

What's on

at North Herts Museum and Hitchin Town Hall

May – August 2025





Curator talks

£7 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.



6 May 12pm

British Impressionism

The rise of impressionism in France influenced many British artists. In this lunchtime talk Cultural Services Manager, Ros Allwood, will be taking a look at who these artists were.

Including Philip Wilson Steer, Walter Sickert, Sir George Clausen, James McNeill Whistler and John Singer Sargent.



28 May 12pm

The Wildlife of Hitchin by guest speaker Phil Barron

Join local nature enthusiast Phil Barron from Hitchin Nature Network for a virtual tour of wildlife and sites of interest within the Hitchin orbital path.

If you've ever wondered where to look for bats, owls, butterflies, or newts or where you could hear a woodpecker or a goldcrest cry, this talk would be perfect for you! Photo © Steve Granger

10 June 12pm

From Daguerre to Digital: The Art History of Photography

Join us for a whistle-stop tour through the artistic debates that have shaped photography since its invention.

From the earliest photographs that questioned the boundaries between art and documentation to the rise of photojournalism as a tool for truth-telling – and later, manipulation – this talk will explore how photography has continuously challenged artistic traditions. We'll also examine the impact of technological advances from film to digital and the profound ways that the smartphone camera has reshaped our relationship with images.

Along the way we will take a closer look at examples from the North Herts collection, using the photos to illustrate the evolving role of photography. Whether seen

as a mechanical process, a creative medium or a tool for mass communication, photography has always been at the centre of artistic and cultural debate – education apprentice Rosie Wheeler will trace that journey from the 19th century to today.





22 May 12pm

From Yemen to Letchworth: the ceramic work of Abdo Nagi

Before the close of our Abdo Nagi exhibition, join us for a talk about this internationally renowned potter. Explore his roots as a Yemeni goatherd, 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.



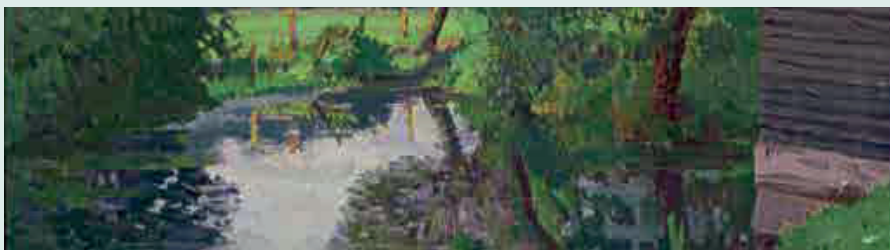
8 July 12pm

Collections of Life and Death

Life and death is something that unites us all.

We have many objects that represent people's most important moments, from births to deaths, weddings to funerals.

Curator Matt Platt charts this journey, picking out and exploring notable objects and what they tell us about life and death rituals among the people in North Hertfordshire.



30 July 7.30pm

'No worldly goods to worry about'; the life and art of William Ratcliffe

A talk from Ratcliffe's biographer Ros Allwood, about William Ratcliffe, an artist who spent much of his long life working in and around Letchworth Garden City.

For a few years in the early 20th century, this quiet and unassuming man unexpectedly became part of The Camden Town Group of young British artists. With them, he exhibited at the famous Post Impressionist and Futurist exhibition in London in 1913, with Picasso, Cezanne and Van Gogh, as well his friends Harold Gilman and Spencer Gore.



12 August 12pm

Willian before the Garden City

When First Garden City Ltd bought three adjacent estates to develop Letchworth Garden City, only the northern half of Willian was available, although it bought the rest in 1931.

The centre of Willian retains its village character, separated from the rest of Garden City by fields. It has its own history, and much of the Garden City south of Icknield Way and east of Pix Brook occupies the village's former fields and lanes. It is still possible to trace the remnants of these landscape features.



27 August 7.30pm

South Polar Explorers

In this talk, Education Curator Cas Sanders, will be concentrating on explorers of the South Pole and their feats of extraordinary bravery and ingenuity.

Individuals include Scott and Shackleton to Amundsen and Ross, from Ingrid Christiansen to Mawson and Barbara Hillary. There are many more people that we need to include in this role call of brave

and sometimes controversial polar explorers, all traversed to the furthest South; a few reached both poles. We know about the astonishing navigation of Shackleton's boat by Worsley to South Georgia, but without McNish they would never have got there or survived on Elephant island! Tom Creen was there for this and the last journey of Scott. But the greatest feat of survival could well have been Mawson.

Come and make up your mind.



The Roman Empire from Caesar to collapse – £7.50 each



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! In March he began in chronological order, delving into the lives of the emperors throughout the ages.

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 West, a succession of increasingly weak emperors reigned until the child Romulus was deposed in 476 by Odoacer, who refused the title of emperor and sent the imperial regalia to Zeno, acknowledging him as his overlord. 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. 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.

Yemeni goatherd to master potter

The ceramic art of

Abdo Nagi



Exhibitions **FREE admission**

12 April – 25 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.

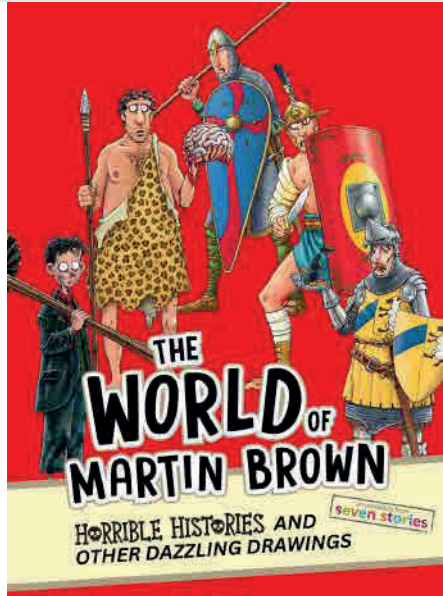


Upcoming exhibitions FREE admission

7 June – 21 September

The World of Martin Brown: Horrible Histories © and other dazzling drawings

Martin Brown has been illustrating *Horrible Histories* © since 1993, working alongside author Terry Deary. The series has become one of the best-loved children's book series ever published and has inspired TV shows, stage productions and a feature film. Explore an inspirational array of *Horrible Histories* © drawings and other art by Martin, and try your hand at cartooning using Martin's tricks and techniques.



5 October – 30 November

William Ratcliffe and Spencer Gore - works from the North Herts Collection

This attractive exhibition gives visitors an opportunity to see some of the many William Ratcliffe oils and watercolours owned by the museum, as well as the three Gore oil paintings. Both were founder members of the influential Camden Town Group in the years before the First World War.



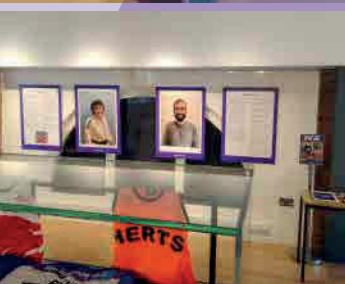
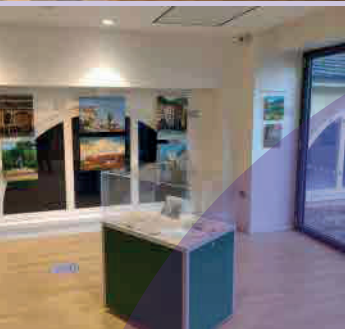


Arches Gallery

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



25 June 7.15 - 9.30pm - £15 pp

Rhythms of the Rainbow: how LGBTQIA+ people have been the hidden innovators of western music

We will look at how LGBTQIA+ people have been hidden by historians of music despite making significant contributions as innovators, performers and lyricists.

Starting in the Middle Ages, the evening brings us through to recent decades, where musicians are increasingly open about their identities. We will hear contributions from many of the musicians – composers and performers – mentioned as influencing the development of western music, whether it be 'serious', 'folk' or 'pop'.

Join Curator Keith Fitzpatrick-Matthews for this special 2 hour talk with a complimentary glass of wine during a 15 minute interval halfway through.

Term-time only

nh NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE
museum

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 5 - 12 year olds
Parental supervision required

North Hertfordshire Museum,
Brand Street, HITCHIN, Herts SG5 1JE

www.northhertsmuseum.org



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).



3 May 10.45am & 11.45am

The Very Hungry Caterpillar by Eric Carle

7 June 10.45am, 11.45am & 12.45pm

We're going on a bear hunt

by Michael Wayne Rosen

5 July 10.45am & 11.45am

Guess how much I love you by Sam McBratney



Summer holidays and half term craft activities



Half term 26 May - 30 May

Summer Holidays 24 July - 2 September

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



28 May

10.45 - 11.30 or 11.45 - 12.30 £4 per child

Sketch the Collection

Grab a clipboard and pencil and explore our museum, sketching your favourite objects as you go! Once you've finished your exploration you can make your way upstairs and transform your pictures into big works of art using pastels and pens.

Summer holidays



5 August 11am - 11.45am or 1.30 -

2.15pm Tutor: Lucy Sugden £10 per child

Woven flowers – kids weaving workshop

Your little ones can learn a new skill in this weaving workshop! Using colourful wool and threads on a circle loom they'll make a small bunch of

flowers or a larger hanging flower.

With a large selection of materials such as ribbons, beads, fabric petals and mini beasts to choose from, every weaving will be fantastically individual and creative!

Aimed at children aged 4+

Summer holidays



7 August 11-12 and 12.30 - 1.30pm
Tutor: Andrea Norrington £10 per child

Making a Map

Creatively record your summer holiday adventures in this workshop! Using reclaimed materials your little artists will make a blank map to chart

what they've done during their time off school. *All materials and equipment provided. Scissors and glue sticks will be used.*

This workshop is suitable for children aged 6+. Children must be accompanied by an adult.

Creative workshops



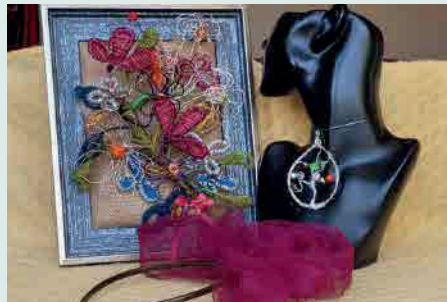
14 May 7 - 9pm
Tutor: Yoshie Allan £30 per person

'Bouquet' - fabric collage workshop

Create your favourite bouquet using colourful, textured fabric on a pre-painted canvas!

With guided step-by-step instructions and templates this workshop is perfect for all levels and is open to anyone aged 16 and above.

All materials provided.



15 May 11am - 2.30pm with a short break
Tutor: Ekky Archibong £60 per person

Creative wirework and wearable art workshop

Join us for a unique wearable art workshop where you'll delve into the craftsmanship of wirework and jewellery design. Choose to create a fascinator, headband, brooch, or hair accessory that reflects your personal style using wire, beads, and fabrics!

All materials provided.



20 May 11am - 1.30pm
Tutor: Sally Taylor £35 per person

Developing expressive watercolours workshop

Join us for the Developing Expressive Watercolours workshop this May, where you'll be exploring lots of different creative techniques.

Whether you're a beginner or have some experience, this workshop will guide you through techniques to enhance your skills.



5 June 7 - 9pm £25 per person
Tutor: Lucy Sugden

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 a rug for your mug.



13 June 10.45am - 12.45pm
Tutor: Yvette Jordan £30 per person

Bumble bee and wildflowers - acrylic ink workshop

Capture the beauty of a bumble bee browsing wild cornflowers in this friendly and inspiring art workshop.

You'll be creating your own work of art and bookmark using acrylic inks. Suitable for all abilities!

All materials and refreshments provided.



26 June 11am - 2.30pm with a short break
Tutor: Ekky Archibong £60 per person

Mixed media expressive art on textile

Unleash your creativity and explore drawing, painting, and stitching on fabric! Whether you're a beginner or a craft enthusiast, this session will guide you in creating a unique, theme-led textile artwork. Your finished piece can be framed, transformed into a cushion, or even made into a stylish tote bag.



4 July 10.45am - 12.45pm

Tutor: Yvette Jordan £30 per person

Lovely Lavender Fields - acrylic ink workshop

Transport yourself to the vivid splendour of a lavender field in full bloom.

You'll create your own lavender landscape and bookmark using acrylic inks in this friendly and summery art workshop, suitable for all abilities!

All materials and refreshments provided.



19 July 11am - 2.30pm

Tutor: Lucy Sugden £40 per person

Eco Weaving- a workshop weaving with waste fibres and fabrics

Enjoy a relaxed, mindful session learning how to create woven art from waste fibres and fabrics. Take inspiration from the natural world, such as plant life and landscapes, or enjoy experimenting with different colours and textures.

You are welcome to bring any fibres of your own to include in your weaving!



26 & 27 July 11.15am - 2.15pm

Tutor: Hazel Godfrey £80 per person

Country Frame Baskets – a two day workshop

Make a willow frame basket for harvesting garden produce, foraging or collecting eggs.

In this workshop you will make an ancient style of basket by constructing a frame with hoops, traditional bindings and ribs, followed by lots of weaving. You will learn the principles of strength, balance and tension that help shape your basket.

Suitable for beginners.

Things to bring: Sharp secateurs



6 August 11am - 2pm

Tutor: Hazel Godfrey £45 per person

Catalan Platters

Using basic principles, you will make a beautiful willow platter that can be used to serve dry foods, or as a trivet to protect your table from hot serving dishes. It will also look great on the wall whilst not in use!

A suitable workshop for beginners.

Things to bring: Sharp secateurs

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



Saturday 17 May

Doors and bar open at 7pm, screening starts at 8pm

Eurovision LIVE screening

Watch Eurovision the right way this year, on our big screen!

Free entry, contact Hitchin Town Hall to reserve a table

Email: hitchintownhall@north-herts.gov.uk

Tel: 01462 474554



Starting 22 July £4 per person

Kids Film Club

At the start of the summer holidays we'll be screening a family favourite every Tuesday.

Watch our social media for film announcements!

*All movies will be rated PG for Parental Guidance. PG stands for Parental Guidance, this means **a film is suitable for general viewing but some scenes may be unsuitable for young children.** A PG film should not unsettle a child aged around eight or older. Parents should consider whether the content may upset younger, or more sensitive children.*

This event is unsuitable for under 2s.

All children must be supervised by an adult.



3 August 12 - 2pm

Kids Summer Disco

Join us over the holidays for a summery Kids Disco!

Come on down with your little ones and enjoy an afternoon full of music and games. You can even dress up as something fun 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

MOUNTFORD HALL



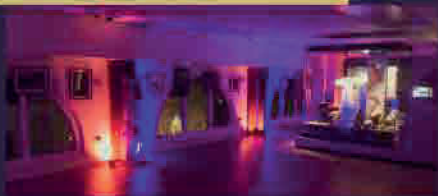
- Room capacity of 250
- Projector, conference sound system and wireless microphone
- Licensed bar available

LEARNING CENTRE



- Up to 40 guests theatre style
- AV equipment

TERRACE GALLERY



- Room capacity of 120
- Outside terrace space
- Interesting museum gallery, a great conversation starter

AT A GLANCE



Lucas Room

All rooms have AV

Refreshments and
food available

Fully furnished

For more info and to
contact us:

hitchintownhallevents.com

hitchintownhall@north-herts.gov.uk

01462 474554





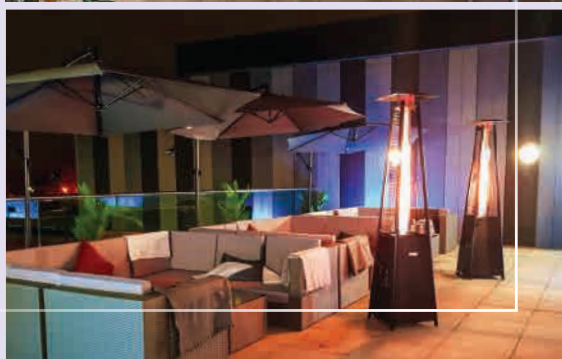
HITCHIN TOWN HALL
WEDDINGS
& CIVIL PARTNERSHIPS



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

£8.50

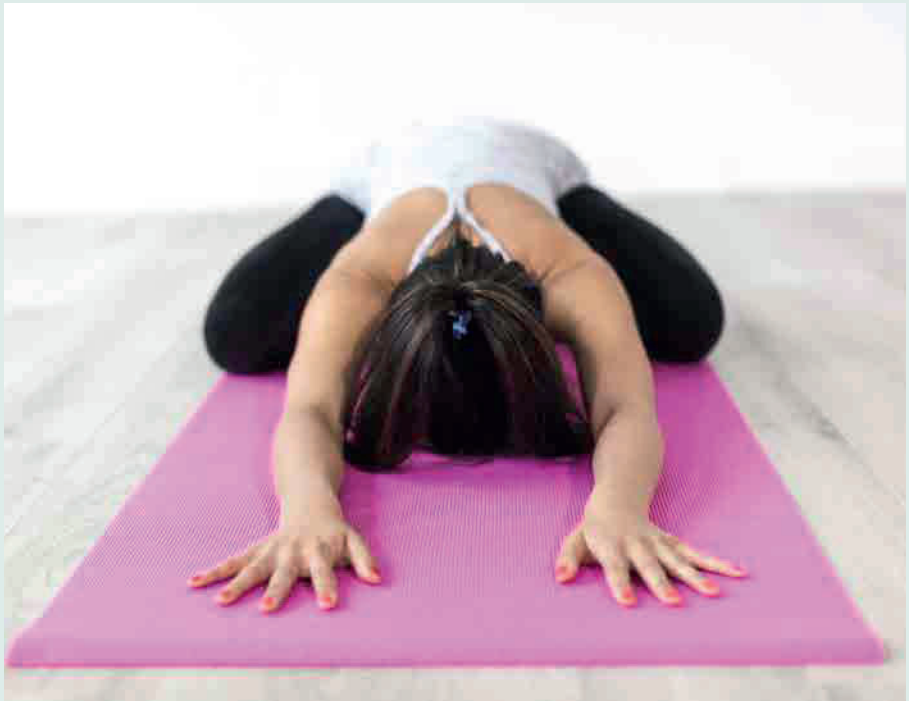


Dance Fit

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, Wednesday, and Thursday** 10.30am - 11.30am

£8.50



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 **Tuesday** 5 - 6pm and **Thursday** 11.30am - 12.30am.

£9 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.


10% OFF IN CAFÉ FOR DAYTIME WORKSHOPS



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
www.hitchintownhallevents.com


hitchintownhall@north-herts.gov.uk
01462 474554
Open Monday to Friday

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