



# Aldeburgh Museum

## MOOT HALL

# MOOT MATTERS

## KEEPING YOU UP TO DATE WITH OUR MUSEUM

Moot Hall • Aldeburgh IP15 5DS  
01728 567767  
learningofficer@aldeburghmuseum.org.uk  
www.aldeburghmuseum.org.uk

## WELCOME

Welcome to this our ninth E-Newsletter. One of the dubious benefits of lockdown is that we have time to put one together!

Please note the museum phone number is now 01728 567767 (previously 454666).



## ALL THE BEST FOR THE NEW YEAR

Plus ça change.... Lockdown in November following an excellent October at Aldeburgh Museum. We opened again in December and we decided, because of increased infection rates, just before Boris did, that we would have to close again. This was a pity as we were looking forward to a busy period between Christmas and the New Year when Fiona had arranged a Father Christmas trail in the Moot Hall and we were expecting quite few visitors and people buying things in our shop.

The good news is that despite all the trials and tribulations Aldeburgh Museum has had a reasonable year financially and we ended the year in profit, thanks to government grants and good attendance through the summer months. The prospects for 2021 look reasonable too provided that we have no lockdowns from the early summer onwards.

Being closed gives us the opportunity to put a few things right and plan our activities for the year. Things we hope to do include

launching a 3D virtual tour of the museum which can be accessed online, launching our tablet tour so that people who are unable to climb the stairs but can get into the ground floor can get a feel for the exhibits on the first floor, plus lots of activities. One thing we would like to do is exhibit some of the paintings and photos that the museum has in its collection which are not currently on display, perhaps in one of the galleries in the Town.

On the curatorial front we are making a few small changes including we hope a new display of the changing coastline as the current display does not work so well. In this we hope to use some recent research conducted by a professor from UEA.

We do hope 2021 will be a good year for our volunteers and that more of you will feel able to give us a helping hand when Covid is in retreat. We of course could have no Christmas party last year but hopefully we can do something in the summer.

Wishing you all a better year in 2021.

## The Batti Wallahs' Society Summer trip on the Thames barge 'Alde' in August 1913



'Alde'  
under  
full  
sail

The Batti Wallahs' Society was founded in 1906 for seamen who worked as electrical engineers on ships, particularly the P & O engineers. The 'Alde' was a Thames barge owned by one of the Batti Wallah's founder members, Walter Riggs who lived at 'Whitebays' in Aldeburgh. He made the barge available for the annual summer cruise in 1913. The Alde was, as one would expect being owned by an electrical engineer, fitted with the latest in electrical equipment including 'Tantalum' lamps, 'Simplex' cookers, toasters and kettles. This was circa 1912, which probably made the Alde the first sailing barge to have electricity installed.

Extract from the ship's log:

*On the following morning (Wednesday) the pilot did not put out very early as there were only the light airs SE by S by S. About 10 o'clock Pilot Thomas Langmaid came aboard and took us through the most interesting part of our trip. The entry into the Aldeburgh river is really surprising to those who have not been through before. With only a light breeze it is necessary to constantly keep the boat facing clear of the river, so that she stands well up in the stream before it gets hold of her. The remarkable way she swings round when once she gets into that tide is most interesting, and one can quite realise how essential it is to have a pilot on board. We carried the ride right up to Aldeburgh. Just after passing Orford, we encountered a heavy rain squall, the wind shifting N E. Anchor was dropped off Slaughden in slack water. The quaint old town of Aldeburgh was well photographed and explored by the party and, as most of the passengers had got tired of meals cooked by electricity, dinner was partaken at the local hotel. Returning after dinner, Secretary Pooley met his namesake at Slaughden and there was great hand shaking.*

*Total day's run 11 sea miles.*



Visitor (possibly a Batti Wallah) on-board the 'Alde'. Smaller crew are Walter Riggs' children, Freda and Tom.

Postcard received by the Hon Entertainments Secretary of the Batti Wallahs' Society in 1913 from a member coming on the barge trip:

*My brother, Baker, and I will be coming down by the 8.22pm tomorrow night and should pitch up on board the old hooker about 9 o'clock. Please keep 1st class state rooms for us, with electric lights, bath hot and cold &c*

(A cold bath could be obtained by going overboard, a hot bath by sitting in the circulating water tank when the engine was running!)

## Curator's Corner - A Calendar Medal



This is one of the more intriguing medals we have in our collection. Made by John Powell of Birmingham, this is a Sunday Calendar, showing the dates for Sunday in the year 1772. Included on this medal are religious dates, an epact number to ordain the dates for Easter, and a Dominical letter to determine days of the week for that year. This example has two letters because it is a leap year.

The medal includes royal anniversaries such as the King's birthday, the 4th June, his date of accession, coronation date and the birthday of his son the Prince of Wales, the 12th August.

These medals were produced annually from the 1680s to the middle of the 19th century by various makers. For such a small item, it contains an amazing amount of information, and in some future year this calendar would again be accurate, at least as far as the religious dates are concerned

*Note: With today's Gregorian calendar, an epact is a number representing the age of the Moon on January 1 in order to harmonize the lunar and solar calendars.*

## Update from Fiona Lewington, Learning and Activities Officer

The museum mice have now retired for a well earned rest and I am now planning for our 2021 activity and events season. When the museum is open, we regularly gather data from collecting postcodes from our visitors. It is always interesting to see where our visitors come from – visitors from the east of London are always very prominent – as are families from West Suffolk and the Midlands. We have noticed that the local population, the area with a IP15 postcode, are not visiting or joining in with our events and activities. Therefore I have put together a quick survey to ask this group for suggestions and information that will help us go forward with our events and activities programme for the future. The survey will go live later this month and will be available from our website. There will be a prize draw for all who enter – so don't miss out!



To pass these very long lockdown evenings, I have been busy building a model of the Moot Hall from a large box of Lego bricks, found in a cupboard whilst spring cleaning. Would you like to join in the fun – and have your creation exhibited in the museum when we open again in the Spring?

Aldeburgh museum will be launching a competition 'Building Aldeburgh' and are on the lookout for model makers of all ages to create an Aldeburgh landmark or building. Any medium can be used – cardboard, paper, clay, Lego bricks or papermaché. The choice is yours!

Lost for ideas? What about creating the town water pump out of clay, or the Martello Tower from papermaché? Don't forget the scallop on the beach, or one of the cottages on the High Street.

For more information and an application form, please contact me at [learningofficer@aldeburghmuseum.org.uk](mailto:learningofficer@aldeburghmuseum.org.uk).

## Update from Our Treasurer Alison Barnetson

I was putting away the Christmas decorations; which makes everywhere look so bare so I've left the tree with just the lights on for the time being; (not technically a Christmas tree, but simply a tree with lights) and remembered that I promised to get some words down for this newsletter.

The museum's financial year is the calendar year and we ended 2020 with a very small profit. This is much better than we had hoped for considering the museum was closed for much of the year. Thanks must go to our Supervisors and Learning Officer who put in a tremendous effort to make the museum attractive to visitors. There were even queues of visitors in the summer months! Ok so I know that was as a result of the Covid measures in place, but queues nevertheless. When did Aldeburgh Museum last have queues?

Sadly 2021 starts with the museum yet again closed, the 'boys' furloughed for the third time and yet again I may have to do battle for the HMRC Small Business Support grant. We have been proactive and have just agreed another re-budget of the project finances with the HLF and also reviewed our outgoings and made some savings where we can. The agreed re-budget is great news as it means that when we can reopen, we can do so safely with both Supervisors on duty, paid for through the project. As with all businesses there are still bills to be paid each month such as rent, subscriptions and service providers whether open or closed.

Our presence on social media last year generated wider interest in the museum which has to be maintained and Fiona has some brilliant Lockdown 3 ideas. Who knows, maybe the mice will put in a reappearance! Instagram seems to get the most response and we currently have >500 followers. Not enough to be an 'influencer' but not bad for a small museum.



Shop sales were good in 2020, the top seller being the 'special offer' of the Moot Hall, Introduction to Aldeburgh and Barbers Point booklets. There are new ideas being considered for the shop, such as matching printed tea towels, placemats, mugs, coaters, aprons etc and Catherine has identified some images in the archives that can be used. If you have any ideas or suggestions, please do get in touch. We still have the new, recently published 'Ben & Jim's Activity Book' which is packed with 30 fun things to make and do at home, perfect for lockdown days or a few Where's Wally? Spooky Spotlight Search books. All can be purchased from the online shop [www.aldeburghmuseum.org.uk/shop/](http://www.aldeburghmuseum.org.uk/shop/) Don't forget too that we have registered Aldeburgh Museum with 'Easyfundraising': <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/> where retailers donate a percentage of your spend to Aldeburgh Museum at no additional cost to you. Simply sign up and shop online through the easyfundraising website. Remember to select 'ALDEBURGH MUSEUM' as your charity.

Before I finish, if you have any unwanted Christmas decorations that could be used to decorate the museum, please get in touch as we may be able to make use of them.

With all good wishes for 2021,

Alison.



1. Part of a watering can.
2. No dancing partner.
3. A well dressed man.
4. A musical instrument.
5. Young sheep's end.
6. Males on bikes.
7. Popeye's baby.
8. A fiery game of cards.
9. There are a lot of these in Amsterdam.
10. A crafty pair of mittens.
11. Plenty of work for the Queen.
12. A wartime symbol.
13. A bovine tip up.
14. A truthful policy.
15. Always remember.
16. A cathedral clanger.
17. Snow, ice and cold winds do this.
18. A famous railway line.
19. Don't drink tea from this cup.
20. An old fashioned girl.
21. Sugary Bill.
22. A foggy cuddle.
23. A colourful sunrise.
24. A wedding dowry.

## DO YOU BUY THINGS ONLINE?

We've registered Aldeburgh Museum with [easyfundraising.org.uk](http://easyfundraising.org.uk), which means over 4,000 shops and sites will now donate to us for FREE every time you use easyfundraising to shop with them. These include John Lewis, Marks and Spencer, Boots and many more. These donations will help SO MUCH, so please give it a go and sign up to support us – it's completely FREE and doesn't take long.

[CLICK HERE FOR EASYFUNDRAISING](#)

## FLOWER QUIZ

The clue to each answer is the name of a flower. Send your answers to [aldeburghmuseumshop@gmail.com](mailto:aldeburghmuseumshop@gmail.com)

A Bottle of Prosecco to the first correct answer drawn from a hat!

### BBC Dr Radha's Five C's

*- mental health tips to keep you mentally and emotionally well during the lockdown.*

**Control** *Control what you can - following medical guidance on hygiene and government guidelines on social distancing. Note down and put aside anything that you cannot control whilst in lockdown.*

**Care-** *Care for ourselves - eating healthily, a good sleep pattern, exercise and fresh air.*

**Continuity-** *Continue to carry out normal daily routines as much as possible - watch your favourite TV programmes or listen to the same radio programmes.*

**Creativity-** *Take up a hobby to fill your days - sewing, knitting, singing, letter writing or painting.*

**Compassion-** *Be kind to yourself and to others. Phone a friend and have a chat. Look out for your neighbours.*

**Take care and keep safe**