



## Notes on the history of Guildford Museum

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### Introduction

If you want to understand the story of Guildford Museum there is no better place to start than the newsletters of the Friends of Guildford Museum.

The Friends were set up by Matthew Alexander, Curator of Guildford Museum in 1995. Their main role was to take an interest in the museum and raise money.

Every year 2 newsletters were produced, edited by Eric Morgan. He produced every issue from January 1996 to December 2017 with contributions written by himself, curatorial staff and many other people. The newsletters make interesting reading for anyone involved with the museum. They document its story not just since 1995 but look back on earlier parts of its history.

The story of Guildford Museum is the tale of a partnership between Guildford Borough Council and the Surrey Archaeological Society. In 1898 the Council wanted an educational museum to go with its newly laid out Castle Grounds. It had the accommodation but not the ability to create a museum. Meanwhile, the SyAS had collections and experts but no base. And so, a partnership was born which lasted up to the present.

For me, the story of Guildford Museum shows that it can and should be of value to the town in a number of ways. It can raise the profile of the town, help create a sense of identity, build communities, contribute to education and benefit the local economy. I hope these notes will help the Council develop a clear set of objectives and define the benefits so that we are all clear about what we are trying to achieve, and Guildford gets the museum it deserves.

### Origins

#### 1885 - Guildford buys Castle Grounds

In 1885 Guildford Borough Council purchased the ruined great tower of Guildford Castle and the surrounding land. It laid out a municipal park which has been one of the jewels of the town ever since, frequently winning awards for its beautiful flower borders. Municipal parks were popping up in towns all over the country. It was the age for such things and a uniquely English contribution to urban design to meet the needs for fresh air in the ever-growing polluted towns of England. Battersea Park in London was one of the first, inspired by the royal parks.<sup>1</sup>

The Surrey Archaeology Society were quick to congratulate the town. They had a motive for they were having a spot of bother. Basically, the SyAS needed a home for its growing collection of books, prints and archaeological artefacts. In 1871 an agreement had been reached with Croydon Literary and Scientific Institution whereby all Surrey collections of the Society going forward would be stored free of charge and a catalogue made of them by the curator. (Interestingly Guildford Borough Council also supported an offer from the town's mechanics institute). However, the relationship with Croydon was a disaster. There were hardly any new acquisitions. There were stories of broken cases, and broken locks. The catalogue was never done. In 1892 the Honorary Secretary of the SyAS turned up to find the collections in a "deplorable condition", had a row with the librarian and was told to get packing. So, the collections went into store for 6 years until Guildford Museum opened its doors.

#### 1898 - How the SyAS came to Guildford

In the early part of Queen Victoria's reign there was a sudden widespread interest in archaeology and many county societies were founded. Sussex founded in 1846 was the model for Surrey which inspired Kent to form one. In 1854 a group of men met at the Bridge House hotel in Southwark to



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found the SyAS. In their enthusiasm they donated a number of important books from their private collections to form the nucleus of the SyAS Library.<sup>2</sup>

People often dismiss archaeology saying “I’m not a stones and bones” person. We really ought to ban such phrases because the SyAs collections cover everything. The original objectives of the SyAS were to collect and publish information on antiquities, architecture, costume, coins, civil history, records and “all other matters comprised under the head of archaeology”. The rescue of remains discovered through building works (particularly railways), and the preservation of existing structures were also stated. At the time there was a lot of interest in combining the arts and sciences and reaping the benefits of both. As a result, the collections of the Surrey Archaeological Society contain not only Prehistoric, Roman and Medieval artefacts, but also prints, maps, needlework. The research published, contains a lot of historical research in addition to excavation and finds reports.<sup>3</sup> The library was an important part of the society’s work. Along with the collections it represented the knowledge acquired over a century. It was also to be an important resource for historians and archaeologists. In an age before the internet sharing knowledge was difficult and libraries became the internet of their day. By 1872 the SyAS was part of a union of libraries sharing their publications. The union included 26 societies in Britain, four in America and one each in Tokyo, Spain and India.<sup>4</sup> So the library became a repository not just for information from Surrey but from across the world allowing members to benefit from the experiences and knowledge of archaeologists far and wide.

For the first few years the SyAS had no home but gradually acquired objects through collecting and excavation. At each AGM a rather quaintly named “Temporary Local Museum” was set up and people were invited to bring along objects of interest which were put in glass cases and protected by the Metropolitan police on one occasion. It very quickly became apparent that a permanent home would be needed for collections that were currently being kept in the homes of members. In 1855 the society had to turn down an offer of architectural fragments from Bermondsey Abbey due to lack of Space.

So, when in 1885 Guildford Borough Council bought the Castle Grounds, the SyAS hinted as part of its congratulations, that if the town could provide accommodation it would move its collection to the town. G.C. Williamson the honorary remembrancer in Guildford promoted the move which was approved in 1888 but had to wait until 1898 when the lease on the corner house in Castle Arch expired.

Williamson often gets a bad press for the many mistakes in his book “Guildford in Olden Time” but it was a milestone and the first modern history of the town. He was “Honorary Remembrancer” (a post created for him, I believe) and instrumental in setting up the Old Guildford Society. He was well connected and persuaded Princess Louise to step in and save what is now Lloyd’s bank, in the High Street. So, it is interesting and fitting to see him involved in the setting up of Guildford Museum<sup>5</sup>.

For that is what happened. Guildford got a museum and the SyAS got a home, having moved its collections six times in the previous 45 years. The location was Castle Arch House, one of the oldest houses in the town. Long assumed to be a 17<sup>th</sup> century house, in December 2006 the Friends Newsletter revealed that it had been dated to the Tudor period. It was dated via the Surrey Dendrochronology Project which started in 2003 and attempted to date 200 buildings. It is a typical hall and cross wing built up against the castle wall. The design is typical of Tudor and early Stuart buildings and was assumed to have been built around 1630 by John Carter but the testing showed a date of 1554 for the roof construction. Part of the process in testing was to take care not to date timbers that might have been reused from elsewhere, so this was a pretty reliable date for the original construction of the building. This came as a surprise and could mean that it was built by John



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Daborne, Keeper of the Castle in 1544. This is an early date for this type of roof construction. John Carter probably enlarged the house because the fireplace in the ironwork room is nearer 1630 on stylistic grounds although the one at the back where the Gertrude Jekyll collections could be Tudor.

### The relationship develops

The relationship between the SyAS and the Borough is interesting to discuss and very relevant today. The SyAS may have had some well-connected members but it was an academic organisation. It had a library, collections and lots of expertise but it lacked the funds to build or commercially lease a permanent home. Guildford Borough Council on the other hand had the funds to acquire property but no way of setting up a museum. It was an age when Councils were providing more and more services. Social improvement and education were important issues. So, it was a perfect partnership with both parties having something to gain and offer.

In 1903 the first curator and librarian, Frederick H Elsey was appointed who remained connected with the museum until his death in 1944<sup>6</sup>. The SyAS started to acquire objects that would have been given to the town if it had run its own museum. As a result, in 1905 the SyAS accepted the plaster White Hart inn sign from the Inn of the same name when it was demolished in 1903<sup>7</sup>. The site of the inn is now Sainsbury's in the High Street. The front of the current building dates from the 1980s (I believe) and was restored as a faithful reconstruction of the original inn.

### 1911 - Gertrude Jekyll Collection and museum extension

In 1907, however, the SyAS received an offer of a large collection which would change its relationship with the Borough. The garden designer, Gertrude Jekyll offered her collection of rural cottage furniture and utensils acquired over 30 years. It was and still is a very important social history collection. The society could not, however, afford the commercial rent on premises to store and display the collection<sup>8</sup>.

The Borough therefore agreed to build an extension to the museum. However, the rate payers were spared the expense of construction when Alderman Smallpiece stepped in and paid for it. His family had connections with the town going back generations and had long been closely associated with the Corporation. The extension opened in 1911 and the museum became known as "The Guildford Borough and Surrey Archaeological Society's Museum".

The museum was now jointly and equally run by the Borough and SyAS with the Borough contributing £25 pa and the SyAS £15pa. The theory continued that the town provided the building and the society provided the exhibits although the town was starting to acquire its own collections. Gertrude Jekyll's collections were displayed in full.

The library also grew and in 1929 the town purchased a garage next to the museum and converted it into a muniment room. The society's deeds and manuscripts were now moved there. As collecting continued the museum's running costs increased and the borough eventually took over the full running of the museum in 1933 but under the new agreement (renewed in 1953 and 1957) the SyAS had to deposit all its collections from the entire county (except graphics) in the museum. Who got the best deal is hard to say. Certainly the Council acquired a Surrey Archaeological Museum covering the entire county and had the opportunity to make the most of it.



### Discoveries

The SyAS was running a museum, adding to collections, publishing research and maintaining a library. It was also excavating. Today people often get turned off by flints and pottery fragments in museums unless they are very well displayed. What must be remembered, however, is that an archaeological dig is not a just window into the past. It is an event and many of the SyAS's excavations were very eventful. If their story along with their discoveries could be told, then the subject might reach out to a broader audience.

#### 1898-1903 - Waverley Abbey

Local to Guildford, although in the neighbouring borough are the remains of Waverley Abbey which the society excavated in 1898 to 1903 and published in the 1904 volume of the collections. The abbey was the first Dominican Abbey in England and had significant influence on Guildford. The monks built a series of bridges, along River Wey, of which the original Guildford Town Bridge was one until it was swept away by floods in 1904. The monks managed the wool industry which greatly benefited Guildford and the medieval barn at Wanborough was also associated with the abbey.

#### 1929 - Guildown Cemetery

One of the most important excavations in Guildford took place in 1929<sup>9</sup>. When Mr and Mrs Kempter's gardener found some remains in the back garden of a house on the Mount the SyAS stepped in. At the time, the over enthusiastic archaeologists thought they had uncovered the remains of a massacre recorded at Guildford shortly before the Norman conquest.

It is a shame there are no photos (that I know of) of the archaeologists in action because it must have been quite a scene. The back garden of a suburban house was dug up. The gardeners were released to help, and the family provided lunch.

The excitement of Lowther, the lead archaeologist on site must have grown daily as the remains of over 200 bodies were discovered. Gradually he pieced together an argument that these were the bodies from a massacre recorded in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. Edward the Confessor and his brother Alfred fled England when their father was defeated and killed by King Cnut, who then married their mother. A few years later, believing there was support for him, Alfred returned. At Guildford, however, he was tricked. After a banquet in the town one night he was taken up to the Hogs Back. "Look around you", he was told as he looked at the views from the hills. "All this will be yours". Then his party were attacked and murdered. (NOTE: versions of the story vary and not all put it at Guildford).

Had Lowther discovered the bodies from the massacre? Certainly, the story had captured the imagination and a myth was born. As recently as 2018 there have been articles still claiming there was a link. However, archaeologists have disputed Lowther's interpretation for one of less national importance but of vital local importance. For here we have the some of the original Guildfordians. The bodies come from different periods in the Saxon period. 35 came from a pagan cemetery and 186 were probably executions victims from a later period, the largest such site ever discovered.<sup>10</sup> Many of the earlier graves were of women and children, some containing possessions. Food or drinking vessels were often found by their heads. Bead necklaces, bracelets, brooches. Buttons and even a crystal pendant were discovered. Two conical glass beakers were also found of amber coloured glass and thought to originate from the continent. An article in the Friends Newsletter (Dec 2012) describes a visit to the garden in the 1990s (I presume) when Eric Morgan was writing articles for Blind Newspaper. In December 2000 Mary Alexander informed the Friends that the bones from the excavation were thought to have been lost in the war after being sent to the Royal College of



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Surgeons which was bombed. However, a third found their way to the Natural History Museum. There is a video of the Mary talking about the Saxon brooch on [www.exploringsurreypast.org.uk/brooch](http://www.exploringsurreypast.org.uk/brooch)

### 1974 - Dominican Friary Excavations

The demolition of the Friary Brewery in the late 1960s provided a chance to find the remains of the original medieval Dominican Friary. Excavations began in 1974 with a couple of trial trenches under the direction of the then curator, Felix Holling. Further excavations in 1974 and 1978 revealed the entire plan of the Friary. Many people will remember passing the hoardings with openings to allow the public to view the trenches and ruined foundations. The entire foundations of the friary were unearthed for everyone to see. What fascinated the macabre instincts of locals most was the discovery of over 100 skeletons. Here were ordinary Guildfordians and experts had an opportunity to learn more about their diet, health and lives. They were studied before reburial in St Mary's Churchyard in 1987. There was an interesting group in a mass grave, presumed to be plague victims and a lead coffin containing the remains of a wealthy woman who died in childbirth. Her name, Margaret Daubeny, was on the side of the coffin. The excavations were written up by Rob Poulton of the Surrey County Archaeological Unit and published by the Surrey Archaeological Society in 1984 as part of their research volume series.<sup>11</sup> As an addendum to this story, in December 2000 the Friends Newsletter reported that the British Museum had recently purchased the Sherbourne Missal, a medieval illuminated manuscript illustrated by John Siferwas, a monk who had been at the Guildford Friary. The Missal was scanned and can, I believe, be viewed online.

### 1985 - Wanborough Roman Temple Excavations

In the mid-1980s a metal detectorist discovered gold coins in a field at Wanborough. Under the law of treasure trove any items of gold discovered are automatically the property at the crown. An inquest was held in 1985 and the judge made the mistake of revealing the location of the site. Shortly afterwards thieves turned up with shovels and even mechanical diggers to unearth literally thousands of Roman and Iron Age coins which were then sold on the market. There were stories of diggers shovelling lorry loads of earth into trucks which were taken away and sifted through. The volume of coins flooding the market was so great that the price of Iron Age coins dropped. The police became involved and there was no option but to excavate the site. The Surrey Archaeological Society stepped in and discovered a Roman temple along with many finds. Four headdresses were discovered on this site along with other religious items. Only 7 headdresses had been previously discovered in Britain and only one in Surrey. Sceptre handles were also unearthed. In 1999 a further excavation revealed a second temple. The theft of the coins became national news and resulted in a change to the law covering treasure trove.

### 1990 - Excavations at Guildford Castle

It had long been known that there was more to Guildford Castle than the keep. Ruins in Castle Cliff Gardens proved there was more to discover, and the site remained unspoilt by later buildings. As a result, the Surrey Archaeological Society, Surrey County Excavation Unit, Guildford Museum and Guildford Borough Council came together to organise five summer excavations. The aim was to discover more about the town's castle whilst also promoting the role of archaeology. Both the Surrey Archaeological Society and the Surrey County Excavation Unit relied heavily on volunteers



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and the site was in a perfect town centre position to run a training excavation. In the first year (1990) over 150 people took part in the excavations which was as many as the site could hold. Guided tours were provided and over 600 school children came to see the excavations and learn about the castle. Each year the three-week excavation season was over subscribed as more finds were produced. The archive was deposited at Guildford Museum and a full report published by the SyAS in 2003. When the Castle was restored in 2003-4 a model was created based on the discoveries.

The excavations provided a great example of the interdependence of archaeology and documentary evidence. The archaeology produced odd sections of walls and in some cases just a few stones. Recreating the royal palace would have been impossible without an abundance of documents referring to building work. References here and there to how one building was close to another or a how a window was replaced, a wall whitewashed allowed a very detailed reconstruction to be made.

### 1991 - Museum Excavation Unit

One very interesting aspect of the museum story (covered in the first Friends newsletter) concerns the Museum Excavation Unit<sup>12</sup>. The official sounding title hides the fact that it was a couple of volunteers (initially) who funded their own efforts to rescue archaeology that would have been destroyed by builders.

John Boas, a builder and archaeologist, volunteering at the museum used his time and experience to watch building sites around the town and the results were startling. In Spring 1991 a pit full of broken glass and pottery was discovered in Tunsgate. Also discovered at Tunsgate was the John Dwight teapot, the earliest English made teapot ever found in an excavation.

Kevin Fryer a cataloguer at the museum joined John to sort through the discovery. The unit moved on from there, learning much about the town. Their most important discovery was at 81 High Street where a previously unknown 12th century undercroft was discovered. English Heritage were called and there was soon speculation that this might have been synagogue. The Friends Newsletter captured the story of how they gradually entered the undercroft. There were also many articles in the press.

At 149 High Street panelled rooms from a timber-framed house were discovered behind Victorian partitions. On the River Wey, a water company unearthed part of the town wharf but since there was no obligation to tell anyone they dumped everything down stream. Undeterred, the team went through the spoil heap and salvaged pottery and timbers.

Mary Alexander wrote "if the Friends of Guildford Museum could raise money for the Unit they would be doing a real service to the history of Guildford, and if they could raise public awareness of the problem so that official action was taken, Guildford could become a shining example of a borough which takes its history seriously."

There was no proper funding for the unit and Kevin and John had to fund themselves initially but did receive a small grant from the council to cover expenses after a few years. Eventually they were taken onto the museum staff.





### Bringing history alive

As well as discovering and researching the past, a museum needs to bring history alive. In Guildford, however, there have been many groups, organisations and individuals doing this in a variety of ways. Museum staff, themselves, are not natural show people but in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century Guildford was lucky to have a curator who delighted in different ways of bringing his subject to as many people as possible

Matthew Alexander was curator from 1980 to July 2009. He joined the museum in July 1975 as Assistant Curator under the then curator, Felix Holling. He admitted having to look Guildford up on a map, but it was love at first sight even if it was day 2 before he realised Guildford had a castle. Guildford seemed to have preserved its historic identity despite the economic pressures that had made it one of the most prosperous towns in the country.

His knowledge of Guildford soon became encyclopaedic as anyone who talks to him will quickly realise. There ought to be competition to see if there is any aspect of Guildford's history he does not know about. What makes Matthew stand out, though is his flair for presenting history and telling the story of Guildford in ways that are always captivating. With his red neckerchief, corduroy trousers and waistcoat he cut a distinctive, almost theatrical figure and appeared to have walked out of history. He was a one man show and an ideal candidate to take part in one of the most ambitious theatrical projects ever staged in the town – the Silver Jubilee Pageant of 1977.

#### 1957 to 1987 - Pageants

Guildford has a long history of pageants. In 1957 seven hundred locals took part in an historical pageant to celebrate the granting of the town charter in 1257. It was part of a whole year of celebrations. However, with the arrival of David Clark, who lived here from the 1960s, Guildford took this form of entertainment to heart. David described himself as a "Pageant Master" and organised pageants all over the country - Farnham, York, Carlisle, Corfe Castle, Chichester, Salisbury, Exeter. He was one of the most charismatic people imaginable and managed to persuade just about anyone he wanted to dress up in costume and re-enact episodes from history. In 1968 he staged his first pageant in Guildford with jousting and scenes from history. 1000 people and 100 horses took part and 42,000 people from all over the world came to see it.

In 1977 he organised another pageant which ran for two weeks in Shalford Meadows with a similar sized cast. It was jubilee year and Princess Anne attended one of the performances. He drew primarily on amateur dramatic and singing groups but also visited schools in search of actors. He also persuaded riding clubs to provide cavalry for a number of scenes. Three grandstands were built to house the audience, there was a sound box for voice overs, fireworks, jousting, a village of tents for the cast and hundreds of people running around dressed in costume from every period imaginable. The pageant told the story of Britain from prehistoric times, (with dancing round Stonehenge), to the Second World War. Scenes included battles between ancient Britons and Romans, a medieval fair and jousting, Civil War battles, fireworks and dancing from Vauxhall Gardens, Queen Victoria arriving by train, and a grand finale with rousing music and the words of Winston Churchill – very Guildford.

There was another pageant in 1987 followed by smaller pageants in the High street in the 1990s.



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### Publications, Radio and Films

Pageants are a rather unique way of presenting history. Writing is a much more obvious one. The Guildford Group of the Surrey Archaeological Society was very active in local history as well as archaeology and through the group Matthew published "Guildford as it was" in 1978. This was a photographic essay presenting early photographs of the town. It gave Matthew taste for writing which never left him. This was followed by a sequel. Matthew was not the only person writing and Guildford has been fortunate to have several locals interested in publishing and writing popular histories. John Janaway at the Surrey Records Room in the town library self-published many books and through him Matthew wrote a Short History of Guildford as well as number of other books. In the 1990s the publishing mantle was taken up by David Rose who produced many illustrated books on the town. Other authors include Roger Nichols who more recently has published excellent books on the Mount Cemetery, Henry Peaks diaries. Mary Alexander produces authoritative books on St Marys, Abbots Hospital and Holy Trinity. Shirely Corke who worked at the Guildford Muniment Room wrote many books. She contributed to excavation reports and published "*A Pictorial History of Guildford*". Moreover, the Surrey Archaeological Society publishes bulletins, journals and popular histories and is continually contributing to our understanding of the town.

New research and a constant re-interpretation of the past is important if history is to remain relevant to each generation and Guildford is lucky to have people keen to take up the mantle.

Perhaps what it lacks is an authoritative study of the town's history that puts it in context.

E.R.Chamberlin's "*Guildford: A Biography*" published in 1970 is still the closest one gets to such a book even though a lot of good research has been published in specialist areas. Chamberlin's work is interesting because this book was re-published in 1980 with a new chapter. He also wrote "*Guildford Under Siege*" and a couple of picture books on the town in the 1990s and early 2000s. Each time he gave his personal views on how the town had changed and so he provides an interesting commentary on Guildford's evolution in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century.

### Film

As well as writing, Matthew seized an opportunity for broadcasting when Guildford got its own radio station, County Sound, in around 1980. Matthew had a weekly slot on the station for several years.

From radio it was a short jump to film and when the local award-winning film group, Circle Eight decided to make a film on Guildford they turned to Matthew who journeyed round the borough on a tandem telling the stories of places he came to. It was an opportunity for those of us bitten by the pageant bug to dress up again and have a bit of fun. The film was followed by an equally successful sequel called "*Tales of Old Surrey*" which had Matthew floating around the county in a hot air balloon.

## Appreciating the past

### 1984 - Guildford History Course and Guildford Guides

One could argue that Matthew Alexander's greatest achievement was his ability to inspire others to get involved with history. Through writing and dressing up he flew the flag for local history, but he also set up two groups that would have a big impact on the museum and the town. The first was the Guildford Guides in 1984 and the second was to be the Friends of the Museum in 1995.

In 1984 Matthew started a series of courses on Guildford History. The courses were supplemented by a set of notes on various Guildford topics. At the end of the course, Matthew suggested forming a team of town guides. Marjorie Williams assisted by Eric Morgan was the first leader of the group



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which started giving tours to tourists and school parties that year (1984). Over the years they have provided a welcome to literally tens of thousands of people and helped promote the town.

The Guides had (and still have) two aims. These were explained in an article in issue 28 June 2009 of the Friends Newsletter. The aims were to encourage people to appreciate their local heritage and thus be encouraged to preserve its ancient buildings. Secondly, they aimed to promote the town's prosperity through tourism.

The importance of helping people appreciate their heritage was underlined in another article in the Surrey Advertiser that year (see newsletter issue 28 - June 2009). Fred Pipes, a member of the Thirties Society wrote in The Surrey Advertiser (August 1984) an article entitled "*Guildford is in danger of losing its 1930s Heritage*". He identified three buildings as under threat. The co-op dairy on the A3 bypass, the Odeon Cinema at the top of the High street designed by the architect of the Odeon Leicester Square and the Surrey Advertiser building which he described as the best example of public 1930s architecture in the town. He could have added the car showrooms on the junction of Woodbridge Road and Ladymead and the fire station. All have now gone and the best samples of Art Deco are ironically rebuilds. There is the extension above the cycle shop next to Rogues winebar and the new front to the Tunsgate centre. There have of course been a few notable survivals of which the Rodboro Buildings in Bridge Street is probably the most notable. This was the first purpose-built motor factory in Britain built by John Dennis around 1900 and contained a production assembly line that pre-dated that of Ford.

### The Guildford Society

At the vanguard of preserving the town has been the Guildford Society. Formed in 1935 it had a predecessor called the Old Guildford Society. In October 1896, George R Williamson, the Guildford Antiquary and Honorary Remembrancer, received a letter from the new newly established Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB). The letter expressed concern about the future of Guildford High Street and asked Williamson to form a "watching committee". A public meeting was held at which concern was expressed about houses being built at the top of Pewley Hill. A letter was read out from none other than William Morris emphasising the dangers to the towns "incomparable" High Street. The Old Guildford Society was formed and its first (and most important) campaign was to save the Guildford Old Bank at the top of the High Street, now Lloyds). Attempts to dissuade the owners from demolishing the bank fell on deaf ears but Williamson had connections. As an art historian he moved in distinguished circles and knew many influential people from Queen Victoria to Lewis Carroll. The younger royals frequently broke their journey between Osborne and London to do some discreet shopping in Guildford. So Williamson wrote to Princess Louise explaining the problem and inviting her to visit the bank and meet its owners. This was done and plans to demolish the bank vanished as the brass plaque outside testifies. The telegram Williamson received from Princess Louise still exists in the archives of the Old Guildford Society.

The Society dwindled when Williamson left the town in 1904 but a new society was founded in 1935. Today it plays an active part in the life of the town, reviewing planning applications, contributing to the local plan, run design awards and advising on transport.<sup>13</sup>

### 1994 - Heritage Open Days

Heritage Open Days is a national event held every September. With 2500 participants it is the country's largest history festival and started in 1994. Properties from historic buildings to modern offices are opened to the public free of charge. Over the years it has developed with talks, walks and living history displays. Guildford's contribution has always relied on a partnership between the Borough Council (publishing a guide and opening its properties), the Guildford Society and Guildford



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Guides who provide the volunteers. In 2003, Guildford topped the charts with the most properties open nationally at 64. Today it has over 100 properties open each year putting it in the top half dozen places in the country. It is still a popular festival with 14000 visits to over 100 properties in 2017 but more could still be made of it with more support. The costs are born by the participating properties, the guide costs about £2000 with £1000 coming from the Council and the rest from sponsorship<sup>14</sup>.

### 2000 - Historical Information Panels around town June 2000

During the past year 11 plaques had appeared with local history information. They were instigated by Maurice Byham the Town Centre Manager. The magazine also announced the museum lecture series featuring 7 professors talking about their latest books from subjects as varied as the crusades, Madame Tussaud's, medieval churches and the British Empire

### Bringing History alive - Historical Information Panels around town – Dec 2001

The historical information panels around the town. More history panels put up. Full list given. There were now 16.

### 1994 - Friends of Guildford Museum

In 1994 Matthew Alexander brought together several museum supporters with the aim of forming a Friends of the Museum. The Town Guides threw their full support behind the project and offered to give any donations they received to the Friends.

In the late 1980s and early 1990s the concept of Friend's Organisations to fundraise for museums gathered steam across the country. This was just before the formation of the heritage lottery which was formed in 1994 and it was to take a few years before it became the influence on heritage sites that it has become.

After a bit of planning the group started in late 1995. The first newsletter in January 1996 explained the aims of the group. "We aim, with the help of the Curator and his staff to keep you informed of the wide range of Museum. activities and associated events in your area."

The activities of the friends consisted of talks, trips and tours all of which raised some income for the museum. The first committee were Elizabeth Cobbett, Chairman, Bill Bellerby, Tim Bryers, Marjorie Williams, Pat Cousins, Eric Morgan, Matthew Alexander, Brian Alexander-O'Neill and Jen Powell.

### Undercroft in High Street

The first newsletter mentioned that the tourist information centre had moved out of the undercroft and that the museum was going to open it up during the tourist season. Volunteers were being sort. In June 2009 (Issue 28) there was a long article but Marjorie Williams which explained the background to undercroft.

Dating from the 13th century and categorised as a Historic Monument, the undercroft has been described as "the finest medieval building of its kind". It is the remnant of a timber framed house demolished in the early 1800s which was built by a wealthy merchant who probably used it as a shop for wine and luxury goods. Measuring 30 x 19 feet, most of the original stone building survives; its rib-vaulted ceiling is supported by four central columns and around the walls the arched ribs rest on brackets, known as corn Les, carved in the shape of faces, some human, some grotesque monsters.



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The undercroft under the Angel Hotel also survives intact, but not only is it of inferior quality with no carving but also following damage caused by its use as an air raid shelter, most of its stonework has been replaced.

During the 1960s and after, many of Guildford's ancient buildings were knocked down. Horrified by this vandalism several people, especially David Watts, the Chief Executive of the Council, and Jac Cowie of the Guildford Group of the Surrey Archaeological Society took action. In 1988 they persuaded the then owners, the Halifax Building Society, to lease the undercroft to Guildford Borough Council at a peppercorn rent. The building was restored and used as a tourist information centre until 1996 but the conditions were too damp and cramped to be healthy so the tourist information moved to Tunsgate and the museum took it over. The Friends provided funds for replica furniture, pottery and information boards as well as volunteers to run it in the summer. The Town Guides also contributed funds and the undercroft became a highlight of their tours.

Over the next few years the partnership between the curatorial staff and the Friends breathed life into the museum with the purchase of replicas and original objects to enhance the displays

Membership of the Friends quickly reached over 100 and by June 1996<sup>15</sup> they had raised £1400. An exhibition on the Museum Excavation Unit and their discovery at Tunsgate featured the John Dwight teapot, the earliest English made teapot ever found in an excavation.

There was also an article about the Surrey Young Archaeologists Club run jointly by the museum and the Surrey Archaeologists Society giving children from eight to eighteen an opportunity to get involved with archaeology. A variety of activities were out on for the group who met once a month.

By January 1997 with 160 members the friends were flourishing. The exhibition on the Museum Excavation Unit called "Pit of History" was being changed every 2 months. Volunteers from the Friends enabled the medieval undercroft in the High Street to open 3 afternoons a week from April to September<sup>16</sup>.

The Friends also used the funds they had raised to pay for their first contribution to the museum, a replica of a chair supposedly used by King Stephen. This was to go in the undercroft with a view to eventually putting it in the castle, the restoration of which was under discussion.

The August 1997 edition reported that at the AGM the replica medieval chair based in the Hereford Chair in Hereford cathedral reputedly used by King Stephen was proudly on display. The Friends were showing their worth and helping the museum fund ideas that would otherwise be impossible. Matthew Alexander now asked for funding for an interactive video (all the rage in the 1990s).

### 1998 – Lewis Carroll Celebrations

1998 was an important year for the Town as it was the centenary of Lewis Carroll's death. A small committee had spent two years planning over a dozen events including exhibitions at the museum and Guildford House. Called the "Guildford Lewis Carroll Centenary Festival" it ran from 7<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> May 1998 and the programme shows that a large variety of ambitious events were staged. 7<sup>th</sup> May - A multi-media evening of choral and instrumental music, creative art and textile work, drama, poetry and prose devised and presented by pupils from Guildford High School. Friday 8<sup>th</sup> October - In the Marble Hall of Clandon House, Hatstand Opera presented an evening of popular opera and readings from Alice in Wonderland. On the same evening Kevin Moore presented Crocodiles in Cream, a one man show evoking the world of Lewis Carroll. There was a "Grand Snark Hunt" which involved a boat



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trip along the river to St Catherine's Meadows where a picnic was held and a "Wonderland Adventure" in Racks Close for children. Circle Eight Film Group presented the story of Lewis Carroll narrated by Matthew Alexander and on another evening, Edward Wakeling, expert on Carroll gave a talk about his mathematics. All events were ticket only

Membership was now 200 and work on the interactive video was proceeding. Matthew, full of ideas now asked for some money to improve the interpretation of the undercroft. The July 1998 edition contained some interesting facts about the friends

During the year there were

- 2 full day coach outings
- 2 guided walks
- 7 tours of Surrey villages
- Coffee morning, quiz and skittles match.

All this activity had the aim of fund raising and there was now £4200 in the bank. In addition to fund raising the friends had provided 1492 hours of time.

- 330 hours stewarding exhibitions
- 365 hours stewarding the undercroft
- 746 hours on the museum stall
- 60 hours providing refreshments.

The museum's interactive display was now in place and the undercroft had been decked out to be a 13th century wine shop. Matthew expressed his gratitude with a long article on the undercroft. (July 1998 Friends Newsletter).

At the end of 1998 the newsletter said there were 220 members. The Friends seem to have been gathering momentum with 17 trips organised over the year. There was also a series of talks in aid of the Museum Excavation Unit which sold out.

Two more purchases through the Friends fundraising were announced. One was a Wonderland stamp case invented by Lewis Carroll. The other was a silver Penny of William the Conqueror minted in Guildford. Two articles in the newsletter explained the significance of the objects.

Now with 243 members (June 1999 edition) and assets of £6144 the Friends helped purchase a rare belt late from the Surrey Rifle volunteers dating from 1870s. John Boas and Kevin Fryer has been taken in a permanent staff

The December 1999 edition gave a list of the items purchased by the Friends so far with a good article on some of the most recent acquisitions. The Friends proudly announced (June 2000) they had spent £10,000 on projects to benefit the museum. This edition announced the purchase of a model Triumph TR2 made by Victory industries a toy model manufacturer in Worplesdon in the 1950s.

During the year 2000 (Dec 2000) there were the usual trips. 400 hours of volunteering were put in by the Friends at the undercroft which had now been fitted out with replica furniture.





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The Town Guides get a mention since half of them were also Friends of the Museum. They collected donations amounting to £700 or £4000 since their creation in 1995.

### 1988 - Wisley Log Boat

Matthew had an article about the Wisley log boat found on the Wey in 1907 and given to the museum in 1988. At 11ft it was too long to display but the decision by the National Trust to do something at the Wey Navigation prompted the museum to try and date the boat.

In June 2001 Eric Morgan wrote on the inauguration of Jen Powell as mayor. "I'm sure all those people involved with the Friends at the beginning would also wish our Mayor every happiness in her year of Office. Our Mayor has always taken a keen interest in the Museum. She was a member of our first Committee in 1995 and she has remained a committee member ever since." It is now on display at Wanborough Barn, I believe.

### 2001 - Victorian Schoolroom

Since 1995 the Friends had raised £19,600 for the museum and spent £15,300. In 2000 there were no requests for purchases. However, Matthew "made up lost ground fast very early in 2001 when he bought the entire inventory of a Victorian classroom for £4,500". An advert for the school room appeared in the magazine entitled "Canes and Blackboards" and the schoolroom was opened to the public for two weeks in July. The advert explained that the schoolroom was "A reconstruction of a schoolroom of the 1890s depicting educational techniques of the time. Staff will interpret the exhibits and give an impression of schooldays at the end of Victoria's reign." The Friends also paid for the restoration of a commercial size Dennis lawnmower at a cost of £1,600.

The Victorian schoolroom had its first group of children on 10th October 2001. Details of a typical lesson are given in the December edition that year.

### Membership and income

In July 2002 the newsletter announced membership at 268. Since 1995 the Friends had raised £24000. 50% came from outings and events, 30% from subscriptions and 20% from donations from people on walks given by the town guides. £17500 had been spent.

### Railway model

After this there were no more references to members or purchases. In December 2002 to commemorate the amalgamation of 3 lines to create the Southern Region in 1932 a five-week exhibition was staged at Salters. At its centre was a model of the Guildford Station created by John Boas. Following the success of the railway exhibition in it was decided to move the model of Guildford Station from Salter's to the museum and have a permanent exhibition on the railways. This opened in the first half of 2002 and remained a major exhibit at the museum until 2017

The Council was now considering plans to develop the museum and Matthew announced a questionnaire into the future of the museum and what people wanted. Work was beginning on the castle (Dec 2003), and Guildford's heritage weekend topped the charts with 64 properties open.

## 2004 - Development of the Castle

### Development of the Castle

In July 1998 edition the Friends Newsletter stated that John Boas had been "instrumental" in setting up a committee to care for the fabric of the castle, particularly the keep. The castle was maintained by two departments (building maintenance and public parks) with a third, namely the museum taking a keen interest in its history. Interestingly Professor John Ashurst, an international figure in



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stone conservation lived locally and he was invited to work on the project. Conservation work had taken place in 1989 but even so, emergency work was needed particularly to the chapel in the keep which had lost some stonework over the winter. The obvious solution was to roof over the keep to protect it and that was something that the museum was starting to look into.

In December the newsletter stated that Mary, John Boas and Matthew had been talking to students at the University of Surrey Civil Engineering Department about proposals for the restoration of the keep. There was talk of a roof and floors but there were many technical issues that would need to be passed by English Heritage and be eligible for lottery funding. Eventually in 2003 work began and the following article by Mary Alexander from the December 2003 edition of the Friends Newsletter is reproduced in full

### The Castle Keep

The Museum had been agitating for work to be done on the keep for some years now, and it finally began in spring of this year. Part of the problem has been the natural erosion suffered by a ruined building, but it has been made worse by unsuitable restoration in the past. A lot of work was done in 1885-6, when the Borough acquired the Castle Grounds, and the keep was repointed in 1989. Both of these campaigns used cement mortar which is too hard for used in a building built with lime mortar. It traps water inside the walls and forces it out through the stonework. The tops of the walls have become cracked over the years, letting in rainwater which has been saturating the stonework, and causing even more damage during frosts. Vegetation was cleared off in 1989 but has grown back, causing a lot of damage in some areas.

A comprehensive programme of conservation was drawn up by Ingram Consultancy, headed by Prof. John Ashurst. English Heritage has given a grant for the work but Guildford Borough Council, as owners of the site, have funded most of it. The work is being carried out by Nimbus Conservation, and it is refreshing to see that almost all their workforce is young and partly female. Clearly there is a healthy future for stone conservation. Today, conservators consider the whole building, and how its materials react, before choosing a suitable method of repair and consolidation.

One of the first tasks to be done was removing the cement mortar and this produced a huge surprise. When it was gone, we could see details of the construction of the keep including crenulations from a completely unknown phase. When the keep was first built, there was a ground floor and first floor, ending with crenulations. Unusually, these were built of the same rubble stonework as the rest of the walls, and they may well turn out to be the earliest crenulations in the country. We are still analysing the discovery. Even more exciting was the discovery of plaster and whitewash on the sides and base of the crenulations, covered by the infilling when the walls were raised. Despite studying the keep for a good eight years, I am still not sure when it was built, and the crenulations have put the cat among the pigeons! As my Ph.D. thesis was almost complete, I have had to ignore the new discoveries for that, so have not been able to give them much attention until now. However, the general feeling is that the keep belongs to the first half of the twelfth century, perhaps in Henry I's reign (1100-1135).

Other discoveries have been the original position of the roof, obscured by Henry Peak's restorations, with four drainage channels through the east wall, one containing part of its lead lining. The latrine chute from the first-floor chamber in the wall has been found, where I thought it ought to be, but where there was no sign of it until the work began. It empties down the north wall just by where I think the entrance onto the motte was, so we will have to re-think the layout! The stonework of the chute is beautiful greensand stone.





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The discovery of the crenulations has led to a proposal to put in a floor and roof which the council has accepted. It is ironic that the museum's carefully thought out proposals some years ago were turned down, but this sudden change of plan has been agreed with no trouble, but at least it is going ahead. The roof will be over the first floor, where the original roof was. The roof was raised over a second floor at some point, probably in the 16th century, but we need to think about that a bit more. The ground floor will be entered through the ground floor door, which we now know is original. There will be graphic displays on this floor. A new external staircase (going the right way this time - we were not consulted on the old one) will lead to the first-floor door where the whole room will be accessible, plastered as it would have been. The spiral stairs will take visitors to the top of the keep, and will provide a much better experience for the visitor

The restored Keep was opened on 26th June 2004 and attracted 14000 visitors in its first year. There were articles in the Surrey Advertiser and a good article by Mary

### 2004 - Castle Son et Lumiere

To coincide with the restoration of the castle ex-councillor Auriol Earle and Pat Grayburn from the university came up with the idea for a son et Lumiere. They were inspired by a similar event at Cranleigh and drew on the expertise developed there. Gradually building on contacts they put on an spectacle described here [Get Surrey for 10<sup>th</sup> September 2004](#)<sup>17</sup>

#### **Lights fantastic illuminate town's colourful past**

The Great Tower came to life on Wednesday in a spectacular performance never before seen in the town.

The remains of Guildford Castle were lit up as the town's Son et Lumière raised the curtain for the first performance of a five-night run.

There was barely a spare seat in the house as hundreds gathered to enjoy the spectacle. The brainchild of former Guildford Borough councillor Auriol Earle, the project was brought together by a team from Guildford Borough Council, the University of Surrey and the Guildford Institute.

The newly refurbished Great Tower provided the stunning backdrop for the biggest light show the town has seen, using the latest computer-generated imaging and light and sound technology.

On a huge screen in front of the Castle Green bowling green, the life and times of Guildford was brought to life with the All Electric Picture Postcard Kaleidoscope Show, While not pretending to be a definitive history of the town, Son et Lumière portrayed a very entertaining tale of murder and debauchery, fun and laughter, war and peace and industry and leisure from over the last 900 years.

The script was written by Martyn Read, playwright and actor, who wanted to move away from a straight history lesson.

He said: "Guildford, like many market towns, was rarely at the forefront of national events, but it has its own rich and fascinating story to tell."

Many stories, in fact, of famous people connected with Guildford and events that have happened here over the centuries. The spectacular was directed by actor and director Michael Cochrane, with sound directed and edited by Michael Bartlett.

Not only did the soundtrack bring together actors such as Penelope Keith, James Bolam, Susan



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Jameson and Belinda Carroll, it also featured the voice talents of pupils from Aldro, Guildford County and Northmead schools and King's and Christ's Colleges.

A Song for Guildford was specially written for the show by Simon May, who wrote the theme tune for EastEnders.

Although the Son et Lumière Spectacular is fully booked for tonight (Friday) and tomorrow (Saturday), tickets are still available for Sunday's open air performance.

### 2000 to 2015 – Plans to develop of the museum

Plans to develop the museum go back almost to its beginnings. As mentioned before there were plans after the First World War to build a new museum and library as a memorial to the fallen. Much later, ambitious plans for a Surrey Museum on the site of Farnham Road bus station were formally adopted in the Borough Plan for 1983 but never implemented. More modest attempts to build on the museum garden and add an entrance into the Castle Grounds also fell foul of planning and financial obstacles. In 1997 Matthew Alexander tried unsuccessfully to persuade the Borough to purchase The Chestnuts as a Lewis Carroll Centre when it came on the market for £250,000.

Deprived of the major investment the museum did not change very much. The railway model was installed in 2004 and a Gertrude Jekyll Room was set up in 1990s.

There were some achievements. The store at Salter's was closed which seemed inconvenient but the borough provided a new store at Woking Road Depot with excellent conditions. Salter's was eventually returned to the museum and used for exhibitions and then became the home for the schoolroom which has delighted countless schoolchildren. The redisplay of the core archaeological collection in a modern gallery in 1991 represented a major development even though it was made to last longer than the original 10 years intended.

The current plans for the museum can be traced back to 2000 when Matthew Alexander announced in the Friends Newsletter that the Council had decided to form a working party of Councillors and others to explore the possibilities of future development at the museum. At the meeting of the Arts and Recreation Committee in July there was "overall support for significant Council investment in the museum. However, the question of an extension or Castle Grounds entrance would depend very much on finances available after the Civic Hall's future is resolved. In the meantime, it is proposed to consider a major redisplay of the existing museum galleries using external designers and modern display techniques. Clearly this is not something that will be accomplished rapidly but it does offer exciting prospects for the future." The first meeting of the working party was held on 25th October 2000. (NOTE: I was told that designs were worked up and an excellent set of plans produced for new galleries and published them in a booklet. However, I have been unable to locate such information).

In 2004 the Borough Council received the final report from a specialist museum consultant looking into options for the future of the museum (January 2005 edition). It concluded that the museum was a "very valuable asset to the Borough and with the necessary funding and staff structure could become one of the county's leading local authority museums. The aim of the museum would be to strike a balance between a Borough and Countywide focus".

The proposals were

1. Separate the management of Guildford House from the museum
2. Extend into the museum garden



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3. Provide appropriate staff structure
4. Look at the way the service is run e.g. council or trust
5. Forge closer links with the Surrey Archaeological Society and jointly provide an educational discovery centre for the public.

In June 2005 it was reported (in Friends Newsletter) that the consultant's report was accepted by the Council Executive which agreed to develop new facilities and pursue a Heritage Lottery bid for £2million. It was decided to not pursue the option for a trust at present. A new staffing structure would be introduced to improve the range of services and specialists interested in local history. It was agreed to investigate linking the museum with the castle grounds, use part of the Spike for museum use and undertake structural repairs on the museum buildings. These actions were to be introduced as soon as was practical, but the earliest development was probably 5-7 years away. Councillor Jen Powell said after the Executive meeting, "a tremendous amount of hard work has taken us to this point. The enthusiasm to move forward with the project has delighted and excited all those involved with the future of the museum."

### 2006 - Jill Draper joins museum

In 2006 a new museum manager was appointed. Jill Draper joined the museum on 16th January (Jan 2006 edition). She had worked in museums in Edinburgh, Luton and Oxfordshire and more recently at Gunnersbury Park Museum. Her parents lived in Guildford and it was a natural move. There had been a survey of visitors to the museum. Jill's priority was to prepare the museum's application for Museum Accreditation.

Jill received a grant from Museums South East Sharing Skills scheme to spend two days at Maidstone Museum learning about their multimillion pound lottery bid. Maidstone museum has many parallels with Guildford. (June 2007). Meanwhile the archaeological gallery was removed from the main gallery. In July 2007 the museum launched its new exhibition gallery with the exhibition "Living History". This was followed by one of prehistoric and Roman religion.

### 2009 – Matthew Alexander retires – Museum restructured

In July 2009, Matthew Alexander retired, and it was an opportunity for a change in change in direction. The December 2009 edition announced the creation of Heritage Services. Mary remained as collections officer and Nick Booth as museum assistant, but a new structure emerged that seemed to focus on services more than research and collections. This was in line with changes in the way museums were funded nationally. The new department was within the Economic Development service sector of the Council. Several sites were merged with staff working across them. These were the museum, castle, Guildford House, Guildhall, Undercroft and Wanborough Barn.

Within this structure were

Jill Draper (formerly museum manager) now Head of Heritage Services

Sophie Macleod - Customer services and marketing officer

Lyn Szygenda - Exhibitions Officer

Cassie Herschel-Shoreland - Access Officer

An article explained their roles and the desire to reach out to lots of different groups across the community. The Heritage Lottery Bid was underway, and the conservation management plan had been completed. The museum was heading in a new direction. Previously it had relied heavily on an energetic curator, with imagination and flair for bringing history alive in many ways. However, not all



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curators have these skills and one can see the Council's logic as it now tried to put in place the structures necessary to create a strong organisation.

In June 2010 the newsletter announced, "A major heritage and tourist attraction is a step closer." The council had given the go-ahead for a public consultation. The plan was for "a more inclusive and enhanced museum. A new entrance from the castle grounds. A cafe and exhibition in the Henry II chamber. A new home for the Surrey Archaeological Society. Councillor Jen Powell said "it's important to emphasise that this is the first stage in a long process"

### 2013-15 – Lottery bid

In 2012 Nick Booth left and Mary took early retirement leaving the museum with no curatorial staff. There was a long article in the June 2012 edition about the museum development project. The Pre-application was submitted to Heritage Lottery in 2011. The 1<sup>st</sup> round lottery bid was submitted in April 2013 and following its rejection a second lottery bid was submitted in late 2014. News of its rejection was announced in March 2015.

The museum was in a tired state. The railway model was looking dated with information panels faded and peeling off. The 1991 Archaeological gallery had been taken out, so the museum looked as if nothing had changed in decades. Captions in cases referred to buildings in the present tense that had been demolished years before. As one councillor put it the place had become "a museum of itself". For a time, it looked like the Council was considering its closure. However, in a report in April 2016 the Council committed itself to the redevelopment of the museum.

## Appendix – Collections

The following are extracts from the Museum's collections policy. For a full account of the collections see the policy but the following represents some of the highlights

### Gertrude Jekyll Collection

Of international importance is the cottage life collection made by Gertrude Jekyll, which forms part of the Surrey Archaeological Society's holdings. Jekyll developed a great love of the Surrey countryside, and of the cottagers who lived in it. After some time away from Surrey, Jekyll returned in 1876 to find that the old way of life was fast disappearing. For the next twenty years Jekyll toured the area, photographing scenes of country life and collecting objects relating to cottage life. In this, she was a pioneer of social history collecting. Fading eyesight led Jekyll to turn to garden design and she formed a famous partnership with Edwin Lutyens. In 1911, Jekyll presented her collection of 'bygones' to the Surrey Archaeological Society, which prompted a Guildford councillor to pay for a new museum gallery to display it. The collection concentrates on items relating to the large, open 'down hearths' of Surrey cottages, and to lighting—especially by home-made rushlights. With this collection and other local history materials, rural life is extremely well represented, reflecting the fact that Surrey was an overwhelmingly rural county until the 20th century.

### Needlework

The textiles or needlework collection was started by Miss Joan Drew in 1928. Drew was an embroiderer from a family of artistic women in Albury and persuaded Guildford Borough to start a collection of representative types of needlework from this country and abroad. Due to the aims of Joan Drew, and unlike the other museum collections, local (or even UK) provenance was not previously an acquisition requirement for the needlework collection. However, the foreign section is very small. As a result of this collecting policy, the collection is largely representative of all types of



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needlework: embroidery, plain sewing and crafts such as lace, crochet, tatting and knitting, with a good selection of needlework tools. Some of the best pieces were given by Joan Drew and her collector friends, such as her own embroideries and that of women taught by her in a style known as 'WI Work'. Thus, despite the broad collecting policy, the needlework collection is of local significance given that Drew was from a local family, and that the majority of the collection is in fact of local origin. There is a large collection of samplers from the 17th to the 20th centuries, a collection of patchwork which includes most historic patterns of patchwork though there is little quilting, a small collection of lace with a few 17th century pieces including Venetian and Milanese, and a small table cloth of about 1600 decorated with needlelace. Although clothing is not collected for its own sake, the collection naturally includes embroidered accessories such as fichus and aprons, and garments such as smocks or waistcoats. A particular strength is the number of Surrey smocks, which have a distinctive local style with very little smocking or embroidery. There are, of course, many baby clothes, which include techniques such as hollie point lace and Ayrshire work, with a layette worn by a baby born in 1707, in late 17th century style. Some of these items overlap with the local history collection, though stored together. There are three mid-17th century embroidered boxes, each of a different type, as well as later needlework boxes and pocket containers for sewing equipment. The collection also includes bags and purses, including one made from an 18th century embroidered waistcoat. The needlework collection also overlaps with art as much of the needlework is home-produced, low status, and based around craft revivals, forming a folk-art collection.

### Topography

Especially important are the series of pencil sketches by Alexander Monro of Guildford in the 1830s, the Stevens collection of local prints and ephemera, and a scrapbook containing sketches by the Guildford artist John Russell. Photographs constitute the major part of the holdings, with the series by the Guildford photographer Chaplin in the 1860s and 1870s, and the Wilkie collection of black and white photographs of the 1960s and 1970s, being worthy of note. There is also a collection of postcards, both of Guildford and the rest of the county, dating mainly from the late 1890s to the 1920s

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<sup>1</sup> I am saying a lot of this from memory – if I remember the correct source for this I will add it. Best source for this is Museum of London gardens exhibition in 1986 whose catalogue escapes my mind for moment!!!!

<sup>2</sup> SyAS Collections 1954-5 Annivesary Edition

<sup>3</sup> SyAS Collections 1954-5 Annivesary Edition – history of society

<sup>4</sup> SyAS Collections 1954-5 Annivesary Edition – see history of library

<sup>5</sup> See Guildford Under Siege by ER Chamberlin (Guildford Society)

<sup>6</sup> Ibid p64

<sup>7</sup> Ibid p66

<sup>8</sup> Ibid p59

<sup>9</sup> See Friends Newsletter Dec 2000 for good article by Mary Alexander, also the excavation reports in SyAS Collections. See also another article by Eric Morgan in October 2012 Issue 32

<sup>10</sup> SyAS Bullet 464 Oct 2017

<sup>11</sup> Information obtained online. See Friends Newlsetter for information on the Sherborne Missal

<sup>12</sup> See Friends of Museum Newsletter Issue 1 for main article and first couple of years for updates

<sup>13</sup> See Guildford Under Siege by ER Chamberlin (Guidford Society)

<sup>14</sup> See Friends newsletter Dec 2003



<sup>15</sup> Friends Newsletter July 1996

<sup>16</sup> Friends Newsletter Jan 1997

<sup>17</sup> Get Surrey <https://www.getsurrey.co.uk/news/local-news/lights-fantastic-illuminate-towns-colourful-4849048>