

## ***THE FRIENDS OF WEST BERKSHIRE MUSEUM***

Newsletter No. 1 August 2015

What's On? Dates for your diary

September 30 <sup>th</sup> at 7.30 pm	AGM – followed by a talk given by a member West Berks Archaeology Department, then Tea or Coffee
October 31 <sup>st</sup> at 2pm	Talk by Dr Nick Young on his book – Newbury 365 – Please note this is an afternoon event.
December 3 <sup>rd</sup> at 7.30 pm	Christmas Event – informal
<b>2016</b>	
January 7 <sup>th</sup> at 7.30 pm	Talk by Max Hastings on Spies and Intelligence Please note this event will be at Shaw House
March 16 <sup>th</sup> at 7.30 pm	Talk by Roger Day on “The Western Kennet Valley in The Great War”
All events are at The Museum unless otherwise stated. Non-members are welcome to all Friends events for a small charge.	

We are still finalising our events programme for next year but if anyone knows of speakers who could give talks of interest to the members please contact Ray Hopgood (rjhopgood@live.co.uk). Also, if you know of any museum news from other local Museums that you think would be of interest to members please do contact us.

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### **Waitrose's Community Matters**

If you shop at Waitrose (Newbury) you will have noticed that the Friends are one of this month's 3 local causes – so please remember to pop your green tokens in our box and help with fundraising.

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### **Donation to the Museum**

The Committee has recently made a donation to the Museum to enable it to buy a Chest Freezer!! No, this is not so that staff and volunteers can have lots of lovely ice creams and lollies this summer, but is to assist in its' conservation work. Fabrics and other organic artefacts have to be kept free from moths and other pests and the best way to kill any larvae is to freeze them. Until now the Museum had to send items to Oxford for treatment which was expensive and time-consuming, so we were pleased to be able to provide this useful piece of equipment.

## **Our Events this year**

We were pleased to welcome so many to our inaugural talk on 26<sup>th</sup> March “The Foundation of the Raymond Almhouses”. Dr Margaret Yates of Reading University’s Local History Department (retired) laid out the story of the formation and development of the Almhouses leading us gently through changes of name, Wills and inheritances showing how they evolved into today’s organisation.

Our second talk on 14<sup>th</sup> May was unfortunately not so well attended but we had to compete with the Spring Festival. David Du Croz, ex-head of History Marlborough College, gave a detailed talk on the background to and the events leading up to “Magna Carta”. He effortlessly clarified all those details you thought you knew about this important event and explained how this Great Charter has influenced not only our laws but also those of other countries, notably America.

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## **Visit with a Child**

The Museum is a great place to take a child this summer. There is the exhibition of “Toys and Games throughout History” which even has an early fashion doll – perhaps she’s Barbie’s great great great grandma.

There are games to play such a Sleeping Tiger, Sardines and British Bulldog and activity jigsaws or you can make a bookmark in hieroglyphs. Upstairs there is Stone Age hands-on corner, a Wild Life table or you could try to design a pub sign.

If your child likes How to train your Dragon go and visit Blaze in the Cloth Hall and help him find his missing objects and don’t forget to say Hello to Ethel the sheep – perhaps she is Shaun’s cousin?

**Note.** The Museum is holding a First Anniversary Fun Day on Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> September and the Friends will be there providing information and hopefully recruiting new members.

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## **Your Committee**

Chair:	Jill Hopgood
Vice Chair:	Brian Barnes
Secretary:	Terri Costain
Treasurer:	David Clow
Events Secretary:	Ray Hopgood
Membership Secretary:	Sheila McGill
Web Co-ordinator:	Mike Weideli
Committee	Colin Milsom
Ex Officio	Victoria Barlow

We are currently looking for at least 2 more committee members and also hope that someone would like to take on the job of Secretary. Join us at the AGM and talk to the Committee about the Friends and our aims and ambitions.