



The Round Tower

Friends of Bruce Castle Newsletter

Jan 2011 No 55

From the Chair

In 2009 and in 2010, we organised coach outings for the winter months, (sadly the snowy weather caused our December outing to be cancelled) because the summer period has been taken up with events closely connected with the Museum (for example, the re-enactment of Henry VIII's visit to Master Compton's house). But that will not be the case this year, so we're thinking of organising an outing for early autumn 2011.

A number of venues suggest themselves. The first and most obvious, because of the Henrician connection, are the Tudor artillery forts at Deal and Walmer, built around 1540 to protect the Channel coast from invasion. The latter was occupied by Lord Wellington until his death in 1852, and has some magnificent gardens which will be well worth a visit in May or June. Depending on timing, it might be possible to combine a visit to these two forts with a stop in the Cinque Port town of Sandwich.

Another suggestion is Knole House near Sevenoaks in Kent, birthplace of Vita Sackville-West, who went on to create the gardens at nearby Sissinghurst Castle. It was built by Thomas Bouchier, the then Archbishop of Canterbury, between 1456 and 1486, and is reputed to be a calendar house, having 365

rooms, 52 staircases, 12 entrances and 7 courtyards. The National Trust own and operate part of it; the rest is owned, and still occupied, by the Sackville family, whose Tudor ancestors had important roles in the politics of the sixteenth century.

Closer to London, there is the Red House at Bexleyheath, the Arts and Crafts home of artist, writer and political activist William Morris, who also had a house (now an art gallery) across the River Lea in Walthamstow. And closer still there is the possibility of behind-the-scenes visits to the British Museum and the Museum of London.

At the moment, of course, all this is still at the "thinking about" stage, and no decisions have been made. Before we do, we'd like to hear from the FoBC membership about possible places to visit. What historic properties, or favourite museums, or notable parks and gardens, would you like to see during 2011? Do let us know, care of Bruce Castle Museum at the address given in the Contacts Details box on the back cover.

In the meantime, of course, we hope you all have a Happy New Year.

Joseph Nicholas



A Happy and Healthy 2011 to Everyone!

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Friends of Bruce Castle AGM 2010

On 17th October the Friends' Annual General Meeting took place at Bruce Castle. It is always good to see members and as more and more arrive, we can relax a little, knowing that the meeting will be quorate after all. Cherry and Carole took charge of the financial side, taking memberships and payments for the lunch as people arrived, and proffering Gift Aid forms. Meanwhile, the Secretary was rushing round putting out the paperwork on chairs and generally preparing. There's always a lot going on behind the scenes at these things.

The Acting Chair, Marlene McAndrew, opened the meeting and reviewed the year. Highlights included the archery and falconry, the Sunday lunch, Tea in the Tower, Open House, and the number of volunteers at these events. The Secretary thanked Marlene for stepping in as Acting Chair, and Cherry for taking up the duties of Membership Secretary and Events Co-ordinator. The Secretary also spoke of the number of volunteers but said the we need more people to be active if the organisation is to survive. Chris and Hazel Whitehouse have now moved away from London and their loss will be keenly felt. We need more people to come forward and join the committee. We also need more people to help at events - the presence of volunteers in FoBC t-shirts makes an impact.

One of the most important facets of FoBC is their ability to obtain grant funding - recent events in the Tudor season have brought many new visitors to the Museum - and the most important of all is the funding of the family activities, which would not take place at all without the Friends. Thus we have a vital function in one of the country's most deprived areas, as well as insuring that children and families will hopefully love and value the Museum in the years to come.

A word of warning was sounded - in the current financial climate libraries and museums will be vulnerable and it is up to us to be vigilant. The Museum has won the Sandford Award for Education for the second time, and the National

Customer Service Award raised the profile considerably.

The Treasurer presented a report to the meeting, compiled with Carole's usual care. In the year 2009-2010 FoBC had an income of £7,348.86 and the expenditure came to £11,517.68 (some of which was the settlement of final invoices for the Tudor activities). Cash at the bank is £12,487.74, of which £8,406.58 is grant money still to be dispersed.

Vic McRae kindly took charge for the election of the new committee and Officers. The current committee were elected unopposed. Joseph Nicholas agreed to stand as Chair and was elected, along with Carole Towers as Treasurer, Valerie Crosby as Secretary and Cherry McAskill as Membership Secretary.

After a break for refreshments, the meeting heard a brief presentation on a proposal to use the bowls hut in the park by Art to View and then ended with members looking at some of the Tudor handling objects purchased with the Awards for All grant.



Val showing members the new handling objects

Val Crosby

Pssst . . .

. . . are you getting your copy of the *Round Tower* in black & white? Do you have email? If so why not consider receiving electronic newsletters? Email copies of the *Round Tower* arrive in your mailbox in full colour. If you would like to change over to receiving electronic issues then contact Ann: Robbotwix@aol.com

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Going Potty in Highgate!

I feel a real affinity towards the exhibition in the museums' back gallery – the Highgate Roman Kiln Revisited (open until February 27th). I joined an enthusiastic group on Monday 12th July 2010 at the start of the project to recreate a Roman kiln, fire it and produce pottery in the style of the local Roman inhabitants.

The kiln site was hidden away in the depths of Highgate Woods along a steep incline marked by coloured ropes as a guide for visitors. The site was buzzing with purposeful activity – in the first few hours trying to put up the gazebo. Students and staff alike struggled with poles, joiners and angles. All was resolved by reinforcements from the museum and their specialist knowledge gained over many windy outdoor events!

Mooki Hurst, the potter, encouraged us to feel the clay, work it with our hands and roll it in coils to create the pots, smoothing the sides ready to fire (this is a shortened version of the whole process). I made several attempts at making a lamp used to hold in the hand, two were successfully fired and one is in the museum display.



Some of the pottery items made at the kiln.

A digger was used to dig down under the topsoil to get to the clay deposit; this clay was then used to create some of the pottery and in the kiln.

Nick Peacey along with several students and young people dug out a pit to begin making the kiln. The kiln was taking shape when I had to

leave. I believe it took a couple of attempts to create and fire the kiln. I was sorry other commitments meant I only spent one day at the site but I really felt it was my own 'TimeTeam' experience. It certainly rated as my best memory of this summer!

Cherry McAskill

Gift aid your contributions and donations

The Friends of Bruce Castle are now registered for Gift Aid as an education charity. If you are a taxpayer, you can increase the value of your subscription or donation to the Friends at no cost to yourself by filling in the Gift Aid Declaration form included with this copy of Round Tower. I am sure you agree that it is worthwhile spending a few moments filling in the Gift Aid form to benefit our activities. Please return the completed form to The Treasurer, FoBC at the museum address (see the Contact Details box on the last page of this newsletter).

As an example if you pay basic rate tax every £10 contributed will be worth £12.50 to FoBC.

Thank you if have already signed the Gift Aid form.

Cherry McAskill
Membership Secretary

Alternative FoBC Outing

A trip to the Geffrye Museum in Shoreditch is currently being organised for a weekday in early May. Getting there would be by public transport which is not a difficult journey. There would be an opportunity to have a visit around the recently restored almshouses as well as the gardens and the museum itself.

Details will be appearing in the next issue of the Round Tower in April and announcements will probably be made at the talks. In the meantime, why not have a look at their website:

<http://www.geffrye-museum.org.uk/>

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Help! We Need Some Bodies!

There were many events at the museum last year which required volunteers to assist in various ways, from setting up stalls and disassembling them, to greeting and advising museum visitors and providing refreshments.

We were very lucky to have FoBC volunteers showing a high profile as the events in the museum took place. We have appreciated the help that has been offered throughout the year and we are hoping it will continue during 2011. Whatever would we have done without you all?

This year the need for volunteers to help at museum events is even greater as, **with Council cutbacks taking place**, there won't be as many museum staff to attend these events.

The year's first major event is the Haringey Local History Fair on Saturday 12th February from 11am until 4pm (see the back cover for further details). For this we need volunteers to help with setting up and clearing away as well as throughout the day with a variety of tasks.

We also need to set up a pool of volunteers who can help at the regular monthly lunchtime and evening talks with setting out chairs and serving refreshments. At least three people are needed each time but it doesn't have to be the same people at all talks.

The need for practical help is not the only way FoBC members can help. Publicising the museum's activities, exhibitions and talks to everyone you can and attending them yourselves to give the museum a high profile would be brilliant. We need to show that the museum is a popular place to visit for all members of Haringey's community.

Please, please make it your new year resolution to volunteer for at least one talk or event this year. We need you!

If you are able to offer a little (or a lot!) of time to help out at any of the forthcoming events for this year then please get in touch by contacting: Val Crosby at the museum on: 0208 808 8772.

Recent Museum Acquisition

A book, once owned by Henry Hare, second Lord Coleraine, and known as Lord Coleraine's Binding, has joined the collection of museum artefacts. Covered in dark calf leather and published in 1685, it is a first edition of Edward Stillingfleet's *Origines Britannicae* (the Antiquities of the British Churches) and displays the armorial stamp of second Lord Coleraine on both the front and back covers. Inside, on the front flyleaf, is the signature of 'H.Coleraine' and the instructions to the binders which read 'Stillingfleet's Orig. Brit. Red leather'.



The Binding was introduced to some of FoBC members at the Annual Lunch in November (See photos above and below). The book was bought with a generous grant of £300 from the Friends of the National Libraries who have kindly helped the museum with purchases in very recent years. These purchases, including a body snatching letter and a Gedney medieval manorial deed, would not have been possible without their help. If you would like to see the Binding for yourself then make an appointment to view it in the museum's search room. Tel: 0208 808 8772



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Gallery of Events in 2010

As the last two issues of the Round Tower were quite light, to say the least, it was decided to have a retrospective look at some of the events that occurred during the latter half of the year. A big thank you to John Catling who took some of the photos.

Archery Event - August



Robert Missen, (above) keeping an eye on the archery stall. A spectator, (below) chancing his arm with a bow and arrow.



Tea in the Tower - August



Joan in conversation over cakes and a cuppa.



Carole Towers wondering whether she has a winning raffle ticket.

Open City Weekend - September

Falconry



Bird of prey Admiration Club. Jan, the organiser, giving a talk about the birds (above). Jan and his assistant posing with Boo the eagle owl (below)



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Brenda and Stephen Whittle's grandson holding Boo the eagle owl.

The Round Tower



Tudor information and banners displayed in the Round Tower.

All Hallows



An example of some of the beautiful stained glass in nearby All Hallows Church.



John Catling striking a very kingly pose whilst looking after visitors to the Tower

The Weather Station



A DIY tornado in a bottle at the weather station.



The lone bagpiper come to pipe out the Open City weekend and emphasise the Scottish connection with Bruce Castle.

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Fobc Annual Lunch



Let the feast begin. Diners getting stuck in.



Patient diners waiting their turn for lunch.



Diners enjoying an after-dinner coffee. Eunice Barber (above, second left) created the lovely floral table arrangements (below).



Joseph Nicholas, our new Chairman (above), addressing the Friends after the meal and introducing Chris Protz who spoke on the origins of Tottenham.



Bea, above, was our youngest diner on the day.

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Museum Events, Exhibitions and Talks

Events

Haringey Local History Fair

Saturday 12 February 11am - 4pm

Attractions will include stalls, experts, speakers, and childrens activities. More details to appear in the Museum's 'What's On' and on the website:

http://www.haringey.gov.uk/index/community_and_leisure/time_out_in_haringey/visiting_haringey/places_to_visit/brucecastlemuseum/brucecastleevents.htm

Can you help at the Fair?

Phone Val on 0208 808 8772

Exhibitions

Untold Stories: Living Proof: Holocaust Survivors in and around Haringey

12 January until 27 March

A new series of original portraits by Austrian-born and Haringey resident, Silvia Olipitz Gayler.

The Phoenix Cinema. 100 Years

From 12 January

East Finchley's newly restored Phoenix Cinema is arguably London's oldest surviving purpose-built cinema. To celebrate the cinema's centenary, the exhibition will display memorabilia from the Phoenix's own archives, the Cinema Museum and from Bruce Castle Museum's own cinemas collections.

Carrying the Torch for Haringey: the Past, Present and Future of Our Sporting Heritage

On view until Spring

A celebration of 100 years of sporting excellence, achievement and ambition in Haringey

Haringey Potter: the Highgate Roman Kiln Revisited

Continues until 27 February. See page three for a review of the project to rebuild a Roman kiln in Highgate Woods last summer.

Postal People

From 19 May

Celebrating the end of the Museum's Postal History Project in which ten people with connections to the Post Office or Royal Mail have a special object from the Museum's Morten Collection, on display.

Munch And Listen

Doors open at 12 Noon. Talks begin at 12.15pm

Monday 31 January

Film: 'The Clouded Yellow' Starring Jean Simmons and Trevor Howard. Cert PG (81 mins)

Monday 28 February

Tireless Wireless, John Thompson shares a lifetime of enthusiasm and expertise.

Monday 28 March

Cinema Considerations and Similar Contemplations, Archivist, Clare Stephens, shares details of the museum's entertainment memorabilia.

Evening Talks

Wednesday 23 February

'Cinemas In Haringey' by local historian and author, Jeremy Buck, who will be giving a talk on the historic buildings which once housed the many cinemas in Haringey for this popular pastime.

Wednesday 30 March

Film: 'The Smallest Show on Earth'. Starring Peter Sellers, Margaret Rutherford and (Tottenham -born) Leslie Phillips. Cert PG (77 mins)

Contact Details

Newsletter items can be sent to:

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