

# **New Exhibition at Hollytrees Museum, Colchester!**

## **Straw - Bonnets to Boaters**

**Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> September 2010 – 27<sup>th</sup> February 2011**  
**Hollytrees Museum, Colchester**

A new exhibition is coming to Hollytrees this September... Straw - Bonnets to Boaters. The exhibition will open on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> September and will run until 27<sup>th</sup> February. This exciting new exhibition displays for the first time over twenty straw hats, ranging from 1830s to today, from the collections of Colchester and Ipswich Museums.

Also on show will be 3 paintings from Ipswich's art collection, including *Woman reading on a couch* by Philip Wilson Steer, and a small display focusing on the lost Essex industry of straw plaiting and the tools and techniques involved in making the plait.

In addition there will be a fascinator on display, made by a woman from Colchester. Fascinators have grown in popularity in the last few decades, often replacing hats as the thing to wear at special occasions. This fascinator, which combines pheasant feathers from Witham and straw plait, was made about 4 years ago and featured in the Channel 5 programme *Make Me a Supermodel*!

Danielle Sprecher, Costume Curator at Colchester and Ipswich Museums said, "The hats on display cover a huge variety of fashionable styles all made of different types of straw. We are also able to reveal three recently conserved bonnets including a Quaker bonnet and an intricate Tuscan straw bonnet."

Catherine Newley, Assistant Curator for Community History at Colchester and Ipswich Museums said, "In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, straw plaiting was a significant cottage industry in some rural parts of Essex. Starting with bundles of straw, Essex women and children would work through the process of splitting, plaiting and dyeing it. The plait was then sold to be made into hats. This is a great opportunity to show off the tools and techniques involved in creating straw hats like some of the ones on display."

This exhibition is show cases the rich collections of Colchester and Ipswich Museums and tells the story of a lost Essex industry.

So come along to Hollytrees Museum from Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> September to see this wonderful new exhibition 'Straw - Bonnets to Boaters'.

Hollytrees Museum, High Street, Colchester

**FREE admission**

Tel: 01206 282940

Opening times:      Monday to Saturday 10am – 5pm  
                             Sunday 11am – 5pm  
                             All year round

### **Colchester and Ipswich Museum Service**

Our vision is to create a museum service that is a source of pride, inspiration and fun.

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