



Eden Valley Museum Trust

Registered Charity 10655466

Officers and Members of the Eden Valley Executive Committee 2023-24

Governance 2022-23

Chairman	Alan Smart OBE
Deputy Chair	Alan Layland
Hon. Treasurer	Lorraine Ganney
Hon. Secretary	Angela Baker – Temporary from May 2023
Curatorial Chair	Hilary Brand
SDC and ETC reps	Stuart McGregor
Members	Richard Johnson Jean French Margot McArthur
Attending non-executive	Martin Frost – House Manager

Members standing for election 2023-34

Chairman	Alan Smart OBE
Deputy Chair	Alan Layland
Hon. Treasurer	Unfilled
Hon. Secretary	Joan Varley
Curatorial Chair	Hilary Brand
SDC Representative	Jim Morgan
ETC representative	Stuart McGregor
Members	Richard Johnson Jean French Margot McArthur Angela Baker



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Jim Morgan, SDC Representative

I first arrived in Edenbridge when my parents moved from London to be one of the first owners of a property on the Ridgeway estate in the late 1950's. I went to the primary school when it was based in the building next to the church which subsequently became the library.

My Parents moved to Edinburgh in the early 1960's. The Scots provided a broad education such that I could have gone to university studying either History or Maths. I chose Maths but retained my love for History. I went to the University of Kent (UKC) and achieved a Maths degree. I made my career in Computing and IT. After getting married we lived for a time in Essex and then Macclesfield producing a son and daughter. As a family we decided to move back south. I had so many fond memories of Edenbridge that we chose to move here in 1985.

Since 1985 I have been involved in many local bodies including the Residents Association and as a governor of the Middle School before it was closed. For the Town Council I managed a review of Transport and Roads I actively supported the creation of the Museum and have supported it since its inception.

I am a keen quizzer and have been involved in taking part and running quizzes in the town. A brief claim to fame was being part of the University Challenge team for UKC in the late 1960's. I still have a passion for History and am honored to be invited to join the committee.

Hilary Brand, Chair of Curatorial Team

I moved to Edenbridge with my husband Peter in December 2019 and began to get involved in the museum in autumn 2021, assisting in the pharmacy cupboard project and making new display boards for the entrance hall. I took on chairing the curatorial team in January 2022.

I originally trained in photography at Croydon College of Art and went on to freelance in photographic and written journalism, with the writing soon taking over. Alongside this, I have worked in a variety of part-time admin jobs, including setting up a resources library for Southwark Diocese, and volunteer roles including chairing an arts association and an organization linking churches in Surrey with churches in Zimbabwe. All of these latter roles have involved organizing events, publicity, fundraising and displays. On retirement I went back to studying, gaining a BA in Humanities from Surrey University in 2012 and an MA in Theology from Winchester in 2015.

Jean French



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My family moved to Edenbridge in 1964 and I have been living in Chiddingstone since 1972 with my husband and family. I was educated in London and obtained a degree in Computer Science in 1972. I worked as a computer programmer in Riverhead and Edenbridge before retraining as a Mathematics teacher in 1990 completing my PGCE in 1992. In 2000 I became Head of Mathematics at Sackville school in Hildenborough where I worked until I retired in 2013. In 2008 I took on responsibility for security and conduct of external examinations, tracking pupil progress and reporting to parents. In my last year I trained a new Examinations Officer and persuaded someone to take on the assessment and reporting. The following academic year I was asked back to cover long term illness in the Maths department!

For many years I was a governor at Peshurst Primary School responsible for helping the Head set the budget each year. In retirement I have proof read a book for an author, been involved in fund-raising for Hospice in the Weald, and have got involved in projects at Chiddingstone Castle. The initial project at the Castle involved cataloguing and cleaning the books in Denys Eyre Bower's library. A team of 12 volunteers were shown how to catalogue and clean books by a conservator from the National Trust. That project took about 3 years to complete working in small teams. A number of us are still working on other projects and I steward one day a week when the Castle is open. The curator invites volunteers to afternoon tea each year and at one of these gatherings there was a request for cataloguing assistance at Eden Valley Museum. I joined Joan Varley scanning and cataloguing the Roy Coles collection prior to the Hopping Exhibition. I was also asked to join the editing team of the EVH magazine, my many years proof reading reports comes in handy! Children's activities take place during the school holidays and at other events which I lead with the able assistance of Julie & Richard Johnson.

Margot McArthur

Educated mainly in Scotland, Margot graduated from universities in Nottingham and Manchester, and is a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, having worked in the UK and overseas for major brands and industry-leading organisations.

She now runs her own consultancy advising local companies and central government ministries and departments. In addition, she is a member of the Employment Appeal Tribunal, appointed by Royal Warrant.

Having served as an Edenbridge Town Councillor for several years, including two years as Chairman, she was elected as a Member of Sevenoaks District Council seven years ago (for Edenbridge South and West ward). Margot is now the SDC Cabinet Member with a Portfolio for 'Cleaner & Greener'.

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In 2021 she was elected to represent the Sevenoaks Rural South division of Kent County Council. She was appointed as Deputy Cabinet Member with a portfolio of Integrated Children's Services

She is also a voluntary trustee on the management boards of 5 charities.

Richard Johnson

I have lived in Edenbridge since 1961. I am married to Julie. We have one son and two grandsons. I attended both primary and secondary schools in Edenbridge. The first 3 years of my working life were spent at Tonbridge as a draughtsman with a large water treatment company, Wallace and Tiernan. In a change of direction from engineering I was employed at Fox and Manwaring as a negotiator dealing primarily with house sales for a further 3 years. Reverting to engineering I remained with this discipline until my retirement, firstly at Francis Barker and Son (approx. 1 year) manufacturing mainly military compasses and then Harvard Apparatus (approx. 32 years) ending there as Production Manager. Responsible for manufacturing and factoring teaching equipment for medical students through to products for drug discovery supplying the major companies around the globe. After its' closure and relocation to Cambridge I was employed by a small sub-contract engineering company back over at Tonbridge where I remained for a further five years until my retirement, somewhat ironically supplying machined parts for both Wallace and Tiernan and Harvard! Away from work I joined the Edenbridge Rifle Club at Hever and was a member there for over 30 years ending my time as chairman. I was fortunate enough to have represented the County for approximately 12 years. I joined the Kent Fire and Rescue service in 1981 and served exclusively at Edenbridge Fire Station for 25 years as a retained fireman running concurrently with job at Harvard Apparatus. During my time there I was approached to join the civilian committee of a newly formed Air Training Corps Squadron in the Town. I remained on the committee for just over 25 years until the sad closure of the squadron approx. five years ago, the final ten years serving as chairman. Regarding the museum my wife and I have been involved since the museum catalyst history exhibition at Edenbridge Primary School organised by (we think) the local council regarding the 100th anniversary of town and parish councils?? My contribution was a display charting the history of the local fire service. Since then we both have been involved helping out with catering at various launches and events and in my case, an exhibition of the local fire service during WWII and later on a small exhibition commemorating 100 years of the Royal Air Force in 2018.

Cllr. Alan Layland, Deputy Chair



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I have been a resident of Edenbridge for the last 51 years and have been a Town Councillor since 2012 and a Sevenoaks District Councillor since 2014. I have supported the museum for many years regarding issues of Health and Safety and the installation of the recently commissioned lighting system. I am a trustee of: Edenbridge Volunteer Drivers; The Norman Foundation; The Public Recreation Ground; Blossoms Park Recreation Ground. Chairman of Edenbridge Town Council. Elected member for Edenbridge North and East Ward. Elected member for Sevenoaks District Council for Edenbridge South and West Ward. Should I be elected as a trustee I will continue to support the museum in any way I can.

Alan Smart OBE, Chair

I was born in 1961 at Chiswell Farm, Marsh Green, Edenbridge, where my parents farmed. I went to school at Spitals Cross Secondary Modern School (as it then was) in Edenbridge, before taking a BA Honours Degree in English Literature and History of Art. Since 1986 I worked for the British Council both in the UK and overseas. Initially spending seven years teaching English in Egypt, I subsequently went on to be the British Council's Country Director and Cultural Attaché in Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Burma (Myanmar), Palestine, Afghanistan, Iran and the USA. I was awarded an OBE for my work in 2010 and retired in 2022. My main interests are history (both local and international), literature and art. I volunteer as a Steward for the Eden Valley Museum and am currently the Chairman of the Trust. I'm about to start a long delayed part time Masters Degree in History of Art at London University. I live in Edenbridge and have always considered it home even when working overseas. I remain passionate about my hometown.

Cllr. Stuart McGregor, ETC Representative

I have made my home here in Edenbridge since 2005. Prior to my retirement, I worked as an IT professional for many years.

I enjoy history, reading, travelling and am a keen photographer, with photographs published in a number of books. I have used my photography skills to help the museum catalogue its items and for the museum magazine.

I have been a Town Councillor since 2007, including serving as Town Chairman for two years.

Joan Varley BSc Econ. (Hons)



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I served in the Women's Royal Naval Service (WRNS) / Women's Royal Naval Reserve (WRNR) for more than 15 years, retiring as a Petty Officer Wren RS (Radio Supervisor) in 1991. Parallel to my service in the WRNR I worked at the University of Portsmouth in various library and information posts for 21 years, culminating in managing a specialised fisheries economics library and acting as UK Desk Officer for several West African research projects. I subsequently became a UN Consultant working for the Support Unit for International Fisheries and Aquatic Research (SIFAR) based at the UN Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) in Rome, Italy, developing and managing an online fisheries information system and working on numerous smaller projects for various UK, European and International development agencies. I have been a member of National, European, and International aquatic library associations, serving on the Board of the European Association and as President from 2000 to 2003. On moving to Edenbridge and subsequently taking early retirement I became involved with both the Edenbridge Homeworkers Group and Edenbridge Rotary Club and applied successfully for a part time post at the Eden Valley Museum. I served as Deputy Curator at the Museum from July 2007 to October 2011 and continued as a volunteer managing the museum's digital archive, co-editing the annual newsletter, and curating numerous exhibitions. I also served as the Community News Correspondent for the Edenbridge Courier from 2009 to 2017. I was elected to the Museum's Executive Committee at the 2019 AGM to serve as Hon. Secretary and Trustee and served as such until December 2021, stepping back at that time to nurse my husband Allen during his final months. I'm now ready to return to the Executive Committee as Hon. Secretary and Trustee, should I be elected.