

# Friends of the Willis Museum Newsletter, September 2015



Aldershot, July 11<sup>th</sup>: in the foreground the visiting party of Friends with their guide Paul Vickers (far left) former Chairman of the Friends of Aldershot Military Museum; in the background Matthew Cotes Wyatt's equestrian statue of the Duke of Wellington, the largest equestrian statue in England.

*See "The Friends visit Aldershot" by Derek Anthony. (Photo by Howard Ray).*

'The Friends' was founded in 1978 to "promote, support and improve the Willis Museum." Meetings are held on the third Thursday of the month for ten months of the year, and other events are arranged from time to time. *Registered Charity no 280406.*

Annual subscription £10. Visitor for one meeting £2

***Your committee: Derek Anthony (Chairman), Ian Williams (Deputy Chairman), Shelagh le Marechal (Secretary); Howard Ray (Treasurer); Janice Bridgen, Alistair Craig, John Hollands (Publicity); Cathy Williams (Programme Secretary); Jenny Stevens (Curator, Ex officio).***

***Contact us c/o the museum, or by email on [enquiries@friendsofwillis.hampshire.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@friendsofwillis.hampshire.org.uk)***

**Newsletter edited, duplicated and distributed by Derek Anthony and John Hollands**

## In this issue

Chairman's jottings, by Derek Anthony.....	2
An heroic defeat, by Janice Bridgen.....	2
The Friends visit Aldershot, by Derek Anthony.....	3
“Working in partnerships and collaborations, by Janice Bridgen and Howard Ray.....	4
Lt Col John May's “Mystery wife”, by Ken Smallbone.....	7
Barbara Applin, by Mary Oliver.....	8
What's on at the Willis.....	9

### Calling all Friends

#### Chairman's Jottings, by Derek Anthony

Welcome to the September issue of our Friends' newsletter. I do hope that you have had an enjoyable summer.

John Hollands has asked me to mention that he is always on the look-out for interesting articles and photographs to publish in the Newsletter. So, if you can help with either please don't be shy, ring John on 01256 350764 or email him at [john2439.hollands@virgin.net](mailto:john2439.hollands@virgin.net) and let him know how you might be able to help. This year's Annual General Meeting (AGM) will take place at 7.30pm on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> October immediately before what promises to be a most entertaining talk entitled “Down the memory line – Picture postcards of railway subjects” presented by John Hollands.

I do hope that you are able to join us for the AGM. A good show of support at the AGM makes all the difference to those who are elected to take the Association forward over the next 12 months. Along with this Newsletter you will find a formal invitation to the AGM including details of how to nominate members to the committee. We always need committee new members who can bring fresh ideas and a different perspective to our deliberations.

Looking further ahead, in November we welcome a very special guest speaker, Dr Janet Owen, the Hampshire Cultural Trust's (HCT) Chief Executive Officer and, as such, one of the people who has ultimate responsibility for the Willis Museum. Those of you who were at the December 2014 Christmas Meeting will remember that Janet came and spoke to us about the newly formed HCT. This time Janet will be sharing with us some of her own research into archaeologist and “Darwin's Apprentice”, Sir John Lubbock.

Finally, may I remind you that non-member guests wishing to join us at one of our monthly meetings should book a place at least 48 hours ahead of the meeting by telephoning the Museum on 01256 465902 or risk finding that all seats are taken. Also, as a courtesy to our speakers and to avoid interruptions, the doors to the Museum will be closed at 7.30pm.

#### An heroic defeat, by Janice Bridgen

A fun evening was had by all who participated in the FOWM versus FOCM skittles match! The event took place on Friday 15<sup>th</sup> May at the Anchor Inn, North Warnborough. Each side consisted of fifteen members, and three games were to be played with a tally deciding the winner at the end.

Chairman Derek of FOWM was first in the alley and started off the initial game with healthy score of nine skittles. The rest of the team performed well giving us an average score of 6.5 skittles per player. The opposite side put up a fight but FOWM took the first game with a convincing score of 97 compared with 85 scored by FOCM. The gauntlet had been thrown down! A welcome interval arrived with a hot and cold buffet and drinks, all enjoyed amid much banter and joviality. The raffle also took place during the interval and raised £34 towards the kitty for FOWM.

The second game saw Derek FOWM start off with a good score of eight. The average score per player for this game was six, despite decent scores from Derek, Elspeth and Wendy. Sadly this was not enough to stop the FOCM, and they took the second game with a victory of 99 skittles to our 85. The cumulative total was now FOWM 182, FOCM 184, thus taking us into the third and final round almost neck and neck.





***Well bowled, sir! Our Chairman in action;***

The last game had its moments. One in particular saw Barry Hedger a recent new FOWM member score a much needed fourteen skittles. Having knocked all nine skittles down with the first two balls, Barry took another five skittles with his third ball. Further high scores came from Howard, Alistair and Dave B. The two opposing sides were racing towards the finish, each close to victory. The score for the final game was FOWM 102, FOCM 101. Alas, although FOWM had won two out of three games, we were pipped at the post by one point overall, the final score being FOWM 284 to FOCM 285 – high scores considering there had not been even one strike throughout.



***Left: Ours for a year!***



***Showing the “Awards”***

Derek, our Chairman, presented the trophy to the winning side, whilst they had the pleasure of giving Derek the wooden spoon! Derek commented that our team had played very well indeed, and that we would win next year! So here’s hoping!

It was agreed by all who were there that the evening had been a great success. Everyone left with a smile on their face. Next year will see a return match in Alton, so we might want to start honing our skills over the winter if anyone can think of how and where.

***Left: Ours for a year!***

**The Friends visit Aldershot, by Derek Anthony,  
(photos by Howard Ray)**

On Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> July, in glorious summer weather, a total of fifteen Friends and their guests visited Aldershot for a guided tour of the Royal Garrison Church and the great Wellington Statue. I had never seen either but can thoroughly recommend a visit. Even if the Church is closed to visitors a walk around the outside plus a climb up to the Wellington Statue makes for an intriguing hour or so. But do choose a fine day and take some refreshments with you because parking is free and the church and statue are situated in beautiful parkland, ideal for a family outing and picnic. Paul Vickers, for 12 years chairman of the Friends of the Aldershot Military Museum, was our guide for the day and the church and church facilities were opened specially for us by Andy Chittock a member of the church staff.

The church was consecrated by the Bishop of Winchester in 1863, since when tens of thousands of service men and women have marched up to and worshipped in the “Army Cathedral”.



Among the many memorials and regimental flags the most interesting to me was the large weather-beaten wooden cross now sheltering in the South-West Porch of the church but originally built and erected in 1916 by serving soldiers at High Wood on the Somme to commemorate their many comrades killed on that most bloody of battlefields.

The great equestrian statue of the Duke of Wellington stands on a natural mound about 200 yards from the church, a tribute to Britain’s most successful military commander in Aldershot, the home of the British army. Weighing 40 tons and standing nearly 30 feet high, this is the biggest bronze statue in Britain.

But the statue wasn’t always located in Aldershot, as we heard from Paul. Cast in London in 1846 by sculptor Matthew Cotes Wyatt for display in the capital city of the Empire, the massive statue was mounted on top of Decimus Burton’s triumphal arch, which can still be seen at the top of Constitution Hill. Burton and many other people thought that this was a wholly inappropriate place for the statue; disproportionately large for Burton’s elegant classical arch.

In 1882-3 the arch was dismantled and moved a short distance to make way for road improvements at Hyde Park Corner. The statue was never returned to the top of the arch and lay unattended in a corner of Green Park until August 1884 when it was moved to Aldershot by Pickfords and erected in its present position.

From the point of view of the Friends of the Willis Museum perhaps the most interesting aspect of the statue’s story is that its sculptor, Matthew Cotes Wyatt, was a cousin of Lewis Wyatt, the architect of the “new” Basingstoke Town Hall, now the home of the Willis Museum.

### **Working in Partnerships and Collaborations: the BafM Regional Conference, by Janice Bridgen & Howard Ray**

On June 17th we represented you at the annual BAFM (British Association of Friends of Museums) Regional Conference. This year it took place in the beautifully renovated Victoria Hall in the majestic, and listed, Reading Museum and Town Hall complex, just a short walk from the main railway station.

Apart from what we learned from talking to colleagues from other Museums and listening to the excellent speakers we both left the conference with three over-riding thoughts:

- What a fabulous building Reading has in which to house their superb range of fascinating museum galleries.





- The extent to which we had failed to appreciate just how much history there is in the centre of Reading.
- Just how effective and seamless the relationship appears to be between the Borough Council, the museum staff and the Friends of the Museum in Reading. All are working together, on a day to day basis, to achieve the common aim of reaching out to and informing the community. Hence the theme of the Conference – Partnerships and Collaborations.

In excess of fifty people attended the conference representing a rather disappointingly low number of just twenty four museums/organisations. The conference was co-hosted by the Friends of Reading Museum (FoRM). Delegates were welcomed by the new BAFM Regional Co-ordinator (Hassi Shah-Leverett) and by the Vice Chairman of the FoRM (John Steeds), who chaired the morning sessions. The conference was officially opened by The Mayor of Reading Borough Council (Councillor Sarah Hacker) who we were told has a real enthusiasm for everything cultural. To her great credit, once she had opened the conference with a few words, she stayed for the rest of the morning to hear the three keynote speakers. These excellent presentations were entitled:



- **With a little help from our Friends....Partnership and Collaboration at Reading Museum**, given by Matthew Williams – Museum Manager
- **Saving Reading Abbey – a story of civic partnership and collaboration from the 18<sup>th</sup> to 21<sup>st</sup> Century**, given by John Mullaney – local Author & Historian.
- **Reading’s Bayeux Tapestry**, given by Ben Bishop – Museum Gallery Assistant.

We were amazed to learn from the first talk that Reading Museum holds a collection of half a million objects. Of these approximately two thousand are made available to schools and community groups through their Loan Box and Memory Box schemes. In addition some material is loaned to other museums.

During a buffet lunch break it was just possible to make time for a lightning tour to see what the museum had to offer in its eleven galleries. The delegates then broke up into smaller groups, some joining one of two walking tours of the thirty hectare Abbey Quarter site. One of these was within the ruins and not normally available to the public and, as such, necessitated hard hats. The rest of the delegates joined workshop groups or guided tours of particular areas within the museum.



There were four workshops and three tours on offer, but rather disappointingly we only had time to partake in two each. Prior to the conference we had agreed to each do one of the workshops and one of the tours.

Janice attended a workshop entitled “Two Rivers Press – Working with Local Museums” where she heard how this Reading based, small independent publisher, specialises in printing books of local interest, often by local people. She discovered how decisions to publish are made and how costings are established. Her second session involved a “Behind the Scenes Tour” of the climate controlled basement storeroom, where paintings not currently on display are kept. The group received an explanation of the loan system (in and out), how

collections and displays are decided and formed and how decisions are made regarding the purchasing of paintings. Finally the group were shown examples of paintings received as gifts, bequests or donations.

Howard attended a workshop/discussion group led by Reading Museum’s Community Engagement Curator on the subject of “Community Engagement – Outreach and Partnership”. He



introduced the session with some fascinating statistics based on the profile of museum visitors - local and national - and explained how Community Engagement was a key element in the museum strategy to broaden their appeal. Participants then had the opportunity to contribute their thoughts on how to extend this vital aspect of the museum's remit, based on their experience of their own museum. He followed this workshop with a rapid guided tour of Reading's Victorian copy of the Bayeux Tapestry, embroidered by the ladies of Leek in Staffordshire in 1885/6. All the delegates had earlier heard the story of how this facsimile came to be in Reading.

The discussion groups and tours we sadly had to miss were entitled "Young Friends/Kids in Museums", "Friends & Volunteers - The Way Forward" and "Hands on Learning - Loan Boxes & Memory Boxes". This final topic provided an explanation of the facility Reading Museum offers to the community through their extremely popular scheme, for which they have an amazing 1500 individual boxes available.

After a short feedback and round up session, the opportunity was offered to those who did not have long journeys home or other reasons to get away promptly, to take part in an extra tour of the Abbey Quarter led by John and Lindsay Mullaney. We joined four others, including our good friend Kate Bentley from the Curtis



Museum and Allen Gallery, on this tour. After walking through the superb Forbury Gardens and viewing the Inner Gateway of Reading Abbey (restored by George Gilbert Scott in the 1860s after a partial collapse) we reached the Grade 1 listed Abbey ruins. Because of the dangerous state of parts of the structure access is unfortunately not currently possible for the general public. However we were able to view the Chapter House and to hear how they hope to soon discover what could be buried beneath this location and elsewhere on the site. There is even a possibility of locating the remains of King Henry I resulting from a major site investigation for which a project plan is

currently being developed. This project will involve the use of ground thermal imaging techniques, at a cost approaching £1,000/day. A funding plan involving grant applications is also being prepared.

We ended our tour inside the quite breath-taking Pugin Roman Catholic



Parish Church of St James, the associated buildings of which are built into the walls of the Abbey complex. This visit included a detailed examination of, and discussion about, the unknown origins of the carved stone discovered, in the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, buried in the Abbey Grounds. This stone now serves as the church font.

For those interested in exploring this locality you can pick up an excellent self-guided walk leaflet from the Reading Museum.

As neither of us had visited either the museum or the Abbey Quarter before, probably because we were unaware of their existence, we came away impressed with what they had to offer. A return visit for at least a day is a priority. How many of you are like us and do not realise what you are missing on your door step? This article has hopefully given you an idea of what you can find in the Abbey Quarter locality. We should perhaps add that apart from the very well presented replica Bayeux Tapestry, the museum itself contains an extensive range of displays. These include the Silchester Calleva site (with two superb and huge mosaic floors), Huntley & Palmer Biscuit boxes, contemporary Aldermaston pottery, Romanesque carvings, natural history, a considerable number of works of art and, of course, a history of the town.



And what did we gain from the day, apart from having a thoroughly enjoyable time and our eyes opened to the hidden merits of Reading? Firstly we had the opportunity to exchange views, ideas and



And what did we gain from the day, apart from having a thoroughly enjoyable time and our eyes opened to the hidden merits of Reading? Firstly we had the opportunity to exchange views, ideas and



experiences with our colleagues in other museums. Always useful! Secondly, we came away with the thought that, as a group of Friends of the Willis Museum, we are probably not doing as much as some other groups to support our museum. We wondered whether we could provide more of our time in assisting the staff in their task of promoting the Willis Museum and the exhibitions.

Perhaps we should think more about the importance of communicating effectively with the community, young and old, both within and away from the museum. Whilst we are proactive in helping to fund Museum projects and offering an attractive programme of monthly meetings and outings, perhaps we have the capacity to do more, given our relatively large membership? Possibilities could include providing guided tours of the Museum, arranging fund raising events, liaising with young people and talking to community groups including old people's homes, societies and schools. The aim is to encourage more Partnership and Collaboration. What do you think?

### Lt Col John May's mystery "wife", by Ken Smallbone



It seems that so much has already been written locally about **Lieutenant-Colonel John May** (1837-1920) that hardly anything about his life has not been covered. Yet, one aspect of his life is indeed shrouded in mystery. Although there is no record of his marriage – and thus it must be considered that he never married (legally, that is) – there is evidence enough to show that he had a “wife”. In fact, they were living together for at least forty years as man and wife (she taking his surname), according to the various census returns, but, even so, there is no evidence to suggest that she ever visited **Basingstoke**.

*Left: John May. Sadly no photo of “Mrs May” has come to light!*

**Julia Sophia Nobes** (1841-1922) was born at Gosport, daughter of Richard and Victoria Nobes, and was christened in the church at Forton on 10 October 1841. Her father was a shoemaker. In 1861 Julia was in employment as a domestic servant, while living with her uncle and aunt – Thomas and Mary Reeves – in Portsmouth. Mr Reeves was a pensioner, and records show that Julia sometimes took the surname of Reeves.

It would appear that John May had probably met Julia Nobes in or about 1865 or 1866, for on the 1911 Census she stated that the couple had been “married” for 45 years. They had no children, and the reason why they might have kept their “marriage” a secret was probably because of their individual statuses – May was middle class and Nobes definitely lower or working class. In May's case it would not have been “respectable” enough for him to have a servant girl as his wife. Naturally, this is mere speculation on my part, as only the couple would know the situation. Perhaps his family members were simply opposed to such a union.

Nevertheless, at the time of the 1871 Census the couple were living together at 1 Brussels Road, Battersea, in the Borough of Wandsworth, near London. John, then aged 33, described himself as “retired from rental of houses”, and it was stated that both he and his “wife” were born at Southsea – either a deliberate mistake expressed by the couple or possibly an error made by the enumerator when transferring the data into his census book. On later censuses John always stated that he was born in Basingstoke. The couple had their own servant in 1871.

Ten years later (on 3 April 1881) John and Julia May were now occupying 7 Norton Road, Hove, in Sussex. Mr May was a retired brewer, aged 43, while his “wife” was supposedly aged 33. They had a cook and a housemaid. At that time they were receiving a visit from Florrie Page, aged 6, who was Julia's niece – and this particular piece of information eventually became the key to open up the mystery, leading to my discovery of the identity of John May's “wife”.

At the time of the 1891 Census John and Julia May were the occupants of 5 Belle Vue Terrace on Portsea Island. Julia's 16-year-old niece, Florence Page, born at Bedford, was living with them, along with servant Elizabeth Gilbert. John May, aged 53, was “living on his own means”.

In 1901 the couple were living at Elm Lodge in Grove Road, Portsmouth, along with Florence Hodges (formerly Page, and now married, but her husband was absent) and Caroline White, their cook.

In 1911 the couple were residing at Cromwell House, 16 Nightingale Road, Southsea. However, Florence was no longer living with them, and they had two servants – Emily Ward and Ada Searle. This was actually the last known record in which the couple appeared together.

They must have been having difficulties by 1913, and thus went their separate ways. When John May made his last will and testament on 7 August 1913, he revoked all former wills. Julia was not mentioned at all therein, and he left the prominent portions of his estate to his five nieces, with ‘Hawkfield’ (his Basingstoke residence, off Winchester Road) being initially inherited by one of them – Mrs Leila Allen (but this was revoked in his first codicil of 28 November 1918, along with other changes to his will: the house was later sold instead). At the time of his second codicil – on 13 March 1920 – he was now residing in the Royal Beach Hotel at Southsea, where he died four days later. He was buried in the Holy Ghost Cemetery in Chapel Street, Basingstoke, on 22 March, following a procession through the town in his honour.

His former “wife” died at 16 Nightingale Road, Southsea (where they were living together in 1911), on 28 October 1922. On her death certificate she was recorded as Julia Sophia May, otherwise Julia Sophia Nobes. In her will she described herself as “Julia May, spinster”, thus revealing the truth of the matter – that the couple never married. Yet, within that same will (dated 15 October 1919 – while John May was still alive) she also called herself Julia Reeves. Furthermore, she made a codicil to the will seven days later. Neither will nor codicil mentioned John May, and like him, she had revoked “all prior wills”. She left a legacy of £200 to her niece Florence Hodges, while one of her executors was her nephew Joseph Wallace Page, a captain in His Majesty’s Army.

Joseph Wallace Page was born at Landport on Portsea Island in 1862, and he was found with his parents on the 1871 Census at 12 Faber Street, Bedford. His father was Joseph Wallace Page, a sergeant in the Bedfordshire Militia, and his mother was Isabella (née Nobes), who was born at Gosport in 1836 – the couple married in 1860. Further research revealed that Isabella Nobes’s younger sister was Julia Sophia Nobes, who became the common-law wife of John May.

### **Barbara Applin, by Mary Oliver**



*Reproduced with permission from the May 2015 issue of the Basingstoke Archaeological and Historical Society Newsletter.*

The recent unexpected death of Barbara has caused shock and grief among her family and friends and deprived the Society [BAHS] of one of its founder members and most stalwart supporters.

Barbara was a Lancashire lass who studied English at Newcastle, then part of Durham University; while there she learned her trade as an archaeologist on training digs on Hadrian’s Wall, and later at St Albans while working in London. She first came to Basingstoke in 1967, following me as Assistant Curator at the Willis Museum, a post created to deal with the work arising from the Town Development Programme. There was certainly plenty to do, rescuing items from the buildings about to be demolished (now in Milestones) and excavating the sites discovered on the new housing estates around the town (Oakridge, Popley, Buckskin) and on the route of the M3. She was helped by a group of enthusiastic volunteers – which included both our future husbands – and by me when I returned to the town as Mrs Oliver.

When the museum HQ moved to Winchester and could no longer supervise excavation, the Archaeological Society was begun with Barbara as its first Secretary, and we began the first major project – Rucstall’s Hill. We were joint directors and worked well together both on site and in preparing the report, the first of many happy co-operative efforts.



However Barbara decided on a career change and began working at MacMillan's publishers in the English as a Foreign Language Department where within a couple of years she was a full time editor, using her English specialism. She also wrote some books herself – the first one was called *Bluestones*, which drew on her archaeological interests in an imaginative way. She stayed with this job until she retired in 1996, and continued with some of her projects to completion as a freelance. I know she was a popular and valued colleague.

She still took a major part in [BAHS] Society activities, serving as Secretary, Chairman, and notably as Newsletter Editor, a post she held for about 30 years. Under her capable leadership the [BAHS] newsletter was transformed from a duplicated sheet into the professional publication it is today, beautifully presented and full of interest. She was so good at commissioning articles from us all. Another project was the video about the town's archaeology, *Beneath Basingstoke* (her title!) which we had fun in scripting and producing with so many members. It earned the Society a Countryside Award in 1993 and is still available on DVD.

Because of her back problems, Barbara moved away from excavation towards local history, especially after her retirement. She realised the importance of oral history, and that the Society should be recording the memories of those who had witnessed the transformation of the town – so *Basingstoke Talking History* began, with a group of interested volunteers led by Barbara interviewing people from all walks of life.

She used this evidence in giving talks and putting on displays, and also, most importantly, in producing books. A glance at the list of books produced by the Society is tribute in itself to Barbara's creative ability as both author and editor. Her contribution to the recording of Basingstoke's local history – recognised by the well-deserved personal achievement award of the British Association for Local History in 2009 – will give future students of the town much cause to be grateful to her. I'm full of admiration for all she did. In recent years, with Bob, she has been a key member of the team working to re-write the Victoria County History volume for Basingstoke, and was a major contributor.

Above all, she was a lovely person. We will all miss her warmth, kindness, interest in people, enthusiasm, and willingness to help. She will not be forgotten. For me, she was the best of friends for almost 50 years. To Bob, her perfect partner in every aspect of their lives, we offer our sincere condolences.

## What's on at the Willis

**All advanced bookings can be taken at the Museum (01256 465902). You can also book some courses and workshops on-line. See the museum's website for details. Please remember that non-members attending Friends' Association events, including your personal guests must reserve seats in advance.**

Now until October 31: **Wildlife photographer of the year**, Sainsbury Gallery. *Award winning photographs blending startling visuals, compelling narratives and a passion for the natural world.*

Saturday 19 September to 24 October: **Caught in the Act exhibition, by local Artist Lee-Anne Hampson**, Basingstoke Gallery. *"Hampson's portraits are particularly successful, as humour and liveliness are indulged in her wickedly funny depiction of friends and family."* (Oxford Times).

Tuesdays 22 September to 1 December, 2.30 pm to 4.30 pm (not 27 October), **You can draw!** *A ten week course that takes inspiration from the Wildlife Photographer exhibition.* Adults £95/Over 60s £71.25/ in receipt of benefits £47.50 Advance booking recommended.

Fridays from 9 October to 4 December, 10am to 1 pm, (except October 30), **Still Life and Nature Study Photography Course**, Archaeology Gallery. *Use your own camera to get to grip with digital controls, and try out some historical photography processes dating as far back as the 18<sup>th</sup> century. You will have access to relevant archive material at the Willis and at Basing House.* Adult £80/ Over 60 £60/In receipt of benefits £40. Booking in advance recommended

Thursday October 15, 7.30 pm. **Friends' AGM, followed by 'Down the memory line', by John Hollands**, Archaeology Gallery, *Historic picture postcards of railway subjects, covering familiar locations as they used to look, trains once seen in Basingstoke, World War 1 and railway humour.*

Wednesday 21 October, 7 pm to 8.30 pm **Talk with Andrew Forsyth – Finalist of the Wildlife Photographer of the Year Exhibition.** *Learn the story behind the 2014 award winner “Murmuration in the storm.”, and get an appreciation of the dedication and hard work required to reach the highest level of nature photography.* £5 per person, booking in advance recommended.

Thursday 29 October, **Animal Encounters!** *Get up-close, learn about and interact with a variety of amazing animals from expert handlers.* Age 5+, (children must be accompanied by an adult) TICKETS: £5 each (adults join in too!) Six available sessions: 10am, 11am, 12pm, 1pm, 2pm and 3pm. booking in advance recommended.

Friday 30 October, 10.30am – 12.30pm **Sun Prints – Family Workshop** *Learn how to create photographic images without the need for a camera.* Suitable for children aged 6 plus. Children must be accompanied by an adult. £7 per child, adult goes free. To book please call 01256 465902

Saturday 31 October to 12 December, **The Basingstoke Art Club Biennial Exhibition.** Basingstoke Gallery, *A wide range of work by local artists, including works for sale. A Christmas present purchase there perhaps?*

Saturday 31 October, 5.30 pm to 7.30 pm, **Mexican Day of the Dead Festival.** *Explore our museum displays in the dark at our annual Torchlight event! Not for the faint hearted! Please bring your own torch. Drop-in, no need to book. Donation welcome.*

Saturday 7 November to 2 January, **The Light Room,** Sainsbury Gallery. *Artist Liz West creates vivid environments that mix luminous colour and radiant light. The Gallery will be transformed into an immersive experience that creates the magical effect of walking through a rainbow.*

Thursday, November 19, 7.30 pm. Friends' event, **Darwin's Apprentice: the personal archaeology collection of Sir John Lubbock, by Dr Janet Owen,** Archaeology Gallery, *A welcome return from the Chief Executive of Hampshire Cultural Trust to talk this time about an important yet often forgotten Darwinist, and his archaeological and ethnographical collection.*

Thursday December 17<sup>th</sup>, 7.30pm, **Friends' Christmas Social,** Archaeology Gallery. *A light hearted evening with buffet, quizzes and more!*

Tuesdays 20 January and 27 January, 2pm to 4.30 pm, **Jane Austen writing workshops with novelist and Austen expert, Rebecca Smith.** *Study Jane Austen's way of creating characters, her writing style, and her pioneering use of points of view. With exercises to try and share. If you write fiction, poetry or memoirs, this is for you whatever your level of experience.* £25 each session. Book in advance.

Thursday, February 18, 7.30 pm, Friends' event, **The search for Alfred, by Dr Katie Tucker.** *Will the dramatic discovery of the remains of King Richard III be followed by the discovery of the remains of Wessex's great King Alfred?*

Saturday 27 February to 6 April, **Defining moments,** Sainsbury Gallery. *Discover the most influential art movements to have shaped 20<sup>th</sup> century British modern art in a unique selection from the Southampton City Art Gallery Collection.*

### **Calling all Friends**

***We need new committee members who can bring new ideas and fresh perspectives to our committee meetings. If you think that you may be able to help, or would like more information, please telephone our Chairman, Derek Anthony on 01256322073, or email [derekanthony@btinternet.com](mailto:derekanthony@btinternet.com)***