



Groups

Groups are welcome, and may book in advance a guided tour during normal opening hours. Numbers may be limited in some areas of the campus.

Group tours are free and a standard tour lasts one hour. Tours may be tailored to meet your interests. Please give at least two weeks' notice. Tea and coffee may be booked for a small charge.

Email museum@panaceatrust.org to book.

Admission to the Museum is **FREE**

There are toilets including accessible and baby change, books and gifts on sale at reception, and a Tea Room with a selection of hot and cold drinks and snacks.



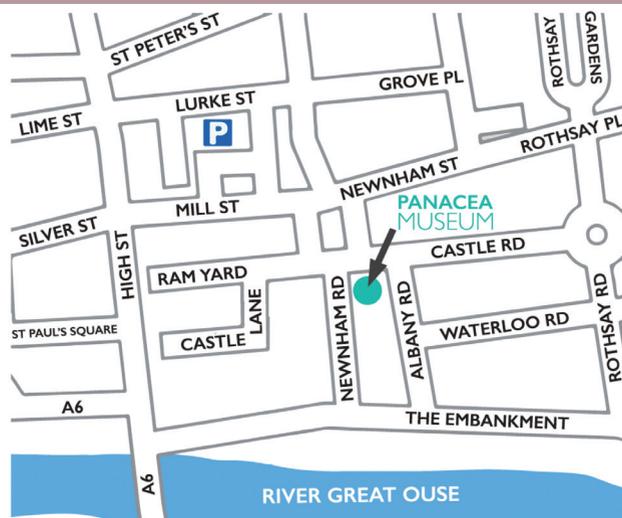
Opening Hours 2026

5th February - 28th March
Thursday - Saturday 10am - 4pm

2nd April - 27th September
Thursday - Sunday 11am - 5pm

1st October - 28th November
Thursday - Saturday 10am - 4pm

11 Newnham Road, Bedford, MK40 3NX
Tel: 01234 353178
Email: museum@panaceatrust.org
Website: www.panaceatrust.org



The museum is located in the town centre close to The Higgins and Bunyan museums, accessible from the bus and railway stations.

By car: metered parking in nearby streets, and a multi-storey car park is in Lurke Street, a 5 min walk.

Access: Step-free access is through the gate on Castle Road. We have a lift to all floors in 'Castleside'. Access to some areas is limited. Assistance dogs welcome. Please contact us for more information.



Telling the story of the Panacea Society

Formed in Bedford in 1919 by Mabel 'Octavia' Barltrop

Women's History | Beautiful Gardens | Victorian Architecture



FREE

www.panaceamuseum.org

About

The Panacea Society was founded in 1919 by **Mabel Barltrop** (Octavia) who had moved to Bedford with her husband and children around 1905.



Mabel emerged as the prominent member of a group of women studying the prophecies and publications of Joanna Southcott.

During the 1920s and 1930s the community grew to more than 70 resident members living in and around Albany Road in Bedford. Over 130,000 people from around the world applied to receive the Society's method of healing through water- a 'panacea' to cure all ills.



The Panacea Museum is presented within the original buildings lived in and used by members of the Society.

Joanna Southcott

Southcott's writings heavily informed the beliefs of the Panaceans, and of founder members such as Rachel Fox and Kate Firth.



Joanna died in 1814 having left a sealed box of prophecies with special conditions for opening. Octavia and the community campaigned tirelessly for it to be opened.

Research our Archives

The archives of the Panacea Charitable Trust hold significant material relating to the Panacea Society, its members and its healing ministry. The archive also holds original material relating to Joanna Southcott and other millenarian groups. The archives are available for research by appointment. For more details please email: admin@panaceatrust.org

The Panacea Museum is located across several Victorian buildings that formed the community's headquarters. The main museum displays are in 'The Haven' and 'Castleside'. The Chapel, Wireless Room and Founder's House are presented as they may have looked in the 1930s.

Exhibitions and Events

Changing exhibitions and special events throughout the year. Visit www.panaceamuseum.org or check our social media for current information.



Admission to the Museum is **free**. For more information on our onsite facilities please see our website: panaceamuseum.org

Our Gardens

The Museum is surrounded by beautiful gardens, which the Panaceans believed was the Garden of Eden. Find out more in the Museum.



Printing Press

An 1857 Columbian Press was in constant use by the Society. We offer regular art sessions, where visitors have the chance to see the Press in action and make their own artworks- for details see our website panaceamuseum.org/events

