

# SAXMUNDHAM MUSEUM

## End of season update: Autumn 2015

It's been a busy summer for Saxmundham Museum. Our new window display received many positive comments, with people taking the opportunity to spot their house on the town map and to stop and watch the pristine trains against their re-vamped surroundings.

In addition to the individual visitors, the Museum was also delighted to play host to a number of local groups, including three classes from Saxmundham Primary School, a group from Station House Community Connections in Campsea Ashe and BOS.

### A centre for learning



*Saxmundham Primary School pupils sketching the Market Hall during their visit in July*

A huge thanks to Penny Hewett Brown who prepared the excellent learning tools for our enthusiastic visitors from Saxmundham Primary School. The children particularly enjoyed the replica shop fronts.

Because of the time taken to prepare the educational materials and the training needed for staff, we charge a small fee per visiting class to the museum. Great value learning!

### Visitor Numbers Top 1,500 !

We are thrilled to report that the Museum welcomed over 1,500 individual visitors during the summer. Their donations helped enormously with the ongoing running costs associated with the Museum. It costs over £4,000 per year to keep the Museum ticking over (utilities, rent, rates, insurances, etc) and that is before any abnormal / capital costs are taken into consideration.

At the start of year we repainted the frontage to the Museum and we hope to make big improvements to the signage in the town in 2016 to further increase visitor numbers. We are indebted to Saxmundham Town Council who donated a grant of £800 to the Museum earlier this year.

As ever, a huge thank you is owed to Olive Warren and her team of willing volunteers who give up so much of their time in their vital role as stewards.

### FORTHCOMING EVENTS

#### Saxmundham Museum

##### Museum AGM

Friday 30th October 7.00pm  
URC Hall, Chapel Road  
Saxmundham  
All welcome

##### Friends' Evening

Friday 20th November 7.00pm  
Sternfield House, Sternfield  
Join us for supper and entertainment  
Tickets, £11.00 for Friends and £13 for guests, from Crisps Newsagents

##### History Society

###### 8th October

History Society lecture  
*Mark Mitchells*  
The find of a lifetime - Hoxne

###### 12th November

History Society lecture  
*Kate Jewell*  
Cake, Ale & Partying

###### 3rd December

History Society event  
Music & Songs

History Society lectures take place at the URC Hall, Chapel Road, Saxmundham at 7.30pm  
All welcome. Non members £3

Details

Richard Crisp: 01728 663583  
Or visit the Museum website

## Ron Thompson



This year, the Museum posted a special exhibit about Ron Thompson, a stalwart of the Saxmundham community who spent much of the Second World War as a Japanese Prisoner of War.

Ron Thompson was born in Dennington in 1921 and moved to Albion Street, Saxmundham as a small boy. His father worked at Bower's Coal Merchants.

He joined the army when he was 18 and was posted to the Far East almost straight away to

work on the infamous Burma railway. He was captured by the Japanese and interned in Changi jail between 1942 and 1945.

After the War, he worked for Reades of Aldeburgh as a builder and plasterer, travelling between jobs on his motorbike.

Ron Thompson passed away in May this year. He is survived by his wife, Dorothy, and their sons Stephen and Christopher.

## Christmas shopping at the Museum

Saxmundham Museum's shop shelf has a selection of small gifts that would make perfect Christmas presents for friends and family.

This year the Museum will be open on:

Saturday 5th Dec, 12.00am - 6.00pm and Saturday 12th Dec, 12.00am - 4.00pm.

So come along, see what we have to offer, and enjoy a mince pie and a cup of festive cheer!

We will have mince pies and mulled wine!



## Photo Amnesty!

One of the most interesting historic records we hold is the collection of photographs of the people, events and scenes of Saxmundham.

If you have old photographs that you would like to donate or lend to the Museum we would be very grateful to receive them. Please bring them in on one of the Museum's Christmas shopping days, see above.



Walter John Westby (3rd Left) - 1st apprentice of Mann Egerton (Norwich)  
George Robert Westby 5th from left. M.E. built aircraft frames

## Facebook

The Saxmundham Museum Facebook page is just over a year old and we're delighted to say that it's attracted 100 Likes – a significant milestone in Facebook terms.

It's a great way for us to share information about the Museum such as new or improved exhibits, press cuttings and visitor notices. It's also proving a popular forum for people to post requests for information about local history or long lost family connections.

If you have an internet connection, please follow 'Saxmundham Museum' on Facebook.

**Thank you!**



## Join now!

Becoming a Friend of Saxmundham Museum costs just £15 a year or £20 for family membership.

You'll be invited to talks and events of special interest, plus our annual party!

We rely on the support of Friends to stay open.

If you aren't already a Friend, please drop in to the Museum and complete a form, or send us your name, address and contact details plus a cheque for £15 / £20 made out to 'Saxmundham Museum'.

**Thank you!**

## Film Evenings

Showing this Autumn/Winter at the Museum's cinema:

**10 Dec : Mamma Mia**

**14 Jan : Fargo**

**18 Feb : Looking for Eric**

**10 Mar : Little Miss Sunshine**

Why not bring your friends, nibbles and a bottle of wine and enjoy a film in our friendly cinema!

Suggested donation £5 per head.

Spaces limited - for details and bookings email [pahb@ymail.com](mailto:pahb@ymail.com).

## Contact

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Tel: (01728) 663583 or 832019  
and you will be able to leave a message

Email: [info@saxmundhammuseum.org.uk](mailto:info@saxmundhammuseum.org.uk)

We're always pleased to receive reviews and comments or suggestions as to improvements we might make.

We'd love to know what you think of the newsletter too!

