

Grosvenor Museum, Chester

Cheshire West & Chester Council

# Discover a Medieval City: Places, Voices, Journeys

4 May – 22 September 2013



DISCOVER A  
Medieval City  
PLACES · VOICES · JOURNEYS



Cheshire West  
and Chester



**DISCOVER a  
Medieval City**  
PLACES · VOICES · JOURNEYS

## THE EXHIBITION

The city of Chester has a rich medieval heritage. It survives in the city's townscape, its medieval collections and in a remarkable body of medieval literature; in Latin, in Welsh, in English. The documents reflect the experiences of diverse cultural and ethnic communities within a dynamic city on the border of England and Wales.

This exhibition explores life in a medieval city, in this case Chester, but reflective of life in general during this period. It investigates the role of religion and in particular the significance of pilgrimage to Chester. It looks at identity, those personal

The exhibition is part of a larger project 'Discover Medieval Chester' focusing on the city and the identities that its inhabitants formed between c.1200 and 1500. It has been developed in partnership with Southampton University, King's College, London, Queen's University, Belfast and funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council. It draws together material, textual and visual culture to forge connections between the medieval past and the modern urban environment.

For more information visit <http://discover.medievalchester.ac.uk>.

everyday items, such as buckles and brooches, cooking pots and cauldrons, needles and net weights. It uncovers the role of the guilds in trade, along with ornaments of the wealthy, with examples of their jewellery and tableware. Most importantly it displays an array of magnificent documents, which more than anything paint a picture of Chester, its visitors and citizens; from the manuscripts produced and kept at the Abbey of St Werburgh and the scripts of the Mystery Plays maintained by the guilds, to the poems of the Welsh, who reflect on the men of Chester, weak beer and their love of St John's Church and its Holy Rood.



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## EVENTS

**Saturday 4 May  
Exhibition Tour,  
Discover a Medieval  
City**

**Grosvenor Museum,  
Gallery 1  
2-3pm**

Free

Join the curator of the exhibition to discover more about its background, the objects displayed and medieval Chester.



**Tuesday 14 May  
Pots, Pins, Rattles  
and Rings: The  
Medieval Collections  
of Cheshire West  
Museums**

**Grosvenor Museum,  
Lecture Theatre  
2-3pm**

Free

Join our Collections and Interpretation Officer to discover more about the fantastic medieval collection cared for by the museum service.

**Saturday 18 May and  
Sunday 19 May, Saturday  
22 and Sunday 23 June,  
Saturday 13 and Sunday  
14 July, Saturday 10 and  
Sunday 11 August**

**Discover the  
Medieval Towers  
Water Tower and King  
Charles Tower, City  
Walls**

**11am- 4pm**

Free drop in

Discover these hidden treasures of Chester and find out more about their medieval past. Children's activities will help bring these buildings to life for the younger visitor.



**Monday 27 May  
Make a Medieval  
Pilgrim Badge  
Grosvenor Museum,  
Newstead Gallery**

**2-4pm**

Free drop in

Create your own pilgrim badge as a souvenir of your visit to the medieval Chester exhibition.



**Tuesday 28 May  
Make a Medieval  
Pouch**

**Grosvenor Museum,  
Newstead Gallery  
2-4pm**

Free drop in

Create your own medieval pouch or purse to keep your pennies safe and secure.

UNIVERSITY OF  
**Southampton**

**KING'S  
College  
LONDON**

Digital Humanities

**Cheshire West  
and Chester**

**Queen's University  
Belfast**

**grosvenor  
museum  
chester**

**DISCOVER  
MEDIEVAL CHESTER**



**Arts & Humanities  
Research Council**



**Wednesday 29 May**  
**Discover Medieval**  
**Chester**

**Grosvenor Museum**  
11am-4pm

Free drop in

Meet some colourful characters and learn more about life in medieval Chester.

**Thursday 30 May**  
**Try some Medieval**  
**writing**

**Grosvenor Museum,**  
**Newstead Gallery**  
2-4pm

Free drop in

Use a quill pen and ink and try your hand at a calligraphy letter.



**Friday 31 May**  
**Decorate a tile**  
**Medieval style!**

**Grosvenor Museum,**  
**Newstead Gallery**  
2-4pm

Free drop in

Decorate a tile with medieval designs.

**Tuesday 4 June**  
**Pilgrimage in**  
**Medieval Cheshire**

**Grosvenor Museum,**  
**Lecture Theatre**  
2-3pm

Free

Chester was a centre of pilgrimage, with the shrine of St Werburgh and the Holy Rood of Chester. This illustrated presentation explores these medieval journeys through images, costume, music and artefacts.



**Saturday 15 June**  
**Minstrels' Court**

**St John's Church,**  
**Chester (next to the**  
**amphitheatre)**  
10.30am-5pm

Free drop in

Discover an ancient tradition, where the minstrels of Cheshire were given their licenses to play for the year ahead; with music, dance, storytelling and lots of characters bringing medieval Chester to life.

**Saturday 15 June**  
**Merrie Musicke with**  
**the Minstrels**

**St John's Church,**  
**Chester (next to the**  
**amphitheatre)**  
7.30-9.30pm

Tickets £5, available on the door, or reserve a place by e-mailing [grosvenor.museum@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk](mailto:grosvenor.museum@cheshirewestandchester.gov.uk)

Join renowned Tudor musicians Piva, and Chester's own 'Time Bandits' along with many other minstrels for lively music from medieval times performed on a range of period instruments in the atmospheric setting of Chester's oldest church.



**Saturday 22 and Sunday**  
**23 June**  
**Midsummer Watch**  
**Parade**

**Starting from Town**  
**Hall Square**  
2pm

Free event, [www.midsummerwatch.co.uk](http://www.midsummerwatch.co.uk)

First performed in 1498, the Midsummer Watch Parade is one of Britain's oldest and most colourful street parades. It includes a cast of up to 500 with pride of place going to Chester's unique 'Family of Giants' the Father, Mother and two daughters; towering 4 metre figures.



**26 June – 13 July**  
**Chester Mystery**  
**Plays**

**Chester Cathedral**  
Monday - Saturday at  
7.30pm, Saturday matinee  
at 1pm

Tickets from £12 from  
[www.chestermysteryplays.com](http://www.chestermysteryplays.com) or 01244  
500959

A rare and treasured part of Britain's cultural heritage, the Chester Mystery Plays are performed every five years by a community cast of hundreds! Guaranteed to enrapture, astound and delight, iconic Bible stories are transformed into a truly spectacular, dynamic theatrical experience through tales of ambition, intrigue, betrayal and passion.



**Tuesday 2 July**  
**Life in Medieval**  
**Chester**

**Grosvenor Museum,**  
**Lecture Theatre**  
2-3pm

Free

Join Jane Laughton, author of 'Life in a Late Medieval City', and be introduced to some townsmen and women who lived in Chester in the 15th century. Learn where they lived, how they made their living, what they ate, what they wore and how they did (or didn't) get on.



**Monday 22 July**  
**Calligraphy**  
**Workshop for Adults**

**Chester Library**  
10am-1pm

£5, materials included, book your place at the museum shop or ring 01244 972112 and pay on the day

Based on writing from the medieval manuscripts displayed as part of the exhibition, you will have the opportunity to have a go at calligraphy and illumination using gold leaf.

**Monday 22 & Friday 26 July**  
**Mystery Play City Tour**  
**Meet at the Grosvenor Museum**  
 11am-12.30pm

£6, £5 concession, book your place at the museum shop or ring 01244 972112 and pay on the day

Discover the city of the Mystery plays with a member of the Guild of Chester Tour Guides.



**Monday 22 July**  
**Welsh Poetry Reading**  
**St John's Church (next to the amphitheatre)**  
 2-3.30pm

Free

Welsh poet Aled Lewis Evans has worked on the Discover Medieval Chester project, exploring the theme of borders with the Hoole Creative Writing group and Chester stories with children from St Anthony's RC Primary School, Saltney, whilst also creating his own work for the exhibition. Come to this atmospheric setting to hear him read some of the medieval works and his own poetry in Welsh and English.



**Tuesday 23 July**  
**Medieval Chester City Tour**  
**Meet at the Grosvenor Museum**  
 11am-12.30pm

£6, £5 concession, book your place at the museum shop or ring 01244 972112 and pay on the day

We think of Chester as being a Roman city, but much of its medieval past remains. Discover this history with a member of the Guild of Chester Tour Guides.



**Tuesday 23 July**  
**Deciphering the Cityscape**  
**Cheshire Record Office, Duke Street, Chester**  
 2-4pm

£5, book in person at the Record Office (Tuesdays to Fridays) or telephone 01244 972559 to book and pay by card

Journey through Chester's medieval streets, learning to read the 16th century handwriting of the city's first Assembly Book.

**Wednesday 24 July**  
**Cathedral Tour**  
**Meet at Chester Cathedral Visitor Entrance**  
 11am-12.30pm

£6.50, book your place at the museum shop or ring 01244 972112 and pay on the day

Chester Cathedral has an extraordinary story to tell and this tour will look at how it has developed over the centuries, resulting in the amazing structure that we see today. You will also see the grave slab of Ranulf Higden, author of the Polychronicon, which features in the exhibition at the museum.



**Wednesday 24 July**  
**Chester Cathedral Library Tour**  
**Chester Cathedral Library (near the Abbey Gateway)**  
 2-4pm

£5, £4 concession, book your place at the museum shop or ring 01244 972112 and pay on the day

Discover this hidden gem at the cathedral-take a tour of the library and a look at its displays.

**Thursday 25 July**  
**Mapping Workshop**  
**Grosvenor Museum, Education Workroom**  
 10am-12noon

£5, £4 concession, book and pay at the museum shop or ring 01244 972112

What do maps tell us about the past? This workshop, led by Dr Keith Lilley from Queen's University, Belfast, will reveal how maps contain many hidden histories of medieval Chester.

**Thursday 25 July**  
**Discover Medieval Chester City Tour**  
**Meet at the Grosvenor Museum**  
 2-4pm

£5, £4 concession, book and pay at the museum shop or ring 01244 972112

Meet the academic team who have worked on the Discover Medieval Chester project and join them for a tour of the city.



**Thursday 25 July**  
**Discover Medieval Chester: Lecture**  
**Grosvenor Museum, Lecture Theatre**  
 7-9pm

£5, £4 concession, book and pay at the museum shop or ring 01244 972112

Join Professor Catherine Clarke from the University of Southampton to explore fascinating historic sources from medieval Chester, as well as the modern tools used by the 'Discover Medieval Chester' research team to analyse and publish them. How do we turn a medieval manuscript into an interactive online text? What technology allows you to stand at St John's and hear the church described in the words of a twelfth-century monk? And how did the project team go about creating a computer game out of the medieval sources? Come and discover more about medieval Chester – and what happens when the medieval goes digital...





**Friday 26 July**  
**Medieval Chester at the Water Tower**  
**Water Tower, City Walls**  
 11am-4pm

Free  
 Discover some medieval characters and the history of this tower at a time when it sat beside the port of Chester.



**Saturday 27 July**  
**Discover Medieval Chester**  
**Grosvenor Museum**  
 11am-4pm

Free  
 Discover some medieval characters and learn more about life as it would have been in the city, with activities at the museum and in the castle.



**Saturday 27 July**  
**Piggery Jokery by Hand to Mouth Theatre**  
**Grosvenor Museum, Lecture Theatre**  
 11-11.30am, 12.30-1pm, 2-2.30pm

Free, but please collect your ticket from reception for each performance as places are limited

Full of history and fun, this unique puppet theatre will entertain and amuse you.

**Saturday 27 July**  
**Medieval Chester City Tour**  
**Meet at the Grosvenor Museum**  
 2-3.30pm

£6, £5 concession, book your place at the museum shop or ring 01244 972112 and pay on the day

We think of Chester as being a Roman city, but much of its medieval past remains. Discover this history with a member of the Guild of Chester Tour Guides.

**Saturday 27 July**  
**Walls Tour**  
**Meet at the Town Hall**  
 2-3.30pm  
 £6, £5 concession, book at Visitor Information Centre or online at [www.visitchester.com](http://www.visitchester.com)

Take a tour of the impressive city walls with a member of the Guild of Chester Tour Guides.



**Friday 2 August**  
**Cheshire Myths and Legends**  
**Grosvenor Museum, Lecture Theatre**  
 2-3pm

Free  
 Join our medieval storyteller as he tells you mysterious tales and folklore from Cheshire.



**Tuesday 6, 13, 20 & 27 and Wednesday 7, 14, 21 & 28 August**  
**Family Activities @ What's the Story?**  
**Chester Cathedral, South Transept**  
 10am-12noon, 1-3pm

No entrance charge to the Cathedral for families taking part in this free activity

In the colourful surroundings of the Community Art Project, make puppets and explore storytelling just like the Mystery Players of medieval Chester made the stories of the Bible come to life.

**Wednesday 7 August**  
**Defending a Medieval City**  
**Grosvenor Museum, Lecture Theatre**  
 11am-4pm

Free  
 Join some colourful medieval characters and discover more about unrest and defence in medieval Chester.



**Wednesday 14 August**  
**Trouvère – The Instrumentarium**  
**Grosvenor Museum, Lecture Theatre**  
 Free, but please collect your ticket from reception for each performance as places are limited

Roll up for a musical history tour with the Trouvère Medieval Minstrels! Try out an amazing array of musical instruments and discover some wonderful sounds of the Middle Ages:

11am - A tour through time from Saxon to Tudor music  
 12.30pm - Attention please! Fanfares and noisy music making

2pm - Stepping Out, music and dance in the Middle Ages  
 3.30pm - Sweet Harmony, the gentler side of medieval music



**Wednesday 21 August**  
**The Journey Man – 'Lord, have Mercia!'**  
**Grosvenor Museum, Gallery 1**  
 11am-12noon, 1-2pm, 2.30-3.30pm

Free  
 Ever wondered what those saints did to be remembered by the churches in Cheshire? Join the Journey Man as he shares, with reverent humour, the tales gathered from his story hunting pilgrimage. Listen to the incredible, but inspiring stories of those saints who touched the mysterious lands of Mercia.





**Wednesday 28 August**  
**Richard and Elizabeth**  
**York – Medieval**  
**Music**

**Grosvenor Museum,**  
**Lecture Theatre**  
 11am-12noon, 1-2 pm,  
 2.30-3.30pm

Free, but please collect your ticket from reception for each performance as places are limited

Meet and hear a huge collection of instruments, from portative organ, to pipe and tabor, to bagpipes, from harps to hurdy gurdy, to hautbois, and many more, and play some too, to experience some of the rich medieval variety of sounds. Elizabeth and Richard mix performance, entertaining explanations and chances to participate. There may even be chances to dance too!



**Friday 30 August**  
**Herbs and Remedies**  
**in a Medieval City**  
**Grosvenor Museum,**  
**Lecture Theatre**  
 2-3pm

Free

Learn more about the doctrine of signatures, the properties of herbs and some of the folklore associated with these plants.



**Monday 9 September**  
**Turrets and**  
**Battlements: The**  
**Fortifications of**  
**North Wales and**  
**Cheshire in Art**  
**Grosvenor Museum,**  
**Lecture Theatre**  
 2-3pm

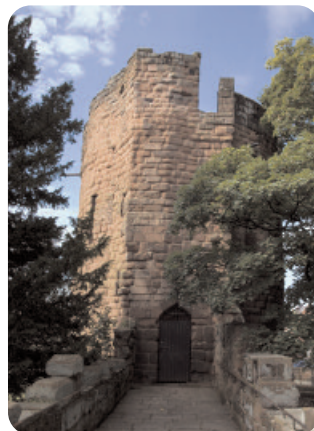
Free

The great medieval castles of North Wales and Chester's city walls are among the finest in the British Isles, while Cheshire can boast some fine Gothic Revival castles and Chester Castle is one of the masterpieces of the Greek Revival. This lecture explores the region's fortifications as depicted by artists over the past three centuries.

**Saturday 14 and Sunday**  
**15 September**  
**Heritage Open Days**  
**The Water Tower and**  
**King Charles Tower,**  
**City Walls**  
 11am-4pm

Free

Discover some medieval characters and learn more about these magnificent towers set on Chester's historic walls.



**Every Sunday, Monday &**  
**Tuesday, May – October**  
**Secret Chester Tour**  
**Meet at Visitor**  
**Information Centre,**  
**Town Hall Square**  
 2-3.30pm

£6, £5 concession, book at Visitor Information Centre, online at

**www.visitchester.com** or pay the guide on the day.

Discover some of the hidden glories of the city with a member of the Guild of Chester Tour Guides. Sunday Tour: North Wall, King Charles Tower, Water Tower, Port and Shropshire Union Canal. Monday Tour: Chester Castle, Bridgegate, River Dee, Grosvenor Park and St John's Church. Tuesday Tour: West Wall, Watergate, Racecourse, Chester Castle and St Michael's Church.





**Grosvenor Museum Grosvenor Street Chester CH1 2DD**

**Admission free Monday-Saturday 10.30am-5pm, Sunday 1-4pm**  
**01244 972197 [www.grosvenormuseum.co.uk](http://www.grosvenormuseum.co.uk)**

Access Issues, Grosvenor Museum  
 Full independent access to the ground floor including the Discover Medieval Chester  
 exhibition, Lecture Theatre, Newstead Gallery and accessible toilet.