slaying the dragon. This was presented by the Rotherwick Players, the Basingstoke Society and Mr W Stocker's P.T. class. The dragon, "a horrible scaly monster, appeared by permission of Children's Entertainment Films."

The scene recording history of Sir James Lancaster who sailed against the Armada, also involved Queen Elizabeth visiting the Vyne, and Sir James Deane the founder of the Almshouses in London Street. It was presented by The Grange Players, the Vine Hunt, the Choral Society and the High School. An entertainment for the Queen was provided by "Lancaster's Men", (North Foreland Lodge School) who demonstrated how to fence."

A Harvest Thanksgiving Scene involving John Hooke the town's first congregational minister was performed by "members of the Congregational Church and St Michael's Guild". John Hooke had emigrated to America and been recalled to England by Oliver Cromwell.

"In a short scene that would have looked much better at nighttime", the Thornycroft and Basingstoke Operatic Society presented Polly Peacham's elopement with the Duke of Bolton in 1729. Meeting her outside the theatre he carried her off in a sedan chair, the path lit by a flaming torch."

Members of Church Street Methodist Church depicted John Wesley preaching to crowds in Basingstoke. Also taking part were "past and present members of the Royal Hampshire Regiment" playing uncouth veterans of the Battle of Minden captivated by the power of Wesley's preaching.

The Townswomen's Guild, the Vine Hunt, and individual performers enacted a scene in the Market Place where Jane Austen is told news of the Battle of Trafalgar in which her brother Frank saw action. "The part of Jane was taken by a descendant of her family."

Lansing Bagnall created *Pegasus* an interpretation of the first railway engine to arrive in Basingstoke in 1839 "amidst clouds of steam and sparks", giving the audience "an insight to the uncomfortable and highly hazardous introduction of this new way of travel."

The scene involving Queen Victoria and the Iron Duke (of Wellington), the local Rangers, Scouts and Racing Pigeon Clubs, recalled the Duke's 1851 suggestion that sparrow hawks should be used to rid the Crystal Palace of sparrows and pigeons.

The transport event that followed related to the representation of what purported to be the first appearance of a motor car in Basingstoke, a Thornycroft in 1904; this came on stage accompanied by a "mighty explosion" as the contraption backfired. Here the producers appear to have been unaware that the first motor car to be seen in Basingstoke was that of the Honourable Evelyn Ellis who drove his Panhard-Levassor from Micheldever station to Datchet in 1897 in defiance of the Red Flag Act then in force.

Then as an "elderly gentleman of Basingstoke" explained to a young lady how Basingstoke "became fortunate enough" to possess such a beautiful War Memorial Park, the characters from the past silently filed on to the lawn and took their places for the final scene.

Page 11 The logo at the head of the poster will probably look very familiar to anyone who remembers 1951. Featuring

19 51

Britannia, bunting, and Union Jack colours arranged in a compass shape and known as the "Festival Star" it was designed by former Official War Time Poster Artist Abram Games (1914-1996).

Who printed this poster? Undoubtedly there were Basingstoke printers who could have made a good job of it, but it was actually "printed for HM Stationery Office by Fosh and Cross, Ltd, London", perhaps an indication that government approval had to be sought for local publicity that bore the official logo.

Will Basingstoke have an event in 2051 to mark the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Festival of Britain and the bicentenary of The Great Exhibition? If so, what do you think it will be like?

### Four things I learnt about Jane Austen's early life from *Jane Austen, A Life* by Claire Tomalin first published 1997 by Jenny Fairweather.

I am currently reading this excellent book and have found out some interesting aspects of Austen's early life. I thought I would pick out some of these for the newsletter.

- 1. Jane was looked after by a village woman from about 3 months old, after her christening. Mrs Austen breast fed Jane for the first three months of her life, then collected her when she was about 18 months. Jane's parents seemed to have done this with her other children too. Jane was the seventh child.
- 2. Jane knew a form of sign language and mentions talking "with my fingers" possibly to talk with her older brother George. He was nearly 10 years older, suffered from fits as a child and was brought up elsewhere, though was regularly with his family.
- 3. In Janes's early years, her parents were running a boarding school for boys, the eldest being 14 and 15. Mr Austen, in debt to many, needed more income. Aside from being the rector, he taught the boys and supervised their study. Mrs Austen had the work of the vegetable garden, poultry yard and dairy as well as supervising the preparation of meals for all the boys and family.
- 4. Jane was sent to boarding school aged 7, with Cassandra and a cousin, Jane Cooper (both about 10 to 11 years old). The school moved almost immediately from Oxford to Southampton. The latter, being a port city, was affected by an infectious fever from troops returning home from abroad. All the girls caught the fever and had to be collected and taken home. Jane was seriously ill from it and was in danger of her life. Jane Cooper's mother caught it from her daughter and died.

All these parts of Jane's early life experience must have fed into her attitudes and ultimately her writings.

### What's on at the Willis

Now until Nov 2: **Michael Rosen, the illustrators.** This new touring exhibition from the Heath Robinson Museum explores Michael Rosen's 50+ year career as a children's author and much more, and the talented artists that have illustrated his books including Quentin Blake, Helen Oxenbury, Chris Riddell and many more. Sainsbury Gallery

Now until Oct 5 **Me, myself and art, by Neal Whelan** *An intimate exploration of this artist's creative journey.* Basingstoke Community Gallery

Sept 21, 10 am – 4 pm: Adult's Collage Workshop- Inspired by Michael Rosen: The Illustrators - Brighter Futures, with artist Michael Williams. Through playful collage techniques. reconnect with your inner child and remember what it is like to experiment with your creativity and imagination. Archaeology Gallery, cost £55, concessions £49.50

Page 12 Oct 11 to Nov 9: The brutal tour, by photographer Heather Judge. Photos from the production of Complicité's "Drive your plow over the bones of the dead" based on the Nobel Prize winning novel by Olga Takarczuk, plus photos reflecting the artist's love of brutalist architecture. Basingstoke Community Gallery

Oct 16, 7.30pm: Friends AGM followed by a Jane Austen celebration with refreshments. *Please make every effort to attend this important event*. Archaeology Gallery

Oct 26, 2.00 pm: Sunday afternoon talk followed by tea or coffee and cake. **The military in the time of Jane Austen, by Alan Turton.** Archaeology Gallery

Admission £7 with £1 discount for Friends. If possible, please book online at

<u>www.hampshireculture.org.uk/willis-museum-and-sainsbury-gallery</u>. Use this code for your discount: FOWMTT1

Otherwise, phone 01256 465902 or call in.

Oct 27-31. School half-term holiday. Plans for a series of activities were still being finalized when this newsletter had to be sent to the printer. Details should be available on-line or from the museum by the time you read this or very soon afterwards.

Nov 12 – Feb 22: **Beyond the bonnets: working women in Jane Austen's novels.** What of the lives of the less often noticed working women incidental to Jane Austen's stories and the real working women that served the Austen family? This major Hampshire Cultural Trust exhibition made possible by the Heritage Fund commemorates the 250<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Jane's birth. Sainsbury Gallery

Nov 15 – Jan 11: **Inspired by Jane: a Basingstoke Art Club Exhibition.** *In this, their annual exhibition, The Art Club members present their own take on the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Jane Austen's birth.* Basingstoke Community Gallery

Nov 20, 7.30 pm: Friends' talk: Christmas traditions, by Diana White. Archaeology Gallery

Nov 21 10 am -4pm: Illustrations workshop inspired by "Beyond the bonnets" with artist Emily Harper. *Make and decorate Regency style paper-cut silhouette portraits.* £55 (Concessions £49.50)

Nov 30, 2pm; Sunday afternoon talk followed by tea or coffee and cake. **Food in the time of Jane Austen**, **by Jenny Stevens**. Archaeology Gallery. Booking as for Oct 26.

Dec 4 and Jan 29, 7 pm (café opened from 6.30): Mrs Martin's library: a theatrical monologue, by Pedlars & Petticoats (Jane Glennie and Terri Read). Mrs Martin's subscription library mentioned by Jane Austen in a letter was the best place in Basingstoke to borrow novels, but it's under threat from persons who believe novels are "dangerous". £10. Booking as for Oct 26.

Dec 14 Sunday afternoon talk followed by tea or coffee and cake: Jane Austen, from page to stage and screen, by Alex Walker. Booking as for Oct 26

Jan 15, 7.30 pm, Friends' talk: The man behind "Q", by Guy Caplin. Issue of January newsletter

There are access issues regarding events on the second floor. Please check with the museum (01256 465902) before booking if you have a mobility problem.

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### What's on elsewhere

Tadley and District History Society (TADS) www.tadshistory.com

Meeting on the second Monday of the month at Baughurst and Heath End Hall, Heath End Road RG26 5LU at 8.00 pm. Free to members. Non-members £3.00.

Oct 13: British railways during WWII, by Richard Marks

Nov 10: Beatrice Shilling, female aviation engineer, by Ken Fostekew

Jan 12: A history of the Atomic Weapons Establishment, by Garry George

Basingstoke Archaeological and Historical Society (BAHS) www.bahsoc.org.uk

Meeting at Church Cottage starting at 7.30 pm. Admission free for BAHS members, £3 for non-members. No need to pre-book. Secretary Penny Martin, 01256 974212, bahssecretary @outlook.com

Oct 6: A people apart: new insights into life, death and society in Iron Age Dorset, by Dr Martin Smith, Associate Professor of Biological Anthropology, University of Bournemouth

Nov 3: A lion in York? New evidence for animal spectacles in the arenas of the Roman north, by Dr John Pearce, Dept of Classics, Kings College, London

Dec 1: Jane Austen, woman and writer, by Maureen Stiller, Hon. Sec. Jane Austen Society

Curtis Museum, High St, Alton GU34 1AT, Open Tues -Sat, 1000-1630

**Until Nov 29, Free Dotty the Dodo's Autumn Fact Hunt**. *Dotty has hidden some more facts from the natural world around the museum. Can you find them all and earn your Dotty the Dodo sticker?* 

**Until Oct 24 & Nov 4 -29, Saxons Vs Vikings - Choose your side!** Activity trail with two routes, Saxons or Vikings! Choose a side and join its boot camp on this fun family trail. Why not make a Saxon or Viking shield to blend in with your chosen team? Free trail. Only £2 per shield with craft materials provided.

**Autumn half term: The Curious Case of the Haunted Exhibits**. Uncover the mystery on this spooky self-led activity trail. .For the youngest visitors there are hidden clay ghosts to find.

Oct 25- Nov 1: Communal Craft: The Ghostly Gathering - you can also decorate and add a ghost to a communal mural. Communal craft free, £2 per trail including Halloween prize

Oct 30, 11am—3pm (drop-in): Creepy Crafts Club: Make Your Own Ectoplasm. Slimy, gooey fun with our own museum "ectoplasm" mix! £2 per child.

Oct 31, 5.30pm - 7.30pm (drop in).: Museum by Torchlight. Explore the museum after dark! Includes torchlight trail, spooky storytelling, and Halloween challenges. £3.75 per child, adults free!

**Dec 2- Jan 3: Medieval Christmas** *Travel back in time to medieval Alton! Discover the origins of many traditions we still do today. Free activity trail, make and take crafts and a communal Christmas decoration!* 

Dec 17 and 31, 11am-3pm (drop-in.) Christmas Crafts Club Festive make and take crafts £2 per child

### Allen Gallery, 10-12 Church Street, Alton GU34 1AT Open Tues-Sat 1000-1600

Oct 25 -Nov 1, Pumpkin Spotter Trail. £2 per trail including Halloween prize

Oct 28; 11am - 3pm. Clay Ghost Workshop Make your own spooky (or silly!) ghost from air-dry clay. All. ages welcome, £5 per child

Oct 29, 6pm. Spooky Film Night – TBC Family-friendly Halloween film. Ticketed. Price tbc

For further information regarding activities and exhibitions at the Curtis Museum and Allen Gallery please visit <a href="https://www.hampshirecultural.org.uk">www.hampshirecultural.org.uk</a>.

**Friends of the Curtis Museum and Allen Gallery, Alton.** Meeting 7.30 pm at the Allen Gallery. No charge for non-members but donations are welcome. Further information from Caroline Taylor, carolinetaylor@hotmail.co.uk

Oct 9: Bees, by Lesley Ann Morris

Nov 13: Medieval women, by Caroline Stapleton

### Page 14 Tailpiece: another Hook's heritage poster, courtesy of Paul Cluett

# **Boundary Stone**

Hook only became a parish in its own marks the boundary between the old right in 1932, before which it comprised part of the three separate parishes of Newnham, Nately Scures and Odiham. This boundary stone Newnham and Nately parishes.





and its own well and is the oldest Elizabethan House in Hook. It was a It was built as a typical Yeoman farmer's house in 1564 with local oak farmhouse for over 200 years before being converted into three cottages In 1911 Pilgrims comprised three dwellings known as Hartletts cottages. in the early 19th century. In 1955 it reverted to a single dwelling.



Built in 1582, the Forge has been the home of local blacksmiths for hundreds of years. Metal agricultural components were made and coffins produced in the carpenter's shop which was demolished in the 1950s.

## Hook's Heritage Near Hartletts in 1911

Lees Farm



ees Farm cottage was constructed immediately prior to the English Civil War in 1641 as a 21/2 bay central chimney house. It adopted the name from Barnard Lee, tenant farmer, who farmed the

surrounding land for some 40 years before his death in 1788.

### **Hurst Barn**

to a private dwelling in Archives. It was built as a three-bay structure in but was later extended to The picture shows Hurst Barn in a 1552 drawing in Winchester College 1471 by William Hoke, six bays. It was converted



south east was known as 'The Park' and extended all the way to substantial structure built in 1895 by Colonel Barker. His land to the Ashwell's Copse. Hartletts' Park became a public amenity in 1991 Hartletts country house, demolished in 1975, was an impressive and when it was gifted as part of a housing development agreement.



Matthews, having been decommissioned as an inn 10 years previously. Constructed in 1573 the Raven Inn was for many years a Old Raven House was a private dwelling in 1911 occupied by Brig. post house and coaching inn. It is now a care home.



Lee's Farm

# **Jubilee Seat**

The iron seat marks the It has now been relocated to a site in front of the Parish Victoria's Diamond Jubilee in 1897. It was made at Hook Foundry. Until 2022 it was sited in front of one of the huge redwood trees leading to Geffery's House. of occasion

