



NEWSLETTER

April 2018

- Friends News -

Annual General Meeting of the Friends of Tamworth Castle and Museum

This year's AGM will take place in the Great Hall of the Castle at 7:30 pm on Friday April 20th and will be chaired by our patron Mr Christopher Pincher MP.

This is the most important of the Friends' events you could attend this year: it is where decisions are made regarding the running and operation of our organisation, and where you can make your opinions known. So please put this date in your diary and resolve to help us, the committee, make those decisions.

We hope to fill a number of committee positions and If you feel you would like to contribute as a member of the Friends' committee, this is your chance to volunteer. All that is involved in being a committee member is attending a monthly evening meeting, unless you feel you would like to take on a more active role in some of the organisational activities—it is entirely up to you.

The Castle is at an exciting point in its history, with the new Heritage Lottery Fund grant enabling the provision of new, more interactive methods of recreating the history of the region and of its peoples. If you would like to learn more about these projects, come to the meeting and listen to the speakers or chat to those in the know.

The AGM will be followed by the talk "The Man Who Creates Invisible Art", details of which can be seen in the "Talks" section of this newsletter.



Membership Renewal

A membership renewal form accompanies this news letter. If you have received the news letter by email, the renewal form will be a separate attachment and you should print out the form: if you have any difficulties doing this, please contact Sue Evans, whose contact details are shown on the back page.

Please complete the renewal form and return it to Sue with a cheque for the appropriate amount (details on the form).

If you pay income tax, please remember to complete the Gift Aid Declaration on the renewal form: it allows the Friends to claim a significant amount of money from HMRC to help us with our work in supporting the Castle.

Talks at The Globe Inn

We held our first talk at The Globe Inn (“After the Yorkshire Ripper”) after our January lunch club meeting. The talk was a resounding success, with up to 50 members attending the talk, and a substantial increase in the number of members attending the lunch beforehand. After the talk many members expressed their approval at the change of venue, enabling them to attend the talk where they felt unable to do so at the Castle. The committee recognise that not all members would be able to attend talks held at The Globe Inn (mainly because of its timing, in the afternoon), and some members feel that talks should be held at the Castle because we are, after all, Friends of the Castle. With these points in mind, we shall be holding some talks at the Globe and some at the Castle, and monitor the situation going forward. Please pay particular attention to the venues and times specified for different talks in the Talks section of this newsletter.

- Talks -

As mentioned above, talks will be divided between the Castle and The Globe Inn (plus one in St. George’s Chapel, St. Editha’s Church). As a result of this, some talks have been moved to different months: the list opposite shows the date, time and venue for the remaining talks for 2018.

The Man Who Creates Invisible Art—April 20th, after the AGM, the Castle
Unsung War Heroes, WWII-Afghanistan—May 11th, 7:30 pm, the Castle
Mad as a Hatter—Origins of Sayings—June 8th, 7:30 pm. The Castle
Aethelflaed & the Origins of Stafford—July 13th, 7:30 pm, St. George’s
Chapel, St. Editha’s Church
You’re Never Too Old to Rock & Roll—September 27th, 2:00 pm, The Globe
Mary Shelley & Frankenstein—October 12th, 7:30 pm, the Castle
The Perils of a Public Speaker—November 29th, 2:00 pm, The Globe

The Man Who Creates Invisible Art

**By Graham Short in the Great Hall, Tamworth Castle
On Friday 20th April 2018 at 7:30pm (after the AGM)**



Graham Short at work, and the Lord’s Prayer on the head of a pin

If you don’t recognize his name, you will certainly have heard of his work—Graham Short is the man who engraved a tiny portrait of Jane Austen on four of the new £5 notes, which were then spent secretly in the four countries of the UK and were eagerly sought after by the public.

Eight years after leaving school at the age of 15 with no qualifications, but inspired by an English teacher who told him that anyone could achieve anything, Graham had a client list that included Buckingham Palace, Harrods, Fortnum & Mason, 10 Downing Street, Chanel, Yves St Laurent and many others of similar prestige. He is working as a micro-artist and his work is sold to fine-art investors all over the World.

Graham has produced the smallest art in the World, including the Lord's Prayer on the head of a pin and Leonardo Da Vinci's "The Last Supper" along the sharp edge of a razor blade.

In order to produce such minute works of art, he goes to enormous lengths to reduce distractions and vibrations while he is carving, including working between midnight and 5:00 am to avoid vibration from passing traffic, lowering his heart rate to 20 beats per minute and engraving between heartbeats, and injecting his eyelids with Botox to obviate distractions caused by eyelid movement.

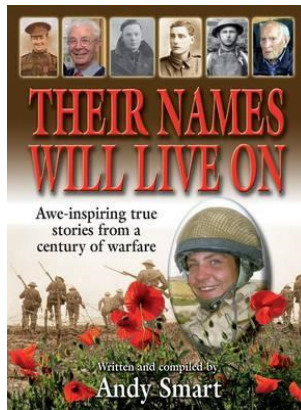
This talk sounds like one that you definitely will not want to miss!

This talk will immediately follow the Friends Annual General Meeting (see front page).

Unsung War Heroes, World War II—Afghanistan

By Andy Smart in the Great Hall, Tamworth Castle

On Friday 11th May 2018 at 7:30pm



Andy Smart and his book, on which his talk is based

Andy is a journalist of 40 years experience with many amusing stories about his career as a news/sports/feature writer in regional and local newspapers and on local radio. In his talk, based on his book about unsung war heroes from World War One to Afghanistan, he will tell of stories that have the power to chill you to the bone, bring a tear to a glass eye ... and one or two that will make you smile

Signed copies of his book will be available at a special price. Sales of the book have so far raised nearly £2,000 for the Royal British Legion.

Mad As a Hatter—Origins & Meanings of Sayings

By Sandy Leong in the Great Hall, Tamworth Castle

On Friday 8th June 2018 at 7:30pm



Sandy Leong, and an instance of a famous saying

Sandy is an historian, passionate about bringing to life the sort of history that doesn't normally get into mainstream history books. She is a professional speaker and published author, married to a Malaysian and spending time living and working in the UK & Malaysia. She is a guest speaker with P & O, Fred Olsen and Thomson's cruise ships, and a sought-after speaker for Historical Societies and other groups.

Sandy says of her talk:

Some people may say that I'm as Mad as a Hatter because I'm fascinated by the origins of everyday sayings. There are more sayings than you can shake a stick at. For any doubting Thomas, I'll let the cat out of the bag & pull out all the stops to entertain you with stories of how the sayings that we use came about.

Aethelflaed and the Origins of Stafford

By Professor Martin Carver

in St. George's Chapel, St. Editha's Church, Tamworth

On Friday 13th July 2018 at 7:30pm



Martin Carver, and a depiction of Queen Aethelflaed

Writer and broadcaster Martin Carver is Professor Emeritus at the University of York, Department of Archaeology.

Aethelflaed, regarded as “Ruler of the Mercians”, was the first-born child of King Alfred the Great and is a rare example of female rulership in English history. 2018 is the 1100th anniversary of Aethelflaed's death in Tamworth, and the site of St. Editha's Church, venue for this talk, is regarded by many as being part of or adjacent to the palace of the Anglo-Saxon Mercian King Offa.

Large-scale archaeological examinations have been undertaken in Stafford over the last fifty years, including the excavation of the fort in Stafford built by Aethelflaed, Lady of the Mercians, in 913 AD. The majority of our county towns, and the shires themselves, owe their origins to the campaigns of Alfred and his children Edward and Aethelflaed in the late 9th and early 10th centuries. Stafford is one such town, and the archaeological examinations have provided an extraordinary opportunity to piece together the history of such a "typical" town.

- Trips, Social & Other Events -

A Trip to the London Museums

Saturday 7th April 2018

This trip, originally scheduled for Saturday 3rd March 2018 has had to be moved to Saturday 7th April because of the snow on the original date. Members who booked for the original date have been informed of the change: this trip is still fully-booked.

- Reviews -

After the Yorkshire Ripper

A talk at the Globe on Thursday 25th January

This, the first of our talks to be held at The Globe Inn, was given by David McCaddon. He has spent the last 32 years specialising in developing law-enforcement computer systems, including HOLMES (Home Office Large Major Enquiry System), which, in its second incarnation (HOLMES 2) is used by all UK police services to investigate major incidents.

David gave an informative and entertaining talk, telling us how, prior to computerisation, police investigation into major incidents (serial murders, large-scale fraud, etc.) was seriously hampered by the manual systems then in place. All investigation data was then held on a system of cards, where one piece of information could be stored on half a dozen cards in different card "boxes", leading to an enormous amount of work involved in searching for relevant information. Computerising this information across multiple police services resulted in a massive decrease in search times, allowing many more leads to be followed.



Friends Events for 2018/19

25/01/18	Talk "After the Yorkshire Ripper"
29/03/18	Talk "Tricks of Light and Colour"
20/04/18	Annual General Meeting
20/04/18	Talk "The Man Who Creates Invisible Art" (following AGM)
11/05/18	Talk "Unsung War Heroes, WW2 to Afghanistan"
08/06/18	Talk "Mad as a Hatter" - origins & meanings of sayings
13/07/18	Talk "Aethelflaed & the Origins of Stafford
27/09/18	Talk "You're Never Too Old to Rock & Roll"
12/10/18	Talk "Mary Shelley & Frankenstein"
27/10/18	Children's Halloween (date provisional)
29/11/18	Talk "The Perils of a Public Speaker"
09-10/12/2018	Trip to the Thursford Xmas Spectacular
Feb 2019	Talk "The Meaker Brothers" (date to be confirmed)

Contact Details

Where booking slips are included with the newsletter, if return details are not included on the form please complete and send them, with payment, to:

Sue Evans, 48 Barbara Street, Tamworth, B79 7EJ

If you do not have a booking slip or would like more details about a trip, you can contact Sue by phone on **01827 55916** or by email at

social@tamworthcastlefriends.org

If you have any questions or suggestions regarding newsletters, please contact Roger Ashford by phone on **0790 0088960** or by email at

newsletter@tamworthcastlefriends.org

Membership queries should be addressed to

membership@tamworthcastlefriends.org

For any other issues, contact **admin@tamworthcastlefriends.org**

Friends Website: **www.tamworthcastlefriends.org**