



# NEWSLETTER AUTUMN 2019

## From the Curator

The museum recently acquired at auction, with the generous support of the Friends, an oil painting of Queen Victoria visiting the 1899 Carisbrooke Fete by Constance Pitcairn. Held at the Castle to raise funds for the restoration of the exterior of St Thomas' Church, the fete entertainment included a "gypsy encampment", dances, concerts and a "bicycle gymkhana". In the painting (currently on display in the main museum stairwell) Queen Victoria sits in a carriage outside the Governor's House (now the museum) with her grandchildren Princess Victoria of Schleswig-Holstein and Prince Leopold of Battenberg, while her daughter, Princess Beatrice, stands beside them. Our thanks to the Friends for enabling us to secure this substantial piece.



We are also excited to be able to share with you the news that next year, thanks to funding from the Weston Loan Programme with Art Fund, the museum will host a special exhibition 'Anglo Saxon Treasures of the Isle of Wight' (Feb-Nov 2020). The exhibition will bring together objects from the collections of the British Museum, English Heritage and the Isle of Wight Council Heritage Service and will explore life on the Island more than 1,000 years ago. The people of this time chose to be buried with special artefacts that provide an insight into their lives, occupations and beliefs. These objects are evidence of a sophisticated society of skilled craftspeople with international connections to Europe and beyond. Far from being a sleepy backwater, the island was at the frontier of international trade in goods and ideas and these people created a rich material

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culture. We look forward to sharing further information about this exhibition and a related programme of special events in the New Year. *Dr Rachel Tait*

## **From the Trustees**

For this autumn's newsletter I thought that, on behalf of the Trustees, I would give an update on some of the cross-organizational working that the Museum has been involved with and how these partnerships are working to increase, protect and expand the cultural life of our Island.

### The Island Collection

The Island Collection was created in early 2018 and this followed several years of strategic discussion between a number of the Isle of Wight's leading arts and heritage organisations. The purpose of the Island Collection is to establish the Isle of Wight as a significant cultural destination by working across organisations, creating collaboration between organisations and projects and to promote a strategic focus for the sector.

### Museums and Schools Project

The Island was fortunate to receive funding from the Arts Council England (ACE) to promote joint working with Island schools through enabling visits for school children to the Castle museum and other venues on the Island. Carisbrooke Castle Museum led on this project. The aim of the project was to give our school children the opportunity to understand more about their cultural heritage and the rich stream of history that exists on the Island that is all there for them to discover.

### Isle of Wight Cultural Investment Company (IWVIC)

The idea of developing an IW Cultural Investment Company was first discussed in 2018 and a working group was formed with the intention of creating the company to support the Island's cultural sector. There is an understanding that the national funding formula for the Island does not reflect the reality of the Island's situation and highlighting this nationally is one of its most important streams of work for the Island's cultural future.

So quite a lot happening on the Island to protect preserve and enhance our Island history. Our manager at Carisbrooke Castle has been fully involved in all of this work, which enables us, as Trustees, to be kept updated on progress on all of the initiatives happening around the Island.

*Gill Kennett*

## **Oral History**

I am pleased to say that we've been awarded another grant from the National Lottery Heritage Fund in partnership with the New Carnival Company to share and record oral histories of Island carnivals. This is a year-long project starting in November 2019. The interviews will be deposited with the Museum and build upon our collection of 'Island Voices' which is steadily growing. In addition to this news, oral history interviews from the Newport Parish Council Living History Project and the Out on an Island project have also been added to the collection this year. Anyone wanting to become involved with conducting interviews or transcribing for the new project, or if you have your own memories of Island carnivals that you'd like to share, please contact me via the museum on 523112 or [lisa.kerley@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:lisa.kerley@hotmail.co.uk) for more information. *Lisa Kerley*

## **Outreach**

About a year ago I read an advertisement from the Museum outreach department inviting people to visit Sandown Railway Station to learn about the outreach program, with tea and cake being

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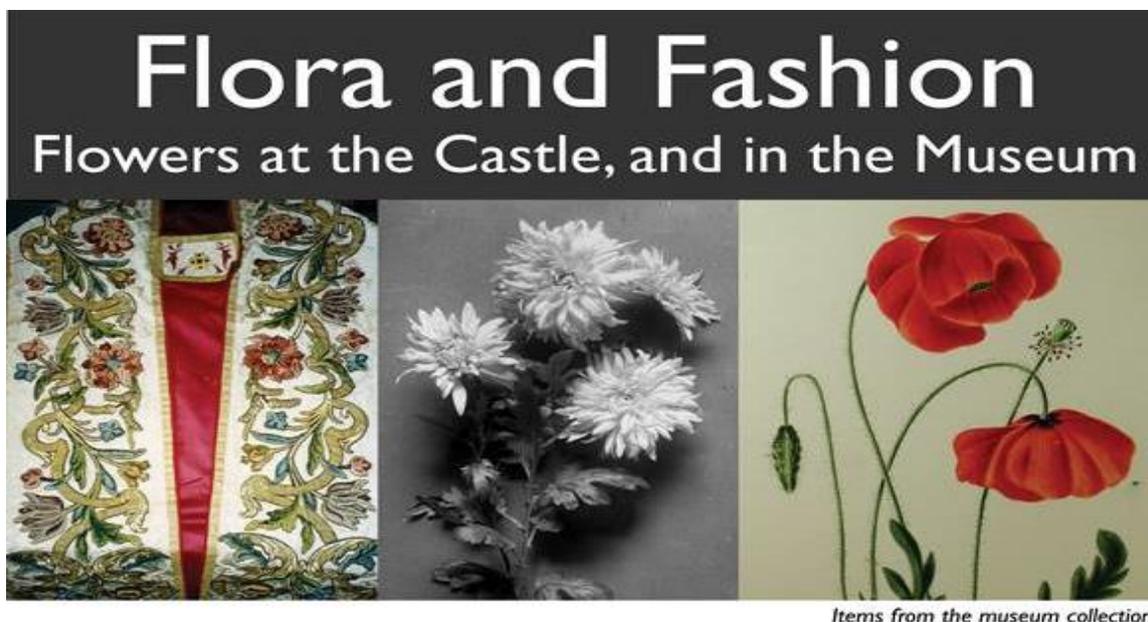
offered. I spent a pleasant hour or so talking to some very enthusiastic members of the team and having the chance to handle objects from the memory boxes, which contain 20<sup>th</sup> century museum objects. Volunteers take the boxes to Care Homes and other groups. The objects can all be handled and have been chosen to spark memories and stimulate conversation. I was interested to learn about the involvement in the community, reaching far beyond the walls of the Castle.

Within a few days of the tea & cake (*I knew I would have to pay for it sometime*) I was invited to join Mary and Helen in a visit to a Care Home in Ventnor. Having no idea what to expect, I went along and watched two professionals at work. Their enthusiasm and skill in interacting with the residents inspired me to sign on the dotted line and become an outreach volunteer. Over the past year every one of the museum staff and volunteers that I have met and teamed up with has shown the same level of enthusiasm and dedication to delivering the outreach program. Talking to other volunteers, it comes across that we all get a sense of satisfaction when interacting with people who, in their youth, used many of the objects in their daily lives. As well as showing the objects, we take time to listen to and talk to the residents.

In return I have been told how to hand milk a cow, climb Everest, jump out of a plane along with the Paras, and from the 'going out' box, how to draw a straight line up the back of the leg to look like stockings. I have noticed that younger members of the Care staff ask a lot of questions and get involved with the residents when talking about the objects.

If you would like to know more, do what I did and tag along with members of the team on an outreach visit. There is no obligation. You don't need any specialist knowledge; the important thing is being able to engage with people. If you are interested, please contact Chris on 01983523112 or e-mail [assistant@carisbrookecastlemuseum.org.uk](mailto:assistant@carisbrookecastlemuseum.org.uk) and a place will be arranged for you.

*David Reeves.*



**Tuesday 26th November 2-4pm**

Booking essential - please see next page for details & full programme of Museum Insights

**Museum Insights 2019-2020**  
**Flora and Fashion: Flowers at the Castle, and in the Museum!**

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Flowers unify this special afternoon, which will start with a presentation by English Heritage Historic Properties Steward, Sue Wilson, who will talk about the wide diversity of wild flowers that can be seen in the castle grounds, and will consider why some of them are found here. Nick Minns and Kate Tiley will then help us discover how flowers are featured within the museum collections; with a special focus on costume, art, and postcards. **Tuesday 26<sup>th</sup> November 2-4pm Tickets £8 including tea, coffee and biscuits**

### **'The oldest working organ in the country'**

This Insight will have a special focus on the unique 17<sup>th</sup> century chamber organ in the museum, thought to be the oldest working organ in the country. Rosemary Cooper will talk about its history, and Andrew Cooper (pipe organ builder, organist, and Director of music at All Saints, Ryde) will present a talk about the restoration of historic pipe organs. There will be a rare opportunity to hear Andrew playing this organ. *(the talks will be in the Lower Gallery but unfortunately the organ itself is in our Upper Gallery, accessible only by stairs).* **Tuesday 3 December 2-4pm Tickets £8 including tea, coffee and biscuits**

### **Redfern's Fashion House: Cowes, London, Paris, New York**

In this talk Kate Tiley will look at the 19<sup>th</sup> century Cowes fashion house of John Redfern, and how it grew from a small Island draper's, to an influential fashion empire with branches around the world. There will also be an opportunity to see some examples of Redfern outfits from the museum's collection up close. **Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> January 2-4pm Tickets £8 including tea, coffee and biscuits**

### **Hidden Heroes of Ryde**

Come and discover a seismologist, an acclaimed historian, royal photographers, and other notables; all heralding from Ryde. Led by Nick Minns, this Insight will also include participation from other speakers. **Tuesday 4th February 2-4pm Tickets £8 including tea, coffee and biscuits**

### **Sand Pictures: An Isle of Wight craft**

This will be an opportunity to view sand pictures from the museum's large collection, featuring the work of artists from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century to the present day. Rosemary Cooper will give a talk on some of the Victorian sand artists represented in the collection, including their styles and techniques. Come and learn about the artists, the pictures, and this art form. We hope there will be a chance to meet Island sand artist Eve Lester, and see examples of her work.

**Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> February 2-4pm Tickets £8 including tea, coffee and biscuits**

### **Deputy Governors of the Isle of Wight: Service and disgrace**

The recent Deputy Governors of the Isle of Wight have been important to the museum in facilitating its foundation, caring for the collection (or not) and residing at the castle. Hallam Tennyson broke the mould in being non-resident and the last deputy governor. The Insight, led by Dr. Paul Bingham, will include an opportunity to view the secret tunnel that Thomas Cochrane had dug to keep his food warm, and the memorial to his deserted wife (the Island's 'Lady Diana'), buried in the chapel. **Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> March 2-4pm Tickets £8 including tea, coffee and biscuits**

### **Photographing the Island: Photographs, photographers, and the past.**

A look at some of the photographs in the museum's collection; considering how they are researched and dated, and what they can show us about the Island's past. Our speaker, Mike Osborne, will also introduce us to some of the Island's many photographers, and show examples of their work. **Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> March 2-4pm Tickets £8 including tea, coffee and biscuits**

**For further details and to book your places please ring 523112 or e-mail [info@carisbrookecastlemuseum.org.uk](mailto:info@carisbrookecastlemuseum.org.uk) . BOOKING IS ESSENTIAL as places are limited.**