

## **June 2026 at the Willis Museum**

### **Talks**

**Hosted by the Friends of the Willis Museum (Archaeology Gallery, second floor)**

**18 June, 7.30pm: The Woman who gave Birth to Rabbits by Bob Clarke**

*In 1726, Mary Toft from Godalming became the subject of considerable controversy when she tricked doctors into believing that she had given birth to rabbits. The resultant public mockery ruined the careers of several prominent surgeons.*

Doors open 7.10pm, raffle and refreshments available. Free to members, visitors £5 at the door. Some "first come, first served" seats have been reserved for non-members, booking essential. Call in to the Museum or phone 01256 465902.

*Looking Ahead:*

*Jul 16: A History of the Royal Army Medical Corps by David Wiggins*

**Hosted by the Museum Management (Archaeology Gallery, second floor)**

**28 June, 2pm - Sunday Afternoon Talk: A Field in Runnymede by Alan Turton**

*In 1215 King John put his seal to a document which was meant to put an end to a conflict between himself and his rebellious barons. Its effects at the time were short lived but, known later as Magna Carta, it has journeyed across the globe, and through history. It has become one of the most important documents of Medieval England.*

*Alan Turton is a military historian and has written a number of books on the English Civil War. He was curator of Basing House for 24 years.*

£7 (£6 for Friends) including tea, coffee and cake. If able, please book online at:

<https://www.hampshireculture.org.uk/event/sunday-tea-talk-field-runnymede-alan-turton>

- or drop into the museum.

*Looking ahead:*

*Sep 27: Hinton Ampner & Ralph Dutton by John Holden*

### **Special Exhibitions**

**Weds to Sats, 1000 – 1700, Suns 1000-1600**

**Sainsbury Gallery (ground floor)**

**14 Mar – 28 Jun: Bees! Hampshire's Hive of History & Nature**

*Bees are extraordinary creatures. From buzzing gardens to golden honey, they connect us to the natural world in remarkable ways. This exhibition explores their world, how they live, work and communicate, sometimes even through dance! Discover the power of pollination and why our future depends on theirs.*

*At the heart of the story is local man Charles Butler of Wootton St Lawrence, a seventeenth-century vicar, musician and pioneering observer of bees. His groundbreaking 1623 book 'The Feminine Monarchie' transformed beekeeping in England, popularising the idea of the queen bee and capturing the sounds, habits and hierarchy of the hive with extraordinary insight.*

Step inside an immersive hive installation, see a newly commissioned mural by fine artist Dan Wilson, and take part in hands-on activities and bee-themed games.

This exhibition has been created with the support of the Charles Butler Foundation.

Looking ahead:

from July: *The Nineties*

### **Basingstoke Community Gallery (first floor)**

#### **Until 14 Jun: Nature's Tiny Miracle: An Exhibition by Great Binfields Primary School**

Taking inspiration from our *Bees! Hampshire's Hive of History & Nature* exhibition, this collection of artwork has been created by pupils aged from 4 - 11 years. Using a variety of mixed media, the school have been focusing their work on the book 'Nature's Tiny Miracle' by Patricia Hegarty to help guide pupils in making their artwork.

#### **20 Jun – 12 Jul: Inclusion School Bee Exhibition**

The pupils of the Inclusion School have used "*Bees! Hampshire's Hive of History & Nature*" exhibition as a starting point to inspire their work within their art classes.

Looking Ahead:

from July: *Basingstoke in the 90s*

### **Special Event**

#### **14 Jun, 2pm: Honey Tasting Workshop with the Honey Guild**

Join honey sommelier Helen Rogers for this informative workshop, where participants will take a deep dive into the world of honey.

**What you will explore:**

- **The Journey of Honey:** How bees create it, how beekeepers carefully harvest the "liquid gold," and why humans have been obsessed with it throughout history and religious texts.
- **A World of Variety:** Why honey characteristics vary so significantly from place to place.
- **The Sensory Experience:** You will taste five distinct UK mono-floral honeys. Session leader Helen Rogers will guide the participants through the same sensory analysis techniques used by professional honey sommeliers to truly "profile" each variety.

The Honey Guild of the United Kingdom exists to evaluate the honey varieties made in the UK and to educate people in the sensory analysis of honey.

Helen Rogers is based in London and owns Highgate Honey, a beekeeping business with hives all around North London and has kept bees since 2012. She runs the training apiary for North London Beekeepers and runs regular honey tasting workshops.

Duration 1.5hrs, Cost £30/person, please book in advance:

<https://www.hampshireculture.org.uk/event/honey-tasting-workshop-honey-guild>