



# Museum Matters

Newsletter of Saffron Walden Museum Society Ltd

Autumn/Winter 2017 Issue 43

## In this issue

Highlights and Happenings: <i>Chairman</i>	1
Curator's Column: Sound or Silence?	1/2
End of an Ice Age - new fridge wanted!	2
Article: The fifth dive into the early records of the Museum: the Giraffe's Eyes Len Pole	2/3
Natural Sciences: Sarah Kenyon	3/4
Human History Collections: Leah Mellors	4/5
Object of the Month: Leah Mellors	5/6
Museum Outreach News:	6/7
Exhibitions:	7
Volunteer News	7/8
Our valued Volunteers: Wendy-Jo Atter	8
Pen portrait of Charlotte Pratt	8/9
Upcoming Events:	9/11
Museum Society News	11
Reports on Talks and Events	
Who to contact	

One priority is to improve the use of our new store by developing a digital record of its contents. Also needed is further development of the Museum site to improve visitor Facilities. We have met with the Heritage Lottery Fund to discuss the availability of grants and work will progress to applications during the next year.

As a result of the anticipated increase of the involvement of the Society in development, we decided that a revision of our committees was appropriate. The Development committee will continue with increased membership, and we have merged the work of the Administration committee and the Museum Support committee into an Organisation committee. The Society continues to support the Heritage Development team working with other heritage organisations.

At the AGM. after editing the Society's newsletters since 2004 (Susan didn't christen it Museum Matters until 2006), Susan Hollingworth's wish to retire from the position of Editor was made known. The call for a replacement has been answered by Tony Morton, who has substantial experience in IT, and was appointed at the Board meeting at the beginning of November. A volunteer is also needed to fill the post of Secretary to the Board of the Museum Society with effect from August, 2018.

We have recently heard that Carol Law, who has been our Talks Co-ordinator for ten years, has decided to stand down and we need to find a replacement for her. In the meantime, talks for the months from January to April have been confirmed, so whoever takes over will have a good 'springboard'. If you would like to be involved, please telephone either myself (01799 521153) or Vice-Chairman Paul Salvidge (01279 814153).

**Tony Watson**

**Dates of future Events - see Noticeboard enclosed**

## Highlights and Happenings

### From the Chairman

The Annual General Meeting of the Society was held on Friday, 6th September. In giving my Chairman's Report for the past year, I was delighted to include a very sincere 'thank you' to the Museum staff and to all our Volunteers, whether members of the Society or not. for without them the Museum would never open. In addition to our desk volunteers, we now have a group of store volunteers working with staff on Mondays. Development was also mentioned and the latest position on this is below. I also had pleasure in acknowledging the support of the Board Directors and members of the various committees.

The Development committee is now actively involved in the planning for the next developments of the Museum, As reported in our Summer newsletter, the Castle and the Museum are now linked through the Museum Management Working Group, and Future developments will link the Museum and the Castle as a part of the heritage of both the town and the District,

### Curator's Column Sound or Silence?

Do you like museum galleries to be quiet and peaceful places, or would you welcome some sound or music to bring some life to static exhibitions? This is one of many questions we have been debating about how we could re-imagine our main galleries, so over to you, Museum Society Members and (hopefully) frequent visitors. I would welcome your views on what you would or would not like to hear, as well as see, in the Museum.

My question has been prompted by a series of recent experiences. First, it has been a joy to hear the sound of happy and enthusiastic school children exploring the Museum as Charlotte's appointment brings the welcome return of school visits. Hopefully, we and the teachers succeed in keeping children's natural boisterousness within limits acceptable to the majority of other visitors, though in various museums over the years, I have witnessed some visitors exit galleries smartly as soon as a school arrives. How do we accommodate such different expectations and learning preferences- extrovert engagement or reflective solitude? Perhaps an extended museum will allow us to offer a better balance and separation between quiet spaces and lively learning areas.

Secondly, there is recorded sound, The inspector for our VAQAS certificate (Visitor Attractions Quality Assurance Scheme) suggested that some background sound in the World Cultures Gallery- perhaps African drums or music from other cultures represented - would help give visitors a sense of exploring different human traditions from around the world. The designers and curators of the brilliant Scythians exhibition at the British Museum seem to me to have judged use of sound exactly right. Just as horses and horse-associated artefacts permeated the lives and exhibition of these warrior nomads, so the occasional sound of cantering hooves and snorting horses provides an evocative but unobtrusive aural equivalent. For sheer humour in sound effects, I fondly recall a display at Luton's Wardown Park Museum many years ago, in which a display on the 'Peace Riots' of 1919, during which the Town Hall was burned, was viewed to the accompaniment of 'Keep the Home Fires Burning' on an aged, and slightly out-of-tune, pub piano.

I suspect that our reaction to sound in galleries largely depends on the context and whether it has been artfully integrated into the exhibition experience and the gallery acoustic, or becomes obtrusive or annoyingly repetitive (and not least for the front-of-house staff and volunteers who cannot so easily escape from it!). So suggestions or examples of 'sound practice' from other heritage attractions are welcomed.

*Carolyn Wingfield*

### **End of an Ice Age - new fridge wanted for Museum kitchen!**

Our current fridge was a second-hand one from the former Curator's House in Castle Street, but we would like to replace it with a larder fridge (i.e. one without an ice box). This would not need frequent defrosting, and therefore will have more shelf space for chilling all those bottles of wine for Museum Society Private Views and Christmas Parties!

If you know of any good second-hand larder fridges which are no longer wanted, the Museum would be grateful for any offers. The fridge will have to fit in a confined space under a worktop, so maximum dimensions must be no more than 48 cms wide x 65 cms high x 55 cms front-to-back.

### **More from the early records of the Museum Len Pole's Fifth article — the Giraffe's Eyes**

In the first four years of its existence, the Museum established a respectable reputation among other similar institutions. Evidence of this comes from the Minutes of the meetings of the Board of Management. Those of March 6th 1839 included a letter of thanks from the, "Secretary of the British Museum for the under named very desirable addition to the national Collections:

2 specimens Lacerta, Cape of Good Hope ('lacerta' is the Latin for 'lizard')  
Platydactylus maculatus - new – S. Africa (probably a form of spotted gecko)  
Nest of a species of Wasp, *Proteles cristata*. Cape of Good Hope (the aardwolf)  
*Simiasyndactyla*, Sumatra ('simia' then covered a wide range of primates)  
*Melivora capensis*, Cape of Good Hope (honey badger). "

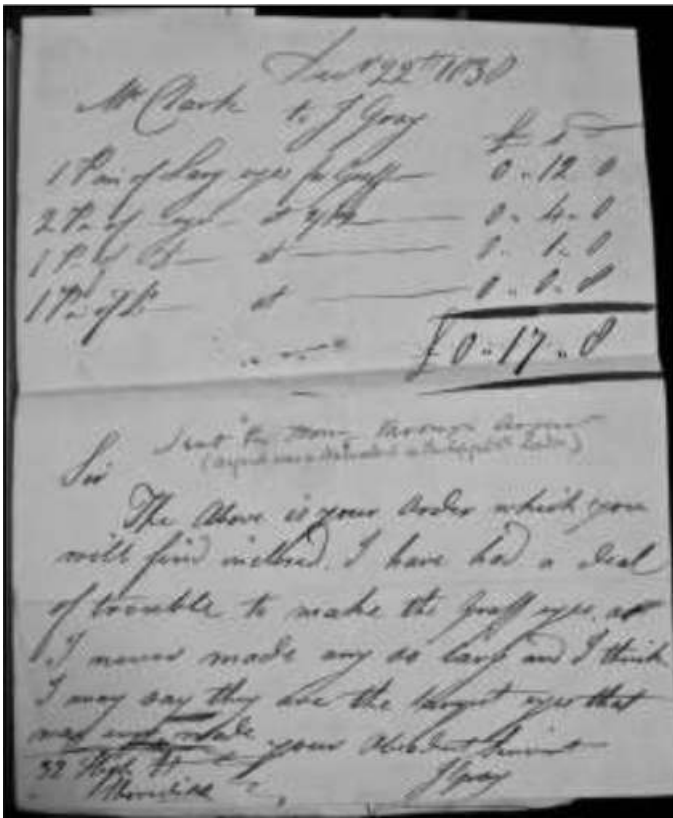
This was the result of a visit the previous December by Mr John Edward Cray of the British Museum, and he reported, 'this Museum appeared to exceed his expectations, and whose suggestions were very acceptable'. Presumably one of the suggestions related to the acceptability of these duplicates for the British Museum. In addition, at the same meeting it was resolved that, 'In order to evidence the Board's sense of the liberality shewn to this Institution by the Zoological Society of London that that Society be presented with Duplicates of the undermentioned Antelopes. namely:

Antelope *Isabellina* (the Southern Reedbuck?)  
Antelope *Grummea* (probably a form of duiker)

and that the Revd. John Barlow be written to Accordingly.'

It is likely that this liberality related specifically to the presentation to the Museum of the skin of a young giraffe by the Zoological Society of London in October 1838. It is relating to this specimen that in November 1838. the Board resolved that 'Mr Joseph Clarke be requested to use his best endeavours and his practised skill. in having the Giraffe set up as soon as he considers necessary'.

What was involved in this setting up process is recorded in the back of Register One where original invoices were pasted. One shows a sheet of costs relating to the manufacture of its skeleton incurred by William Ward in March 1839, which included the purchase of two pieces of willow at over 8 ft long, 208 ft of other wood, together with 20 days' work by two carpenters at 3 shillings a day each, and various brads, nails and spikes. It also included a sum of £1 0s. 5½d paid to William Spicer for, 'Iron work done to the Giraffe', comprising long rods, bolts, plates, nuts and screws. There was a second invoice from J Gray of 32 High St, Shoreditch, for 17s 8d to cover the supply of a pair of large eyes for a 'Graff', together with some others. Mr Gray appears to have been a specialist glass eye maker,



as he added the following: 'I have had a deal of trouble to make the Giraffe eyes, as I never made any so large and I think I may say that they are the largest eyes that was ever made' (see invoice above). The total cost of setting up the giraffe amounted to £10 8s. 9½d. This can be compared to the costs involved in setting up the famous elephant, in 1837, which amounted to £24 1s. This work was also supervised by Joseph Clarke (perhaps this was what was meant by 'his practised skill').

During this year. In June 1838, Joseph Clarke reported that. as requested. he purchased various items in London, including an Alligator, from Mr Attanaisio, 9 skins of unspecified birds from John Gould. and some items from the South African Museum (presumably it had an office or some connections in London. possibly mediated via the British Museum). These were listed as mostly birds in Register One (spur-winged goose, tern, grebe, pratincole), also a saddle-backed jackal, and finally an 'African Kaross' which was entered in the Register with no evidence that George Maynard, who made out the entries in the Register. had any idea what it was. He appears to have assumed it to be an African bird. in which case he clearly had not seen it, although he gave it an accession number.

A Kaross is in fact a kind of cape or cloak made of several species of mammal skins, traditionally with the hair left on, formerly worn by men and women of the San ('bushmen') and Khoikhoi communities in Southern Africa. Later in the 19th century, the word was applied to cloaks made of imported blanket material but, at this date, is more likely to refer to the traditional form. However. there is no evidence that such an item was ever on display or present in the collections. Such items are usually quite spectacular, so would have been difficult to miss: another object that needs to be investigated!

The minutes of the Saffron Walden Natural History Society meetings continued to provide glimpses into the sense of responsibility of some of its Trustees in the 1830s. The first

meeting held in 1839 provides a good example. This was at the Annual Meeting of the Trustees, held on January 3rd at 12 o'clock. Those recorded as being present were: Mr Richard Day, Mr Francis Gibson, Mr Stephen Salmon, Mr Thomas Spurgin, Mr John Player. Mr Gibson was requested to fill the Chair. After considering the Minutes of various previous meetings, these notes go on to record "The time of the Meeting having nearly expired, and the number of Trustees now present being but limited, the Meeting was adjourned till 7 o'clock this Evening. and John Thurgood was ordered to convey Notice to the Houses of all the Trustees resident on the spot, all of whom had had the previous Notice of this Annual Meeting. The Chairman resigned that Office for this day, he being interested in the settlement of the Accounts.

John Thurgood was the Curator; being a Thursday, he was presumably at work somewhere in the museum building. He must have been able to make contact with these errant Trustees, since Messrs Baron, Catlin, Ward, Joshua Clark and Wyatt George Gibson were all present at the resumed meeting, but he must have had his work cut out to reach them all in time. Most lived in Walden, but Joshua Clark was a farmer, who lived at The Roos Farm, half-way to Debden, a good two miles outside the town. However, not all the Trustees were present at the adjourned meeting, as two of them who had been at the earlier meeting, Richard Day and Thomas Spurgin, were not in attendance later. Nevertheless the Accounts were eventually approved.

**Len Pole**

### Natural Sciences Sarah Kenyon

Museum Society collections volunteers helped me to complete the move of 55 drawers of birds' eggs and mollusc shells from the second floor Museum natural history store to their wooden cabinets in the first floor natural sciences store at Shirehill.



**WM Tuke: cabinet of British birds' eggs**

Peter Walker wins the competition for the car that could transport the most birds' eggs- 4 drawers at a time. Richard Priestley especially enjoyed packing the shells because he grew up by the sea.



**Richard Priestley with the restocked mollusc cabinet**

What else have I been up to? The current exhibition and special roadside verges have kept me extremely busy. 'Life in the Ice Age' opened with a private view for Museum Society members on 11th August and will continue until Sunday, 14th January, 2018. The exhibition is a collaboration between the Travelling Natural History Museum and Saffron Walden Museum. It features specimens and models from the TNHM and objects from the Museum's geology and archaeology collections which are otherwise in store. Since the private view there have been some new additions to the exhibition. The fossil antler of a Giant Irish Deer was displayed with the assistance of volunteers, and designer Mark Fanthorpe painted a life-sized woolly mammoth on the wall. Ice age animal drawings done by visitors now form an impressive art wall.



**Paul and Richard moving the wolf back**

The verge survey team carried out ecological surveys at 22 special roadside verges in Uttlesford, donating about 50 hours of their time. All the annual reports are done and reported to the project meeting for Essex. The next tasks are to check that all sites have been given a full width cut and to try and make progress in getting the verges marked with posts and plaques. This will involve liaison with Essex County Council, Essex Highways, Uttlesford Highway Rangers and Essex Wildlife Trust volunteers to try and find a way forward. 21 out of the 46 verges have posts missing, and all sites need new marker plaques on the posts, to give up-to-date contact details of organisations involved in the project.

**Sarah Kenyon**

## Human History Collections Leah Mellors

At the end of July, we said goodbye to 'Completing the Look: 300 Years of Fashion Accessories', my favourite exhibition to date. In total, around 6,150 visitors viewed the exhibition, including a number of special-interest groups, and the feedback on the exhibition was overwhelmingly positive. I have now started work on our next temporary exhibition, which will open at the end of January 2018. 'From the Hazely Brick Earth : Agriculture in North-West Essex', will explore how agriculture and rural trades have changed, or continued in their traditions, from the past to the present. The exhibition will feature input from local people involved in agriculture, including RAGT Seeds, West Essex Saddlery and James Carter, master thatcher.



**Farmers in Ickleton**

Over the summer, we welcomed Vicky Geddes as our Digital Engagement Intern. Many of you will have met her at the Museum Society AGM in early September. Vicky spent 30 days at the Museum, helping to engage the public with our collections via social media and our website. Vicky has gone onto secure employment with Historic England at Audley End House, once again proving the success of our internship programme. The Museum's use of digital media is going from strength to strength, and I am in the early stages of planning an online catalogue for our collections, which will feature on our website and increase public access to the collections.

In the last newsletter, I reported on a collaborative project with the Royal College of Music to add information about our musical instrument collection to a national database. This work is now complete and you can view our musical instruments by searching for the Museum on [www.minim.ac.uk](http://www.minim.ac.uk). The project has provided us with in-depth information about our musical instruments, as well as providing increased access to them for the public, so I am delighted that we took part.

**Serpent**



Work on the collections continues with my wonderful team of volunteers. Almost all of the social history collections at the Shirehill store are now on our database, with up-to-date locations, and we are about halfway through the audit and re-packing of the world cultures collection.

The documentation backlog for our document archive is steadily decreasing, thanks to my cataloguing volunteers, and we are discovering more and more interesting things in the early registers (which you can read about in Len's articles). My volunteers deserve a huge thank you for the effort they put into documenting our collections.

Looking ahead to the next few months, I will be starting a fundraising campaign to acquire part of a hoard of coins found recently in a piano in Shropshire. The discovery attracted international media coverage at the time, so you may be aware of the story. The coins date from between 1847 and 1915 and they were found hidden in a piano that originally belonged to a Saffron Walden resident. There are many unanswered questions surrounding the coins; who did they belong to, why were they hidden, why were they never recovered? - and this mystery all adds to the appeal of the story. The coins have been declared as Treasure and we need to raise about £8,000 to bring a selection of them, plus the piano, home to Saffron Walden.



Piano hoard

If you are able to make a donation, no matter how small, please do get in touch - the more local support we have, the easier it is for us to secure grant funding.

**Leah Mellors**

### Object of the Month

*Object of the Month*, a project that aims to highlight objects rarely seen by the public, is going from strength to strength with staff and volunteers all choosing objects to display in the Museum and share online on our blog.

#### August 2017



August's Object of the Month was a puppet of the character Punch, from Punch and Judy. It was chosen by Leah Mellors, Collections Officer (Human History). The puppet was made by Joyce Sturge, a local artist from Saffron Walden, some time before the end of World War II. Joyce made the entire cast of puppets from Punch and Judy out of papier maché and performed the show at children's parties. She even made tiny sausages!

Punch and Judy shows have been performed since the 1600s- Punch first appeared in Covent Garden, London in 1662 - but didn't become the show we recognise today until the Victorian era. Punch and Judy shows were not originally aimed at children because the shows featured marital problems between Punch and Judy, and regular violent behaviour from Punch. However they gradually became a part of Victorian family entertainment. As seaside holidays became more popular later in the Victorian period. Punch and Judy became a familiar part of a trip to the seaside.

Since the 20th century, Punch and Judy has been steadily declining in popularity but the shows continue to be found at the seaside and, for many, remain a classic aspect of a trip to the coast.

#### September 2017



To celebrate the kids return to school, September's Object of the Month was a photograph showing the staff and pupils of the Boys' British School in Saffron Walden in 1954. The photograph was chosen as Object of the Month by Leah Mellors, Collections Officer (Human History).

The Boys' British School was opened in 1833 on East Street in Saffron Walden. A girls' school was opened at the same time on South Road. The creation of the Boys' British School was decided on at a meeting in Saffron Walden Town Hall on 26th July, 1833. Those present decided that the town needed better education facilities, especially for the poorer classes.

They decided that the school should follow the model of the British and Foreign School Society. The school would be open to children of all religious denominations, from the ages of seven to 14. Parents would pay 2d per week for each boy. The Gibson family provided the building on East Street for the school, rent-free, and William Jenkines was appointed the first headmaster.

The school was open for 127 years, seeing two World Wars and several headmasters. In 1950. it became a junior school, when the Saffron Walden County High School opened. In 1982, the school joined with the South Road school and the premises on East Street were finally vacated.

#### October 2017



October's Object of the Month was a mechanical calculator made by Muldivo. which probably dates from the 1930s or 1940s. It was chosen by Vicky Geddes, Digital Engagement Intern. Mechanical calculators used a series of gears and pinwheels to

calculate sums, and were popular through the 19th and 20th centuries, until the electronic calculator became more affordable. The first designs for mechanical calculators, also known as pinwheel calculators, came from Germany in the 1600s. For three centuries, various people across Europe and America designed and built these calculators. The first one to be mass produced was Odhner's Arithometer in 1690, which became the most popular design in Europe. The design that the Muldivo follows first emerged in 1850 and remained popular until the 1970s.

Pinwheel calculators have pinwheels, with nine pins sticking out of them. The number of pins sticking out from the pinwheel can be changed by moving a setting lever and this selects the number you want to add/subtract/multiply/divide. Turning the handle at the side of the calculator clockwise adds the number selected to the accumulator (the row of numbers at the bottom of the calculator) and turning the handle counter-clockwise subtracts the number. Multiplications and divisions can also be done on the calculator, through a series of repeated additions or subtractions.

### November 2017



November's Object of the Month is a tiny razor, called the Laurel Ladies Boudoir Safety Razor, It is only 4 cm in length and the blade is just 2 cm wide.

The razor was made in Sheffield between 1935 and 1940 by a company called G H Lawrence Ltd. The early 20th century saw a new emphasis on personal grooming and beauty products for women. This was partly a result of the shortage of marriageable men following World War I, but also of the new fashions. In contrast to Victorian and Edwardian women who had covered up with long sleeves and full skirts, women were now showing more skin.

One of the companies that benefited from this change was Gillette, who produced the first razor for women in 1916, called the Milady Décolleté. By the 1920s, tiny boxed razors were to be found in almost every bathroom cabinet, along with hair-removal creams and powders. Magazine adverts promoted the removal of body hair - in 1924 an advert for Veet hair removal cream stated that "nothing is so repellent and disillusioning as hair growth on the arms of a woman".

Throughout the 20th century, companies continued to market hair removal products at women. appealing to their desire to be feminine or attempting to make them feel ashamed of their body hair. Today. there is more conversation about personal choice not to remove body hair, but adverts still aim to convince women that hair removal is an important way to look and feel glamorous and to be sexually appealing, You can see the razor on display in the Museum until 30th November.

**Leah Mellors**

### The Whale's Tale (or The Missing Link)

During the store move, when collections were moved from the off-site store in Newport to the new store on the Shirehill Industrial Estate, a dead mouse was found inside the Museum's whale jawbone, Clarissa Cochran. the partner of one of our store volunteers Michael, wrote the following poem about the discovery.

This is the tale of a whale  
 A whale and a mouse  
 Of the mouse who made a house in the mouth of the whale  
 (not its tail!)  
 The whale had a jawbone the size of a house  
 And I don't mean a house for a mouse  
 For two men were needed to lift up this jawbone  
 This now fragile and bubble-wrapped jawbone  
 Too big for display it was left in The Store for a century or more  
 And protected from dust and insects and must,  
 and with bait traps for vermin -  
 Just How little mouse did you make your home -  
 In the mouth of the huge hump-backed whale?  
 With your weeing and pacing  
 your scuttling and chewing  
 of bubble-wrap nesting  
 you made quite a Stink  
 made us all Think  
 and Marvel to show us the Link  
 between mammals Small and Awesome

So How, Mighty Mouse Did you make your house in the mouth of the Huge Hump-backed Whale?

***Congratulations to Clarissa for such an imaginative poem and many thanks too to Leah for sharing this with us. Ed.***

### Museum Outreach News

During the school holidays we held a number of Children's activities inspired by our collections which included -

#### Seaside Holidays- July

Inspired by the exhibition 'Completing the Look: 300 Years of Fashion Accessories', children designed and created their own seaside holiday accessories to take home.



#### Stone Age Day- August

To celebrate the opening of our new Exhibition 'Life in the Ice Age', we had a special visit from a Stone Age Man! He



set up camp in the museum grounds and showed visitors what life was like in the Stone Age - and these lucky participants even got to touch some tools made thousands of years ago!

### Woolly Mammoth Fun Days

In October our new Learning and Outreach Officer Charlotte, introduced a very successful ticketing system for the Woolly Mammoth Fun Days seated craft activity sessions: Ice Age Wrapping Paper and Fantastic Fossils.



On both days children also had the opportunity to follow our Woolly Mammoth activity trail around the Museum.



This young participant loved painting her plaster fossil by hand



Lending a hand to create a 'fur' coat for our chilly Mammoths!

### Museums at Night



Visitors enjoyed following a torch-lit trail around the Museum. Our thanks to Welcome Desk Volunteer, June, who kindly dressed for the occasion in purple witch's hat and wig!

### Exhibitions

**Current exhibition until 14th January 2018**  
**Life in the Ice Age**

Find out about Life in the Ice Ages, in this Exhibition by Saffron Walden Museum and the Travelling Natural History Museum, Learn about ice sheets, glaciers and times of warmer weather, Meet Stone Age man and discover the creatures that lived in Essex during the last Ice Age glaciation.

**The next exhibition:**

**27th January - 29th July 2018**

**'From the Hazely Brick Earth': Agriculture in North-West Essex**

A look at rural life and trades in North-West Essex from the past to the present. 'Hazely Brick Earth' is an old Essex dialect term for the rich soil found in Essex.

This soil has provided livelihoods for Essex people through agriculture and rural trades for centuries, This exhibition will explore how agriculture and rural trade has changed, or continued in its traditions, from the past to the present day. Through photographs and objects from the Museum's social history collection, the exhibition will explore the importance of rural trades, such as thatching, malting, crop production and animal husbandry, to this north-west corner of Essex. Alongside this, contemporary photographs and stories from our local community will illustrate how things differ today.



### Congratulations

We are delighted to announce that Wendy-Jo Atter passed her Institute of Leadership and Management Level 3 Award (equivalent to an A Level) in Management of Volunteers with distinction. She was presented with her certificate at the SHARE Annual Conference at Bedford on 6th November. Wendy-Jo has also contributed to a SHARE seminar for museums in the region, sharing her experience and good practice in managing volunteers.



Wendy-Jo Atter being presented With her Institute of Leadership and Management Certificate by Kathy Fawcett, Relationship Manager, Museums, Arts Council England.

### VOLUNTEER NEWS

**Wendy-Jo Atter, Manager of the Desk Volunteers team.**  
**Our valued Volunteers**

#### Fond farewell

Michael Swindlehurst was a valued volunteer at the Museum for many years, We know that many of you will have known Michael both as a volunteer and a friend, and it is with great sadness that we record his passing away on Monday, 7th August. Christine Sharpe kindly represented the Museum at his funeral, which took place at St Mary's Parish Church on Tuesday, 29th August.



Michael with his Certificate of Recognition, presented to him at Saffron Walden Museum on 9th December 2016

### Warm welcome

We extend a warm welcome to our new volunteer, Reece Thear, the grandson of our regular Volunteer, David.



Reece completing his induction with our Welcome Desk Volunteer, June.

### Grateful thanks



We offer our heartfelt thanks to Ron Lowe, Welcome Desk Volunteer, who kindly assisted with the repainting of the Ice Age Exhibition.

And this is Ron in action!

### Pen Portrait of Charlotte Pratt Learning and Outreach Officer



Hello to Museum Society members!

A small village on the Blackwater Estuary called Tollesbury is where I grew up, attending secondary school at The Plume School in Maldon. After leaving at 16, I studied for a National Diploma in Media, Film and Moving Image, achieving a triple grade of distinction, distinction, merit.

I went on to study a Foundation diploma in Art and Design, including graphic design, photography, sculpture, print and fine art. I followed this with a Fine Art degree at the University of Essex, specialising in sculpture, moulding and life casting using natural materials achieving a 2:1 with Honours. I exhibited in a number of local exhibitions and also an exhibition on the Trans-Siberian Express.

Developing an interest in teaching, I then studied for a PGCE at the Colchester Institute achieving the Centre Prize for education at my graduation, gaining experience on the Level 2 Art and Design program. After 3 years I became course leader of the level 1 and level 2 programs at Braintree College. My responsibilities included the management and delivery of the program, designing course content, planning trips, marking, hanging exhibitions, pastoral care etc. As a learning support practitioner, I supported learners with additional learning needs and have specialist training in Autistic spectrum disorders, ADHD and mental health issues. During this time, I made and sold my own work including illustrations and jewellery. Realising that a career within the museums and heritage sector would enable me also to continue with my own hobbies and interests, I began volunteering at Colchester and Ipswich Museums. After six months,

I was employed as a casual at the Colchester Museum working in the galleries, the front desk, with school groups and eventually planning and delivering activity sessions. My experience as Visitor and social media volunteer has proved useful in conducting and reviewing visitor surveys and promoting events on social media. In my spare time I practice taxidermy, having been on several courses as well as undertaking private study. I plan to attend the guild conference in March and aim for beginner's accreditation. I work mainly with mammals and as I currently live in Stoke-by-Nayland in Suffolk, find road casualties which enables me to practise the art ethically. My largest piece to date is a lamb, and I'm currently working on a badger- examples are on my website

<https://gburgessandcotaxidermy.moonfruit.com>.

After a month in post, I already have many ideas for the development of the learning and outreach programme at Saffron Walden Museum. I feel a two-pronged approach will be effective in the development of learning and outreach at the Museum.

First, developing the education programme for schools which will include up-dated loans boxes to meet the new curriculum: new schools sessions also meeting the new curriculum, with a well presented handling collection. The sessions will be available either in the Museum or in schools. I have started a new learning menu which will outline the sessions on offer and which can be sent out to schools in order to promote the service.

Secondly, the development of a more varied events programme, both to increase visitor numbers and raise additional income for the Museum's service. I have already drafted a programme for next year which I am now researching and finalising. The new programme will contain more events for the whole family, as well as some events for adults. This position is really exciting and varied; I've already delivered sessions to three schools on Egypt and fossils, and we haven't yet started to promote the service! I have just started an Instagram account for the Museum @saffronwaldenmuseum which I hope will help with our social media profile. I am looking forward to continuing to develop the programme - 2016 will be an exciting year!

### Upcoming Events

#### November



November will see our first collaborative event with Saffron Screen. 'Ice Age - the movie' will be shown at Saffron Screen on Sunday 26th November. Viewers will then be invited to head to the Museum for an Ice Age themed trail, making further use of the popular cardboard mammoth herd.



## December



December will see the return of the Decorate the Christmas tree activity, with an Ice Age theme. The event will remain free but will be ticketed. This new system was very successful during October half-term, improving the management of the activities and improving the experience for both visitors and volunteers.

The photograph on the right illustrates that success of the ticketing system, with a calmer approach to activities with no more fighting for places. Visitors to the half-term activities all responded very positively to the changes, commenting that the atmosphere was much improved.



## January

January 2018 will see the opening of the new temporary exhibition 'From the Hazy Brick Earth': Agriculture in North-West Essex. More details on page 7.

## February

February half-term will include a variety of activities for young visitors to the Museum, based on the theme of farming and agriculture inspired by the new exhibition. Following the introduction of the successful new ticketing system for October half-term, ticketing for craft sessions will be continued so that their management and quality will continue to improve. In addition, there will be a long-horned cow craft trail, which will engage visitors with the whole Museum, enabling them to engage actively with the whole space in a creative way. There are also plans to introduce activities for adults at the Museum, with evening events and a Valentine themed event is currently being planned.

## December

Historical Jumble at the Christmas Social Evening!

New to the Christmas Social this year will be the 'Historical Jumble'. The teaching collection has been pruned and a number of items will be available for purchase, with all proceeds going to the Museum Society. So unzip your purse or wallet and grab a bargain!

### New Museum email newsletter

This newsletter is sent out about every two months and delivers the latest news, events and exhibitions at the Museum straight to your email inbox.

If you haven't already signed up to our new email newsletter, you can do so on the Museum's website [www.saffronwaldenmuseum.org](http://www.saffronwaldenmuseum.org)

## Museum Society News

### Talks and Events

**Monday, 11th September**

**The Ice Age in Essex and beyond**

**Speaker: Gerald Lucy, Fossil expert and Author of 'Essex Rocks'**

Gerald Lucy gave us an illustrated talk about the Ice Age in Britain and Essex, a remarkable period of the Earth's history that is not very well understood.

An ice age is a period of long-term reduction in the temperature of the Earth's surface and atmosphere resulting in the formation of continental and polar ice sheets and alpine glaciers. Within a long-term ice age, pulses of intense cold climate are called glacial periods or glaciations, while intermittent warm periods are called interglacials. As a general rule, glaciations lasted up to 100,000 years while interglacials lasted only 10,000 -15,000 years.

There have been at least five major ice ages in the Earth's history - Huronian, Cryogenian, Andean-Sahara, Karoo and finally the current ice age, the Pliocene-Quaternary glaciation which began 26 million years ago. The last glacial period ended approximately 10,000 years ago and we are currently in an interglacial period. All that remains of the continental ice sheets are the Greenland and Antarctic ice sheets and smaller glaciers such as Baffin Island. It has been suggested that the next glacial period may be delayed due to human global warming.

There are three main types of evidence for ice ages; geological, chemical and paleontological. Geological evidence comes in various forms including rock scouring and scratching, glacial moraines, drumlins, valley cutting and the deposition of till and glacial erratics. The chemical evidence consists of variations in the ratio of Oxygen isotopes in fossils present in deep sea sediments obtained from deep sea cores and ice cores. This variation allows a temperature record to be constructed which can be linked to the geological record.

The Anglian glacial stage, for example, which witnessed the most severe glaciation in Britain around 450,000 years ago, is linked to Oxygen Isotope Stage 12. Till or boulder clay was left behind across Essex by the Anglian glacial stage when a huge ice sheet covered almost the whole of Britain. The English Channel was formed at this time and the ice sheet diverted the River Thames to its present course which can clearly be seen at Hornchurch, the most important geological site in Essex.

The paleontological evidence consists of changes in the geographic distribution of fossils. During glacial periods, cold-adapted animals such as mammoth spread into higher latitudes while warm loving animals such as hippopotami became extinct or were squeezed into lower latitudes. A mammoth skull with tusks was found in a brick quarry near Ilford dated to around

*Leah Mellors*

200,000 years ago. Remains of a female hippo have been found at Barrington that are dated to the Ipswichian interglacial 120,000 years ago. These are now housed in the Sedgwick Museum of Earth Sciences in Cambridge.

The first evidence of human occupation in Britain is found in the early Pleistocene stages of the current ice age around 800,000 years ago in Norfolk, while at Boxgrove, Sussex, tools and fossil remains of *Homo heidelbergensis* have been found dating to around 500,000 years ago. Evidence of neanderthal occupation - *Homo neanderthalensis* evolved from *Homo heidelbergensis* found in Britain around 100,000 years ago. Modern humans (*Homo sapiens*) arrived in Britain around 40,000 years ago. During periods of severe cold (glacial maxima) humans retreated to more southerly climates and Britain was unoccupied.

The causes of ice ages are not fully understood but the consensus is that several factors are important: atmospheric composition such as the concentrations of carbon dioxide and methane, plus changes in the earth's orbit around the Sun known as the Milankovitch cycles, as well as the motion of tectonic plates that affect wind and ocean currents, and even the impact of meteorites!

**Carol Law**

*As Members will now be aware, Carol has retired from the position of Talks Co-ordinator for the Museum Society, so this will be her last report.*

*Carol, I know the Board intends to recognise your remarkable contribution, but I would like personally to express my gratitude to you for all you have done to give us such a wide range of fascinating subjects, aimed to appeal to as many as possible of the different backgrounds and interests within the membership of the Museum Society. And the clarity of the reports you have prepared for the talks you have covered has been masterly - as illustrated by this one.*

*Thank you very much indeed, Carol - and it would be great if you also felt able to share with us your experiences of your intended world-wide travel. Ed.*

**Monday 9<sup>th</sup> October**

**The lost Heroes of Bletchley Park  
or How Bill Tutte Won the War**

**Speaker: Richard Fletcher,**

**Secretary /Treasurer of the Bill Tutte Memorial Fund**

Richard Fletcher came to tell us about how Bill Tutte won the war or, at least shortened it by two years, for it was said that the three things won WWII for the Allies, American money, Russian blood and Bletchley Park!

Many of us in the audience had heard of Alan Turing and his work on the Enigma code machine and some of us, indeed, had been on the SWMS visit to Bletchley Park in October 2011, but there were few of us, I think, who knew of Bill Tutte.

Bill was born in May, 1917 in a village near Newmarket. His mother was a housekeeper and his father a gardener at the Fitzroy Racing Stable. Bill went to Cheveley village school where he showed exceptional talents in some subjects. His pastimes included working on algebra and astronomy for fun.



Fortunately his headmaster recognised his talents and thus he got a scholarship to Cambridge County High - a mere 16 miles distant. This involved using a bike and the train or, if it didn't run, cycling the 16 miles there and back. In 1935, he was awarded a scholarship to Trinity College, Cambridge where he read Natural Sciences but this time, for fun, he joined the Mathematics Society working with others or on his own, solving some classic mathematics puzzles.

On graduation he was made a Fellow of Trinity but, after the outbreak of World War II, his Tutor recommended him to the Code and Cypher School at Bletchley Park. There he was interviewed by Turing, who turned him down, so he was offered to Brigadier John Tiltman, who didn't. Codes were now mathematically based rather than alphabetically, so Bill's talents were particularly appropriate.

In 1941 the listeners at Bletchley Park heard "a new kind of music" which the station dubbed 'Fish'. This turned out to be the sound of the Lorenz code introduced by Hitler for use by him and his top brass for high level strategic planning, as opposed to the more day-to-day messages sent using the Enigma code which had already been cracked. This 'Fish' was longer and more complex. The breakthrough came on 30th August, 1941 when a very long 4,000 character message was sent and the German receiver asked for a re-send - possibly because it was so long. In the second sending some character groups had been shortened, e.g. 'number' came down to 'nr' and this gave Tiltman what he needed to work on and the message was eventually read - in German, of course. But they still didn't know how the Lorenz code worked and could not decode other messages.

They gave the problem to Bill Tutte. He finally deduced that Lorenz used 574 characters and that the character patterns meant 41 spokes per rotor and there were 12 rotors. Enigma used just 4 rotors for the Navy and 3 for the Army and Airforce but, unlike the Enigma machine, neither Tutte nor anyone else at Bletchley Park, had seen the Lorenz machine. They were now in a position to read other messages but decoding messages still took days. During 1942/43 Tommy Flowers, with others, started building a machine to cope with the task of reading these messages. When completed it was so large that it was nicknamed 'Colossus'. It was the first programmable computer ever built and, based on Tutte's work, it cut the de-cyphering time to such a narrow margin that Hitler's messages could be read very quickly. They got so good at it that occasionally they had to ignore the intelligence to allay Nazi suspicions that Lorenz had been cracked.

Access to the information gained was restricted to a very few, very senior officers. Before the Battle of Kursk in July 1943, they passed to the Russian Commander Hitler's proposals for the German attack and subsequent strategy (but concealed the source of the information). This gave the Russians the edge, even though heavily outnumbered, and they won this critically important battle. Equally when it came to D-Day preparations, the British learned that Hitler was reluctant to move German troops from Italy and were able to convince Hitler and Rommel that the US / British forces were going to invade France by the shortest route rather than on the Normandy beaches. All in all, this knowledge of the German intentions proved crucial to the Allies' success and could well have shortened the war by two years.

After the war, Bill returned to Trinity College and took a doctorate in Mathematics, but Bill and his wife then settled in Canada where he had a distinguished academic career. His subsequent work (on graph theory and matroid theory) underlies much of modern computing. Bill Tutte was never given any public recognition for his work at Bletchley Park as it was still classified as totally secret, (In fact, we kept on using it to 'eavesdrop' on the Russians in the first years of the Cold War as they used captured Lorenz machines for their own communications). The authorities seemed happy later on for the Bletchley Park publicity to be concentrated on Alan Turing and Enigma. After his wife's death in 1994, Bill Tutte returned briefly to England but didn't settle and went back to his adopted home.

Several Colossus machines had been built but all the British-based ones were eventually destroyed. One had been sent to the USA, This proved useful when in the 1990s a team of British specialist amateurs were in the long process of re-constructing a Colossus and were able to get some basic photographs and limited information to help them complete the task. In 2001, a year before his death, Bill was awarded the Order of Canada. The citation described his work on the Lorenz as 'one of the greatest intellectual feats of World War II'. His role only began to surface publicly when a BBC Programme in 2011 on Bletchley Park asked why had Colossus been built in the first place. In 2012, the Newmarket Journal took up the story, and in 2014 Newmarket Town Council built a public memorial and set up a maths scholarship for local children. Thus Bill Tutte's name lives on now in more ways than one.

**Heather Salvidge**

### **And now it's time to hand over . .**

Among the many activities I have undertaken since I became more closely involved with the Museum Society, the Editorship of our Newsletter which I undertook in early 2004 is the one which has given me the most satisfaction.

From the start, I have tried to ensure - with the invaluable assistance of Carolyn and her colleagues without whom it would not have been possible - that Museum Matters should give Museum Society Members a much greater knowledge and appreciation of what is involved in running the museum service. And, indeed, past issues of the Newsletter have shown how much more involved the Museum Society itself has also become.

I have always had a great regard for the correct and clear use of English but it's impossible not to be aware of changes in the way communication is now carried out, especially the growth of social media which has changed how many people access news and information. The way forward is going to need much more IT knowledge and Tony Morton, who is taking over as Editor, is well versed in this so I wish Museum Matters a bright, useful and interesting future.

**Susan Hollingworth**

### **Legacies**

Christmas is very much a time to think of the future, If you are making or revising your Will, could we ask you please to consider a legacy to the Saffron Walden Museum Society? Any special wishes regarding the bequest will be carried out, enabling you to designate your gift for a particular purpose if you wish, And don't forget legacies to charities are not subject to Inheritance Tax.

**Peter Walker**

### **New media for communication and information**

If you have an email address and would like the Society to communicate with you by email, please send an email to Paul Salvidge at [SaffronWaldenMS@gmail.com](mailto:SaffronWaldenMS@gmail.com) and he will add you to the database. This would not only assist our administration greatly but also helps us in containing costs particularly of postage.

We assure members that their details will not be made available to any other organisation, Many thanks for your understanding and co-operation.

**Museum Society e-mail address**  
[SaffronWaldenMS@gmail.com](mailto:SaffronWaldenMS@gmail.com)  
**Museum Society web site**  
[www.swmuseumsoc.org.uk](http://www.swmuseumsoc.org.uk)

### **Who to contact . . .**

#### **Museum Society**

Donations/legacies: Peter Walker 01799 521868  
Membership: Christine Sharpe 527546  
Newsletter: Susan Hollingworth 550220  
Talks/Visits: Carol Law 521727  
helped by: Heather Salvidge 01279 814153

#### **Museum**

Carolyn Wingfield, Curator ([cwingfield@uttlesford.gov.uk](mailto:cwingfield@uttlesford.gov.uk))  
Wendy-Jo Atter, Museum Admin Officer  
([watter@uttlesford.gov.uk](mailto:watter@uttlesford.gov.uk))  
Sarah Kenyon, Natural Sciences  
([skenyon@uttlesford.gov.uk](mailto:skenyon@uttlesford.gov.uk))  
Leah Mellors, Collections (Human History)  
([lmellors@uttlesford.gov.uk](mailto:lmellors@uttlesford.gov.uk))  
Stefan Shambrook, Security & Premises Officer  
Telephone numbers:  
Museum 01799 510333  
Shirehill 01799 510631

Saffron Walden Museum Society Limited  
Museum Street  
Saffron Walden, CB10 1JL  
Telephone: 01799 510333  
Company Registration no: 6469141 Charity no: 1123209

