

THE FRIENDS OF WEST BERKSHIRE MUSEUM

Newsletter No. 2 - February 2016

What's On? Dates for your diary

March 10 th (Note the change of date from Newsletter No.1) Note - Refreshments will be served from 7 pm to 7.30 pm	Talk by Roger Day on "The Western Kennet Valley in The Great War"
May 10 th at 10.00 am * See below for details	Visit to National Needlework Archive at The Old Chapel Textile Centre, Greenham
September 8 th at 7.30 pm	AGM + Talk (Speaker to be confirmed)
October 13 th at 7.30 pm	Talk by Dr Michael J Allen on "Environmental Archaeology of Stonehenge "
All events are at The Museum and free to members unless otherwise stated. Non-members are welcome to all Friends' events for a small charge.	

We are happy to receive members' suggestions regarding talks and speakers - please contact Ray Hopgood (rjhopgood@live.co.uk).

*** Friends Visit to the National Needlework Archive ***

A Friends visit has been arranged to the Archive at The Old Chapel Textile Centre, Greenham. This visit will include a viewing and talk on the 'Country Wife' mural which was made for the Festival of Britain in 1951 by Constance Howard and is currently being conserved at the Archive. Morning coffee with home-made cake will be served in the Tea Room and there will be an opportunity view an exhibition on Print Marking and a small bag

exhibition in the main hall (part of Open Studios). There is also a small shop stocked with haberdashery, fabric, wool and handmade gifts. The cost of the visit is £12 (members £9) and it will be necessary to make your own transport arrangements. There is lots of free parking.

It is essential to pre-book for this visit and tickets will be available from 6th April at the Museum.

There is disabled access to the main hall, shop and tea room but currently no wheelchair access into the Conservation Room (i.e. Country Wife).

Waitrose's Community Matters - We were delighted to receive £330.00 from Waitrose – we hope to be included in this scheme again sometime during the summer.

Donation to the Museum

The Friends had pledged to give up to £500 to the Museum to assist in the purchase of the exciting find of pre-Roman gold coins from Sulhamstead (8 gold staters approx 30BC).

However, the Museum has been very successful in obtaining grants and has raised the full amount needed for the purchase of these important artefacts.

Following discussion with the Museum the Friends have agreed to make funds available for the purchase of the display equipment required to mount a new exhibition to include not only the Sulhamstead hoard but also the other hoards already held by the Museum. Planning for this display is in the very early stages and it is not yet known what will be required.

New Friends Logo

We are very pleased that Boomerang Creative, a design and digital marketing agency, have agreed to design a logo for the Friends of the West Berkshire Museum . Once we have the

logo we will use it on all our correspondence and publicity. Boomerang has generously offered to design the logo for us free of charge and we are very grateful for their support.

Membership Cards

It has been decided that we will issue Membership Cards – it was hoped that these could be issued on renewal of subs in April - but it has been decided to wait until the Logo is available so that this can be incorporated. In order to save costs these will not be sent out by post unless we can include them with some other communication. It is envisaged that most members will collect their card when attending a Friends event or at the museum desk.

Our Events this year

Sir Max Hastings one of Britain 's most well known military historians gave a entertaining and sometimes racy talk to a packed Shaw House on Thursday 7th January on his latest book *The Secret War: Spies, Codes and Guerillas 1939-1945*. He was very informative about the development of “the great game” and quoted some hilarious examples of elaborate schemes which went wrong, and of the strange – by today’s standards - decisions and assumptions made, even at Bletchley Park . Sir Max has been very generous in his support of the Friends and their fundraising efforts on behalf of the Museum – he waived his fee and donated a percentage of the book sales towards the Museum. The Friends are very grateful to Sir Max for his time and support which has raised more than £1,000 for funds.

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Museum savings

As a result of the local government settlement made for West Berkshire , West Berkshire Council has announced a second round of savings in addition to those announced before Christmas. It is proposed that the museum operating budget be reduced by £40,000 (approx 25% of the total). This will affect the museum’s ability to offer activities and events, access to collections, volunteering opportunities and will result in increased charges. At this time, it does not look likely that opening hours will be affected or redundancies required. You can have your say on this proposal at the council’s website www.westberks.gov.uk Compared to other services, it may look like the museum has not been adversely affected but your

support is still important and it is worth remembering that the £40,000 cut is still only a proposal, not a 'done deal'.

Do you shop online? Help us fundraise for the Friends of West Berkshire Museum with easyfundraising.com

Many well known retailers will donate a percentage of what you spend with them to Friends of the West Berkshire Museum , via the fundraising website: easyfundraising.org.uk. Spread the word to family and friends to let them know just how easy it is!

To communicate quickly and save costs, we will use your email address for correspondence whenever possible. If you haven't got an email address please may we have the email address of a friend or family member who is will to pass along Friends of West Berkshire Museum information to you? Please contact our Membership Secretary with your updated information.

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
Ex Officio	Victoria Barlow
Newsletter Editor	Sheila McGill

We are currently looking for a new Secretary – the Secretary's role is not onerous as secretarial skills are not a requirement, it involves minute taking and their distribution to committee members. We would also welcome 1 or 2 extra committee members and will need a new Membership Secretary at the next AGM. Meetings are held approximately every six weeks and it is a wonderful opportunity to become more involved with the future of the museum.