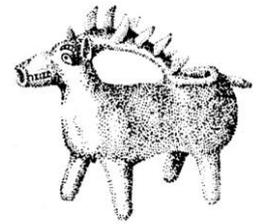


Friends of East Surrey Museum

NEWSLETTER

No. 147 Spring 2022



From the Curator

Peter Connelly



Welcome to the spring newsletter, a busy Christmas and an exciting year ahead. Most Covid restrictions in England have now been lifted, and things are beginning to get back to something like normal at last.

Back in November we dressed the museum for Christmas, the decorations were put up by the volunteers and the popular musical Christmas tree erected in the Victorian room. The 'Music at Christmas' display was put up as planned, and we played our part in the 'Christmas comes to Caterham' event on 27th November. This proved very popular, attracting almost ninety visitors on the day. The old Christmas 78 rpm records seemed particularly popular, and featured again for the Christmas museum open day on 15th December. We followed up in the week before Christmas with children's activities, making musical instruments.

In January, the 'Music at Christmas' display evolved into an exhibition on the history of recorded sound, with the addition of vintage records, a vintage tape recorder, cassette tapes, minidiscs and even into the 21st century with an iPod!

January also saw the museum chairman Rod Stead presenting to Tandridge Council's Strategy and Resources Committee, to secure a new lease on our building. A number of councillors spoke strongly in support of the museum, and the committee agreed to set up a working group to help the museum secure additional core funding. Negotiations on our new lease continue, and will hopefully be concluded soon; our future plans to refurbish our galleries and upgrade our heating cannot progress without security of tenure.

The New Year also brought donations of interesting artefacts. A picture of Humphrey Lyttleton at the Guards Depot has already been added to our Guards' exhibition. We also received an oil painting of the museum building done in the 1950s, when it was known as The Cottage, and a copy of the visitor's book of WW1 Furzedown Auxiliary Hospital, signed by many of the recovering soldiers. One of our old wooden display cabinets found a new home in Thomas Gainsborough's house in Sudbury, Suffolk. Our 'heritage column' in the local paper, the *Tandridge Independent* (formerly the *Caterham Independent*), also restarted after Christmas. February featured an Edwardian wedding at Titsey Church, and March will feature Tandridge Village School in the early years of the 20th century.

In February we put up a new display covering the history of scouts and guides in East Surrey, with many items kindly

loaned by groups in Godstone. The display has attracted a lot of interest to date. I was even interviewed by Nicky Patrick on BBC Radio Surrey on Saturday, 19th February (still available on BBC Sounds until 20th March).



Oil painting of The Cottage, Caterham Valley, by Doris Beer, 1952 (CATES 9298)

For the future, in March we will be marking the 150th anniversary of the FA Cup with a display of memorabilia and local stories, and also celebrating Her Majesty the Queen's Platinum Jubilee with plenty of royal memorabilia. The museum will also be attending the Platinum Jubilee picnic in Warlingham on 5th June which should be great fun. Other events we will be attending include the AGM of the Bourne Society on 26th March at the Soper Hall, and the Family History Study Day in Oxted on 9th April, so if you are coming to any of those, I hope to see you there.

Peter

Friends of East Surrey Museum

Membership subscriptions are due on 1st April. If you have not already paid, please send your payment of **£10.00** to:

**The Membership Secretary
East Surrey Museum
1 Stafford Road,
Caterham, Surrey, CR3 6JG**

Please make your cheque payable to **East Surrey Museum**. You can also pay your subscription by standing order. Membership and standing order forms can be obtained from the museum or downloaded from our website:

www.eastsurreymuseum.org.uk/friends.html

Thank you!

New Displays

The following new displays have been put up since the last newsletter.

History of Recorded Sound



This follows on from our 'Music at Christmas' display and features some of the same objects. It traces the development of sound recording technology and media from the 1900s to the 2000s. The earliest device on show is the Edison 'Gem' Model D phonograph of 1908 together with examples of the wax cylinders that it plays (*left*). The most recent is an iPod of 2001. In between we see vinyl records (78, 45 and 33½

rpm), reel-to-reel tapes, cassettes, minidisks and CDs, and the devices used to play them.

The display has been put together from items kindly loaned by Peter Connelly, Pat May, Jonathan Spencer and others, together with objects from the museum's collection. Thanks to everyone involved.

Gramophones and phonographs will be the subject of a talk by Peter Connelly on 17th March (see back page) during which Peter will demonstrate the operation of some of the devices.

Scouting and Guiding in East Surrey

This display is in the corridor leading to the Children's Room, where it can be seen until 16th April. It has been curated by Mark Wiles and Tracy Lovell. Much of the material on display has been kindly loaned by scout and guide groups in Godstone. Other items are from the museum's collection.

Using documents, pictures, badges and other material, the display illustrates the development of scouting and guiding in East Surrey from the organisations' origins in the 1900s to the present day.

As part of the display, our rarely seen child mannequin has been liberated from the inside store and dressed in a guide's uniform of the 1920s (*right*).



Children's Activities

Continuing our musical theme, our activity in the week before Christmas involved making a simple musical instrument from drinking straws and card. The pressures of Christmas shopping, and anxiety over the Covid pandemic were the probable reasons for a disappointing attendance, but the activity was enjoyed by the children that did take part.

The half-term activity in February was an old favourite that we have not run for a few years, making a thaumatrope. Making these simple optical toys proved to be very popular, and over eighty people (adults and children) came in over the two days.



Some of the thaumatropes made by the children

Thanks to Sue Williams for organising these activities, and all the volunteers who helped to run them.

Outreach and Visits



New volunteer Amy Holden, who is working towards her Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award, has begun a project to document the handling boxes of objects that we loan out to schools, care homes and other groups. The aim is for each box to be accompanied by a booklet containing a photograph and a well researched description of each object in it. The Grooming/Medical box (*left*) is the first one that Amy has completed.

Group visits to the museum are picking up again. On 2nd December we hosted the 1st Caterham beavers, and on 20th January we were visited by the 1st Whyteleafe cubs.

Nearly thirty year-4 students from Marden Park School came to the museum on 9th February in pursuit of their studies into Roman Britain. We split the class into three smaller groups, who each took turns to do recognition of Roman pottery with Rod Stead, Roman villas in East Surrey with Peter Connelly, and handling objects from the Iron Age and Roman cabinet with Ray Butler.

Displaying a Victorian Ensemble

Ros Rawling



In the exciting process of going through the textiles stored at the museum last summer we came upon this Victorian ensemble, which we placed in the Victorian Room for Christmas. The generous skirt is of rich red and black brocade, with a flat front rather than being a crinoline, so late Victorian, say 1880. It has a lace-edged 'parasol pocket' and space for a bustle. As we had not displayed a Victorian skirt for some years, we were not sure how to create and support the bustle, and even a visit to the Victoria and Albert Museum did not entirely progress our thoughts, so we managed with a cushion. We are learning and will do better next time.

This was a skirt and jacket, rather than a dress, and the jacket is black velvet, with a black lace collar decorated with jet beading. The sleeves are worked in stripes of black velvet between stripes of the red and black brocade and are edged with the same beaded black lace as the collar. It is exquisitely made inside, beautifully finished by hand and in very good condition. We have found that for costume historians, the construction of garments, and so the inside, is of great interest. Even in not such good condition as this, our costumes can still be studied.



A bustle, as would have been worn under the Victorian skirt, in the Victoria and Albert Museum

Our records regarding these particular garments are limited but the quality of the pieces and the lack of wear would indicate high status. You could think of them being worn by one of the ladies living in the grand Victorian houses along Harestone Valley Road in Caterham.

The Victorian ensemble will remain on show for the next few weeks and will then be put back into storage, to be replaced by another item from our textile collection.

Friends' Outing to East Grinstead Museum

Raymond Butler

A small group of Friends of East Surrey Museum made a very enjoyable and informative visit to East Grinstead Museum on 25th February. The museum is housed in a modern, purpose built building just off the High Street in East Grinstead, close to St Swithun's Church.

The exhibition space, located on the ground floor, is divided into two halves. One half deals with the general history of the town and surrounding area. A display of rural craft tools particularly caught our attention.

The second half tells the story of the Queen Victoria Hospital. Pioneering plastic surgery was performed there during the Second World War under the leadership of Mr (later Sir) Archibald McIndoe on Allied airmen disfigured by serious burns and other injuries. Airmen treated at the hospital subsequently formed the famous Guinea Pig Club. Of 649 members who survived the war only five remain alive today. We were given a guided tour of the gallery by Bob Marchant, who worked with McIndoe in the 1950s and was given honorary membership of the Guinea Pig Club. We were impressed by the display of a WW2 period operating table, a cabinet of rather terrifying surgical apparatus and a reconstruction of the Guinea Pig Club's bar.



The Friends with Bob Marchant at the museum. In the foreground, the WW2 period operating table.

We were also shown the well-resourced research room, where members of the public can carry out their own studies into the history of the local area. Afterwards we were allowed upstairs, where collections officer Jonathan Parrett showed us the museum's storeroom. This was reassuringly similar to our own storerooms, in both content and arrangement, except that it was much bigger. We took the opportunity to compare notes on subjects such as collections policies and use of information technology.

After our visit to the museum we retired to the bookshop on the other side of the High Street to browse the books and enjoy tea and cakes.

Thanks to Anthea Hopkins and Ros Rawling for organising the trip, and to the staff and volunteers at East Grinstead Museum for giving us such a warm welcome and allowing us into parts of the museum not usually open to the public.

Coffee Morning Talks

at East Surrey Museum

**Coffee/tea served at 10.45am
followed by an illustrated talk**

Thursday, 17th March

Phonographs and Gramophones

Peter Connelly

Thursday, 21st April

Looking into Romano-British Urns

Raymond Butler

Further talks are planned for
dates in **May** and **June**.
Please see the museum's
web site for details.

The East Surrey Museum

Annual General Meeting

will be held on

**Friday, 22nd July 2022
at 11.00 a.m.**

**at the Soper Hall
Harestone Valley Road
Caterham CR3 6HY**

***Applications to stand for election
to the museum's Management
Committee should be received by
the secretary, c/o the museum,
no later than 22nd June 2022.***

East Surrey Museum

Open Wednesday & Thursday 10.00am – 5.00pm
Saturday 10.30am – 4.00pm

1 Stafford Road, Caterham CR3 6JG
01883 340275
east surrey museum@gmail.com
www.eastsurreymuseum.org.uk
facebook.com/EastSurreyMuseum

A Model Round House Restored

Raymond Butler



This fine model of a late prehistoric round house (CATES 883) has been in the museum's collection since 1981, and may have been built by our first curator, Lesley Ketteringham. It was originally mounted on a large, rather over-engineered baseboard with a heavy perspex cover which made it impractical to put on display. Consequently it has languished in the outside store for the last ten years or more but has remained in excellent condition. We have now removed the cover and have been able to re-model and reduce the size of the baseboard without damaging the surface treatment. This has made it possible to put the model on display again.

The model is catalogued as an 'Iron Age hut from Coulsdon Woods.' Although there is evidence for Iron Age occupation in Coulsdon Woods, and structures there would have included round houses of this type, it seems likely that the model is based on evidence from excavations elsewhere. Circular houses also appeared in the Bronze Age, and we have displayed the model alongside Bronze Age objects in the John Bushby Room.

From the Editor

Raymond Butler



I hope you have enjoyed this issue of the newsletter. Articles and photographs for future editions are always welcome, and can be sent in by post or email (details below) or handed in at the museum. Thanks to everyone who has helped with this issue, especially Peter, Ros and Ray H.

Friends of East Surrey Museum Newsletter

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COPY DEADLINE

for items to be included in the next issue:
28th JUNE 2022

The editor reserves the right to edit as appropriate or shorten contributions according to the space available.