

# FRIENDS OF GUILDFORD MUSEUM NEWSLETTER

October 2020



Issue 41



Jackie Malyon leading  
a walk in Dorking.

Pictured Nola Thorne,  
Val Bale, Jen Powell  
and Jackie.

Village walk in July 2015,  
Jackie leading FoGM  
members in Chiddingfold.



## **From the Editor**

As Jen Powell notes in her Chairman's report in the accompanying AGM supplement, this has indeed been a turbulent year. Many of the FoGM events which we have enjoyed over the last few years disappeared from our diaries as Covid-19 took hold.

We can only hope that things will return to something approaching normality next year, and that the help we give to the Museum, our stewarding at the Undercroft, our events and talks can all resume safely.

*Jean Wickens*

## **The Royal Society for Arts, Manufactures and Commerce Heritage Index**

The RSA Heritage Index provides some interesting information on Guildford Borough as a heritage area. The Index uses a wide range of parameters to assess the importance of heritage to local council areas. It takes account of how many listed buildings there are, is there a museum, how active is the town on Heritage Open Days and many more. It is not limited to museums and historic buildings however, but gives similar weight to industrial heritage, parks and gardens and surrounding countryside.

In the 2020 Index, Guildford ranks 42nd out of 316 council districts in England. On the face of it, this corroborates my view that Guildford's heritage is very significant compared to most places in England. Furthermore the ranking has improved since 2016 when the Index was last evaluated. On the other hand, Guildford does not do so well on the Built Environment (95th position), Museums & archives (62nd position) and Industrial Heritage (166th position). In fact, the borough's relatively good ranking is almost wholly due to our good scores for natural environment, culture and memories (I think this includes Heritage Open Days, links to famous people etc), and parks and gardens.

It is also interesting to see how Guildford compares with other boroughs in England. Norwich and Oxford are in the top 5, but Portsmouth has a surprisingly good ranking. Bristol on the other hand is down at about 70th. Guildford also has the highest rating of the eleven Surrey Boroughs and Districts.

***Nick Bale***

## **Future of Museums, Historic Houses, Art Galleries, etc**

Over the months of Lockdown there were several articles in the press with concerns about the future viability of museums, historic houses heritage sites, and art galleries. While some are supported by national and local government, like Guildford Museum, the vast majority are run by national charities or by small independent charitable trusts. The National Trust estimated it faced a loss of £200million this year. and has had to make many of it's staff redundant as a result.

The website of the Historic Houses Association stated their members are 'facing one of the worst crises in living memory...' The Director of the prestigious Ashmolean Museum in Oxford said 'We are in uncharted territory...we are facing a crisis...Our heritage is at risk and there won't be enough funds to save everything and everybody'. Small independent museums were at particular risk. The chairman of the Association of Independent Museums said that 'around threequarters get less than 20,000 visitors a year' and the really small ones only survive because their costs are low and their staff are volunteers

In the summer Historic England came to the rescue of some museums like the Mary Rose Museum with emergency grants of £1.8 million to 70 projects in May. Emergency schemes have also been set up by Arts Council England and the National Lottery Heritage Fund. Some small museums like Jane Austen's House Museum in Chawton have also launched appeals to their patrons and the public. Challenges also came over the summer with reopening; as prebooking, limited numbers, social distancing and other measures came into force; and

an, at times, heated debate over the subject of returning artefacts to their places of origin.

More recently the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) announced the award of two tranches of the Culture Recovery Fund:

- £103m for 445 heritage organisations across England.
- £257m for 1,385 theatres, arts venues, museums, and cultural organisations across England.

While this was welcome news and will go some way to protecting our heritage, we can only hope that more of our heritage is not lost as a result of Covid-19.

However an interesting sidelight on the lack of visitors came from the British Museum. Curators discovered that the exhalations of visitors have been vital in keeping the galleries at the right humidity. From the Second World War until this year the museum had never been closed for more than 3 days. They found that following closure on March 23rd the relative humidity dropped to critical levels below 40%, endangering objects made of wood and bone. Sensitive objects like the Lewis Chessmen had to be moved into temperature-controlled storerooms. Their Head of Collections said 'Visitors are the living breath of our objects...It's very strange, that synergy between visitor and object.'

**Jean Wickens**

*Quotes and figures from The Times.*

## **News - Museum Collections Management System**

Some exciting news, after over a year of back and forth, the Museum Collections Management System tender has finally gone live! This means that prospective providers can now tender for the system.

Sarah Fairhurst will be working with IT and Procurement Departments to score and assess the returns and hopefully in the New Year the Collections Management System will be in place.

**Sarah Fairhurst**

## **The History of Guildford Museum Part 2**

We continue our history of Guildford Museum written by Gavin Morgan, founder of Guildford Heritage Forum. Most of the information comes from copies of the Friends Newsletter edited by his father Eric between 1995 and 2017. Part 1 was in Newsletter 40.

*For those interested in seeing the FoGM full set of newsletters, Nick Bale has uploaded all the newsletters to a new "Newsletter" page on our FoGM website. Well worth a look!*

### **1980 - Bringing history alive – Matthew Alexander**

As well as discovering and researching the past, a museum needs to bring history alive. In the late 20th 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 town's 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.

### **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. Matthew started a series of courses on Guildford History (which he still runs) and at the end he suggested forming a team of town guides. Marjorie Williams assisted by Eric Morgan was the first leader of the group 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 - to encourage appreciation and preservation of local heritage and promote the town's prosperity through tourism.

**Visit  
Guildford**  
Free Guided Walks

The Town Guides were awarded the QAVC in 2019



**The Queen's Award  
for Voluntary Service**

### **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. 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**

Almost unnoticed in the High Street is the little entrance to one of the best medieval undercrofts of its type in the country. This has been kept open by volunteers from the Friends of the Museum since the 1990s. 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. 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.

### **2001 - Victorian Schoolroom**

Fund raising by the Friends allowed the museum to purchase items for the collection. By 2000 they had raised £19,500 and spent £10,000 on projects to benefit the museum. One fascinating item was a Wonderland stamp case invented by Lewis Carroll. However,

the most important acquisition came in 2001 when they bought the entire inventory of a Victorian classroom for £4,500. The Victorian schoolroom had its first group of children on 10th October 2001 and there are now thousands of children who have benefitted from the lessons put on there.

### **2004 - Development of the Castle**

The Museum had been agitating for work to be done on the keep for some years. A lot of work was done in 1885-6, when the Borough acquired the Castle Grounds, and the keep was repointed in 1989. English Heritage gave a grant for the work but Guildford Borough Council, as owners of the site, funded most of it. The work was being carried out by Nimbus Conservation

The restored Keep was opened on 26th June 2004 and attracted 14000 visitors in its first year. A floor was inserted at the first floor level allowing the public to appreciate the Keep's rooms for the first time in six centuries. Information about the royal palace acquired from the excavations in the 1990s was used to create a new exhibition with a model of the castle as a centrepiece.

### **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. 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.

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

Since the millennium the museum, deprived of major investment, has not changed very much. 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.

In 2004 the Borough Council received the final report from a specialist museum consultant looking into options for the future of the museum. 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.”

Since 1994 towns across the country have taken the initiative to develop their museums to boost tourism and trade in their town centres. Guildford is a league behind but let’s hope that we can benefit from the experience of other towns and create a museum to be proud of.

***Gavin Morgan***

## **The Undercroft**

Many of us when stewarding in the Undercroft have admired the model of the Merchant’s House, which is also a favourite of younger visitors to the Undercroft as well. In Summer 2019 when Jen Powell was stewarding she was talking to a visitor who told her that he had built the model.



It turned out to be Jonathon Tatlow, who made the model in 1991. For many years he organised the market on the Town Bridge at Christmas and on other occasions, throughout the year.

## **An Interview with Jackie Malyon**

Many of us, who had been on one of her village walks, were saddened to hear of the death of Jackie Malyon. The following interview is from Parish People in the Albury Parish Magazine 2019. With thanks to Richard Floyd and Albury Magazine for allowing us to use it.

*Mrs Malyon is a dedicated historian who, at the age of eighty, still teaches at adult education classes and with her detailed knowledge of Surrey's history, leads regular outings to the County's gems.*

*I asked about her visits to Albury?*

**A** I've made many visits to Albury and particularly the Old Saxon Church. In May 1985, I took a small group to Albury and we met Dr Maurice Burton, the naturalist, then living at Weston House. By coincidence, on the very day of our visit, there appeared an account of his life in the Daily Telegraph celebrating the 35 years that he had been writing the nature notes for that newspaper. Asked why he didn't wait until 40 years of his nature notes, he replied that he might not be around that long. In fact he lived until 1992. On another occasion, I met the Hon Ralph Percy, as he then was, now Duke of Northumberland. I also met Mary Quant at the Old Church, when she was recording a radio programme on 'Favourite Places and Famous People'.

**Q.** What can you tell me about the Pigeon House?

**A.** Having obtained the approval of the estate office to proceed with the restoration, Dr Burton organised the sale of paintings to raise £10,000 needed for the restoration. I asked him why the pigeons continued to nest in the roof of the old church when they had a lovely purpose built hotel in the pigeon house. Dr Burton replied: 'God alone knows'. I would like to see Weston House again, where Dr Burton lived, particularly the garden. He bought the house mainly for its extensive garden.

**Q.** You are an expert on Surrey history, its towns and villages. How did you go about your research?

**A** I particularly concentrated on the villages, because they are so

beautiful and so interesting. I would work on a couple of villages each summer. I would knock on doors of old houses and request permission to photograph the house. Frequently I was asked in, shown over the building and given useful information. Sadly I do not have time for original research but seek out books that others have written. Original researchers make use the public records office.

**Q.** Where would you turn for a history of Albury?

**A.** I used the Pevsner, that is the works of Nikolaus Pevsner, the German architect who wrote on the architecture of the whole of England. He was a Jewish emigre who escaped the Nazis and brought his family over to live in Hampstead. He wrote 38 books covering every county in England which he covered by travelling around with his wife and a team of researchers. His work is very detailed and precise. It is also concise, because he had a lot of ground to cover.

**Q.** Are they still in print?

**A.** The more popular books in the series are being updated and reprinted, particularly London, which is more extensive than the others. So I use Pevsner and Victoria County History, and parish guide books. There is a lot of material available on Albury.

**Q.** Tell me about adult education?

**A.** The government doesn't want to fund adult education any more, except perhaps English as a foreign language, which is regarded as a necessity. There is no funding for liberal studies, so classes like mine have to pay their way. They are attended mainly by retired people, with the time and money.

**Q.** What classes do you take?

**A.** I have one class on English architecture and four classes of Surrey history. These take place in Surbiton, New Malden, Sutton and Cheam. I also conduct six outings a year. I am sure that's why people keep coming back, because they enjoy the outings.

**Q.** Tell me about your early life?

**A.** I was born on 8 September 1938, the second daughter of Thomas and Doris Harmer. My sister, Jill, who is now in poor health living in

Northamptonshire, has one daughter, Susan. I think that my parents wanted me to be a boy (Jack and Jill), which was how I became Jackie. When hostilities started, as one of the many civil servants engaged in essential war work, my father was moved out of harm's way and transferred to Llandudno.

**Q.** What was this vital war work?

**A.** I think it involved the issue of ration books. He had previously been busy winding up his late father's business, involving London food markets, so when seeking a job where knowledge of food would be useful, he was put onto ration books. Initially Jill and I stayed with our mother in London but, in 1940, as the blitz started, we were quickly moved to join our father in a rather cramped flat in Llandudno. There, we were pretty remote from air raids. After the war, father obtained a permanent position in the Ministry of Agriculture. We returned to Southgate, where I attended a lovely co-ed Grammar School, which was unusual at the time. The school is now a sixth form college.

**Q.** After school?

**A.** I went to secretarial college and married in 1958. My son, Paul, born in 1964, is an interior designer. His sisters followed quickly: Kate, 1965, now an occupational therapist, and Jen, 1968, who works at the Law Courts.

**Q.** What next?

**A.** My husband and I divorced in 1970 and I remarried in 1971. My husband, John, still works as an accountant. Our golden wedding is fast approaching.

**Q.** Did you start a new career?

**A.** Yes. I went to a teachers' training college in Twickenham, for a four year, part time, course. On qualifying, I started teaching at adult education classes in liberal subjects: art appreciation, history, literature, etc and in the early 1980s started to specialise in Surrey history. I began my Surbiton class with the Romans in 1980s and it took until last year to get up to George V. I am now starting again with the Romans.

**Q.** What Is the Surrey History Centre?

**A.** It is based in Woking, where it serves as a depository for papers of historic interest. Documents are restored, conserved, collated and catalogued. Several local history societies have deposited their document collections there. They can still access them, in better condition than if left in somebody's garage, and the knowledge can be more widely shared. It is worth doing the guided tour; I take classes there on some of my visits. There are exhibitions, but only of real interest if studying the particular subject in depth. It is a wonderful resource for historians, but not of particular interest to the general public.

**Q.** Can you give me an example of its use by an historian?

**A.** A local historian, David Taylor, was offered access to the Lushington Papers which derive from the Lushington family in Cobham. These were deposited with the History Centre, where he had full and detailed access as part of his research for a history of Cobham for which he got his PhD.

**Q.** What can we learn about Roman Britain in Surrey?

**A.** The sites of 18 Roman villas have been discovered in the county. They have all been excavated, examined and covered over again so there is not much to learn by visiting the sites. There is a Roman bath house in Ewhurst but it's on private property, in someone's garden, so you can't really see it. Then there is the Romano Celtic Temple, south of Albury. Whilst there's nothing much to see on the ground now in Surrey, we can learn from what has been discovered, see the drawings, photographs and artefacts and learn from the records of these discoveries. If you want Roman site visits, travel up to Hadrian's Wall. I have friends who have walked the whole length of the wall but then you probably don't get time for a detailed study of the individual forts. Vindolanda, for example, is worth a visit with lots to see. English Heritage publications are very good and detail the whole of the wall.

**Q.** Is there anything Roman to be found in Guildford museum?

**A.** Yes. They rearrange stuff regularly, but there have been Roman

exhibitions. I regularly take classes on visits. There are gold coins from the Wanborough Romano Celtic site. Interestingly, when that hit the press, the site was inundated with treasure hunters, so arrangements quickly had to be made for the site to be excavated before it was ruined.

**Q.** Are amateurs with metal detectors a help or a hindrance?

**A.** Generally helpful, provided they report their finds, which sometimes lead to great discoveries. The law on treasure trove is now such that both the finder and the landowner will benefit.

**Q.** What else happens at the museum?

**A.** Go and see it In Quarry Street. Well worth a visit. Three times a year, I organise visits for the Friends of Guildford Museum. Recently we took a group to Abinger Hatch, where there are various things to see: 'Goddards' designed by Lutyens, the country's only preserved Mesolithic pit dwelling and the Norman church which has undergone a bit of restoration, first after a lightning strike and then following war damage.

**Q.** What happens at your visits? Do you give guidance or let people explore for themselves?

**A.** I like people to learn and not just have a nice day out! Before the visit, I give them paperwork with explanations, usually annotated. For example, my paper on the Old Saxon Church. at Albury, has lovely drawings by John Baker, sketch plans, lists of owners of Albury Manor since the Norman conquest and other details. On site, and not just at Albury, I will explain some items and then let people go back and look at things that Interest them.

**Q.** Do you take parties to cathedrals?

**A.** They are hard work and I am glad that I spent many years examining churches before progressing to cathedrals, or I would not have known where to start. I begin with the guide book, then make my own visit and learn. I must have six basic points of interest to start with and build on that. I give the classes a list of terms from the Observer Book of Churches, because I use the terms commonly applied in church architecture, not all of which will be known to

everyone. We take a lot of terms from France, such as the windows: quatrefoils, and trefoils. They also get a list of the altar frontals for the different seasons for those unfamiliar with them. I grew up in a Methodist church, where they don't change anything, so I hadn't a clue. The value of the pound sterling at different times in the past and also the Roman numerals, which can be difficult to memorise, are also useful. Another interesting tidbit is the difference between the Julian and the Gregorian calendar. The rest of Europe made the change in 1582 but, as we had broken with Rome, we stuck to the Julian and gradually became out of sync with the continent.

**Q** When did that change?

**A** Not until 1752, when we 'missed' eleven days. The tax collectors were not going to miss out, so the end of the tax year was moved from 24 March to 5 April. The new tax year instead of coinciding with a quarter day, then fell on this ad hoc date of 6 April that we've had ever since. So for gravestones that tell you that somebody died on 1 April 1752, that really must be an April Fools joke. So I give the class a lot of information as I like them to learn.

**Q** Talking of dates, why is Friday 13th considered unlucky?

**A** I assume that this originates from the massacre of the Knights Templar on Friday 13 October 1307. That was a disgraceful business, but the nobility couldn't stand any group becoming very rich, especially if they owed them money. It is easy to stir up hatred against the rich. As the Knights Templar controlled banking systems throughout Europe, their destruction solved money problems for a lot of people. It was the same with the Jews, William the Conqueror brought them in and they became very successful; consequently, they were banned from the professions. As a result, the only thing they could do was money lending, which they did so successfully that so many people owed them money that Edward I banned them. That's why you get these Jews' Houses, stone buildings in Lincoln.

**Q.** Is there a Surrey History Society?

**A.** No. There are a lot of local societies. There is a Surrey Archaeological Society to which I belong. It has a lot of artefacts

at the Guildford Museum. Some years ago the Borough Council decided that the museum would be moved to new premises. It never got moved but the library was moved out to a bookstore in Ablnger Hammer. Local councillors, whose background is in business, may think in terms of business and property and that it would be cheaper to sell off a central property in Quarry Street, where the museum is still located, and take the museum out to cheaper premises elsewhere. However, suitable premises could not be found.

**Q.** In our own benefice, Shere, Albury and Chilworth, each village has its own history society. There must be many more throughout the county. Why so many separate organisations?

**A.** They make a big contribution to history. They do lots of their own research, as I have found from my experience at Westcott. Shere, of course, has its own museum which started in someone's private house and has extended to separate premises. At a local level, so many people feel they can contribute. The societies have also become local social groups; people like doing things together.

**Q.** Do you envisage these social groups being replaced by social media?

**A.** No, virtual meetings will never replace actual 'physical contact. We have a need to get together and meet people. However, I can see the disappearance of handwriting, as we all get used to typing everything. With population growth, I can see that eventually a time will come when most people live in tower blocks, but we will still need to be in contact with greenery and the natural world. I was reading somewhere that even our skin needs contact with plants so the tower blocks will have greenery growing on some walls and roof gardens.

**Q.** If you were a teenager today, would you choose a different career?

**A.** No. I find learning can be exciting. Everybody needs an interest that does not cost much money, but really excites them. That's what makes one get up in the morning. It is good for our brains; It is good for our well-being. When I was at teachers' training college, I felt that I could teach myself history, so I concentrated on English literature, where I felt I needed instruction, and which I thoroughly enjoyed.

**Q.** For most, history will not be a vocational subject. What benefits do children and young people get from studying history?

**A.** The study of any subject at A level or degree level is invaluable. Whatever the subject, one learns to evaluate and develop one's thinking. This process can then be applied to any occupation. History is important because we cannot anticipate the future, without understanding the past. So many of today's problems in economics and feeding the population have arisen in the past. It is important to know how we coped.

**Q.** But what use is fiction?

**A.** It affects our lives past, present and future. Shakespeare throws an uncanny insight into present day life. The Tempest for example shows us the consequences of immigration and of Empire. Prospero takes charge of the Island but Caliban, the native, does not want to be ruled. He just wants to get close to Miranda and have lots of little Calibans. It poses the question, in days of Empire, what right had we to govern these other countries, impose our views on them and not encourage the indigenous population to educate themselves? The consequences in South Africa and elsewhere are still with us.

**Q.** I assume that, if you started again, you would not opt for a different career?

**A.** I am fortunate in having an occupation that I really enjoy. That's why I still work and learn new things. It helps to have a husband as the main breadwinner. We both still work and the arrangement suits us very well.

***Richard Floyd***

### **Note from Nick Bale**

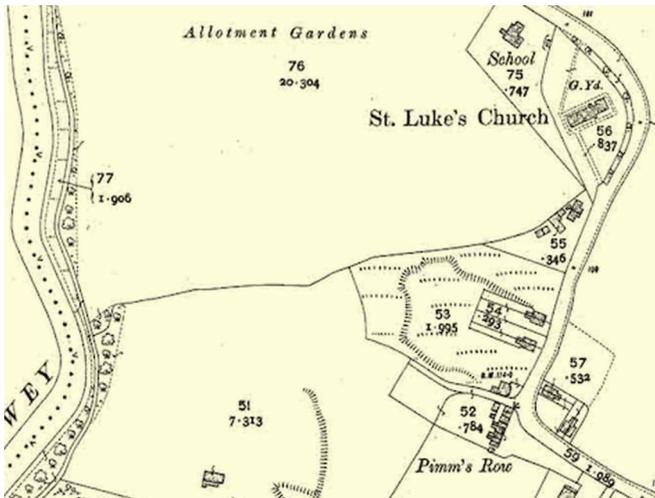
A group of Jackie's students have been cataloguing her papers and books, some of which will be deposited at Surrey History Centre this week (1st November). They also have her lecture notes for 70 or so Surrey Villages. I have agreed that FOGM would help in digitising the slides that illustrated her lectures. Could anyone interested in helping with this project please contact me.

nicholasbale23@gmail.com 01483 459997

# Grow Your Own - History Of Burpham Allotments

*This article was originally published in Burpham Pages.*

Due to the Coronavirus lockdown perhaps we will be encouraged to grow our own food in the future? Apparently, the amount of land for allotments has dropped by over 50% since the 1960s. Getting fruit and vegetables from supermarkets has become the focus of panic buying. The Burpham allotments in Bower's Lane might be an alternative – they are managed by the Guildford Allotments Society.



The 1914 OS maps showed Allotment Gardens behind Burpham Primary School, edged by the river on one side, Burpham Lane on the other, and extending down to the old brick field next to Pimm's Row. In the 19th century and earlier most houses had a small garden where some vegetables could be grown.

According to records in the early 20th century Burpham had several market gardeners, smallholders and nurserymen, presumably many of them used the allotments, including the Kemps, Kilbys and Russells. Residents in Pimm's Row grew produce in the gardens in front of the cottages. Leonard Vincent, who was a market gardener well into the 1960s, donated some of the land by his house in Bower's Lane to the Council for allotments.

The 1934 OS map showed Market Gardens still there beside and behind the school. During the war the children were encouraged to grow vegetables, then after the war some of the allotment land was taken to provide a playing field for the school. However, the school lost some of that land when the A3 was built in the 1980s.



In 2007 there was a spate of attacks on allotments around Guildford. A Surrey Live report said: “The devastation at Burpham was unbelievable. It was like a First World War battlefield. They had chopped the greenhouses to bits. It was a mess.” It seemed that the black-market value of aluminium was the cause, but the result was improvements to the fencing around the site and a locked gate. One of the Burpham allotment plots was the overall winner in the Guildford in Bloom 2015. There are vegetables, fruit, flowers, sheds, greenhouses, cages and polytunnels – even the occasional table and chairs for those social or rest moments.

### ***Moira McQuaide***

*Moira is a local historian who has written 2 books on the History of Burpham Primary School and Burpham - Gateway to Guildford.*

Articles for the Newsletter are always welcome. Could you write something about your knowledge of Guildford’s history?

Please contact Jean Wickens

jeanpwickens@gmail.com 01483 531436

# Photos of the Refurbishments at the Museum

We put a couple of photos in the August News Update, here are a few more for those of you who haven't been able to see them yet.



Museum entrance



Prehistory Gallery



Shop

New Signage

