

PRESS RELEASE

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Great Value New Family Pass for 2009 for Historic Chiddingstone Castle

Family friendly attraction Chiddingstone Castle near Edenbridge in Kent has launched a new Family Season Pass for everyone who enjoys getting out and about with their children or grandchildren.

The Castle, which reopened after refurbishment last year, has a unique collection of Japanese, Buddhist, Stuart and Egyptian artefacts including Samurai Swords, Japanese Armour and even a 6ft long Nile Crocodile.

The 35 acres of grounds include a lake; rose garden and woodland - offering the perfect environment for children to run off some steam. The Castle also has special activity rooms where children can draw and take part in activities and games while learning about all the cultures and artefacts found in the Castle. There is also plenty to do in wet weather.

The pass costs just £38.50 for two adults and two children or one adult and three children and lasts all season. The pass also includes free entry to the 15 activity days planned for the year. The first event **“Get your hands dirty with the Victorians”** takes place in half term on 19 February 2009.

The Castle’s treasure trove of artefacts collected by the late Denys Bower between 1956 and 1977 are now looked after by his Trustees.

The Japanese collection includes lacquer, Samurai swords and armour from the 14th–19th centuries. The Buddhist collection contains beautiful artefacts such as Japanese Buddhist statues, shrines and temple banners. Also on display is an important collection of Egyptian antiquities, which is sure to fascinate children as curiosities on display include a mummified cat, a crocodile from the Nile River and a 5000 year old funerary boat, once kept in a tomb and used to transport the deceased into the after life.

The Stuart collection, one of very few, can be found in the ‘White Rose Room’ and the ‘Print Room’ and includes paintings, manuscripts and memorabilia of Jacobite and Stuart history which fascinated the Derbyshire born Bowers.

Children can explore the Castle with “Alex the Explorer” backpacks which contain goodies including activity cards to entertain children as they take in the history of the picturesque Castle and admire the unique collections. New for 2009 is the Bingo Spotter sheet which takes families on a tour of the beautiful Castle grounds. Each completed sheet will earn the family a prize.

The 15 free activity days taking place next year offer a chance to have lots of fun while learning about different cultures through themed arts and craft but will also include firm favourites such as bouncy castles, face painting and nature walks. The activities are suitable for children aged between 3 and 10.

To purchase a family pass please call 01892 872746.

Chiddingstone's Castle's tea room offers delicious home made refreshments, and can be accessed without a castle ticket, as can the grounds. The frequently filmed National Trust Village Chiddingstone is within easy access of the Castle.

Chiddingstone Castle is open from Good Friday, 10 April 2009 until 27 September 2009. For more information about the Castle and the events please visit

www.chiddingstonecastle.org.uk

Children's Event List for 2009 (free with a season pass)

February 19	Get Your Hands Dirty with the Victorians (11am-5pm)
April 10	Walk like an Egyptian (11am-5pm)
April 13	Easter Hunt and Springtime Fun (11am-5pm)
April 16	Crafty Stories: Princess and Knights at the Castle (2-5pm)
May 4	Creepy Crawlies at the Castle (11am-5pm)
May 25	Get Your Hands Dirty with the Victorians (11am-5pm)
May 28	Crafty Stories: Discover the Dinosaurs (2-5pm)
July 23	Crafty Stories: Under the Sea (2-5pm)
August 2	Japanese Day: Samurai, Drums and Mask Making (11am-5pm)
August 9	Walk like an Egyptian (11am – 5pm)
August 16	Crafty Stories: Spectacular Space (2-5pm)
August 23	Walk on the Wild Side (2-5pm)
August 31	Creepy Crawlies at the Castle (11am-5pm)
October 29	Crafty Stories: Horrible Halloween and Lantern-Lit Trick or Treat (2-5pm)
November 29	A Victorian Christmas (2-5pm)

Editors Notes

- Chiddingstone activity days are free for family pass holders. All arts and crafts will take place on the lawns in fine weather or in activity rooms if raining. To purchase a pass please call 01892 872746.
- Chiddingstone Castle is open 11am – 5pm on Sunday's, Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Good Friday, and some Thursdays for special activities 2 – 5pm. Please check what's on page on the website for forthcoming events and activity days and any changes to opening times and days. Admission: Adult: £6 Children: (aged 5-13) £4 (children under 5's free) Families: (2 adults and 2 children) £18 Adult season ticket: £20.00 Family season ticket: £38.50 (2 adults and 2 children or 1 adult and 3 children). Groups are welcome by prior arrangement: £5pp (min 20 people) All visitors visiting the grounds and the café only are free. The bingo spotter will be available throughout the season.
- Chiddingstone Castle is located on the outskirts of Chiddingstone, and is best approached via the B2027 road from Tonbridge to Penshurst, turn into Mill Lane when you reach Bough Beech and keep straight for one mile.

- Chiddingstone Village has been used as a location in many films, most notably *A Room with a View*, but also in *The Wicked Lady*, and *Elizabeth R* starring Glenda Jackson.
- The Castle can be hired for weddings, corporate and private functions and as a conference centre.
- The k in Gothik is the correct architectural term to describe the Castle, since it is part of the Victorian Gothik Revival and not actually Gothic