



## NOTES FROM THE MUSEUM

### *What's inside the Moot Hall?*

**'Despite its exposed situation on the brink of the North Sea, the Moot Hall at Aldeburgh is one of the best preserved Tudor public buildings in Britain.'** This is how architectural historian, Leigh Alston, begins his report on the historical survey of the Moot Hall that he undertook last September. We are fortunate to have such a rare building in our town, but how many of us give it a second look, let alone venture inside? Whilst Council meetings are held upstairs and the town clerk has her office there, the building also houses the town's museum which is open daily from 12.00 to 5.00 during the summer, and during the afternoons from 2.30 in the spring and autumn.

The Moot Hall, built when Aldeburgh was at its most prosperous, had six shops and a jail on the ground floor, whilst the chamber above was reached by the external staircase. Standing in the centre of the town next to the market cross, a large market hall and booths, it was the focal point of the twice weekly markets. Three more streets, long lost to the sea, stood between Market Cross Place and the beach.

While it is worth going into the Moot Hall just to see such an outstanding building, the museum holds so much to fascinate. The Council Chamber houses a pictorial display of the history of Aldeburgh from Roman times. There is also a fine collection of maps and paintings of the area, along with collections of newspaper cuttings. Objects of local interest, including finds from the Snape Anglo Saxon ship burial, are to be seen in the Museum Room downstairs. The Slaughden Room has a display of paintings and photos of the village that was finally lost to the sea in the 1930s.

The museum is run by a group of dedicated volunteers who can answer questions about the history of the town and its people, but we know that there is a wealth of untapped knowledge held by local people. We are planning to run a regular column here in the Gazette to share information, and would love to hear from anyone who can tell us more about Aldeburgh's past. Please email at [enquiries@aldeburghmuseum.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@aldeburghmuseum.org.uk) or contact Diana Hughes on 01728 452652.