This exhibition will be on the second floor of the Packard Galleries in Palace House and will showcase key works of artists’ explorations of this popular pastime. From early Flemish paintings to the large group skating scenes from Victorian Britain to Bassano photographs of Olympic Figure Skaters the speed and grace of skating are featured. There is also a strong local interest in a selection of photographic prints of Fenland national speed skating competitions.
This sensitive study of a jockey was made from life by James Seymour. Seymour was a prolific and successful equestrian painter. He produced a large number of drawings of horses and their riders, but few are as attractively handled as this sympathetic study of a jockey. This drawing was recently bought for the National Horseracing Museum by the Friends with a generous donation by the family and friends of Lord Fitzgerald.

Who is the jockey? We don’t know, yet. James Seymour followed John Wootton and Peter Tillemans in the early eighteenth century at a time when there was a growing demand for sporting paintings, particularly those to celebrate a great performance or favourite horse on the Turf. Seymour came from a sporting and artistic family. His father, also James Seymour was a banker on Fleet Street in London, who acted as the stakeholder for Guildford Races and who was an amateur artist and considered to be an ‘excellent Judge of Painting’.

When the younger James died in 1752 the London Daily Advertiser described him as ‘the ingenious Mr Seymour, a Painter of great Eminence; the peculiar Branch of which Profession, he so remarkably excelled in, was that of Horse-painting...He has left, we hear, a great Number of Pictures, but all unfinished’. An important task for sporting art historians is to make sense of this great body of work in drawings, paintings and prints. In particular, can we link the drawings to the finished painting or print?

Many of the paintings have come down to us as simply ‘Chesnut (or bay) horse with jockey up’. You first have to identify the horse from its colour and markings, and perhaps the owner’s colours at a time when there were no records of which colours each owner used. And then you try to identify the jockey at a time when jockeys were considered as servants and not recorded in the race records. However, as a start Seymour has annotated many of his drawings with details that give clues. Judy Egerton in an essay of 1978 wrote ‘Seymour was an habitual and a rapid draughtsman, accustomed to carry a pocket sketch-book, eager to whip it out to jot down swift impressions in pencil, crayon or sanguine’. In 1739 Read’s Weekly Journal Or British Gazetteer ‘reckoned [him] to be the finest Draftsman in his Way (of Horses, Hounds, &c.) in the whole World’.

Egerton noted that when working with an engraver, ‘Seymour curbed his dashing manner and angular strokes of his freer sketches, drawing more careful outlines and more precise detail’. The precision shown in this ‘Study of a Jockey’s Head’ suggests that one day we will be able to identify the jockey.
The Friends support new displays at Palace House

Palace House has created a number of changing pop-up displays which highlight various items in the Museum’s collection. Currently there are displays on the pioneering Veterinary Surgeon Professor Edwin James Roberts and the trainer Florence Nagle. The Friends have made a contribution towards the cost of the purchase of museum cases for the creation of these displays.

One of the cases will be used to display items acquired for the Museum with support of the Friends.

Racing and World War One

This display is one in a series to mark the centenary of the end of World War I. It focuses on 1918 racing in Newmarket and explores the issue of racing during wartime and the narrative of the winner of the 1918 Triple Crown, Gainsborough, who made history by being the first horse to win a Classic race, a Derby and the English Triple Crown. Gainsborough was bred, owned by, and raced under the registered colours of a woman; Lady James Douglas. We are also proud to exhibit a rare Victoria Cross awarded for bravery in September 1918 to Captain Cyril Frisby.

Books available in the Shop

Polo, horse-racing, show jumping, endurance riding, ploughing, pit ponies, mounted police, and carriage driving all require different tack. Paula Sells shows how the tack used in 27 different disciplines has become specialised for each. Tack rooms are treasure houses of traditional and innovative modern craftsmanship. The wide range of tack they hold reflects its evolution through our social history and the changing partnerships with horses in modern culture.

Price £30

A day at the races can be a confusing time. But thanks to this little book, no longer will you be out of the loop when the talk turns to: Steeplechasers, Weighing Rooms, Maiden Stakes, a Weaver, a colt, and a filly. Artist and racing enthusiast Rosemary Coates explains in a nutshell, using words and her witty illustrations, exactly what those mysterious racing terms mean.

Price £8.99
Events at Palace House

An Evening with Elly Summers
Thursday 25th October 7pm - 8.30pm | £18 per person
Exploring the fashions worn by successive generations of women in the Royal Family, Curator of the 'Royal Women' exhibition at the Fashion Museum of Bath, Elly Summers will examine how the role of royal women influenced their choice of dress from Alexandra Princess of Wales's wedding dress to Queen Mary and Princess Elizabeth.

An Evening with Trevor Marriott
Wednesday 31st October 7pm - 8.30pm | £18 per person
Retired Scotland Yard Special Branch detective, Trevor Marriott, re-examines the notorious case of Jack the Ripper. Looking at the century old case through the eyes of a modern day criminal investigator to pinpoint the real perpetrator of Britain's most notorious serial killer.

An Evening with Scintillo Quartet
Saturday 3rd November 7pm - 8.30pm | £18 per person
Music in the Mews: From the Baroque to the Romantic.
With a wealth of musical experience performing for HM The Queen and HRH The Duke of Edinburgh and including performances at the Academy of St Martins, English Sernata and live on BBC Radio 4 we welcome Scintillo who will perform some of classical music's most famous pieces from the Baroque to the Romantic, with a short introduction of each piece.

An Evening with Professor David Reynolds
Friday 9th November 7pm - 8.30pm | £18 per person
Churchill and Stalin: A Special Relationship? Professor of International History at Christ College, Cambridge, David Reynolds will give an insight into the special relationship between Winston Churchill and Joseph Stalin through the extensive correspondence between the two giants of the 20th Century.

An Evening with Dr Annie Grey
Monday 10th December 7pm - 8.30pm | £18 per person
Cuckolds Delight and Mother's Ruin: A History of Gin.
Historian, cook, broadcaster, writer and consultant, Dr Annie Gray specialises in the history of food from around 1600 to the present day. Dr Gray's latest book 'The Greedy Queen' about Queen Victoria, was voted the WI Best Read 2017. A regular on BBC 2, most recently seen presenting The Sweet Makers, Dr Gray is also a regular panellist on BBC Radio 2's Kitchen Cabinet.

Ticket available from Palace House Reception
01638 667314 or from the website
www.palacehousenewmarket.co.uk/shop