

## Events and Outings 2011

### Talks

Wednesday February 23<sup>rd</sup> 2.00pm "Haunted Guildford"  
Wednesday March 23<sup>rd</sup> 2.00pm "A History of Shalford"

These talks to be held in the Museum Classroom Admissi  
Free

### Events

Thursday April 7<sup>th</sup> 7.30pm Quiz Evening Burpham Villag  
Hall  
Saturday May 14<sup>th</sup> 2.00pm Friends AGM Brew House

### Outings

Surrey Villages Limpsfield, Chart, Haslemere and Laleham  
(Dates yet to be confirmed)

Further outings are being planned, such as a guided walk to see the  
Public Art in Guildford, a visit to Olympic Park, and a trip to the  
revamped Watts Gallery (after it reopens).

A detailed program of Events and Outings will be circulated in  
January.

Should any member have any idea for a visit (or wish to organise  
visit) for 2011 or 2012, please get in contact with:-

Nick Bale (01483 459997, email [nybale@waitrose.com](mailto:nybale@waitrose.com))

Or John Wilkins (01483 831502, [s.john.wilkins@ntlworld.com](mailto:s.john.wilkins@ntlworld.com))

*The Editor welcomes items for the Newsletter or comments. Please send  
them to Eric Morgan 21 St Michael's Avenue, Guildford, GU3 3LJ.*

*Telephone Number (01483) 233344. [eandsmorgan@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:eandsmorgan@hotmail.co.uk)*

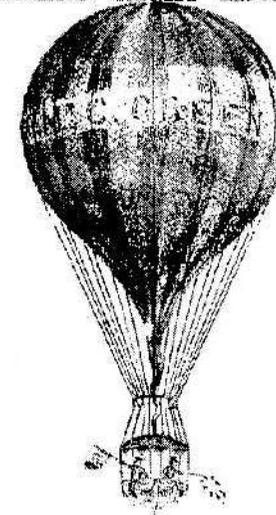
# FRIENDS OF GUILDFORD MUSEUM NEWSLETTER

December 2010



Issue 30

**VAUXHALL GARDENS.**  
**FRIDAY August 16th,**  
**GRAND NIGHT ASCENT**



MR. CHRYM'S NIGHT ASCENT,

WITH FIREWORKS.

AMIDST THE NOY  
**MAGNIFICENT FIREWORKS.**

## *From the Editor*

I am absolutely delighted to report that the consultation process for improvements to the Museum buildings has now commenced. This is only the start of a long process but nevertheless the fuse has been lit and we must all work to keep it alight.

Recently a small touring exhibition travelled to various locations in the Borough for people to make their comments. For those of you who did not see the Development plan I have enclosed the full details in the next few pages.

Chris Mansfield, Head of Economic Development, explains clearly here how the process will develop.

'We are keen that those who live, work or visit the town contribute their views and ideas in progressing this exciting project. However, the current small touring exhibition is only the first stage of a lengthy consultation process during which we will regularly involve others. The aim of this exhibition is to raise awareness of the proposed scheme amongst local people, many of whom do not visit the Museum, and to generate interest so they will want to know more as the project develops. There are no detailed plans yet and consultation at this point is limited to initial reactions on the proposed strategy, particularly the key elements of joining the Castle and Museum sites, creating a new entrance and introducing lift access. There is still a long way to go and more detailed plans will be developed over the next couple of years while pursuing the Heritage Lottery Fund application process. As ideas develop we will be undertaking more targeted and active consultation, involving Guildford residents, businesses and other relevant organisations'

## A Major Heritage Centre and Tourist Attraction for Guildford

A Major Heritage and Tourist Attraction for Guildford is a step closer to reality. Guildford Borough Council has given the go-ahead to public consultation on a plan to bring together two of Guildford's most important heritage sites: Guildford Castle and Guildford museum, and on the preparation of a Heritage Lottery Fund bid to help fund it.

The proposed plan includes

- A more inclusive and enhanced museum through the creative use of buildings and spaces
- With a new museum entrance and reception area with level access from the Castle Gardens
- A café and exhibition gallery located in parts of the castle ruins
- New accessible facilities and displays featuring our important collections
- An education area for a lively programme of activities and events for all ages
- A new home for the Surrey Archaeological Society.

"Although in its early stages, this is an exciting opportunity to develop the Museum – which has been relatively unchanged since the 1960's – the Castle into a major heritage hub and tourist destination. As well as preserving our heritage for the future we will boost community involvement with increased learning and participation including public events and activities". Lead Councillor for People and Partnership, Cllr Jen Powell:

Adds Cllr Powell: "It's important to emphasise that this is the first stage of a long process during which we will regularly consult and involve residents, businesses and other organisations. The views and feedback from the public about the future of the Museum will help shape the detailed proposals and planning".

## Guildford Castle and Guildford Museum

Did you know that **Guildford Castle** was built on the orders of William the Conqueror soon after the battle of Hastings in 1066. It was an important royal palace and home to King Henry III and his son King Edward I for nearly one hundred years from 1216 to 1307.

Edward's eldest son, also Henry, died at the Castle in 1274. His heart was buried on the site of a friary founded in his honour – now the site of the Friary shopping centre.

During its history the Castle site has been occupied by French Garrison (1216), housed a prison, been the office of the Sheriff of Surrey and Sussex and a playground for a local school.

Did you know that **Guildford Museum** was founded in 1898, making it one of the oldest museums in Surrey? It now occupies a series of buildings of differing ages the earliest of which was a private house built in the 16<sup>th</sup> century on the ruins of the gatehouse to the royal palace.

The Museum buildings have at various times been home to the local gentry and a girls' school. The Museum now houses the locally and nationally significant Borough Collection of archaeological, local history and needlework objects as well as the offices and collection of the Surrey Archaeology Society.

The proposed plans unite these two important heritage sites that share a common 1000 year history, and ensure their survival and enjoyment for present and future Guildfordians and visitors to our town.

" The Castle area has been evolving for nearly a thousand years, from Saxon fields outside the town to a royal palace, then to farmland, houses, gardens, a bowling green and a new road where Lewis Carroll's sisters lived. The development of the Museum is the latest phase in an ever-changing history."

*Dr Mary Alexander, Curator and specialist in the history of Guildford Castle.*

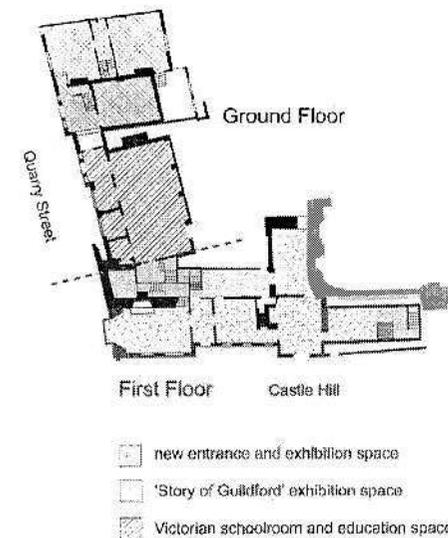
## How will we do it?

### The Project needs £3 million

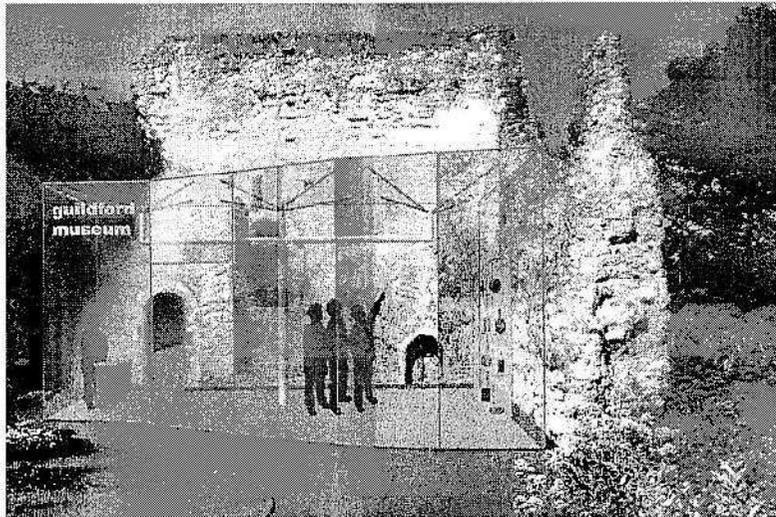
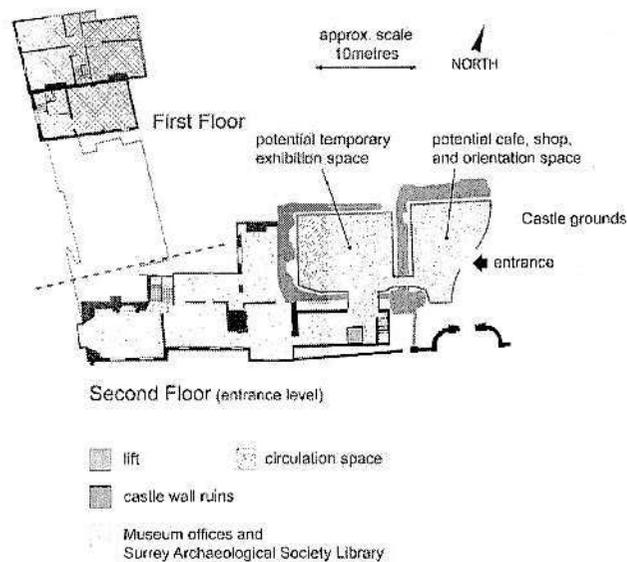
#### Funding will be found through:

- An application to the Heritage Lottery Fund for £1m
- Council funding of £250,000 to kick-start a major fundraising campaign that will look for help and support from grant-making organisations, local business and the community
- However an additional £2m will still be needed

David Graham, president of Surrey Archaeological Society, comments: "We are very supportive of the broad ideas adopted by the Council and feel there is potential for the museum to become one of the most significant heritage attractions in the region"



## An Evening trip to Pirbright



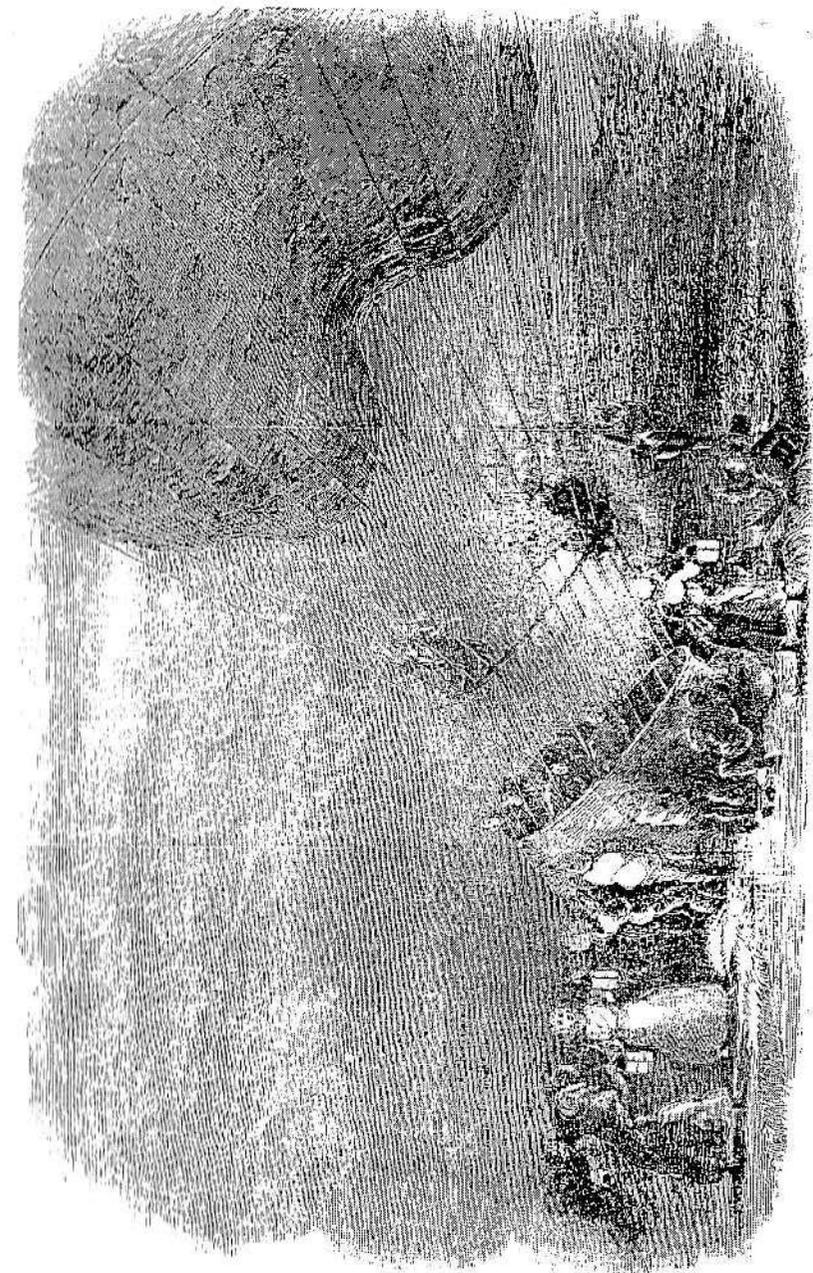
Many of you have travelled the country side in a balloon so I thought you would be interested to learn about Mr Green's 500<sup>th</sup> ascent. This took place in 1852 from the Vauxhall Gardens in London and is recorded by Henry Mayhew in the Illustrated London News of the time..

"I am naturally a coward" said Mr Green, "the literary temperament and sedentary pursuits are, I believe seldom associated with physical courage. My creed is that all imaginative men are cowards and I am one. then why go up in a balloon? Yes why? I confess that it was idle curiosity that took me into the air."

At about quarter to seven o'clock, six of us and Mr Green took our places in the large deep wicker bucket-basket attached to the balloon while two gentlemen were seated immediately above our heads, with their backs resting against the netting and their legs stretched across the hoop to which the cords of the network were fastened and from which depends the basket. There were altogether nine of us – a complete set of human pins for the air to play skittles with – and the majority, myself above the number, no sylphs in weight. Above us reeled the great gas bag – like a monster peg top and all around the balloon were groups of men holding to the sides of the basket, while the huge iron weights were handed out and replaced by large squabby bags of sand. In the course of about ten minutes all the arrangements for starting were complete; the grapnel, looking like a bundle of large iron fish-hooks welded together was hanging over the side. The guide rope longer than St. Pauls is high and done up in a canvas bag with the end hanging out was dangling beside the grapnel. The signal was at last given to fire the cannons and with Mr Green loosening the only rope that bound us to the Gardens we shot into the air or rather the earth seemed to sink suddenly down. The last thing that I remember to have seen distinctly was the flash of the guns and instantly there appeared a multitude of upturned faces, the greater part with their mouths wide open, all signalling farewell. Then, as we struck towards the fields of Surrey and I looked over the edge of the basket in which I was standing, holding on tight to the thick rope descending from the hoop above and with the rim of

the wicker work reaching up to my breast, the sight was the most exquisite delight I ever experienced. The houses below looked like the tiny wooden things out of a child's box of toys and the streets like ruts. To peer straight down gave you an awful sense of the height to which the balloon had already risen and yet there was no idea of danger, for the mind was too much occupied with the grandeur and novelty of the scene all around to feel the least alarm. When we were about a mile above the ground some of us threw paper into the air and these fluttered about like butterflies as they fell. Others had supplied themselves with an extraordinary stock of sparkling champagne which had the effect of making them more noisy than agreeable. Silence was however soon restored by Mr Green reminding them that we were descending at a rapid rate and it was time that they began to look out for their safety. We were told all to sit down in the basket and hold fast; scarcely had we obeyed the orders given than the basket was suddenly and fiercely jerked half round and all within it thrown one on top of another: immediately after this, bump went the bottom of the basket on the ground giving us so violent a shake that it seemed as if every limb in the body had been simultaneously dislocated. For heaven's sake hold fast shouted Mr Green as we were dashed up and down in the basket all rolling one on the other with each fresh lurch of the giant machine.

"Sit still all of you, I say", roared the pilot, as he saw someone endeavouring to leave. Again we were pitched right on end and the bottom shifted into a ditch, the water of which bubbled up through the wicker work and I, unlucky being, who was seated in that part to which the concussions were mostly combined, soon began to feel that I was quietly sitting in a pool of water. To move, however, was evidently to peril not only one's own life but that of all the other passengers. We had fallen in a swamp which we afterwards found out was Pirbright Common. Presently to our delight, some hundred drabsmocked countrymen appeared, almost as if by magic. At first they were afraid to touch but at last they got a firm hold of the basket and we were one after the other extricated from our seats. Two hours later the balloon was packed into a cart and transported an hour after midnight to Guildford.



HENRY OF THE AIRSHIP'S BASKET, ON PIRBRIGHT COMMON, NEAR GUILDFORD.

## BRONZE AGE AXEHEAD FROM ST. CATHERINE'S, GUILDFORD

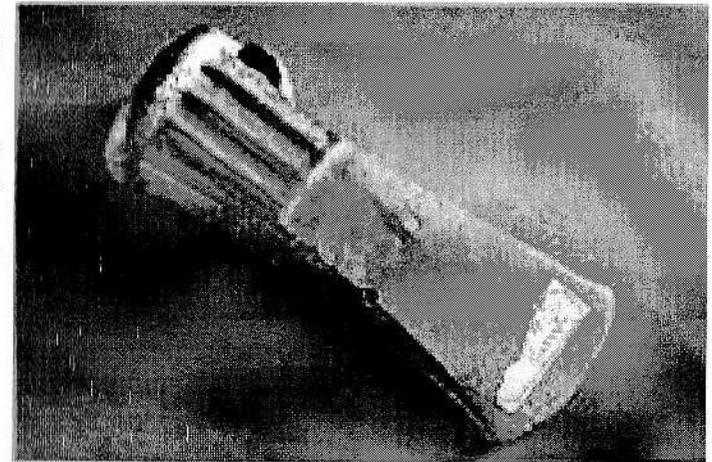
This is a Late Bronze Age socketed axehead, found in the St. Catherine's area of Guildford in 1849. Unfortunately, although Guildford Museum has a number of similar axeheads in its collection, including some on display, this example is now with the Norwich Castle Museum and Art Galley. A drawing appears in *Surrey Archaeological Collections LI (1949)* and is of an ornament found with the axehead, of uncertain use.

In Southern Britain the Bronze Age occurred between the years c2700 – c700BC, and saw the first use, and then development, of bronze, an alloy metal created by the smelting of copper with either tin or arsenic. To begin with this new material was used primarily for high prestige goods such as personal ornaments or weapons, however as time went on, and the different types of objects which the Bronze Age smiths could produce increased, objects made of the metal became more common, for example axeheads and razors

Archaeological research shows that as bronze became more available it was used in an increasing variety of situations. To begin with it seems that bronze was seen as fit for accompanying the dead in the grave, possibly as a way of showing the dead person's importance. However, as it became more common place bronze metalwork can be found in other situations as well, most notably in 'wet' locations such as lakes and rivers. Some suggest that these deposits have a votive character, and are meant as gifts to the gods. The inhabitants of Iron Age Britain (c700BC – 43AD) were known to have a religion that focused on water and wet places, and this could show a long continuation of such beliefs. The strong links between human remains and Bronze Age metalwork in rivers, such as the Thames, seem to back up this argument, as well as evidence for the 'ritual killing' of such objects, such as bending swords before deposition. Others argue for a more mundane reason for the deposition of metalwork, including simple loss and economic factors. It is quite possible that the reasons for the burial of metalwork in the Bronze Age could be a mixture of some, all or none of the above.

By the later Bronze Age (c1000 – c700BC) bronze was used to make a variety of objects including swords, daggers, leather and wood working tools and even personal grooming tools such as razors and tweezers. However, it is the development of socketed axeheads, so called because of the way they were hafted, such as the one shown here, which really stands out as notable for the period (please see [http://www.dover.gov.uk/museum/information\\_resources/the\\_collect\\_ion/ripple\\_hoard.aspx](http://www.dover.gov.uk/museum/information_resources/the_collect_ion/ripple_hoard.aspx) for more information). One theory is that the bronze smiths of this time had a repertoire of different shapes and decorations for the axes and these they constantly intermingled so that a general typological sequence is extremely difficult to perceive. This mixing of styles and ideas suggests that Bronze Age society, or at least the smiths, were in contact with other groups of people from some distance away, either directly or indirectly, and were able to exchange ideas and goods.

The St. Catherine's axehead is recorded as having been found in 1849, although by whom we are unsure. It is mentioned in Sir John Evan's work *'The Ancient Bronze Implements, Weapons and Ornaments of Great Britain and Ireland'* (1881), which was the standard work on the subject in its time, and again in the



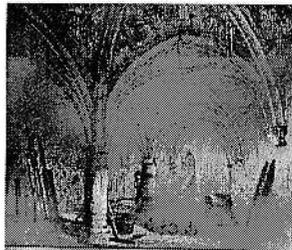
*'Collections of the Surrey Archaeological Society, Vol 11'* (1893), where it is recorded as being in the personal collection of Mr. R. Fitch, F.S.A (Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries). Robert Fitch is known to have been an avid collector of archaeological objects and was an early secretary of the Norfolk Archaeological Society. Although nowadays anything found in the St. Catherine's area would usually go to Guildford Museum, the early antiquaries were

happy to collect from a much wider area. Robert Fitch was an early supporter of Norwich Castle Museum, and in 1891 donated money and later his personal collection, to help with the building of a new gallery. According to the Museum's database The Fitch collection is the largest and most important donation from a private collector. In this way the axehead ended up in Norwich Castle Museum.

The ornament found with the axehead is of unknown purpose, though it could have been for personal display (perhaps similar to a brooch). The image appears in the Surrey Archaeological Collections LI (1949), on pg 143, with a note recording it had been obtained for Guildford Museum by the Curator, and that it bore a striking resemblance to a similar ornament found in Farnham. Sadly Guildford Museum has no record of the object entering the collection, and it seems likely that it was loaned for display and then returned to its original owner, whose identity is unknown. The note reports that it was cast in one piece (disk and back loop) and that it had the remains of an 'ornamental, openwork, bronze binding around its edge'.

Objects from the Bronze Age, and indeed from across the whole time span of Surrey history, can be seen on display at Guildford Museum, open Monday – Saturday, 11 – 5, entry is free.

### Undercroft



During 2010 our volunteer guides and stewards enabled over 2000 members of the public to visit Guildford's wonderful medieval undercroft. Many thanks to all those concerned who made it possible for others to enjoy our heritage. Also many thanks to our organiser, Marjorie Williams

### Pantomime: Posters and programmes from this topsy turvy world

4 December – 15 January Exhibition at the Museum



The upside down world of Pantomime emerged from Renaissance Italy and continues as an enduring favourite at Christmas time. Twenty-two pantomimes are represented in this exhibition through programmes, leaflets, illustrations, script and posters dating from the early 1800s to the present day.

### Celebrating 100 Years at Guildford Museum

1 February - 26 March 2011

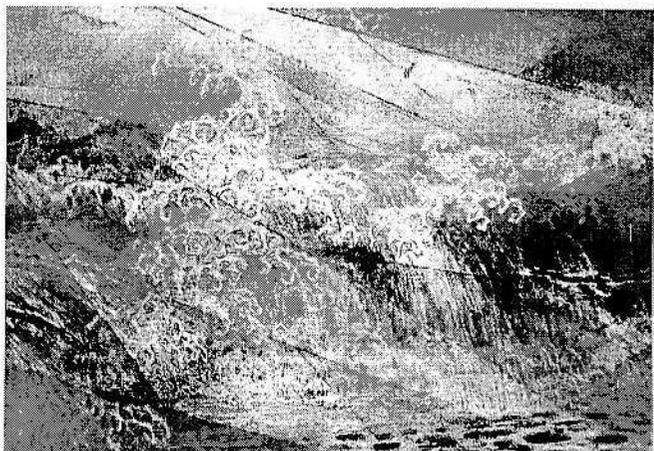
Guildford Museum was founded in 1898, making it one of the oldest museums in Surrey. The Museum's collection originally grew from the collections of the Surrey Archaeological Society.

In 1907 the Museum accepted a donation from Miss Gertrude Jekyll, the celebrated garden designer, of her whole collection of objects relating to 'Old Surrey', and on 15 February 1911 a new gallery was opened to house it.

In 2011 we celebrate the centenary of this event and the relationship between the Museum and the Surrey Archaeological Society.

## Master of the Mysterious

This was the title for an exhibition of the paintings of Sidney Sime held recently at Guildford House. Over 500 items of his work are held at a gallery in Worplesdon but this was an opportunity for a wider audience to view his work. If you love the Hobbit illustrations then you will certainly love Sime's work. Born in 1867, Sime had a career as a magazine illustrator and after marrying Mary Pickett, a miniaturist painter in 1898 they moved to Crown Cottage in Worplesdon.



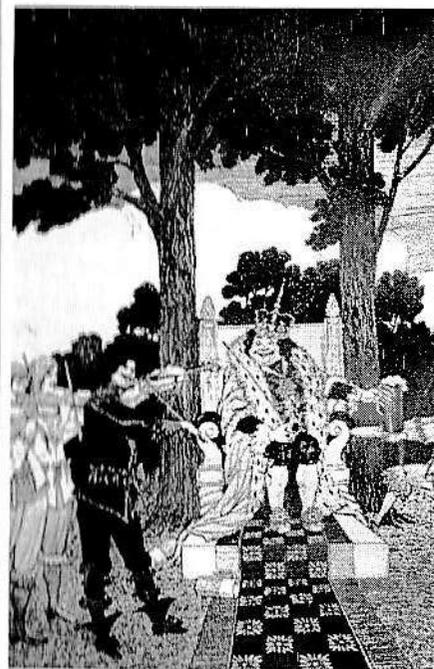
*Waves in Japanese style*

Dressed in the same old blue suit, he became a regular visitor to the local inn. He sat in the same place, opposite a large mirror, sketching caricatures of local working men and tradesmen while drinking whisky,

sometimes holding jovial political conversations but often sitting quietly until closing time. Sime's involved himself in the design of sets for the theatre and in particular Maeterlinck's play 'The Bluebird'. After seeing the play Malcom Cambell is said to have had his new car painted blue; he then went on to Brooklands to win two races. This car named 'Bluebird' brought him good luck and success. His son Donald Cambell also took the same name for his succession of speedboats.

Sime's work can be categorised into three basic genre 1) landscape 2) Magazine and caricature (you may have seen some of the caricatures at the Museum last year) 3) fantasy and the mysterious including book illustrations.

His humour which was so much a part of his character shows in the old woman who lived in a shoe where the cat can be spotted stealing the cream. Also in Old King Cole who sits with his crown at a rakish angle and has a caricature round face. It is a vibrant composition and was produced as a black and white illustration for the Pall Mall magazine.



Sime's imaginative mind appealed to Lord Dunsany who asked Sime to illustrate his books. And this provided the stimulus for Sime to produce some of his finest pictures. Later, Dunsany remarked "I have never seen a black and white artist with a more stupendous imagination. A detailed fantasy scene of a village at night with tall buildings towering over narrow streets appears on the following page. Sime never wanted to explain his paintings and drawings so where there is mystery you have to come through your own interpretation to your own conclusion.

Sidney Herbert Sime died on 22<sup>nd</sup> May 1941 and his grave in St Mary's Churchyard, Worplesdon, is marked by a rough block of granite. Lord Dunsany wrote to his widow "I feel now that the world has lost a unique character, a loss that is quite irreplaceable." Mary Sime's Will in 1949 bequeathed all his pictures to the Trustees for the creation of a Gallery solely for the display of her late husband's work, which she endowed with the proceeds of the sale of Crown Cottage.



An excellent booklet with many coloured illustrations and full of interesting information was produced for the exhibition and is still available from Guildford House.



*Sidney H Sime*

Sime is an artist whose work attracts visitors from the States and yet it is virtually unknown to the people of Guildford. Like many galleries it has no budget for publicity but it is anxious to perpetuate his reputation as a fine artist. Whether you care for his work or not a visit to the gallery is most interesting. Apart from the paintings etc there are

newspaper cuttings and books. Admission is by appointment-phone 01483 232117.

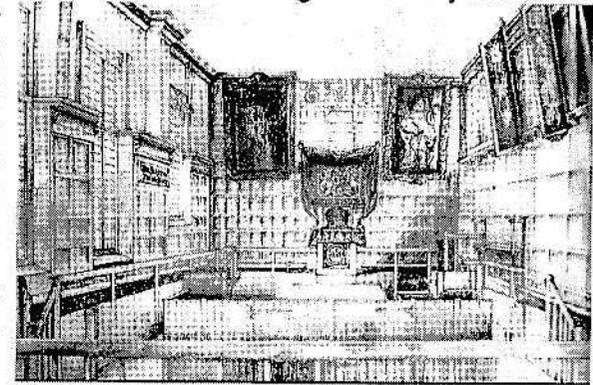
*With acknowledgements to Christopher Ewbank FRICS and the Trustees of the Worplesdon Memorial Hall.*

## Murder Trials

In 1195, Richard I commissioned certain knights to preserve the peace in unruly areas. They were responsible to the King for ensuring that the law was upheld. They preserved the "King's Peace", and were known as Keepers of the Peace. So commenced our judicial system which has been handed down to us today. In 1247 the Sheriff added a building alongside the Keep or Great Tower, presumably for the purpose of maintaining law and order and for centuries our town became a centre for justice in the area. A short while ago, the Lord Chief Justice, Lord Judge and the High Sheriff of Surrey, Lady Toulson attended a history-making ceremony at the Crown Court in Bedford Road to mark the decision to try murder trials once again in Guildford and the following report is abstracted from the Surrey Advertiser.

Judge Christopher Critchlow told the Gathering "For 700 years from

1256 until 1930 murder cases had been heard in the town. But members of the judiciary began to turn their backs on Guildford because the standard of accommodation could not match that of Kingston. Sadly our town did not provide good enough lodgings or court facilities. Also



*The Guildhall Court Room prior to 1788*

Kingston was nearer the capital. As a result it was favoured by judges who looked down on Guildford." Furthermore, a 150 years ago the then Lord Chief Justice referred to the old Guildford Crown Court building as "a barn and a disgrace."

Addressing the Lord Chief Justice, Judge Critchlow thanked the Lord Chancellor for restoring the right to try the most serious crimes in the county before a Surrey jury in Guildford. In conclusion he said: "we feel that your visit today to this court in the presence of the High Sheriff rights any historical wrong."

## Airmen Remembered

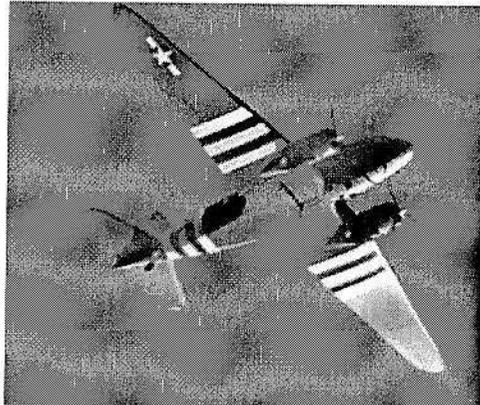
The unveiling ceremony of a plaque to commemorate the crew of an American military aircraft that crashed in a field in Jacob's Well at the corner of Clay Lane and Queenhythe Road in 1944 took place on Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> October at 11am. It was a fitting tribute and a perfect way to round up an amazing story.



The project was the idea of local historians Frank Phillipson and David Rose and included an archaeological excavation of the site by Chris Heywood of the Surrey Archaeological Society and

Phil and Ann Vallis of the Discoverers metal detecting group. After welcoming remarks by Worplesdon Parish Council and Guildford Borough Council, David Rose spoke about the research project which had culminated in the unveiling of this commemorative plaque. This was followed by a few minutes of silence to give praise for the sacrifice these airmen had made and a tribute by Jacob's Well piper Kenneth Thompson who played the lament *Mist Covered Mountains*.

Then, timed absolutely to perfection, those gathered heard the rumble of an aircraft's engines and against the backdrop of a clear sky a wartime C47a Skytrain (Dakota), the exact same type of aircraft that crashed, appeared over the top of the houses. It was a breathtaking sight as it passed over and dipped its wings. It then turned about and flew back over, at which there was spontaneous applause from everyone.



The son of the co-pilot, Professor John Wright and his family travelled over from Wisconsin USA to be guests of honour. Professor Wright then gave a moving speech. He said he was only

13 months old when his father died and that, until he was contacted by Frank Phillipson, he had no idea exactly where in the UK his father died or had any specific details of the crash. He then unveiled the plaque. This contains fragments of aluminium from the actual aircraft recovered during the excavation. The aircraft was nicknamed *Lilly Bell II*. The Wright family then laid four wreaths to commemorate the four airmen. A bunch of lilies was then laid by Martin George on behalf of the 8<sup>th</sup> Air Force Historical Society.

*From Worplesdon Parish Council Newsletter*



*Professor Wright and his family at the memorial plaque*