

Kingston Museum News

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Look out for

Kingston's Birthday Celebrations

On 23rd September the town of Kingston will be 800 years old! On that date in 1208 King John sealed the charter that granted Kingston the right to raise its own taxes, and an independent community was born. Eight years before, in the year 1200, the King had granted Kingston its very first charter, but the original no longer survives.



To celebrate the birthday of the first surviving charter, Kingston Museum will be hosting a special exhibition. *Festival!* marks 800 years of Kingston as a festival town. From the earliest 'Kyngham Games' of medieval times to the multi-cultural carnivals of today, the exhibition reveals how Kingston residents have always expressed themselves by getting together, enjoying themselves and celebrating.

The Museum has consulted a wide variety of communities and many of the objects on display will be loans from recent events. For less recent festivals, the Museum has been talking to senior Kingston residents who have memories going back many years, many of whom have loaned memorabilia for the exhibition. Going back even further, we have been able to draw on the fantastic photographs and documents—including the 1208 Charter itself—in our Archives and Local Studies Collections. 'We believe people will be amazed to see these pictures of Kingston's past', says Curator Peta Cook. 'But there is also plenty on present events. In this exhibition we have aimed to represent the diversity of Kingston's population and to show that we in Kingston know how to party!'

Festival! Runs from 26th July to 18th October. Find out about related events and activities on the museum web site at www.kingston.gov.uk/museum.

Festival! 26th July to 18th October 2008.

An exhibition celebrating Kingston's 800 year-old charter and the Town's more recent reputation as a 'Festival Town'.

Thumbs Up It's Thursday, FREE Children's holiday activities in the Town and Museum throughout the Summer. Prize draw, trails, Mayoral visit to activities on 7th August. Suitable for children aged 3 to 11. Detailed leaflets widely available.

Friends' lecture in the Museum: Tuesday 16th September at 7 for 7.30pm: 'King John to Queen Elizabeth, Celebrating 800 years as a Royal Borough', by Archivist and Local Studies Manager, Jill Lamb

See Kingston's 800 year old charter granted by King John in 1208 in the 'Festival' exhibition

Recording the Present for the Future

Celebrations, festivals, carnivals and street parties—these are the themes for our 2008 Les Kirkin competition. They link closely with this year's *Festival* celebrations, the themes providing scope for recording events across the whole Borough for our Local History Collection. There's plenty of time so lets make this an even greater success than last year's competition. Application forms are available from the Museum, Local History Room and on our web site at www.kingston.gov.uk/museum.



Another Caroline

Caroline Burt is the new Learning and Access Officer for the Museum and Heritage Service (or the new Howard!). Caroline comes to Kingston after just over a year dividing her time as both Learning Officer for Elmbridge Museum in Weybridge and as Learning Assistant for the National Trust at Morden Hall Park.



Caroline has been lucky enough to be able to indulge her interest in history, art and museum learning through working at various wonderful places including Hampton Court Palace, Pollok House in Glasgow and Arbeia Roman Fort on the eastern end of Hadrian's Wall. She finds 20th century history fascinating and is particularly interested in inter-generational and oral history projects.

'I'm thrilled to be part of Kingston Museum Service', Caroline said. 'I am looking forward to working with Kingston's schools and community groups and to developing some exciting projects to introduce new audiences to the Museum in the future'. A big welcome to Caroline from all of us!

Welcome to our new volunteers

The Service relies heavily on its volunteers whose valuable help contributes to all aspects of our work from stewarding to indexing and project work. We would like to welcome most warmly our newest volunteers:

Lee Kiau Goh who has been helping with our family workshops. Lee, who hails originally from Malaysia, has a background in pre-school education.

Hayley Bowen who has already worked on the front desk as well as being invaluable to our events programme. Hayley trained as an illustrator and has a particular interest in art.

Katryna Grimshaw is studying for an MA in Museums and Galleries and the Creative Economy at Kingston University and is aiming for a career in the museum sector. She is gaining experience in a number of museum activities.

Christopher Bryant who has been helping with stewarding and exhibitions. Christopher is passionate about history, especially the Napoleonic Era and the First World War.

Yazan Alsager is a computer studies student and one of our new museum regulars at the Front Desk.

Tolu Odesanya also has a background in art. She volunteers in the Museum on Saturdays, despite having a full-time job during the week and 4 daughters to manage!

Carol Cruddace, a local business woman, who is astounding us with her efficiency and enthusiasm!

Brenda Harrison, a teacher and historian. See Brenda's article on Hillcroft College on the Local History page of our web site at www.kingston.gov.uk/museum.

One of our long standing volunteers , Lauris Ashton, has been researching her family history whilst on holiday in Australia. Read her fascinating account on the local history pages of our web site at www.kingston.gov.uk/museum

Museum Shop News

The Museum shop has enjoyed some major successes over the last few weeks:

Readers' Festival 2008

The Kingston Readers' Festival organisers asked the Museum to be a venue again this year and the shop enjoyed the benefit of selling books during the events. This involved a lot of organisation and extra hours for the staff but we all enjoyed being present at their talks and the captive audience gladly took the opportunity to purchase books for signing by the authors. The shop enjoyed a boost in income of around £800.



Corporate Gifts

The shop has recently started a corporate gift service which is highly successful due to our access to a wide and attractive range of unique images through our collections and archives. We can arrange production of bespoke products through our suppliers. We have recently delivered a large order of mugs to Kingston University to be used as gifts by their International Development Department and we are having on-going discussions with them and other local businesses regarding Christmas cards.

New Products

We have just taken delivery of two new designs of bone china mugs featuring images by local artist, Hennie Haworth: these are part of a range of products using Hennie's colourful, contemporary views of Kingston, which include greetings cards, packs of note cards and handy note pads. The mugs are on sale now at £7.50 each. Also just arrived is a beautiful collection of highly glazed jugs and tankards which are replicas of pottery from the medieval kilns of Kingston and Surrey. These have been made using clays and glazes that are matched where possible to the original artefacts. Prices for these very special items vary from £19.95 to £39.95.

If you know of any local businesses or individuals who would be interested in purchasing unique, bespoke gifts or cards featuring images of Kingston, or if you have any questions about our products, Sandra Murphy would be delighted to talk to you on 020 8547 6465.

New Accessions

Two local schools feature in recent donations to the Museum and Local History Collections.

We have recently acquired another interesting postcard for our local history collections of *Hazelwood School* in Surbiton which appears to have been operative at 14 South Bank in the mid 1930s to 1950s.



Museum volunteer Norman Clarkson has organised the most recent donation to the Museum Collections of a school blazer belonging to the late lady Angela Pullen. The blazer was uniform for the *Modern School* in Surbiton. Both Lady Pullen and the school have an interesting history and you can read Norman's article in the Local History Room or on the local history page of our web site at www.kingston.gov.uk/museum.

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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NEWS FROM THE FRIENDS

Peter Foot, the Friends' new Chairman, has written an introductory letter to all the Friends which we are enclosing with this newsletter as a separate sheet.

John McCarthy has sent us the following letter of thanks for his retirement gift.

Thanks to all of you who gave me such a wonderful 'retirement' present (opera vouchers). Pat and I attended a magnificent performance of Verdi's 'Simon Boccanegra' at the Royal Opera House from excellent seats and enjoyed a superb meal in the Floral Hall Balcony Restaurant; it really was a night to remember even if we didn't get the Royal Box. The champagne and wine that came with the opera vouchers are also just a memory. In thanking you, the Friends, I must also include Anne McCormack and her colleagues on the staff of the Service; these thanks not only for contributing to the gift but also for their support to me as Chairman.

What has also given me much pleasure is to see the way Peter Foot, our new Chairman, is settling in. He has really been thrown into the deep end with the amalgamation of the Museum and Heritage with the Library Services. Only time will show whether this has been a sound move but first indications are that gains should be more than losses.

Anne McCormack also sends her very grateful thanks for her wonderful retirement party and generous presents and for all the support she has received from you all over the years. She looks forward to seeing you all again in her new capacity on the Friends' Committee!

Lectures

Tuesday 16th September 2008 at 7 for 7.30pm in the art gallery
King John to Queen Elizabeth, Celebrating 800 Years as a Royal Borough by Jill Lamb Borough Archivist and Local Studies Manager

Screen London

This London-based project aims to organise high profile screenings of old archive film footage for the people of the Capital to enjoy, such as at Trafalgar Square during last year's London Film Festival. Some of our local film collections have just been included in a July screening which took place at Birkbeck College and we were able to offer films of the First World War Call to Arms Parade in Kingston, Surbiton's Charter Day Celebrations in 1936 and the Three Towns Pageant of 1951.

Hillcroft College-A Woman's Place

Museum volunteer Brenda Harrison has taught at Hillcroft College in Surbiton and researched its history. The results of her research can be seen in the Museum's Community Showcase from the end of July and her article on the college is linked to the Local History Page of our web site.