TOP TREASURE

Find this at

MUSEUM of ISLAND HISTORY

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Questions

- Who do you think this person is?
- Can you describe the picture?
- What do you think it is made from?
- How big do you think it is?
- Why do you think it was painted?

FACT FILE

Painting of Giuseppe Garibaldi

Basic facts

This portrait of Giuseppe Garibaldi (1807-1882) was painted around 1864. Garibaldi is said to have been one of the greatest generals of modern times. He helped bring the different states of Italy together to become the Kingdom of Italy.

What is it?

A portrait painted on canvas using oil paints.
The frame is made from wood and has a gilt (thin layer of gold paint) frame. It is 181cm high and 150cm wide.

How old is it?

It was painted around 1864 when he visited the Isle of Wight.

What is it made from?

Wood, canvas, gold paint, oil paint.

Significance

Garibaldi was a huge celebrity. He even had a biscuit named after him in 1861!

So, why do we have a portrait of an Italian hero in the Museum of Island History? Charles Seely (1803-87) was an MP and a strong supporter of Garibaldi. In 1864 Seely invited Garibaldi to England. It was a chance for him to thank the British people for their support during his 1860 campaign. It was thought Garibaldi would be mobbed by adoring crowds in London so Seely took him to stay at his Isle of Wight home, Brook House for a week.

The Isle of Wight Observer reported "Cowes claims the honour of being the first spot in the Isle of Wight trod by the greatest man who ever set foot on our soil." Over 2000 people welcomed him in Cowes. When he spoke from the balcony of Newport Guildhall thousands of people filled the streets waving flags and cheering.

Seely paid for an artist to paint Garibaldi's portrait to mark the special visit. This is a photo of that painting! It's great that the picture is now on display in the building that he once greeted thousands of people from.

Other facts

Despite attracting such huge crowds of people, Queen Victoria was not a big fan. Some people think she was jealous of the huge crowds he attracted. In London they were said to be the largest ever seen.

Other facts

In 1958, Louis and Julia Denaro bought the Old Coach House at Brook House. They found the painting in the greenhouse! In 2009 their daughters donated it to the Isle of Wight Heritage Service.

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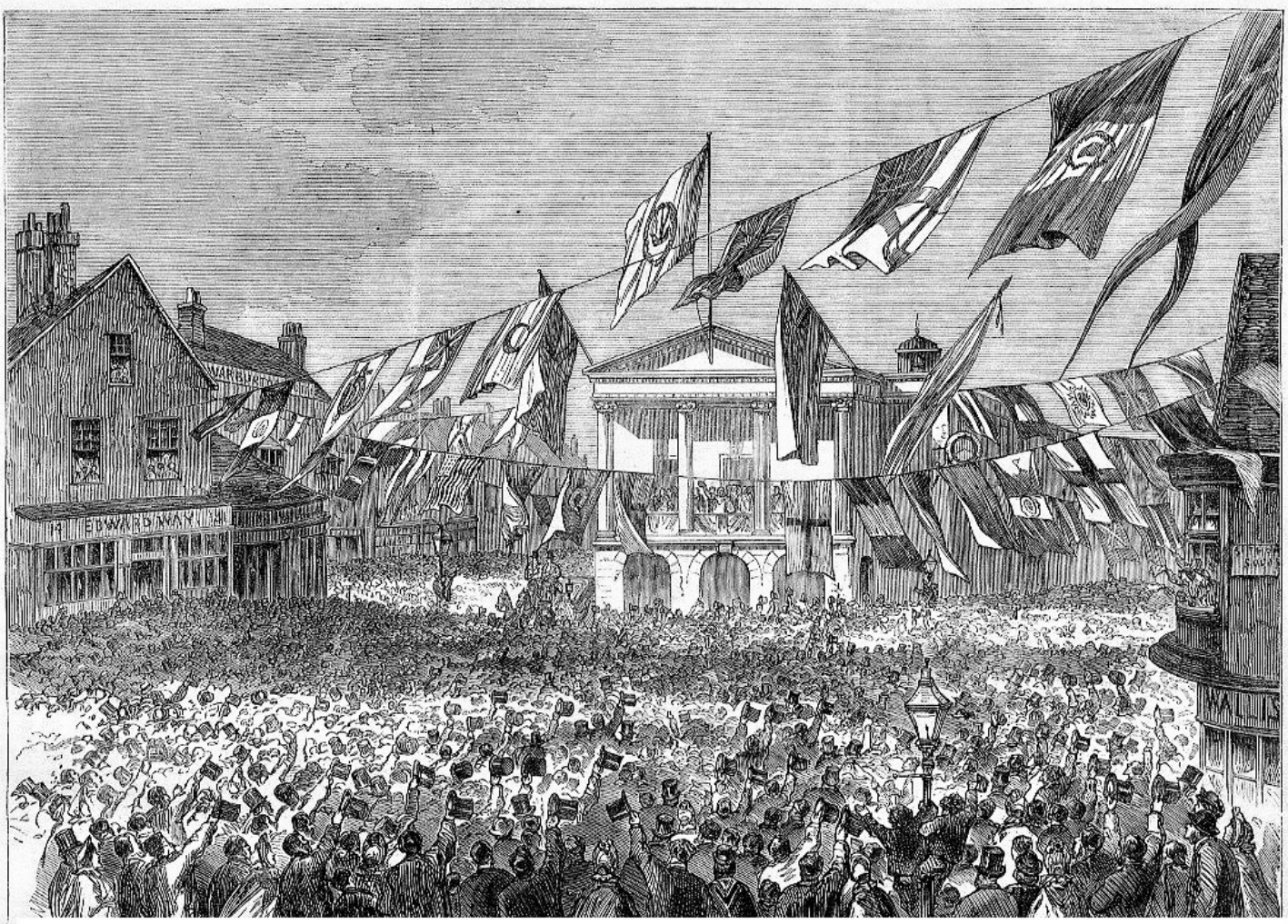
Why don't you?

- Find out more about the life of Giuseppe Garibaldi. Create a fact file.

  Visit: tiny.cc/iw-garibaldi and tiny.cc/nt-garibaldi

- Portraits, paintings and photos of Garibaldi were popular during his lifetime. Create a portrait of your hero in pencil, paint, collage or modelling clay. Why did you choose this person as your hero?
- Imagine you are a newspaper reporter standing on the balcony of the Guildhall with Garibaldi as he greets the crowds below. Can you find out more about his visit to Newport and write your own newspaper report?



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