TOP TREASURE

Find this at

Carisbrooke Castle Museum

Education Contact:
estelle.baker@iow.gov.uk

Questions

- What do you think it is?
- Can you describe it?
- What do you think it is made from?
- How big do you think it is?
- What do you think it was used for?
- Who did it belong too?

FACT FILE

Ceremonial Key

What is it?

Princess Beatrice was presented with this silver-plated key in August 1898.

It was designed by the architect Percy Stone, who restored the castle's gatehouse so that a museum could be put in there.

Princess Beatrice wanted the museum to be a memorial to her husband, Prince Henry of Battenberg, who had died in 1896.

This key was given to her to commemorate the opening of the museum. It is unlikely that it could open any of the gatehouse doors. The key shows the gatehouse with crown on the top to show it was founded by a member of the royal family.

Basic facts

Size: 22cm long x 5cm wide.

How old is it?

Made around 1898.

What is it made from?

Silver plate on a base metal.

Significance

Carisbrooke Castle Museum is the only museum to be founded by a member of the Royal Family.

Beatrice's mother, Queen Victoria, donated some important objects for display.

Before her death in 1944 Beatrice protected the museum by setting up a Charitable Trust to run it. The Museum Trust continues to carry out her wishes by collecting, caring for and displaying the Island's past.

Other facts

Princess Beatrice was the youngest daughter of Queen Victoria.

After Henry died in 1896, Beatrice took on his role as Governor of the Isle of Wight. In 1913 Beatrice made the Governor's House, her summer residence and stayed until the start of World War II in 1939.

When the collections became too large for the gatehouse the museum asked King George VI if it could move from the gatehouse to its present home in the former Governor's House. In 1952, the Castle's Great Hall became the Museum's galleries and other rooms in the building became offices and stores.

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The photo above shows the museum when it was in the gatehouse. It must have been taken after 1928 as this painting of Princess Beatrice was painted then. Can you spot it in the photograph?

Why don't you?

- Have a look at how keys have changed through time: tiny.cc/keys-guide Design your own key to celebrate a special event or something important to you.
- If you could open your own museum what would you collect and display in it?
- Imagine you had a magic key. What would it open? Would it be door to a magical world? Or would it open a mysterious box with something incredible inside. Draw your key and write about the thing it opens.
- Find out more about Princess Beatrice. Use this information to create a fact-file, crossword or presentation.

The postern gate at the castle.

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