

FRIENDS of GUILDFORD MUSEUM  
EVENTS Winter 2013

Thursday 21st November 2013

Limnerslease, home of George Frederick and Mary Seton Watts – a guided tour

Pauline Surrey will be our guide for a 75 minute tour of the house which is yet to be restored.

Meet at Watts Gallery car park at 11 am.

Tickets for entry to Limnerslease and guided tour  
£5.50

Note: Watts Gallery will have a special exhibition "*The Making of Mary Seton Watts*" at this time. You may wish to have lunch in Compton and visit the exhibition in the afternoon, or you could visit the exhibition immediately after the Limnerslease tour. You will need to pay the normal entry fee to enter the Gallery (£7.50 per person). *The entry charge for Limnerslease does not include entry to the Gallery and the Gallery is not included in the tour.*

Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> November 2013

Group Visit to Guildford Museum exhibition-The Ministry of Food comes to Guildford

The exhibition organiser, Lynn Szygenda, will give us an introduction to the highlights of the exhibition.

Meet at the Museum at 2.30pm

Free of charge

Friday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2013

St Nicholas Day coffee morning at The Angel Hotel

Start Christmas gently with our social get together with a German theme. In between catching up with other Friends, there will be some German Christmas specialities to buy and our own German cultural interpreter, Pauline Surrey to tell us what makes Christmas in Germany such a special time.

Meet in Bill's Café in The Angel Hotel at 11 am.

Ticket (including tea/coffee and a piece of cake) £6

Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> March 2014

Victorian Guildford – illustrated talk by Gill Moulton

During Victoria's reign from 1837 to 1901 there were huge changes within the town, especially after the arrival of the railway. Like the Victorian Guildford walk that Gill leads for the Guildford Town Guides, her talk looks at how the exciting developments of the time affected the people, the buildings and the running of the town itself.

St Catherines Village Hall at 2.30 pm

Ticket £3

FRIENDS OF GUILDFORD MUSEUM  
NEWSLETTER

November 2013



Issue 34



## ***From the Editor***

I am pleased to say that there have been some recent additions to the Heritage staff. Catriona Smellie, who appears on our front cover, is our new collections officer. Andrew Longworth is our new collections officer. Our chairman Nicholas Bale has interviewed both and I am sure you will be keen to read about them.

But first of all Nick tells us about the Museum plans. Some of you will know that the lottery bid was turned down at the first round. Our chairman tells us this is not unusual. However I understand that the Lottery fund will provide comments and a revised bid is expected to be made.

With the winter days approaching the Museum is giving some talks. These take place at Salters (with the delightful address of 39½ Castle Street). Some are mentioned below but it is best to check if any have been added to the list. (Museum Tel no 01483 444751)

**Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> March 2014 at 2-30pm**

***Mary Chrystie and the Temperance Movement***

by Judith Witter

**Tickets cost £3-50 and are available from the Museum reception.**

Dates to be announced – Cindy Lowe will be telling us about the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries. (This will be linked with an exhibition at the Museum.) Guildfords Cricket Story will be told to us by David Firth and Andrew Norton will speak to us about Chilworth Gunpowder Mills.

**More events appear on the back page-don't miss these.**

## **Museum development – an update**

The plan to redevelop the Museum and to create a new entrance and gallery in the Castle Grounds (see ***Autumn 2012 Newsletter***) is expected to move forward, although our first application for "First Round" Heritage Lottery Fund approval was not successful. This was disappointing but not unusual. Excellent award winning museums were also turned down on first application.

Did the project set out in the application differ from the previous plan?

The overall plan for redevelopment of the museum is substantially the same:-

- A new museum entrance and reception area will be built in part of the ruins in the Castle Gardens. This entrance area will include a café and exhibition gallery providing better facilities for visitors to the museum and the gardens.
- The significance of the castle site as a Royal Castle, and, later, as a Royal Palace will be emphasised for visitors. The project budget will include funds to protect the ruined walls appropriately.
- The ground floor of Castle Arch House will display the museum's collection of objects in a renewed interior. The permanent display will present "The Story of Guildford" in a more up to date and coherent manner than at present. There will be lift and stair access to the ground and first floors of Castle Arch House and other improvements to make access easier.
- The current archaeology and exhibition galleries will become an education suite with space for formal sessions for schools and a range of learning opportunities and activities for adults and families.
- In the revised project, we are no longer bringing the 1<sup>st</sup> floor of Castle Arch House into public use for displays. This was due to the additional cost of doing this. The Surrey Archaeological Society Library and office will be retained in Castle Arch.

The key objective is to attract a broader range of visitors and to reverse the gradual decline in visitor numbers.

### What is new in this application?

Friends of the Museum and other local people will be particularly interested in the plans to encourage more people to get engaged with Guildford's heritage:-

- Archaeological excavations necessary as a result of disturbing the ground in and around the Museum will involve community and schools groups;
- There will be more opportunities for internships and volunteers e.g. to greet and show visitors around the Museum, and, after training, to assist in recording and conserving items in the collection.
- Learning activities for young and adult learners will be expanded beyond heritage topics, for example, to include creative writing and story telling.
- Themed evening openings are proposed, especially for young people.

In addition, two major events are proposed:-

- A Lewis Carroll weekend festival would be held annually;
- A new "Son and Lumiere" production is envisaged involving local colleges, the University and other youth groups.

### What can the Friends do to encourage the development?

As I mentioned in the Friends Newsletter late last year, our most important contribution will be to engage in activities to secure the widest public support for the project.

- *Over the next 12 months, I think we should try to enlarge our membership to a wider range of the local community, and increase the levels of participation in our activities.*
- *The Museum is planning to recruit volunteers in the near future for a large inventory project concerning the collection of objects and the museum's local history files. I hope you will volunteer for these activities, both for your own interest and the benefit of the museum.*
- *Our Autumn – Winter programme will include social events such as a Christmas themed coffee morning. Please bring along friends, colleagues or neighbours to these and other*

*events. If they have an interesting and enjoyable time they may decide to join our organisation*

Whilst our funds may represent only a small part of the total investment required for the project, the more funds that we can collect, the more likely it is that the project will be successful. As a result, I think that the Friends should look at new activities for 2014 which have the prime purpose of raising funds. If you have an idea of an activity or an event which you think would be suitable, please contact me or any one of the other committee members.

### What happens next?

The next steps will be decided by Guildford Borough Council and the Heritage team once they have received feedback from the Heritage Lottery Fund and considered the various options for continuing the project. Councillor Jen Powell said that "I am very optimistic and look forward to addressing the situation".

*Nick Bales-Chairman*

## Carry on Sergeant

The "Carry On" films are constantly being shown on television and if you are not a fan of them can I suggest that you watch this one, "Carry On Sergeant". The majority of this film was shot on the old Stoughton Barracks, better known as Cardwell's Keep. This was refurbished a number of years ago, after the forces left, and is now

residential accommodation. A road has been knocked through the wall close to the keep but the parade area and atmosphere of the barracks are retained.

The film was shot between 24<sup>th</sup> March and the 2<sup>nd</sup> May 1958. The Barracks were used for the exterior filming apart from the wedding scene (Harefield, Middlesex) and the church scenes which were at Beaconsfield.

The film cost £73,000 to make and took £500,000 at the Box Office. It was the 3<sup>rd</sup> most successful movie in Britain in 1958.



## **New appointments to the Heritage team**

### ***Collections officer – Catriona Smellie***

Catriona will be responsible for management of all the collections in the care of the Heritage Service, including the roughly 80,000 items of local history, needlework and archeology as well as the Borough art collection.

She studied Archeology at Durham University followed by an MA in Museum and Artefact Studies, both at Durham University. Since leaving Durham, she has been Curator at two related medical museums in Worcester, one which was already established, the George Marshall Medical Museum, and the other, the Infirmary Museum that she oversaw through the period of establishment and most of its opening year. Consequently, she has had broad experience of museums and heritage management.

I asked Catriona a few questions about her new role in Guildford.

***Action to maintain the Collection recording and management to accreditation standards is likely to take a significant portion of your time in the immediate future. Do you have other objectives or projects on your list for the first year?***

In addition to keeping existing Accreditation standards of collection care, I am working to bring our policies and plans up to date, in particular to include the art collections within the Accreditation framework. When the previous application was made, Guildford House was not part of the overall Heritage Service and as a result the art collection was considered as a separate entity in collections policy and planning documents.

I am also looking at conservation cleaning and monitoring of the interiors at Guildhall and Guildford House. We must also continue the previous good work digitising the catalogue alongside curatorial assistant Andrew and our excellent group of collections volunteers. Lastly, I am planning a collections review as well as compiling information on objects, locations and risks for salvage planning purposes.

***Is there a role for volunteers in relation to the museums collection of objects? What should people interested in volunteering expect and look forward to?***

Yes! We already have a team of dedicated collections volunteers and as such capacity is limited at the moment due to available space and computers. Volunteers at the moment are digitising our catalogue and helping with the project to list the Loans Boxes' contents.

However, we are planning a large inventory project to resolve documentation backlogs. This project will run over the next few years and we plan to achieve it by having small groups of volunteers working for one or two days per week at our offsite store and occasionally at the museum. We have limited computers available so prefer for volunteers to share the load when it comes to typing things up so computer-literate volunteers are ideal!

Once the inventory is complete, there will be a programme of cataloguing those objects that entered the collection in the past, but which weren't catalogued (for whatever reason). Although this is a few years away, some help in researching the objects for cataloguing would be helpful when we get to that stage, but the research will be fairly light for our purpose.

***What should someone do if they are interested in becoming a volunteer?***

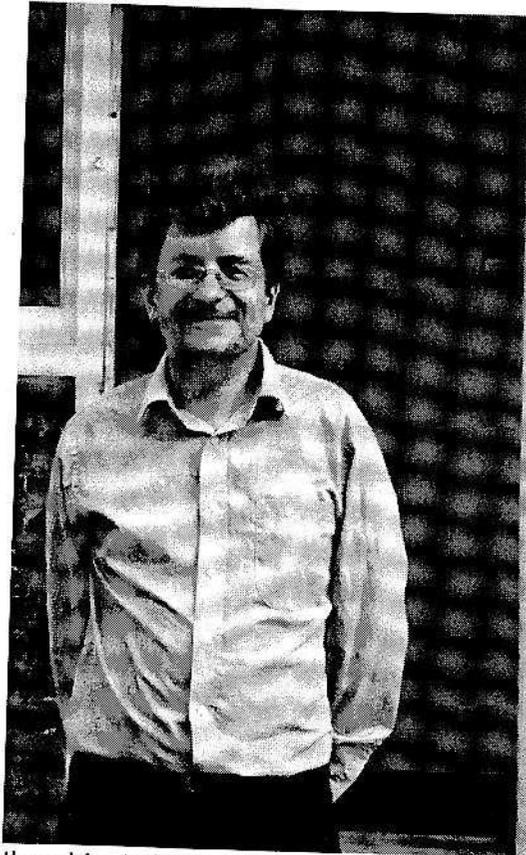
I will be drafting a role description for the inventory project which will outline what the task will involve and what set of skills I would like the volunteers to have.

All being well, I would like to start the project by New Year but the exact timing has not yet been decided. I will send the information to the Friends when we are ready to go ahead with this.

*Found - a red umbrella. This was left at St Catherine's Village Hall following Graham Oliver's talk on Queen Eleanor on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2013. Contact Nick Bale 01483 459997*

## **Curatorial Assistant – Andrew Longworth**

Andrew joined the Heritage Service in Guildford earlier this year with a dual role. His main role is to care for and make accessible the items in the collection, working with Catriona, the Collections Officer. He also has a remit to help with exhibitions put on by the Heritage Service.



Andrew is originally from Bolton in Lancashire, a graduate of Stirling University with an MA in Museum Studies from Newcastle University specialising in history curation. His first museum job was in Newcastle: helping to document and pack up half a million natural history objects at the Hancock Museum as part of the project to create the Great North Museum. For the last five years or so, he has been at Peterborough Museum, a municipal museum with a collection roughly twice the size of Guildford's collection. He is therefore well placed to take excellent care of

the objects in the Museum and Borough collection.

I asked Andrew a few questions about his role in Guildford.

### ***How did you start your involvement in the heritage field?***

I have always had a strong interest in history, especially social history, having visited many museums with my parents as a child. In

my second year at university I took a career planning course where I had to do a job study for which I interviewed the woman who ran the local museum. It was at this point, that I began thinking about a career in museums.

### ***What is your role in Guildford?***

My main role is to improve knowledge of the collection primarily through documenting what we have, what condition it is in and where it is stored. I am also responsible for monitoring the storage environment and pest traps to ensure that the items are safe and secure. I deal with about 20 public enquiries a month, mainly relating to local history enquiries, in particular providing access for researchers looking for information about Guildford Borough and its history.

For exhibitions, my role includes identifying objects for display from the collection and helping to display the objects and art works.

### ***How does Guildford Museum compare with Peterborough Museum?***

Peterborough's collection has a more local focus, with the collections all relating in some way to Peterborough and the surrounding villages. The Peterborough collection however includes natural history and geology which are not covered by Guildford's remit. As Guildford Museum has a strong relationship with the Surrey Archeological Society, the archaeology collections have developed a Surrey-wide context.

In terms of local history, Peterborough's collection is more wide ranging with a lot of material from the 20<sup>th</sup> century, as well as the Georgian and Victorian periods. Guildford's collection is very strong in the Victorian period running up to WW2, but it is less representative of post-war Guildford, something we hope to rectify going forwards.

## Joan Drew

Earlier in the year the museum held a most interesting exhibition featuring the work of Joan Drew. Anyone who visited this must surely have enjoyed their trip. I have taken the following information from the display cards.

Joan Harvey Drew (1875-1961) embroiderer and teacher lived in the Surrey villages of Blackheath, Chilworth and later Albury.

Taught to stitch at an early age, she continued to develop her embroidery skills in adulthood to become an accomplished textile and needlework teacher. In the early 1920's she delivered needlework courses in the Victoria and Albert Museum London, for teachers; and displayed her own work there in 1932 in an exhibition sponsored by the British Institute of Industrial Art, which featured leading creative embroiderers of the day.

In 1928 she donated a collection of embroidery to Guildford Museum which became the basis of the collection of needlework and contemporary textile art held by the Guildford Heritage Service today: the service includes Guildford Museum and Guildford House Gallery.

Joan Drew admired historical embroidery and drew inspiration from the past: much of her own embroidery references historical design.

But she did not support slavish copying from existing work or commercially produced patterns and wanted to encourage embroiderers to create and use their own designs. In 1929 she published **Embroidery and Design** which she called a "People's Book of Embroidery". With this she aimed to inspire and instruct the embroiderer to "depend on her own efforts of brain, eye and hand, rather than upon the machine -printed embroidery patterns of the factory, that are turned out by the thousand."

She applied her own art to useful objects including costume pieces, banners and furnishings using the traditional materials and

techniques well loved by embroiderers during the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.



*Banner for Blackheath  
Womans institute*

Joan was adept at the art of embroidery, which she applied as decoration on useful furnishings and costume pieces. She employed a range of stitches, perfectly executed to create texture and pattern, making everyday items beautiful. This use of embroidery though not always to Joan Drew's quality and standard was the typical use of embroidery in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

Joan Drew also worked on bold designs on large hangings which suited the graphic quality of her imagery. These items, although still functional, anticipated the use of embroidery as an expressive medium used to make a statement, convey a message or emotion, which

has become a feature of contemporary creative embroidery.

Although embroiderers today still decorate furnishings and costume with stitch, artists choose to work in the medium to create pictorial, figurative and abstract art textiles and sculptures. The stitchery is likely to be made by machine, as much as hand, or a combination of both, and a wide range of materials including cloth, paper, plastics, organic and found objects may be incorporated in the work.

## THE UNDERCROFT AT 72/74 HIGH STREET, GUILDFORD

by Marjorie Williams

Whilst stewarding in the Undercroft I often wished that I knew more about the history of this building. At last, to my delight I found help - a report written by archaeologist Martin O'Connell in the 1983 issue of the Surrey Archaeological Collections, Vol. 74, on his excavation during the rebuilding of the front wall of 72/74 High Street by its then owners, the Halifax Building Society. Included in O'Connell's report was a section describing documentary evidence of the building researched by Shirley Corke, archivist at the Guildford Muniment Room, with new information provided in title deeds lent to her by the building's former owners, the Trustee Savings Bank. This article is mostly based on her work.

One expert on undercrofts stated that most were ornate and suitable for the sale of luxury goods but considered that by the end of the 14th century they would have only been used for storage, so perhaps our own medieval shop had quite a short life. The earliest title deeds of nos. 72/74 date only from 1688; those relating to the undercroft itself only from 1825. During the period 1688 - 1801 the early house was owned by the Chennell family, two of whom were rectors of Cranleigh, so they probably rented out the undercroft. On the column near the foot of the entrance steps next to some graffiti can be seen the date 1718. I would love to imagine that they might have been made by young members of the Channell family but that is probably unlikely.

From 1800 to 1805 John Terry, surveyor and carpenter, owned the timber-framed house and during that time rebuilt it in brick to form a wider property covering two plots, with rear outbuildings for storage in an extensive courtyard which had an entry from what is now Chapel Street. After his death his trustees owned the house from 1805 to 1820. From 1820 to 1834 John Rand was the owner, during which time he divided the new building vertically to form the two buildings now numbered 72/74 and 76/78. This explains why part of the undercroft is now under 76/78 and why concrete supporting pillars have been added under the vaulting below the partition wall.

The earliest mention of the undercroft itself dates from the end of the 18th century. In 1770 a Mr Grose refers to it as a cellar in a private house which he was not able to survey accurately because it was full of faggots; engravings of 1770 and 1773 also show these. From 1825 the undercroft is mentioned in rate books as being used as a wine cellar.

From 1825 to 1829 the whole house was rented by Thomas Taunton, a Guildford wine merchant who built a brewery in Bury Street later known as The Castle Brewery. John Nealds then rented the undercroft from 1829 to 1834. From 1834 to 1974 the whole building was owned by the Trustee Savings Bank who rented out the undercroft separately, but there is no information of tenants until 1866 when another Thomas Taunton was tenant until 1872. In 1874 - 1884 Charles A Masters, who built The Friary Brewery, took over and his brewery rented it from 1885; in 1904 a yearly tenancy agreement was made between The Trustee Savings Bank and the Friary Holroyd and Healy's Breweries to use the undercroft as a wine store. I have no information on how long this lasted.

In 1974, the Halifax Building Society bought the whole of 72/74 High Street to use as offices and applied for planning permission to rebuild its front wall and foundations. This resulted in the Surrey County Council Planning Department employing Martin O'Connell to conduct an archaeological investigation on the original frontage and steps to the undercroft. A visitor to the undercroft last year told me she had worked for the Halifax Building Society who used it for storage. In 1988 Guildford Borough Council acquired a limited lease to use it as a Tourist Information Office. They moved out in 1996 and since then it has been in the care of Guildford Museum.

*(other articles on the undercroft have appeared in issues 6 and 29)*

DON'T FORGET OUR NEW WEB SITE

<http://www.surreycommunity.info/fogm/>

All events will be listed here together with news and articles

## British Association of Friends of Museums

### Chertsey Museum

Chertsey were very pleased to find out recently that they were to one of the first groups to be awarded an "All our stories" grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund. Grants range from £3,000 to £10,000 and are to enable groups to explore their local heritage and share their discoveries with others.



It might be about local traditions, place names or researching local buildings.

### World War One

Next year 2014 is the centenary of the start of the first world war. "In Memoriam 2014" has been launched to protect the estimated 100,000 war memorials across the country. The war memorials trust in conjunction with the SmartWater Foundation aims to give them greater protection and each one will be marked with a forensic signature to prevent the theft of metals. This is a free service offered by [www.inmemorian2014.org](http://www.inmemorian2014.org)

### Luton Wardown Museum

If you are ever near Luton and interested in hats go along to this museum. This area was the centre of the straw hat trade because the climate and the soil grew the best wheat straw. Further north were sheep farms so the wool was used to make the felt hats. Both were vital to the hat trade and ladies took advantage of the hats produced. Also the field workers protecting their heads in the sun. The museum shows a range of all these types of hats and looks well worth a visit.

## Eleanor of Provence: Queen of England from 1236 – 1272; resident at Guildford Palace on numerous occasions between 1236 - 1286

*(Graham Oliver has kindly sent this to us as a record of his talk to the Friends prior to the visit to Lewes.)*

Eleanor of Provence was a woman of great vitality, with an unusually exciting life story. Born in 1223, Queen of England at the age of 12 in 1236, married for 36 years to Henry III, a deeply affectionate but dominating mother and a true European. Having promoted her Savoyard kinsfolk and their policies at the English court in 1240s and 1250s, she became a highly significant political figure in the struggle between the king and the baronage, helped to bring about the overthrow of Simon de Montfort and rescued her husband and eldest son from his control. Widowed in 1272, she showed herself vigilant as Dowager Queen and did not die until 1291.

Eleanor was a European, familiar with the county of Provence in her childhood, the daughter of Raymond-Berengar IV, count of Provence and his wife Beatrice of Savoy, daughter of the Count of neighbouring Savoy. Raymond also had links with Barcelona (Catalonia) and with the kingdom of Aragon. Her elder sister Margaret married King Louis IX (later St Louis) of France, her younger sister Sanchia married Henry III's brother, Richard of Cornwall and then briefly became Queen of Germany and her youngest sister Beatrice married the Count of Anjou, brother of Louis IX.

Eleanor was highly articulate and well educated and brought with her something of the warm, vibrant Southern French culture and of a more sophisticated court. Her native language was *provençal*, the language of southern France, and she also spoke French itself and was able quickly to master the form of French (Anglo Norman) spoken at her husband's court in England; it is also clear that she had a reasonable working knowledge of Latin. She also brought with her to England an affinity with the followers of St Francis of

Assisi and the Dominican friars, which was significant for the future of Guildford.

Eleanor was not the first choice for a bride for Henry III but a proposed alliance with the heiress to the county of Ponthieu, in northern France, had been opposed by the French court. It was barely 30 years since King John had lost the heartlands of the Plantagenet dynasty, and less than 20 years since the invasion of England by the French Dauphin following John's death in 1216, the year after Magna Carta. Henry III had succeeded his father in that year as a child aged 9

Eleanor journeyed to England after the financial terms of the marriage contract, including a dowry of 10,000 marks, had been agreed. Following a proxy marriage in Tarascon (in the foothills of the Pyrenees), she was married to King Henry at Canterbury in January 1236; Henry was aged 28, she was aged 12. Six days later she was crowned Queen of England in Westminster Abbey. The wedding and coronation were planned as a celebration of the English kingship and the great chronicler Matthew Paris wrote 'whatever the world could afford to create pleasure and magnificence were there brought together from every quarter'. The new queen was then taken to Glastonbury to see the supposed burial site of King Arthur.



Marriage of Henry III to Eleanor

Three years later on 18 June 1239, the teenage Queen gave birth to a son, the Lord Edward, the future Edward I, the Hammer of the Scots. She had achieved the first step in what was required of her above all else. Edward was an unusual name for the Anglo-Normans and reflected Henry's affection for St Edward the Confessor, the last Anglo-Saxon king and builder of the original Westminster Abbey. From the 1230s onwards Henry devoted himself to the cult of the Confessor with ever growing zeal and he

began to rebuild Westminster Abbey with a view to glorifying the Confessor's relics. In September 1240 Eleanor gave birth to a second child, a daughter, Margaret, who in December 1251 was to be married to King Alexander III of Scotland. A second son Edmund was born in 1244, named after the Saxon royal martyr, Edmund; it was most important to have both the heir and the spare in view of the mediaeval incidence of infant mortality. Prince Edward and his wife, Eleanor of Castile, later lost at least 8 of their children at birth or in infancy; the future Edward II was their 4<sup>th</sup> son.

By 1241 now aged 17, Eleanor was beginning to show her political aptitude – her uncles William and Peter of Savoy had come to England and had been appointed councillors to King Henry, much to the chagrin of Simon de Montfort, the king's brother in law, married to his sister, Eleanor; another Savoyard uncle Boniface had been appointed Archbishop of Canterbury. It is not known precisely what part the Queen played in encouraging these new arrivals but it is inconceivable that she did not contribute by judicious use of her influence with the king. Indeed she has been described as a supreme example of how a well born woman could maintain political power after marriage by manipulating the connections of her birth family.

Eleanor ensured in particular that her relations the Savoyards and their protégés were placed in the household of the young Prince Edward; the Queen was established as the natural guardian of Prince Edward's interests, which included control of the king's lands and key castles such as Dover while the king was abroad on an expedition to Poitou in 1242 in an attempt to regain his continental possessions lost by his father. This placed the Queen, supported by her Savoyard uncles centre stage. Ten years later in 1253, whilst Henry was again abroad in Gascony attempting to quell a rebellion there, the Queen, who had been left in England, was appointed Regent and the Great Seal and the Exchequer Seal were left with her. In other words, she was given the ultimate authority for the government of the country during the king's absence.

King Henry then became involved on Papal prompting in a scheme for his younger son, Edmund, to secure the crown of Sicily which comprised not only the island of Sicily but a large part of southern

Italy. Eleanor and the Savoyards actively supported this hair-brained scheme which cost the English exchequer cripplingly large amounts of money in the 1250s in meeting papal debts incurred in the resultant war in southern Italy.

By the late 1240s there was intensifying discontent with Henry's government among both the laity and clergy caused both by financial extortion through the exchequer as Henry was clearly living beyond his means and by the King and Queen's deliberate protection of favoured courtiers and magnates, in particular foreigners, in face of all the complaints against them. There were two groups of these foreigners; on the one hand the Savoyards who were relatives and contacts of Queen Eleanor and on the other hand the Lusignans from Poitou in south western France who were half brothers and supporters of King Henry through his mother, Isabella of Angouleme, who after the death of his father King John married Hugh of Lusignan, count of La Marche; these two groups hated each other and were a major cause of the constitutional crisis



Queen Eleanor

and rebellion against the Crown which took place in the late 1250s and 1260s. The Lusignans arrived at court in the late 1240s and from the start Eleanor perceived them as enemies. It is likely that the rivalry led to an estrangement between Henry and Eleanor.

Whilst in England, Eleanor spent most of her time in royal castles such as Windsor and Winchester and in the palaces of Clarendon, near Salisbury, Woodstock, Havering, Guildford and Marlborough and in the great palace of Westminster. It is mentioned that at Guildford Palace the Queen's Wardrobe (which was not what you would expect but her financial office) was adjacent to steps out to a fine garden.

In 1252 Eleanor had been temporarily sent to Guildford in disgrace when she backed Archbishop Boniface, one of her Savoyard uncles against Aymer of Valence, a Lusignan over the appointment of a prior to St Thomas in Lambeth.

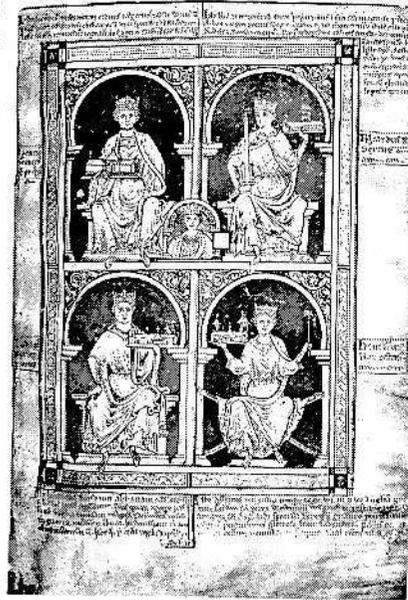
In 1256 another dispute broke out between Aymer, who was Bishop-elect of Winchester and Boniface, who was Archbishop of Canterbury. This resulted in an armed band of Lusignan supporters ransacking Lambeth Palace, the home of the Archbishop and hot footing it with hostages to their castle at Farnham.

In May 1258 an armed group of earls, barons and knights appeared at Westminster and demanded that the king expel his Lusignan advisers and that a council of 24 prudent men, made up of bishops, earls and barons, be set up to rule the country, half appointed by the king and half by the protesters and that a new Parliament be called. Henry was forced to agree to this and the Parliament met in Oxford. It is likely that the protesters had the covert backing of Eleanor.

The result was the Provisions of Oxford under which the kingdom was given virtually a new form of government – the committee of 24 was replaced by a Council of 15 which had a strong baronial composition and an unprecedented measure of control independent of the monarchy. Parliaments were also to meet 3 times a year. The Baronial Council was instrumental in forcing Henry to enter into the Treaty of Paris in 1259 with King Louis IX of France, whom we should remember was married to Eleanor's sister. Under this treaty, Henry acknowledged that he held all his remaining continental possessions as a peer of France rather than as king in his own right; this brought to a close a great chapter of English kingship. After 1259 Henry was in many ways an irrelevance; the focus of royal power shifted gradually but inevitably from Henry to his twenty year old son, the aggressive soldierly Lord Edward. Edward would not be king for more than a decade but he was most decidedly the future of the Plantagenet family, albeit more the son of his mother Eleanor rather than his father Henry who can only be described as a poor and ineffectual king. Indeed although the Pope called him 'Rex Christianissimus' the great Italian Dante was later to call him 'one of the negligent rulers and king of the simple life'.

Eleanor had now become extremely unpopular with both the barons and with the populace in general. In 1263 she attempted to leave the Tower of London, where she and Henry had taken refuge, and was attacked by the London mob who pelted her boat with dirt, rotten eggs and stones; she was lucky to be rescued by the Mayor.

By 1264 the situation had deteriorated into all but Civil war between the King, Queen, Prince Edward and their supporters and the rebellious barons led by Simon de Montfort, the king's brother in law. This climaxed in the battle of Lewes in May 1264 when the larger royal army was decisively defeated by de Montfort. Henry and Edward had taken refuge in Lewes priory; Eleanor was in France attempting to raise troops. The peace marked the king's defeat and he was effectively a captive and swore once more to uphold the Provisions of Oxford and to remove all traitors from his Council. The Queen used all her considerable financial skills and resourcefulness to raise the necessary finance by sales of royal assets in Gascony and by taking out loans to put together an army comprised of French and Flemish knights, German mercenaries and supporters from Gascony and Poitou but this army was never able to cross the Channel as the Queen ran out of money and the troops had to be dispersed.



Henry II	Richard I
John	Henry III

With King Henry and Prince Edward still held captive by the de Montfort government in England, Queen Eleanor retired to Gascony on which she tightened her grip and sought help for the royalist cause amongst the magnates in Ireland and in the Welsh marches. De Montfort was however alienating powerful allies by his blatant promotion of the interests of his son. In May 1265 Prince Edward

was able to escape and a small expeditionary force from Gascony landed unopposed in Pembrokeshire. The royalist forces now joined together and Prince Edward made a solemn promise that he would observe the ancient laws and customs of the kingdom and that he would ensure that the king ruled through native Englishmen and that he would remove aliens from his council.

The second great battle of the civil war was fought at Evesham on 4 August 1265. Edward's forces pinned de Montfort behind the river Severn cut off from his son based in Kenilworth; the result was a massacre. Henry, who had been present as a hostage with the rebel troops, was himself wounded.

Queen Eleanor returned to England in October 1265. Resistance continued from the surviving de Montfortian rebels largely due to a policy of total disinheritance of their assets but gradually the king's councillors moved towards an alternative policy of redemption by which former rebels could recover their lands on payment of fines. This considerably helped replenish Henry's treasury.

In 1269 in Henry's rebuilt church at Westminster a magnificent ceremony took place in front of a great assembly of magnates, prelates and leading citizens from towns throughout England when the remains of St Edward the Confessor were transferred to a recently constructed gold and jewelled shrine in the Abbey by Henry and his two sons, Edward and Edmund and his brother Richard of Cornwall. As I have already indicated, Henry had been devoted to the cult of Edward the Confessor for most of his adult life. He had also planned the rebuilding of the Abbey as part of a conscious glorification of monarchy.

Henry died in November 1272 whilst both his sons were away on Crusade in the Holy Land. Edward finally reached England in August 1274 to take the throne and to become one of England's most successful mediaeval monarchs. He was known as Longshanks for his tall stature and as the Hammer of the Scots.

Eleanor now assumed a new role as Dowager Queen. She was to live for nearly another 20 years, dying in 1291 and surviving her

daughter in law Edward's wife Eleanor of Castile, who died a year earlier.

Guildford Palace was one of her dower residences and, as we know, was close beside the walls of the castle keep. It was contemporaneously described as 'with its chapels, cloister and gardens clearly one of Henry's most attractive residences'. The apartments in Castle Cliffe Gardens were probably built for the Lord Edward in about 1246 and the Castle Arch in 1256. As dowager queen, Eleanor spent more time in Guildford than at any of her other dower residences; she spent a large amount of time as guardian to Edward's children whilst they were young both before and after Henry's death. She was particularly fond of his second son and heir, Prince Henry, a somewhat sickly child, who died at Guildford in the autumn of 1274 whilst in her care. She then proceeded to found the Dominican Friary at Guildford in his memory and it was there that his heart was buried after his body had been taken for burial in Westminster Abbey (it was common mediaeval practice for the heart to be separated from the body for burial). When the Friary was excavated in the late 20C there was clear evidence of the foundations of what was almost certainly the chantry chapel containing young Henry's heart. However, it was probably to please Eleanor of Castile, the boy's mother, that the Friary belonged to the Dominicans rather than the Franciscans.

We know that Eleanor was again at Guildford in 1282 when her seal was used to confirm her granddaughter, another Eleanor,'s betrothal to Alfonso of Aragon; the young Eleanor was aged 12 – 13 and her grandmother insisted that she should not be sent to the Aragonese court until she was considerably older – obviously she had learned from her own experiences as a child bride.

Eleanor exerted considerable influence as Dowager Queen and there is evidence of many letters written from Guildford palace- one to the Sheriff of Sussex mentions that prisoners from Sussex should be held at Guildford rather than Arundel. This practice continued for several centuries. Another letter referred to the expulsion of Jews from all her dower towns in 1275 and it is known several Jewish families had to leave Guildford at that time. (In 1290

Edward I expelled all Jews from England – probably in order to sequester their assets.)



Henry III and Queen Eleanor at Prayer

In 1286 Eleanor decided to enter a nunnery at Amesbury in Wiltshire but never became a fully professed nun and retained a considerable amount of property and income. She died at Amesbury on 24 June 1291 having survived her daughter in law, Eleanor of Castile, by 7 months. She was buried in her convent at Amesbury with her heart being buried in the London church of the Franciscans. Unlike her

husband, son and daughter in law, she has no fine tomb in Westminster Abbey. The Westminster chronicle described her as 'generosa et religiosa virago' which translated means a well born and religious woman of masculine strength and spirit; this was a rare accolade for a mediaeval queen. Her informal role in government had been essential during the de Montfort rebellion particularly in the light of her husband, Henry III, 's poor and ineffectual kingship. Eleanor's resourcefulness, intelligence and above all her conviction of her own authority emphasised the implicit power of English queenship.

*The Editor welcomes items for the Newsletter or comments. Please send them to Eric Morgan 21 St Michael's Avenue, Guildford, GU3 3LW. Telephone Number (01483) 233344.*