

MILDENHALL MUSEUM - Niddy Walpole

Opening Times: Prior to the latest lockdown, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday: 2-4pm; Friday: 10.30am-4pm. Please check their website.

Admission: Free entrance but donations are appreciated.

Website: <https://mildenhallmuseum.co.uk>

Travel Time: From Newmarket by car - 15 minutes.

Parking: Close by in Sainsbury's car park or two roadside places opposite.

General Information: The Mildenhall Natural History and Archaeology Society formed after WWII. Their exhibition put on for the Festival of Britain in May 1951 was so enthusiastically received that they procured two rooms, which then opened on Sunday afternoons. Exhibits and donations increased so larger premises were rented in 1968, but fire badly damaged the place in February 1973. However they reopened in November that same year.

Their landlord (TSB) wished to expand so the museum had to move yet again. This time to two old cottages, which were gifted to the museum's Trustees five years later by the Council. Heritage lottery funding has seen the whole place recently modernised, including a lift. Wheelchair access is to the ground and first floor but not the basement exhibits.



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The museum is of local and Fenland life. It has a huge 19th century photographic archive which can be viewed on request in the Museum. The two major exhibits are:

- 1. The Mildenhall Treasure:** In January 1942 a ploughman, Gordon Butcher, unearthed a large black disc near West Row. He fetched his boss, Sydney Ford, who then helped dig up a further 34 black items which they thought were pewter. A few years later a visitor was intrigued by these. The Coroner then declared the horde Treasure Trove but, as they had not been reported straight away, Butcher and Ford only received a portion of the £50,000 value - £1,000 each. The items proved to be Roman silver and are in the British Museum. As part of the Millennium Project, Dr Colin Dring had replicas made which can be seen in the Mildenhall Museum.
- 2. The Lakenheath Warrior:** In 1997 local digs around Lakenheath unearthed a man's skeleton: a tall man in his 30s from the Anglo Saxon period. He was buried with a sword, shield and spear, together with his horse. There was a basket at his head with offerings of food for the journey.

Today there have been 426 burials uncovered and at West Stowe, a 10 minute drive away, there is a reconstruction of an Anglo-Saxon village. The park here is good for picnics.