

Kingston Museum News

ISSUE NO. 55

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Look out for

Just a Moment

Kingston is known as the birthplace of pioneer photographer Eadweard Muybridge (1830 –1904) but on 8th November Kingston Museum will be celebrating the achievements of another great photographer, Stuart Heydinger.

Heydinger was born in Kingston in 1927 and went on to enjoy international renown as a photo journalist. Over his 60-year career, his work has appeared in papers such as *The Times*, *The Observer* and *The Daily Telegraph*. His images provide a record of key moments in recent world history, from the 1940s bombings in England to the 1960s famine in Biafra.



Kingston Museum, in collaboration with the Landesmuseum in Oldenburg, Germany—Kingston's German partner city—is presenting 40 of Heydinger's personal favourites, selected by the man himself especially for the exhibition. Visitors will see images of leading 20th century figures, including Sir Winston Churchill, Sir Edmund Hillary and John F Kennedy. But Heydinger is not only interested in the great and the good. There are also images of ordinary people, often caught in extraordinary circumstances, which reveal Heydinger's sense of humanity.

'We are very excited to be able to host this world-class exhibition', said Peta Cook, Curator at Kingston Museum. 'These powerful images will appeal to anyone with an interest in photography, journalism and 20th century history'.

Meet the Photographer

Friends of the Museum will have the opportunity to meet Stuart Heydinger at the private view on 7th November where he will be interviewed by former editor-in-chief at *Telegraph* newspapers, John Bryant. Stuart will reveal some of his favourite photographs and relate anecdotes connected with them.

Just a Moment: Photographs by Stuart Heydinger opens on Saturday 8th November 2008 and runs until 10th January 2009.

Just a Moment, exhibition of photographs by Stuart Heydinger, 8th November 2008 to 10th January 2009

A Woman's Place, display in Kingston museum by Hillcroft College, ends on 29th November

Lecture at Kingston Museum on Tuesday 14th October at 7pm: Kingston Carnival by Dr Stephen Knapper

Kingston Camera Club Annual Exhibition, 25th October to 1st November

Friends' lecture at Kingston Museum Tuesday 18th November at 7 for 7.30pm: London from East to West: My Walk for the Shooting Star Trust by David Gibbons

Friends' Christmas Gathering planned for Wednesday 3rd December in the Museum at 7.30pm



Inspiring Young Cultural Creators

The Summer has been really busy with various workshops, talks and events, mostly in connection with our exhibition *Festival!* which has been a great success.

Every Thursday of the school holidays we hosted a *Thumbs Up It's Thursday* craft session at the Museum for children under 11 and their families. These sessions were well attended, with the big crowd-puller being 'make your own pocket pet' during 'Fur and Feathers' week. We had over 100 children in the course of the afternoon making furry puppets.

Thumbs Up It's Thursday

Festival! has provided a colourful backdrop for African drumming workshops with Nzinga Drumming Company, a Capoeira workshop and Rangoli pattern-making workshops for schools.

Young Cultural Creators

In October the Museum will host a Young Cultural Creators project. We have professional poet, Dino Jacovides, on board who will be working with pupils from the Mecklenburg Pupil Referral Unit. The pupils will use our upcoming exhibition 'Just a Moment' as inspiration for their own poetry and photographic work, guided by Dino. This promises to be a really interesting project which, we hope, will signal the start of an ongoing partnership between the Museum and the Mecklenburg Unit.

Caroline has also been out and about with pupils from Bedelsford School. She took the school on a tour of the town centre to look for clues to help us unravel Kingston's past and used props such as pieces of leather, oranges, replica Saxon pottery and a crown to help pupils, who have physical disabilities and associated learning difficulties, to gain an understanding of how life in Kingston has changed through the ages.

800th Birthday Party Celebrated in Style

Kingston Museum celebrated the 800th birthday of Kingston's first surviving Charter granted by King John to the popping of champagne corks on 23rd September. The art gallery was the setting for a gathering of Friends of the Museum, councillors and other well-wishers who joined in the fun. After a few words on the significance of the Charter for Kingston by Scott Herbertson, Head of Leisure and Lifelong Learning, we toasted the Borough we are all so proud to be part of and tucked into a special 'charter' cake so beautifully and cleverly decorated by Heritage Assistant, Caroline Cornish. Downstairs there were activities for pre-school children, including face paints and craft, led by Learning and Access Officer, Caroline Burt.

Free membership

We offered free memberships to the Friends of the Museum to the first 25 to claim them, and it was wonderful to see people queuing at the Museum door at 9.45am. First in line was James Williamson (see image). The day ended with more champagne and cake and a very entertaining talk on Mayor Finny's pageants from historian Tim Everson.

Thanks to all those who came to share the day's events with us and to the fabulous volunteers, without whose hard work none of it would have been possible.

A Woman's Place

Readers of the last newsletter may remember mention of a new display planned for the community showcase at Kingston Museum. The display—entitled *Hillcroft: Empowering Women through Education*—is now in place and tells the fascinating story of Hillcroft College in Surbiton. It consists of documents and images from the College's own archives, many of which are held in the Borough's Archives and may be consulted in the Local History Room.

Hillcroft College has occupied a unique place in the education of women since the 1920s. The first and only residential college for working women was opened in Beckenham, Kent, in 1920. It moved to its current location in Surbiton in 1926 and was re-named Hillcroft College, the National Residential College for women.

'Throughout its existence the college has accumulated photographs, letters and other records which illuminate the way it has developed since 1920. The display goes some way to show this development', said Vina Owen who works at Hillcroft and has co-curated the exhibition. Her partner in the project, Brenda Harrison, is a museum volunteer.

Unique Collection Preserved

The Local History Room has been awarded a grant of £296 from the MLA Collections Care Funding Programme to preserve a collection of rare glass slide negatives of historical events within the Royal Borough. These last surviving press photographs covering the 1950s and 1970s taken for the *Surrey Comet* newspaper have recently been donated to the Local History Room by June Sampson.

The grant allows us to provide individual housing for each slide to conservation standards, preventing further deterioration and providing permanent storage for this unique addition to the collections.



James Williamson, the first to receive free Friends' membership on our special charter day

It was a shame to cut it! Our wonderful charter day cake made by our much talented Heritage Assistant, Caroline Cornish.

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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

Tony Leitch

We were all very shocked to hear of the sudden death of Tony Leitch, one of our members and stalwart of the Kingston upon Thames Society. Over the years Tony has supported the Museum and the Friends in so many different ways: Heritage Open Days, the design and printing of our information leaflets on Cesar Picton and other famous Kingston personalities, his involvement in the design of the Market Place History panel and many, many other museum projects. June Sampson's article in a recent edition of the *Surrey Comet* sums up the many and varied projects he was involved in locally. We shall miss him as a long standing friend and someone who cared about Kingston deeply. We send our sympathy to his wife, Stephanie, and his family at this very sad time.

Chairman's letter

Friends' Chairman, Peter Foot, has written a circular letter to all Friends Members which we are enclosing separately. He specifically mentions the successful **Heritage Open Days** event in September when the medieval Undercroft and the Bridge Remains were opened, courtesy of the John Lewis Store, attracting over 460 visitors. Our thanks to the Friends' volunteers who stewarded the event across the whole weekend.

Guided walks on the Heritage Open Days weekend

Our thanks to John Pink and his fellow tour guides for conducting special tours of the Museum and Town Centre during the Heritage Open Days weekend.

Volunteers

We would like to welcome the newest **museum volunteers** into Friends' membership: **Lucie Barat**: who has been involved with both exhibition and education projects; **Richard Angliss**: who also works at the University library. He has been involved in a variety of tasks in the Museum and was invaluable during the installation of the *Festival!* Exhibition; **Achim Azeez** has rapidly become a regular face manning the front desk and stewarding the art gallery; **Gina Martin** has brought much enthusiasm to stewarding the art gallery and events held there. She made a wonderful pirate during the performance of the *Alien in the Library* in September; **Sabrina Monchi** comes from Italy but has lived in France and now the UK. She's currently helping with the publicity for the Stuart Heydinger exhibition; **Phoebe Lindsley** found time after her GCSEs this summer to help our stewarding of *Festival!*. She is also proving to be a talented researcher for the Heydinger exhibition.

Lecture and events

Tuesday 18th November at 7 for 7.30pm in the Museum art gallery
London from East to West: My Thames Walk for the Shooting Star Trust by David Gibbons

Wednesday 3rd December at 7.30pm

Friends' Christmas Gathering. Donation of raffle prizes welcomed