

What's on

at North Herts Museum and Hitchin Town Hall

January – April 2025





Curator talks

£6.50 per person - booking essential

For lunchtime talks, you will receive 10% off in the café on the day of the talk.

Present your ticket/receipt in the café to receive this offer.



7 January 12pm

North Herts as seen through the eyes of its artists

Views of North Hertfordshire have been captured by artists, in many different forms over the ages, from oils to watercolours, prints to drawings.

To start off 2025, Ros Allwood will take you through over 150 years of art, focusing on the scenery of our district. Some spots you may recognise, while others have completely disappeared...

This is following on from the popular talk 'Hitchin as seen through the eyes of its artists' which you may have attended last year.



22 January 7.30pm

A Tale of Toys

Everyone remembers playing with toys when they were young. Perhaps you still have your favourite childhood teddy bear now!

Our museum service has been collecting toys for over a hundred years, donated by people who have outgrown them. Recently our Curator Matt Platt has been thinking about the tale of the toy: when did they first emerge? What sorts of things did people play with in the distant past? Are toys from back then similar to today? Find out which toys have been spending their retirement years in our display cases in this evening talk.



11 February 12pm

Vesuvius: what, why and will it happen again?

The last time Mount Vesuvius erupted was in 1944, during the Second World War. This volcano normally erupts every year, meaning now it is overdue. In this lunchtime talk, our Education Curator, Cas Sanders, will be looking at the great eruption of AD 79 that buried Pompeii, studying first hand descriptions of the event, searching for clues to make predictions and asking what may happen next time.



26 February 7.30pm

Sexual and Gender Dissidents in History

Despite centuries of treating gender as a binary and sexuality as a single 'norm', there have always been those whose sense of self does not fit into these prescribed categories.

To celebrate LGBT+ History Month, our Curator Keith Fitzpatrick-Matthews will be looking at some characters whose lives stand out for not caring about those categories and even fighting against them.

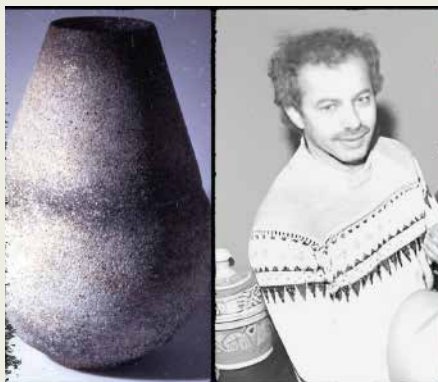


11 March 12pm

Tall Tales of William Gerish

William Blyth Gerish was a folklorist based in Hertfordshire in the early 1900s, who had a great passion for outlandish tales.

Investigating everything from simple local traditions to grand accounts of dragons, witches and highway robbers, Gerish wrote these dramatic stories of local legend into a series of 19 pamphlets which he published between 1905 and 1921. Curator Matt Platt will be diving into these tall tales told by Gerish including the story of 'a Hertfordshire St George' and poor Jane Wenham, the infamous Witch of Walkern.



26 March 7.30pm

From Yemen to Letchworth: the ceramic work of Abdo Nagi

Before our Abdo Nagi exhibition, join Ros Allwood for a talk about this internationally renowned potter. Explore his roots as a Yemeni goatherd and his life and work in North Herts until his death in 2001. We'll walk you through how his heritage influenced his forms and also look at other 20th century artists, such as Lucie Rie, who influenced him.



8 April 12pm

Arbury Banks, Senuna and Venus: exploring an ancient landscape

We've traditionally looked at ancient monuments and archaeological sites as special and isolated places.

Modern techniques allow us to open up entire past landscapes, creating links between these places. We can begin to fill them with people and, at times, start to understand how they perceived the world around them. Join Curator Keith Fitzpatrick-Matthews in this lunchtime talk to learn more.

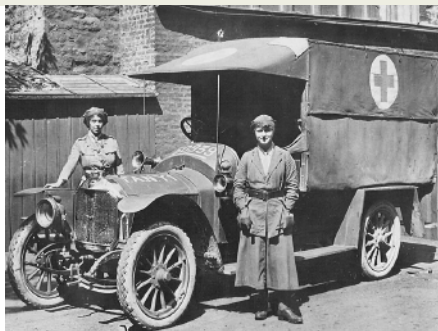
23 April 7.30pm

First Aid Nursing Yeomanry

Learn how the First Aid Nursing Yeomanry didn't take no for an answer, in this evening talk from Education Curator Cas Sanders.

The First Aid Nursing Yeomanry was formed during the Boer War but did not come into its own until the First World War. The nurses travelled to France, turning rat-infested ruins into state-of-the-art hospitals and coolly going into the thick of battle to do things that even Major Generals found surprising!

The Second World War gave this entirely voluntary service a chance to prove its worth. Young women who were fluent in languages went to occupied Europe, risking their lives. Today if you join, you may be called upon to help in a terrorist attack or work in secrecy. No more does a woman need her own horse, just intelligence and some courage.





The Roman Empire from Caesar to collapse – £7.50 each or £50 for all 8

The Roman Empire from Caesar to collapse

If you like Roman gossip or just love listening to our curator, Keith Fitzpatrick-Matthews, then this series of talks is for you! Told in chronological order, he will delve into the lives of the emperors throughout the ages. You can join us for one or sign up for all eight at once and enjoy a monthly jaunt around the Roman Empire.

The Julio-Claudians and Flavians (the 'long first century')

19 March, 7.30pm

Julius Caesar became sole ruler of the Roman state; in the aftermath of the Civil War following his assassination, his great-nephew Octavian established a dynastic system. The Augustan Settlement, as it is known, lasted until the suicide of his great-great-grandson Nero in AD 68. The chaos that followed was resolved when Vespasian's victory led to the dynasty of the Flavian emperors, ending with the assassination of Domitian in AD 98.

The Adoptive Emperors (the 'second century')

16 April, 7.30pm

The elderly Nerva was chosen as emperor in AD 98 and for almost a century, each emperor chose his own successor by formal adoption. The system broke down when Marcus Aurelius chose his son Commodus as successor. As so often in Roman history, a neat sequence of what were known as the 'good emperors' ended in assassination and Civil War.

The Severan Dynasty and the Crisis of the Third Century **14 May, 7.30pm**

Septimius Severus emerged as the victor in the Civil War of the 190s; his dynasty lasted until the assassination of his great-nephew Alexander in 235. Following this, we enter a chaotic period in which generals vied with each other to rule the Empire, inflation was rampant and military defeats caused a catastrophic decline in imperial confidence. The crisis ended with the death of Carinus, in 285.

The Tetrarchy and the Constantinian Dynasty ('the fourth century') **18 June, 7.30pm**

Diocletian became emperor after defeating Carinus in 285 and set about a series of deep-seated reforms to the empire, its government and its finances. Setting up a system of joint emperors in the East and West, each with a subordinate, it became known as the Tetrarchy ('rule of four'). By the 320s, Constantine I had gained effective sole rule, establishing a new dynasty that expired with the death of his son-in-law Julian in 363.

The Valentinianic and Theodosian Dynasties ('the short fifth century')

16 July, 7.30pm

After the brief reign of Jovian, Valentinian I and his brother Valens gained control of the empire, which was briefly reunited under Theodosius I. After his death, different branches of the dynasty continued to reign until Marcian, who died in 457. During this time, the Western Empire began to disintegrate, partly under the pressure of invasions from east of the Rhine.

The Leonid and Justinianic Dynasties ('the long sixth century')

20 August, 7.30pm

In the East, Leo I founded a short-lived dynasty; after the death of his son-in-law Zeno, the elderly Anastasius undertook important reforms and was succeeded by Justin I, whose dynasty lasted until Maurice was executed by Phocas. In the West, a succession of increasingly weak emperors reigned until the child Romulus was deposed in 476 by Odoacer. He refused the title of emperor and sent the imperial regalia to Zeno, acknowledging him as his overlord. Justinian I's attempt to reconquer the West foundered partly for financial reasons and partly from the effects of Plague.

The Heraclian Dynasty ('the seventh century')

17 September, 7.30pm

Heraclius I rose against Phocas in 610 and established one of the empire's longest lasting dynasties. It had the misfortune to see the rise of the Arab states after the foundation of Islam, losing the Levant

and North Africa to them, and the transformation of the Empire from an urban dominated Late Antique society to a medieval agrarian state resembling the kingdoms that were becoming the norm across Europe. Like so many Roman dynasties, it fell with the execution of its last member, Justinian II in 711.

Aftermath: from the Isaurian Dynasty to the fall of the Empire

15 October, 7.30pm

The history of the Empire from Leo III to Constantine XI, AD 717-1453, is often seen as one of long, inevitable decline. This is far from true: there were periods of considerable success and resurgence, but the Crusaders' sack of Constantinople in 1204 was the beginning of the end. However, the Ottoman conqueror of Constantinople, Mehmet II, saw himself as the successor emperor, a claim recognised by the Patriarch of Constantinople and the Ming Emperors of China; the rulers of Moscow from Ivan III Vasilyevich, husband of Constantine XI's niece, also claimed the title.



The Snowman™



Exhibitions FREE admission

5 October 2024 – 12 January 2025

The Snowman™

If you loved Raymond Briggs' classic children's tale, don't miss this special wintery exhibition of 30 original animations cels from the 1982 film, as well as some early editions of The Snowman™, including a facsimile of the original manuscript. Have your photo taken in front of The Snowman™, dress up, and share some festive memories.

www.thesnowman.com © Snowman Enterprises Limited 2024



Upcoming exhibitions **FREE admission**

25 January – 30 March 2025

Stuff: things that make us human

History books used to talk about 'Man the Toolmaker', but we now know that many other animals also make tools. What sets us apart is our relationship with the things we make and use. We can love them, we can't live without them, we use them to show who we are. Humanity's unique behaviour is all based around our stuff. This exhibition draws from all the Museum's collections, from social history to archaeology, from costume to natural history. Expect the unexpected!



12 April – 24 May 2025

From Yemen to Letchworth: the ceramic art of Abdo Nagi

The museum is delighted to be exhibiting work by internationally known potter Abdo Nagi (1941-2001). Born in Yemen, he spent his early childhood as a goatherd. Aged twelve, Nagi walked to Aden, where he found domestic work, coming to Letchworth with his employer in 1967. After taking O- and A-levels in art, he became pottery technician at Hitchin College, and from there gained a ceramics degree at Middlesex University. Abdo Nagi spent his life in Letchworth perfecting his pottery shapes and glazes, from early domestic wares to elegant stoneware vases and dishes with metallic rims. His work has been increasingly sought after since his death in 2001. The exhibition includes pieces from the museum collections and many private loans.





Arches Gallery

The Arches display space hosts temporary exhibitions all year round. These exhibitions are formed either from our own collections or from artists and groups who apply to hire the space.

We have an exciting schedule for the rest of 2025 including beautiful displays from some local artists and celebrations of our local history.

If you are a North Herts artist or group and you have an idea for your own display please get in touch via northhertsmuseum@north-herts.gov.uk





General events



6 February 10 - 11am - £10 pp

Museum tour

If you want to get an in depth look at the history of our district come along to this exclusive tour of our museum, led by assistant curator Matt Platt.

With just a small group on each tour you'll have the opportunity to ask questions and listen to an expert talk in detail about the objects we have on display!

Easter Hours



Good Friday

Closed

Saturday 19 April

10.30 - 4.30

Easter Sunday

Closed

Monday 21 April

Closed



MUSEUM CRAFT CLUB

EVERY THURSDAY
3PM - 4.20PM
IN THE MUSEUM FOYER

£1

**NO NEED TO
BOOK.
JUST
DROP IN**

LEARN ABOUT HISTORY WHILE BEING CREATIVE
DIFFERENT CRAFT ACTIVITY EACH WEEK

Drop in anytime during the session, no need to book
Ask at the welcome desk on arrival
Aimed at children, ages 5 - 12 year olds
Parental supervision required

Term Time Only



Family events



Toddlers

£8 per child or £15 for two children - Tickets must be booked in advance
Parents attend free at the toddlers' sessions (max two adults per child).



11 January 10.45am, 11.45am & 12.45pm

The Gruffalo by Julia Donaldson

8 February 10.45am, 11.45am & 12.45pm

Hairy Maclary by Lynley Dodd

8 March 10.45am & 11.45am

Five Minutes' Peace by Jill Murphy

5 April 10.45am & 11.45am

Mog the Forgetful Cat by Judith Kerr



Easter holidays and half term craft activities



Half term 17 – 23 February

Easter Holidays 7 – 21 April

Join us for kids' craft activities over the school holidays. Free to low cost.
Keep an eye on our social media or tickets page for more details.

Half-term



20 February

10.45, 11.30 or 12.15 Free

Fossil Handling

Get your hands on some of our fossils from the museum collection, and learn about what lived underwater North Herts millions of years ago. Each session is 35 minutes



23 February

10.30 - 11.20am & 11.40 - 12.30pm

Tutor: Yoshie Allan £10 per child

'Dress Me Up' - Kids' Collage Workshop

Help your animal friends get dressed for a party! Create special outfits using colourful fabric.

Scissors and PVA glue will be used.

This workshop is suitable for children aged 3+ Children must be accompanied by an adult.

Easter holidays



6 April 10.30 - 11.20am or 11.40 - 12.30pm

Tutor: Yoshie Allan £10 per child

Easter Bunny Collage Workshop

Create your own charming Easter bunny with a fabric collage on an air-dry clay base.

Scissors and PVA glue will be used.

This workshop is suitable for children aged 3+. Children must be accompanied by an adult.



9 April 11 - 11.45am and 1.30 - 2.15pm

Tutor: Lucy Sugden £10 per child

Easter Weaving Fun

Make Easter-inspired woven artwork in this fun creative workshop.

This workshop is aimed at 4 - 11 yr olds. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

Easter holidays



10 April 10.45 - 11.30am &
11.45 - 12.30pm £6 per child

Lantern Making

Using an electrical tea light you'll be creating a magical Easter lantern that you can take home with you!



17 April 10.45 - 11.30am &
11.45 - 12.30pm £5 per child

Easter Clay Decoration

Get in the creative spirit this Easter and make clay decorations for you and your family.

Creative workshops



16 January 10.45am - 4.15pm

18 January 10.45am - 4.15pm

Tutor: Paul Berryman £75 per person

Portrait Drawing - all-day workshop

Have you ever wondered how a professional portrait artist goes about making a lifelike and expressive piece of work? Well, this all-day workshop, aimed at beginning and improving artists, could be for you!

All materials provided.



22 January 7 - 9pm

Tutor: Yoshie Allan £30 per person

'Dancing Flowers' - collage workshop

Pick your favourite botanical motifs and create a beautiful fabric collage, enhanced with acrylic paint!

All materials provided.



**23 January – 27 February
(6 Weeks)** 7.30 - 9pm

Tutor: Tom Irvine £15 per person
(per session) £90 for full course

**Shout or Whisper presents:
Poetry in-depth - A poetry
writing workshop**

Are you a practised poet wanting to take your work to the next level? Maybe you're having trouble telling your syllabics and sestinas apart, or can't quite crack the rhyming scheme in Shakespearean sonnet? Perhaps, you're just curious of how to best edit and present your writing to help it along the road to publication.



14 February 10.45am - 12.45pm

Tutor: Yvette Jordan £30 per person

**'Beautiful Blossoms' -
acrylic ink art class**

In this friendly and inspiring workshop, you will create a beautiful, frame-worthy work of art on paper using acrylic inks. It is suitable for all abilities.



4 weeks beginning 5 February

7 - 9pm Tutor: Kim Raymont £99 per person

Discover Monoprint Course

Try your hand at mono printing, this course takes you step by step through the different techniques and themes so you can go home with new artwork each week.



5 March 7 - 9.30pm

27 March 1 - 3.30pm £29 per person

Tutor: Beth Fairchild

Concrete Pouring Workshop

Discover how to work with concrete to cast a unique mini vessel in a silicone mould of your choice! You'll have the chance to experiment with concrete pigments to create a one-of-a-kind piece to take home.



6 March 11am - 1.30pm

Tutor: Sally Taylor £35 per person

Playing with Watercolour Workshop

Perfect for a beginner or someone wishing to brush up their skills, this workshop will explore how watercolours work, the different techniques available, and how to create a painting.



14 March 11 - 2pm

Tutor: Hazel Godfrey £40 per person

Make a Birdfeeder/Garlic Basket - willow weaving workshop

During this half-day workshop, you will learn how to weave an attractive conical basket that looks equally good holding garlic in the kitchen or hanging from a branch in the garden!



20 March 7- 9pm

Tutor: Lucy Sugden £25 per person

Mug Rugs - an introduction to woven tapestry

Learn how to create simple but striking designs using woven tapestry techniques.

In this fun relaxing workshop, you will weave your own square, which once finished can be used as rug for your mug!



16 April 7 - 9pm

Tutor: Kim Raymont £28 per person

Postcards of Hitchin - linoprint workshop

In this one-off workshop with Kim Raymont, have fun with Lino printing. Decide on your favourite places in the local area, such as an old building, your house, or a favourite park, and turn them into postcards to take home with you.



22 April 11 - 2pm

Tutor: Hazel Godfrey £40 per person

Swifts and Swallows - willow weaving workshop

Learn how to use simple weaving techniques to make these lovely swooping birds. They can be displayed on the wall or hung from strings waiting to welcome the migrating flocks home in spring!

Museum café

Mon Closed. **Tues – Sat:** 10.30am – 3.30pm. **Sun** 11am – 2pm.

**NEW
MENU**

Tea, Coffee, Soft drinks, Cakes, Scones, Salads, Paninis, Jacket Potatoes...



Mon Closed. **Tues – Sat:** 10.30am – 3.30pm. **Sun** 11am – 2pm.



Town Hall events

To book Town Hall events go to our new website at www.hitchintownhallevents.com



15 February 11.30 - 3.30pm

Soul Brunch

Grab a glass of prosecco and your choice of food from our buffet before enjoying an afternoon of uplifting music from the Soul Music Collective.

The perfect event for Valentine's Day. Get involved, get dancing to the sweet soul sounds of this six piece band!



Club Nights

£10 per person. 8pm - 1am. Over 18s only.



21 February 8pm - 1am

80s vs 90s Disco

Our popular 80s vs 90s Disco is back once more to battle it out! Party all night long to classic anthems from two of music's best decades.

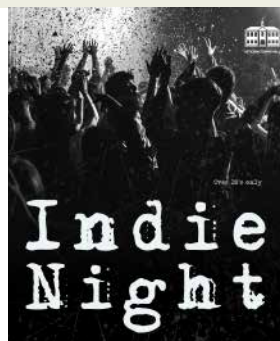
Get out your crimpers, put on your fire-safe shell suit and come down to the Town Hall for a night of dancing!

7 March 8pm - 1am

Indie Night

Get excited for a night full of classic indie hits from every era!

Providing a great atmosphere and great music, what's not to love? Request a song anytime during the evening, so the audience rules the music!





13 April 12 - 2pm or 3 - 5pm

Kids Easter Disco

Join us for an egg-citing kids disco during the Easter holidays! Come on down with your baby bunnies and enjoy an afternoon full of music and games.

You can even dress up if you like! £6.50 per child. Suitable for under 12s and under 1s go free. Adults and under 1s must have an accompanying free ticket. Children must be supervised at all times.

Mostly Comedy

Mostly Comedy will be joining us every month with a stellar line-up of stand-up comedians! Keep an eye on our social media for more info on their events. Follow them @mostly_comedy on Instagram and @MostlyComedy on Facebook.



OUR SPACES

at Hitchin Town Hall

LUCAS ROOM

- Up to 65 guests theatre style
- Hybrid meeting technology
- £26-£42 per hour

MOUNTFORD HALL



- Room capacity of 250
- Projector, conference sound system and wireless microphone
- Licensed bar available
- £58-£99 per hour

LEARNING CENTRE



- Up to 40 guests theatre style
- AV equipment
- £31-£47 per hour

AT A GLANCE



Lucas Room

All rooms have AV
Refreshments and
food available
Fully furnished

**For more info and
to contact us:**

hitchintownhallevnts.com

hitchintownhall@north-herts.gov.uk

01462 474554



HITCHIN TOWN HALL WEDDINGS & CIVIL PARTNERSHIPS



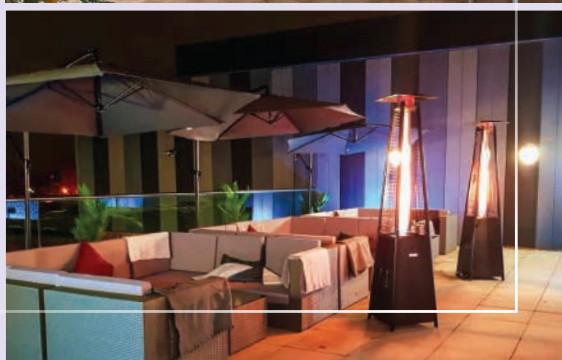
The Mountford Hall, The Lucas Room, and The Terrace Gallery are all licenced for weddings and civil ceremonies.

We offer a range of packages or a bespoke quote so that you can build the day of your dreams.

hitchintownhallevents.com

hitchintownhall@north-herts.gov.uk

01462 474554





Exercise classes



Tai Chi

Tai Chi is a low-impact and gentle exercise that concentrates on correcting posture and breathing, promoting the harmony of mind and body.

Tuesday 10am - Mixed abilities

Tuesday 1.45pm - Beginners

Thursday 12pm - Intermediates

£7.50



Dance Fit

Low-impact up to moderate intensity, Dance Fit is a fun exercise session which can help with building strength, and improving your health and wellbeing.

Every **Monday** and **Wednesday**, 10am - 11am

£7.50



Yoga

This class will provide a nurturing space and time for you, whether you're new to yoga or looking to deepen your practise.

Every Thursday 5pm - 6pm

£8 per person

For more information and to book museum events, visit **north-herts-museum.arttickets.org.uk** or drop into the museum and pay at the welcome desk. Places are limited so buy in advance to secure your place.

North Hertfordshire Museum & Hitchin Town Hall

**Museum
& exhibition
entry is
FREE**

Find us



northhertsmuseum



northhertsmuseum



North Hertfordshire Museum
Brand Street, Hitchin Herts SG5 1JE

Scan for
Tickets



www.northhertsmuseum.org

northhertsmuseum@north-herts.gov.uk

01462 474554

Open Tuesday to Saturday 10.30am - 4.30pm, Sunday 11am - 3pm

Please note that the café closes an hour before the museum (3.30pm Tuesday to Saturday and 2pm Sunday).



Hitchin Town Hall, Brand Street, Hitchin, Herts SG5 1JE

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