

Lottery Funded Exhibition at Kingston Museum

On 11th February, in an exciting partnership with Kingston University, Kingston Museum opened its doors to a major new sculpture exhibition.

Dora Gordine: Sculptor, Artist, Designer has been made possible by a generous £46,000 Heritage Lottery Fund Award. It forms part of a Gordine season which is also taking place at Dorich House—Gordine's former art deco home and studio—and the Stanley Picker Gallery.

The exhibition also features work by her contemporaries including Jacob Epstein and Henry Moore. A number of these are on loan from national collections such as the Tate and National Portrait Gallery. One of the more intriguing exhibits—*Happy Baby*—was rediscovered by co-curator Jonathan Black at Holloway Prison where it had been commissioned for the mother and baby unit in the 1960s.

Latvian-born Gordine rose to fame in Paris during the 1920s and her colourful life took her all over the world, including Singapore and China. She married into the aristocracy and designed the exotic Dorich House on Kingston Vale, which she named after herself and her husband, the Hon. Richard Hare, a scholar of Russian art and literature. After her husband died suddenly in 1966, she became a virtual recluse until her death in 1991. The house was entrusted to Kingston University in 1994. It has since been lovingly restored and includes Hare's impressive collection of 19th century Russian art.

The exhibition has proved very popular receiving 1340 visitors in the first month. The Museum is booked solid with school visits and special 'Sculpture Culture' tours around the town. The exhibition is accompanied by an extensive programme of free talks and workshops. There have been 7 well-attended lectures and the Museum is working with Kingston Association for the Blind and an artist, to produce sculptures inspired by Gordine. This work will be on display in the downstairs gallery where visitors will literally be able to get their hands on art! We are also delighted to say that the Easter Holiday Family Sculpture Workshops are proving popular and are already nearly fully booked. A great success all round!



Exhibition: Until 4th May 2009: Dora Gordine, Sculptor, Artist, Designer, in association with Kingston University

Thames Valley Arts Club Summer Exhibition: 23rd May to 6th June 2009

Summer Art Season: My Life in a Box –exhibition and artist led workshops. Workshops from 13th June; exhibition, 27th June to 18th July.

Friends' lecture: Muybridge in Focus by Peta Cook, Curator of Kingston Museum, Tuesday 26th May 2009 at 7 for 7.30pm. Please note change of date.

Friends' lecture: Brunel's Tunnel by Robert Hulse, Director of the Brunel Museum, Tuesday 16th June 2009 at 7 for 7.30pm.

The Museum's 2009 exhibition programme and the Friends' lectures and events are listed in the new Museum leaflet now widely available

'Learning Links: Slavery and Kingston

Kingston Museum has recently been involved in a Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) funded project with Coombe Hill Junior School on the theme of slavery.

Pupils attended a Cesar Picton Day at the school where they learnt more about the transatlantic slave trade and about Cesar Picton in particular who was brought up as a servant in the household of Sir John Philipps of Norbiton before becoming a successful Kingston business man. In line with the Citizenship Curriculum they discussed rights and responsibilities and were asked to consider how they might go about changing situations of injustice. Learning and Access Officer, Caroline Burt and teaching staff, have developed a resource box on the subject containing handling objects and copies of documents from the archives which will soon be available to all RBK schools.



Plaque displayed on Picton House in High Street, Kingston

Door Opens

The door that connects Kingston Museum and Kingston Library was officially opened on 14th February by the Mayor, allowing the public to move freely between the two for the first time for over 30 years. This move to unite the two services reflects the new joined-up working to increase public awareness and widen access to both services.

Museum & Heritage volunteers receive awards

Congratulations to Chris Bryant, Fiona Caldwell, Carol Cruddace, Pamela Dooner, Jennifer Mills and Peter Tarrant who received awards from the Mayor, Cllr David Berry, for their outstanding service and commitment over the last 12 months. Our volunteers were among 170 peers from a variety of organisations throughout Kingston who gathered in the Council Chamber for the 'People Count' Awards, organised by Kingston Volunteer Centre. Thanks to all our volunteers, including those who were nominated but could not attend, and those who have joined us more recently. We hope to see you all there one year from now!

MLA Funding to review volunteer service

Kingston Museum and Local History Room rely on its 50-strong volunteer force to offer an increased range of public services including digitisation, cataloguing, customer service, invigilation, research, exhibition mounting and educational activities. In November last, the Service was awarded a London Hub Volunteer Management Project Consultancy. 'Our volunteer service is something we review regularly', said curator, Peta Cook 'and this research will enable us to create an enhanced match between the needs of the Service and the aspirations of our volunteers'.

Generous gift

In December 2008 the Museum's final exhibition of the year was '*Just a Moment-photographs by Stuart Heydinger*', an internationally famous photo journalist. Following the exhibition, Stuart decided that there was no better place for his prized images than Kingston and decided to donate over 50 of them to the Heritage Service. We are most grateful for his generosity.

Kingston Museum and London Transport Museum in collaboration

We are working in partnership with the London Transport Museum on an exciting new exhibition to be called *Suburbia*. This will look at the way the expansion of the London transport network helped to create the identity of a number of areas. One of the areas chosen is Surbiton. In addition, Caroline Burt, Learning and Access Officer, will be collaborating on a youth project to create a film on the subject over the May half term, which will then be displayed in the Transport Museum.

Local History Room News

Les Kirkin Competition

The judging for the 2008 Les Kirkin Photographic Competition took place at the beginning of February and the prize-giving was held in the Local History Room on Monday 16th March. It was especially gratifying to welcome Rose Kirkin, Les's widow, and their daughter, Linda and her husband, to the prize-giving and Rose, along with John McCarthy, presented the prizes.

Once again the standard of entries on the subject *Celebration* was very high and choosing an overall winner was difficult. However, Verna Evans (pictured right) edged ahead with her image of Prince Edward's visit to the Borough last June, with Keith Hathaway (twice!) and Hugo Harris as runners-up. All the photographs submitted will go into the Local History Collection and may be viewed by visitors to the Room.



Rotary sponsors 2009

The subject for 2009, *Your Local*, was announced during the evening and competitors have until the end of January 2010 to send in their entries. Entry forms are available in the Museum, Local History Room, all libraries, the Guildhall complex, the Market House and online at our web site. Kingston Rotary Club has once again kindly agreed to be a sponsor of the prizes in 2009 and Kingston Adult Education has also made a generous donation. We should like to thank them and, of course, the Friends for their support of the Competition which would not happen without them. We should like to encourage as many of the Friends as possible to enter—the more the merrier!

Ancestry UK

Good news for family historians! Since February we have had free access to Ancestry UK on all our computers as well as the in the Libraries and it is planned to have a series of training sessions in New Malden Library in the summer term. The details will go on our web site.

Growing use of resources

The use of the Local History Room and its collections continues to grow. Jill has given talks to groups in Worcester Park and Merton on '800 Years of Kingston History' and 'Who Do You think You Are?'. We have also assisted student groups from the Drama and Sociology departments at Kingston College in the use of our resources. Emma and Jill attended a Local History Symposium at Kingston University in January and Jill is currently working with Dr Chris French (KU) and John McCarthy on a lottery project to locate, preserve and utilise for research purposes the records of local societies. Emma and Jill are also currently working with Howard Greenoff (Bonner Hill Cemetery) on the preservation, digitisation and wider dissemination of the cemetery records and the development of educational resources.



Emma and Jill are proud to announce the addition of a brand new stylish grey and, most importantly, safe map cabinet in the Local History Room. A BIG thank you to the Friends for their huge contribution of £1500. Notice how the lid stays up on its own!

Contact Us

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Please ring us on 020 8547 6460 if you are disabled and require assistance or a parking space at the museum.

Parking is available at North Kingston Centre. For assistance ring 020 8547 6738.

If you are unable to read this document because of disability or language, we can assist you. Please contact the Council helpline on 020 8547 5757 or ask someone to call on your behalf.

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M U S E U M



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COUNCIL



NEWS FROM THE FRIENDS

Chairman's Letter

Friends' Chairman, Peter Foot, has written his usual letter to members which will be circulated separately.

AGM

We were pleased to welcome the Deputy Mayor, Cllr Rohan Yoganathan and the new Strategic Manager for Libraries and Heritage, Grace McEllwee, to our well-attended AGM which was held in the Museum on 11th March. Your newly elected committee for the coming year are: Chairman: Peter Foot; Deputy Chairman: John McCarthy; Secretary: Tim Everson; Treasurer: Leslie Green; Membership Secretary: Anne McCormack; committee members and co-opted members: Anne Baker, Annita Barbieri, Frank Dobson, Betty Johnson, John Lulham, John Perry, John Pink, and June Sampson. We have said a sad farewell to former committee member, Mike Jenner, who will shortly be settling in America. We thank him for all his support and wish him every happiness in the future.

Subscriptions

The 2009 subscriptions are now due. Please send them to Anne McCormack c/o Kingston Museum & Heritage Service, North Kingston Centre, Richmond Road, Kingston upon Thames KT2 5PE, as soon as possible if you have not already done so.

Lecture and events

Tuesday 26th May 2009 at 7 for 7.30pm in the museum art gallery:
Muybridge in Focus by Peta Cook. Please note change of date.

Tuesday 16th June 2009 at 7 for 7.30pm in the museum art gallery:
Brunel's Tunnel by Robert Hulse, Director of the Brunel Museum

Saturday 4th July 2009: Coach Visit to Fishbourne Palace and Chichester. The coach is booking fast so please return your booking form or ring Ruth Lankester on 020 8390 7174 as soon as possible.

Kingston upon Thames ARCHAEOLOGICAL Society Programme of talks

Thursday 9th April 2009: *Coins, Medals and Tokens of Kingston* by Norman Clarkson

Thursday 14th May 2009: *The gunpowder Industry in Surrey* by Prof. Alan Crocker

All KUTAS meetings are held at 7.30 for 8pm in the Mayo Hall (ground floor) of the United Reformed Church at the corner of Union Street and Eden Street. Talks are free but donations of £1.50 welcomed.