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BAFM

Journal



The British Association of Friends of Museums

MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

Dear Friends,

A very encouraging number of entries have been coming in for the BAfM Newsletter Competition – possibly the highest number ever. Possibly this is a response to the recent feature on “How to Write a Winning Newsletter”, but whatever the reason, the entries are streaming in and the standard looks high. These will soon be off to the Judges, and their decision will be made in August. The results will be announced at the Ironbridge Conference in October. Good luck to all who have entered! As usual the range seems very varied, and the Judges' task will no doubt be a difficult one.



The recent Consultant's report on BAfM commented generally very favourably on the Journal, but suggested we should try to have more articles that are case studies, from which member groups might learn. Are any of you involved (or have you been involved) in a Friends' project that you feel

would make a good Case Study? Would you be willing to write an article on the project, or do you know someone who could? Please contact the Editor (Tamasin) or the Home News Sub-editor (Bev) with your ideas and articles. Contact details are on the back of this Journal. Thank you!

The Consultation Report also recommends that we recruit Museums Studies or Journalism students or Young Friends to help us edit the Journal, distribute it (or its stories) on Social Media and generally raise its profile and its impact/effectiveness. Do any of you know such students or Young Friends who would be happy to gain this experience? Again, please get in touch if you do, or encourage the young person to get in touch with us.

And finally... an apology to Mary Bailey and the Friends of Bristol Museums, Galleries and Archives. In the Spring issue of this Journal, we incorrectly accredited Mary's article on page 22 – 'Getting to Know Moths' to Bristol Art Gallery Friends, rather than to BMGA. The Friends of Bristol Art Gallery are of course, an entirely separate and different group from the **Friends of Bristol Museums, Galleries and Archives** and we apologise for confusing the two. (Readers may remember that both groups were recipients of Prizes in last year's BAfM Newsletter Competition – there is clearly a lot of talent as well as a lot of Friends' activity in Bristol).

CONTENTS

- 2 MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR
- 3 CHAIR'S MESSAGE

COVER STORY

- 4 BAFM CONFERENCE 2016: MEET YOUR HOSTS, THE FRIENDS OF THE IRONBRIDGE GORGE MUSEUMS

NEWS

- 8 EXCITING NEWS FOR IRONBRIDGE FRIENDS
- 11 BAFM COMMENT: CULTURE WHITE PAPER
- 13 WANT TO ATTRACT NEW AND YOUNGER FRIENDS?
- 15 SAVE SWANSEA MUSEUM!
- 20 HISTORIC ROYAL PALACES
- 21 NEWS FROM THE LAING ART GALLERY
- 21 FRIEND RECEIVES MEDAL OF THE ORDER OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE
- 25 REGIONAL NEWS

ISSUES

- 8 MUSEUMS AND DEMENTIA
- 9 SPOILIATION - A QUESTION OF PROVENANCE
- 15 ACCESSIBILITY: THE WALLACE COLLECTION SUBTITLE FIRST TALK IN-HOUSE
- 18 FRUSTRATIONS

FEATURES

- 6 WATERLOO NECROPOLIS: CLASS DIVISIONS EVEN AFTER DEATH
- 10 EXCITEMENT AT RESTORATION OF THE COLUMBIAN PRESS AT BLACKBURN MUSEUM
- 12 ERNEST GIMSON AND THE ARTS AND CRAFTS MOVEMENT IN LEICESTER - WEBSITE RELAUNCH
- 14 THE RETURN OF THE GLYN VIV

FRIENDS AT WORK CASE STUDIES

- 16 FRIENDS OF SOMERSET RURAL LIFE MUSEUM – WHAT HAPPENS TO THE FRIENDS WHEN A MUSEUM CLOSSES FOR REFURBISHMENT?
- 19 SHARE 'MYSTERY SHOPPER' SCHEME

CONFERENCE REPORTS

- 22 WFFM IN WASHINGTON DC
- 23 EASTERN COUNTIES AREA MEETING
- 23 EASTERN REGION SHARED ENTERPRISE FUNDING FAIR
- 24 YORKSHIRE AND HUMBERSIDE REGIONAL MEETING

OBITUARY

- 24 REMEMBERING KEN HAWKES (1940-2016) FOUNDER MEMBER OF THE FRIENDS OF GUNNERSBURY PARK AND MUSEUM

CHAIR'S MESSAGE



Dear Friends

In the spring edition of the BAfM Journal we circulated the

Information and Booking Forms for our Annual Conference and AGM 2016, to be held at the Ironbridge Gorge Museum in Coalbrookdale, Shropshire. The 1st of October is certain to be a really enjoyable event which I am looking forward to. Having always found industrial heritage fascinating, Ironbridge is one of my favourite sites. That coupled with the outstanding museums in the area, and the enthusiasm and the professionalism of the team who are our hosts, the event has all the elements needed for a memorable conference.

We do hope that you will support the Conference which, in response to member's suggestions, we are confining to a single day. However, for those travelling long distances or wishing to stay over, there will be a chance to socialise on the evening before and to tour the

surrounding areas on the day after. If you consider this trial format to be a success then it could become a template for future conferences - but that will depend on your responses.

Sadly not all members get access to the Journal, and consequently they may not see the Conference information. If you require additional booking forms please contact me, or Jean our Conference Organiser or Jayne our Administrator. Addresses are at the back of this publication and on our website.

That neatly brings me to another point. I am surprised how few members look at the BAfM website. If you have not taken a look recently please try to do so now, it is more interesting and user friendly than the old site and it is becoming one of our most important means of communicating. BAfM is an organisation which is built on communication and mutual support. Without you reading and sharing the Journal or checking the website, it is difficult for us to keep you informed of what is going on in BAfM. Conversely your

contributions and letters to the Journal, to our new E-Newsletter or to your local co-ordinator are our only means of knowing what services members require or how we might provide more relevant support.

A new feature of this year's Conference will be the granting of the very first BAfM Travel Bursary which is an award to a committed volunteer or a graduate not yet established in a museum career. It is hoped that it will enable the winner to visit a distant museum or even work with experts in a specialist area. In other years it could help the winner to take part in the World Federation of Friends of Museums youth conferences. The Award is sure to be a great success, thanks to the dedicated work of its organiser Anne Stobo and her colleague Kate Kuhn.

I wish you a happy and sun filled summer and look forward to meeting you at Ironbridge.

BAfM NEEDS YOU!

Urgently seeking a new Chair and Vice Chair – Bernard Rostron

"BAfM needs you!" – I make no apologies for repeating this cry for help. Two volunteers are needed to be nominated to fill the roles of Vice Chairman and Chairman. If you, or a member of your Friends Group or your Co-ordinator, in fact any suitable person with experience of Friends' activities would like to become more deeply involved then we need to hear from you. Both vacancies demand a willingness to take on responsibility and candidates must be comfortable working with committees and using e-mail.

I must stand down at the Annual General meeting on the 1st October, so we have time for you to get acquainted with what is involved. BAfM has made

good progress in recent years and the renaissance will continue for another year or two, and we need a new leader to see it through. We are currently without a Vice Chairman to share the workload and it has become clear that a two person team is essential.

Being involved in BAfM is very worth-while and challenging but deeply satisfying – so do think about it.

Please contact me soon on 01706 632223 or via rostronb@gmail.com if you would like to express your interest in either position or simply to find out more.

BAfM CONFERENCE 2016: MEET YOUR HOSTS, THE FRIENDS OF THE IRONBRIDGE GORGE MUSEUM

– Geraldine King

The Friends of the Ironbridge Gorge Museum are looking forward to seeing you in Ironbridge at the Annual Conference of BAfM. You will probably recall that new research was commissioned by the Ironbridge Friends into the relationship between Friends and their host museums, the results of which are proving to be fascinating. We will be sharing the findings of that work at the BAfM Conference in October in Ironbridge, and are confident it will ring bells with many Friends organisations across the country.

We are also feeling very excited because the Friends of Ironbridge Gorge Museum have just received the **Queen's Award for Voluntary Service** as part of the Queen's Birthday Honours in recognition for nearly 50 years support for the Ironbridge Gorge Museum. As Chairman of the Friends, I am immensely proud of the whole organisation.

The Friends of the Ironbridge Gorge Museum were in the forefront of large-scale voluntary work as Blists Hill took shape in the early 1970s, but other groups also came to the fore at that time. The Friends' Staffing Group manned the Toll House on the Iron Bridge and the Blists Hill

entrance at weekends. The Staffing Group were also the first demonstrators at Blists Hill, and adopted an exhibit, the Estate Office, when paid demonstrators were employed elsewhere on Blists Hill the Friends' Guiding Group began their long years of service, which still continues; an Umbrella Group (later the Social Activities Group) provided fund-raising and social events, and even provided the Museum's first tearoom at Coalport.

Academic assistance was also a key factor in the early days. The Photographic Group sorted and printed many historic negatives; the Ceramics Advisory Group researched the Coalport China Works and the Heavy Clay Advisory Group specialised in decorative tiles. The Social History Group worked on the Oral History Archive which Ken Jones had instigated. An Archives Group was also an addition of the 1990s, which took a particular interest in the wealth of material from Southorn's Pipe Works in Broseley, which became the Broseley Pipe Works Museum. Members of the Friends still continue to serve the Museum as members of the Academic and Curatorial group of Museum Trustees.

The Friends have always contributed to the social buzz of the Museum; a memorable evening was a Fish and Chip supper we gave in the near derelict Museum of Iron in 1978 to celebrate the winning of an award. Monthly talks and lectures, and social events are all part of the rich fabric of assistance that the Friends give to 'their' Museum nowadays. Over recent years we have welcomed as speakers at our annual lunch former Ironbridge Museum directors and curators, Sir Neil Cossons, (President of the Friends of the Ironbridge Gorge Museum); the late Stuart Smith OBE; and Sir Michael Day, now Chief Executive of Historic Royal palaces.

The Friends celebrated the Bicentenary of the Iron Bridge with a grand fund-raising draw in 1979, but it was the 200th anniversary of the opening of the Bridge which was a highlight for us when The Friends re-enacted the opening ceremony in front of 3000 people on New Year's Day 1981. Other events in the same style were organised over the years, and The Friends celebrated their 40th Anniversary in 2009 with a Victorian Picnic, similar to the early special events of the 1970s.



151 Birmingham Friends present cheque to Wendy Waterson c2002.

London and Birmingham branches of the Friends were set up in the 1980s, but sadly no longer meet, (although Birmingham Branch members do often attend events here in Ironbridge and Coalbrookdale).

The Friends in conjunction with the Museum publish a quarterly magazine, *Ironbridge Quarterly*, the contents keep members and Museum supporters up with the news from the Museum. The Friends' organisation has been fortunate throughout its life to attract Committee members who have a passion for the history of the area, which they translate into practical work, guiding, fund-raising, promoting the Museum at events, committee work – and making the tea!

A very special event took place last year when our late Vice-president and stalwart Friend, local historian Ken Jones, was honoured by having a road named after him. The Friends cooperated with Linden Homes to honour Ken's memory at a naming ceremony on the site, followed by a reception in Coalbrookdale. A Bursary Fund set up in Ken's memory helps fund the Museum Library's book-buying.

The Friends now have over 800 members. The Friends are looking forward to hosting the Annual BAfM Conference on October 1st, and our research into other museums and their Friends will be the keynote theme. So do come to our award-winning museum and to the conference organised by award-winning Friends.

Chairman Geraldine King:

My 40 years as a volunteer and committee member of the Friends of the Ironbridge Gorge Museum began when I joined the Staffing Group, and rapidly became its coordinator, arranging the rota of Friends who staffed the Blists Hill entrance, and later the exhibits. I did my fair share of the duties and thoroughly enjoyed talking to enthusiastic visitors about the history of the Squatter Cottage, Shelton Toll House, Mission Church and other exhibits. I was also an active member of the Social History Group, and the Social Activities Group, and now the Guiding Group, and Marketing Group. My first stint as Chairman was from 1981-1983.

Following my term as Chairman I became Programme Secretary, a post I have held ever since. It is challenging to find the many speakers we need for a full-year's programme, but very stimulating to hear them speak with such enthusiasm for their subject. Now, as I retire from teaching History, I find myself Chairman again in this most exciting year for the Friends. My Vice-Chairman and I have represented the Friends at a Buckingham Palace Garden Party, and Treasurer Sue Tarr and I attended the Patron's Lunch in the Mall to celebrate the Queen's 90th Birthday on June 12th, as representatives of Shropshire.

Vice-Chairman David de Haan:

A museum professional, David joined the Friends' Committee for a stint in the late 1980s and re-joined it on his retirement after 34 years working at the Ironbridge Gorge Museum. In 1979 he chaired the Transport Advisory Group and the General Advisory Group, the latter playing a key role in developing the detail of



David de Haan

the Ironworks at Blists Hill. More recently he has played a key role in the Marketing Committee.

Vice – President Wendy Waterson:

Wendy was one of the first members of the Friends. This was in the 1960s, when Blists Hill was a derelict opencast mining site and when to many people the iron bridge was just another bridge across the River Severn. She enthusiastically volunteered to join the Museum's first Secretary/cum Girl Friday, Gwen Jenkins, in the offices at Southside, Church Hill to help launch the first Open Days. Wendy answered the phone, took orders for tickets and then dispatched them, handled enquiries from numerous people on a vast variety of topics.

She also got to know the first "movers and shakers", people like Bruce Ball, Emyr Thomas, Selwyn Devey and Reg Morton, whose enthusiasm was so infectious, and remembers Reg Morton saying one day, "Many of my ideas are pie in the sky, but if just half of them can be achieved I shall be pleased!" Since then Wendy has continued to volunteer for the Friends, guiding at Coalbrookdale and Coalport, and an active committee member. She has been Chairman twice.

Blist's Hill Victorian Town, one of the 10 Ironbridge Gorge Museums has won the highest Gold accolade from VisitEngland in recognition of its excellent visitor experience.



Ken Jones Close – Geraldine King with Sir Neil Cossons.

WATERLOO NECROPOLIS – CLASS DIVISIONS EVEN IN DEATH

David Wadley, Friends of London Transport Museum

Prompted by a competition picture which first appeared in the Autumn 2015 issue of LTM Friends News, David Wadley has researched more about the Waterloo stations of the London Necropolis Company.



Here is the curious tale of the reason behind the creation of what might be described as London's Terminal Terminal Station, Waterloo Necropolis. In one word, this might sadly be described as – death!

In 1800, the population of London was approaching one million. Forty years

later it was nearly two million and in 1860, 2.8 million. Whilst the population was growing rapidly, the area of London and the extent of its infrastructure were not increasing at the same rate. Finding land in which to bury the dead was becoming very difficult; it was not made any easier by various epidemics – cholera still being of particular concern. The story of the misuse and re-use of burial plots at this time is quite gruesome.

Getting around London then was not as easy as it is today; but getting into London and out of it became dramatically easier from 1836 onwards with the opening of London's first passenger railway: the London and Greenwich. This was, of course, soon followed by many others, all helping London to grow at an even faster pace. The opening of the London and South Western Railway's station at Waterloo in 1848 was indirectly to lead to an easing of the problems of where to

bury the increasing number of dead people.

A year later discussions began regarding the setting up of a Necropolis well away from London – one with ample room for growth. Several sites were considered, including one to the north of London. This would have been reached via trains from Kings Cross, but in June 1854, "our" Necropolis scheme received the Royal Assent and arrangements were made for the London and South Western Railway to convey mourners and corpses between the Necropolis Company's private station at Waterloo, down the main line and on to a private branch serving their site at Brookwood, just west of Woking. There was to be found an abundance of cheap land available for the creation of a cemetery which would be large enough to meet London's needs for many years to come.



The terminus at Brookwood



Platform at Waterloo

At the Necropolis, two stations were provided: the first was the North for all the various groups of non-conformists and the second, the South – a little further on at the end of the branch and in a quite separate part of the site – for Anglicans. The branch was about 3/4 mile long. The Necropolis Station in London was beside, and to the east of, the LSWR terminal at Waterloo. A three storey structure, accessed from both York Street and Westminster Bridge Road, Necropolis Station had a "grand entrance" for first class mourners and another for those who were to travel by 2nd or 3rd classes.

Waiting rooms on the second and third floors offered similar segregation, with first class ticket holders waiting in luxurious rooms on the upper level. One platform was provided for first class passengers; another, separated by a glass screen, for the lower classes. Attendants would lead the first class travellers to their reserved compartments; the rest had to find their own way.

The coffin vans, often at the rear of the train, offered further segregation, not only by class but also by religion. Sometimes, vans were marshalled after the front portion of the train carrying the non-conformist mourners, who would have alighted at the North Station. The coffin vans were owned by the Necropolis Company, but the passenger vehicles were owned by the LSWR. All this segregation may seem a little strange to us today; but, in Victorian times, it was apparently the way things were normally done.

The funeral trains ran to a point just west of what, in 1864, became Brookwood Station. The initial junction here was basic, so the locomotive would have been unhooked to allow the train to be drawn down the branch by a team of black horses!

Initially, the trains ran seven days a week, taking about 40 minutes for the journey, though in later years they became less frequent. At some times stops were also made at Vauxhall and Clapham Junction. The Sunday trains did not last long. The agreement between the Necropolis Company and the LSWR had provided for up to three trains per day, but there was never

more than the one daily train. In later years, the train ran "as required"; so clearly the provision of the service had not developed into the money-spinner that the LSWR had thought it would become.

On the branch, the stations had wooden buildings in which William (later Sir William) Tite, (1798 – 1873), a notable architect particularly associated with railway stations and cemeteries, was said to have had a hand though these had nothing of the elegance of his works at Southampton, Micheldever or Nine Elms. Waiting rooms, rooms for the coffins and for refreshment facilities were provided, once again all with several classes of facilities.

By the late 1890s, the LSWR's main line terminal at Waterloo was in dire need of rebuilding. Its site was cramped and a series of enlargements had resulted in a muddled layout which was not easy for either staff or passengers. For many years it even had a track crossing the passenger circulating area, then over Waterloo Road to Waterloo Junction to form a connection with the South Eastern Railway's line to London Bridge. This was little used; but what a sight would have been presented by a train crossing the concourse: flagmen everywhere and "the Suits" down from the offices – especially if Queen Victoria had been on the train! Part of the alignment is still visible from the platforms at what is now Waterloo East, but don't look for the rails crossing the concourse for they went long ago!

In 1900, work to rebuild and expand the main station caused demolition of the Necropolis station and its rebuilding on a site a little further to the south. The new Necropolis Station opened on 12th February 1902. The station facilities generally followed the previous pattern, though now had an extra storey and an imposing entrance at 121 Westminster Bridge Road. The segregation of the mourners and the departed was perpetuated, both by class and by religion.

In April 1941, in a severe air raid, Sir William Tite's terminal buildings at Nine



Exterior of the Necropolis Company's building at Waterloo post 1902.

Elms were severely damaged (in the initial plans, the Necropolis Station could have been there too). In the same raid, severe damage was also caused to the platforms of the Necropolis terminal at Waterloo, though its main building was less damaged. The special rolling stock was also lost in the raid. This was not quite the end for the Necropolis trains, for it seems that a few with Southern Railway rolling stock were run for a time from the main line terminal; but these did not last for long.

After the war, the Necropolis Company decided that it would be uneconomic to rebuild the station at Waterloo and all funeral traffic was sent by road. The Southern Railway was probably glad to be rid of what had become an uneconomic service bound by the terms of the previous century. However, on the branch, the refreshment facilities remained in use long after the last train had gone: that at the North Station until 1951 and at the South station until 1967. These stations were once described as "the saddest in our Islands", though some might have said that they looked more like the pavilions on a sports ground.

Today, there is no real trace of either the route of the branch, its stations or the junction at Brookwood. As the puzzle picture showed, the entrance and office block in Westminster Bridge Road is still there, though the Necropolis Company no longer uses it. The present occupant is the Transmarine Shipping Agency Ltd. Today, as your train travels into Waterloo, you can look across past the approach towards Platform One; but behind it, there is now no trace of the Necropolis Station left for you to see.

Finally – all those years ago, what had it cost to use the special trains? At one time, first class returns cost 6 shillings and third class 2 shillings. Coffins were charged at £1; or 5 shillings for artisans; and 2 shillings and 6 pence for paupers. Only single fares were offered for those travelling at the rear of the train! Those holding Mourners Tickets could have returned to London on any train from Brookwood station.

Much of the information in the foregoing was gleaned from the Oakwood Press book "The Brookwood Necropolis Railway" by John M. Clarke, which offers a very interesting read, with numerous illustrations. "Railway Bylines" for December 2014 also carried a well illustrated article about the stations on the branch.

EXCITING NEWS FOR IRONBRIDGE FRIENDS

Geraldine King



Geraldine King at a recent Buckingham Palace Garden Party.

It is with immense pleasure and pride that I am able to inform you that the Friends of the Ironbridge Gorge Museum have been awarded the **Queen's Award for Voluntary Service**. This award to the Friends recognizes nearly 50 years support for the Ironbridge Gorge Museum, an independent museum of national and international standing.

The **Queen's Award for Voluntary Service** is the highest award given to voluntary groups across the United Kingdom. Its aim is to recognize outstanding work done in the local community, and as such sets a national benchmark for excellence in volunteering. It is the M.B.E for volunteer groups. The Friends of the Ironbridge Gorge Museum is one of 193 charities, social enterprises and voluntary groups to receive the prestigious award this year. The number of awards given to groups this year is slightly higher than last year, showing that the voluntary sector is thriving and full of innovative ideas to tackle community challenges.

The awards were created in 2002 to celebrate the Queen's Golden Jubilee and winners are announced each year on 2 June – the anniversary of

the Queen's Coronation. Winners get a certificate signed by the Queen and an engraved crystal, both of which will be presented by the Lord Lieutenant, Sir Algernon Heber-Percy, at a local ceremony.

The Friends of the Ironbridge Gorge Museum were founded in 1968 to support the fledgling museum. As Chairman, I pay tribute to all the present and past Friends whose unstinting hard work has made this Award possible. From the time of the first Museum Open Day in September 1969 there have always been Friends willing to give their time freely in support of Ironbridge Gorge Museum and their efforts richly deserve this honour. The Friends have supported the Ironbridge Gorge Museum financially and in kind, with donations and physical and academic assistance since its inception. Throughout the existence of the Ironbridge Gorge Museum the Friends have made major financial contributions to buy exhibits, and refurbish buildings and equipment, particularly projects with which members have been associated. There are too many to name individually, but an interesting link has turned up recently. In 1973 the Friends gave £700 for the Pit Head Gear at Blists Hill. Unfortunately the weather over 40 years has had a detrimental effect on the replica structure, and this year the Friends launched an appeal to raise the £15,000 to replace it. Many substantial grants have continued to be made to the Ironbridge Gorge Museum in the last 20 years to help fund the building of new exhibits at Blists Hill, for example £16,000 given for the Grocer's Shop in the 1900s, and a similar amount helped fund the Railway Goods Shed. Over nearly 50 years the Friends have contributed thousands of pounds to the Ironbridge Gorge Museum, funding art, ceramics, iron and many other exhibits; not to mention the literally thousands of hours of volunteering, for which the Friends are being honoured by this **Queen's Award for Voluntary Service**.

ISSUES: MUSEUMS AND DEMENTIA

Our hosts for the 2016 BAfM Conference, the Ironbridge Museums are aware that people living with dementia – whether at home or in care – are at risk of becoming isolated and that their carers too often experience reduced social opportunities. Living well with dementia is about maintaining as much as possible, and for as long as possible, a life that is active, sociable and stimulating. Blists Hill Victorian Town, one of the sites at the Ironbridge Museum complex is a member of the Dementia Action Alliance and of the Safe Places Scheme. Many staff are trained Dementia Friends and the Museum's Life Long Learning Manager, Maureen McGregor, is the designated Dementia Champion who is training all museum staff to become Dementia Friends. Visiting Blists Hill is a safe and welcoming experience that promotes reminiscence – whether that is walking along the cobbled streets looking at the shops and cottages, riding in a horse and cart, sucking old fashioned sweets or enjoying a bag of chips while sitting in the flower garden.

The Museum marked Dementia Awareness week, May 15- May 21 by inviting those living with dementia and their carers, to visit the Victorian Town on Friday May 20th at the reduced rate of just £5 per couple. Providers of local dementia support services were also available on the day to give information, and signpost to help and advice. Director of Engagement, Paul Gossage said,

"This was the second year that Blists Hill ran Dementia Awareness Day. Once again it was a popular event attended by about 100 guests who live with dementia and part of our work to make the Museum more welcoming to those living with Dementia. The event was a great way of working with different local support organisations in order to give our guests a special day out where they felt safe and welcome."

Both Dulwich Picture Gallery and National Museums Liverpool have pioneered dementia work, and using their projects as case studies, the Alzheimers Society has produced this useful guide on creating Dementia Friendly Arts Venues: www.alzheimers.org.uk/sites/script/downloads.php/Alzheimer_s_Society_Dementia_friendly_arts_venue_guide.pdf.

For more information on this issue see also:

<http://advisor.museumsandheritage.com/industry/museums-are-part-of-a-new-movement-by-cultural-organisations-to-become-more/>

<https://www.unforgettable.org/blog/museums-become-more-dementia-friendly/>

<http://www.dulwichpicturegallery.org.uk/about/news/2014/may/confronting-stigma-and-misconceptions-associated-with-dementia-visual-to-vocal-returns/>

<http://www.liverpoolmuseums.org.uk/learning/projects/house-of-memories/>

www.dementiafriends.org.uk

ISSUES: SPOILIATION A QUESTION OF PROVENANCE

Friends of Bristol Museum and Art Gallery

The French Gallery at Bristol Museum and Art Gallery is showing a small but significant painting: an oil by Pierre-August Renoir, entitled *Crise de Cagnes, Mer, Montagnes*. It's label tells an amazing story. In January 1939, Leopold Moller (known to all as 'Poldi') learned from the police chief in Hamburg that the Gestapo were looking for him. An Austrian Jew, Poldi was prepared for this eventuality and took a flight to Amsterdam the next day, ostensibly on a business trip. The following day he travelled on to Bristol. Under his arm he carried two rolled up paintings, which he apparently convinced the German officials were copies, not originals. One was the Renoir.

Poldi Muller became a member of the Friends of BMAG in the 1950s and also became very well known to the art gallery curators during this time. He made no secret of the paintings in his possession and on his death in 1999, at the magnificent age of 100, the Renoir was bequeathed to the Friends, who in turn donated the painting to the Bristol Museum and Art Gallery.

The noun 'spoliation' is perhaps not one that many people are familiar with. It can be defined as the action of taking goods or property from somewhere by violent means. It is used in the art world with particular reference to the looting or removal of works of art from their rightful owners during the Nazi period 1933 -1945, on the European mainland. Through international agreement many countries including the UK are obliged to investigate as far as possible that

they do not hold art works in public collections which were removed from their owners' possession through spoliation. They are also required to consider fairly any claims made against an art work by a surviving relative, or other associated representative, where spoliation is suspected.

See www.collectionstrust.org.uk/collections-link/cultural-property-advice/spoliation.

Given the known history of how the Renoir in the Gallery had been brought out of Germany, we were somewhat surprised to receive a claim against the painting in January 2014. This claim presented research which suggested that our Renoir was the same one which had been sold at an auction in Germany in 1935. Furthermore it postulated that the sale had only come about as the company which owned it had been forced into liquidation through pressure from the Nazi regime given the company owners were Jewish.

In such circumstances, the process for considering such claims is clear and so BMAG referred the claimants to the Spoliation Advisory Panel. This body, set up by government, considers any such claims made in this country and then makes a recommendation as to the appropriate course of action to the government but also to the legal owners of the item. (in this case Bristol City Council). If a claim is upheld the owners of the art work are expected to abide by the decision which may recommend the return of the art work

to the claimant or alternatively financial recompense for their original loss of an asset.

After due consideration of all the information available, the Spoliation Advice Panel duly published its report concerning the Renoir in September 2015. It found that our painting is indeed the same Renoir sold in the auction in 1935, however, it also found that there was no evidence to support the contention that the sale had been forced upon the company at the time. It considered that the painting had been sold as a means to meet tax debts incurred by the company and not under duress directly linked to persecution. The recommendation therefore was that the painting should remain the property of the Bristol City Council, and the claim was not upheld.

The issues around the return of art works lost or removed from ownership during the Nazi period are complex and difficult. Occasionally the subject makes international news, eg in 2012 on the Gurlitt horde of 1,406 works. When the legitimacy of our own ownership of art works is questioned in this way, we are at pains to ensure that we follow all due process in an open, transparent and fair way. In this instance we are left wondering how Poldi Muller had acquired the painting before his flight from persecution in 1939. Did he buy it at the 1935 auction or acquire it at a later date from a different party? No one seems to know the answer to that question. It would be satisfying to complete the trail of this history and provenance of this remarkable painting.

Can We Help the Museum of Bath at work?

Hello, an unidentified object was brought into the museum recently, and we need your help to identify it! It may have connections to a laundry, or to a pharmacy.

Turning the loop at the end brings the curved parts closer together, like a vice, but they don't quite touch – perhaps it's meant to

stretch or separate something rather than clamp it? It also has a very heavy base. Do you know what this is? If you do, please get in touch!

You can do so via:
email at mobaw@hotmail.com
phone on 01225 318348



EXCITEMENT AT RESTORATION OF THE COLUMBIAN PRESS AT BLACKBURN MUSEUM

– this article was first published in **TELA**, the newsletter of Friends of Blackburn Museum and Art Gallery

My name is Julia and I am an artist specialising in painting and printmaking. I have been a fan of Blackburn Museum since I first visited it as a small child. From the taxidermy and the boulder beetles to the Hart collection of amazing manuscripts there is so much to inspire the imagination. With quality fine art and real gold coins it's a genuine treasure trove. Museums are a great resource for artists or anyone looking for creative inspiration. I can highly recommend an afternoon sketching the artefacts and seeing where the ideas take you. My sketches are often the starting point for prints created from blocks of lino, wood or vinyl.

I have a real passion for printmaking and my interest was fired up when I heard a rumour there was a Columbian Press lurking in the Museum's basement. Being lucky enough to discover the pleasure of printing on a Columbian Press as a visiting artist to UCLAN's fully equipped print studios, I loved the



idea of having something similar in my home town of Blackburn.

The rumours regarding the press were confirmed when I gatecrashed a behind the scenes museum tour. There it was in storage, dismantled with characteristic cast iron, American eagle as counterweight and serpent embellished lever intact. Hidden from view, not fulfilling its true potential, it seemed a pity somehow. I couldn't help thinking that the true value of a printing press

would come from reassembling it and turning it into a real working press.

The Columbian iron hand press was the cutting edge technology of its day. It was designed to allow a whole newspaper page to be printed in a single pull. Invented in 1813 by George Clymer (1754–1834), a Philadelphia mechanic, the press did not prove popular at first. However a move to the UK saw business take off and a vast number were built for the British and European market. With proper care and maintenance a press like the Columbian can run for centuries – or so the experts tell me. Talk about sustainability. How many pieces of new technology can make that claim?

Now I relish the idea of Blackburn Museum and Art Gallery having its own working Columbian Press. Blackburn is, after all, developing itself as a creative hub, with *Blackburn is Open* and lots of new projects in the pipeline. The museum presents us with artefacts from the past which educate and inspire us. This in turn stimulates the imagination which generates new ideas. Having a working press is an opportunity to further engage with visitors. Workshops can show people how the Columbian Press was used in the past and can be used creatively today to highlight the Museum's artefacts from illuminated manuscripts and woodblock prints to contemporary book art.

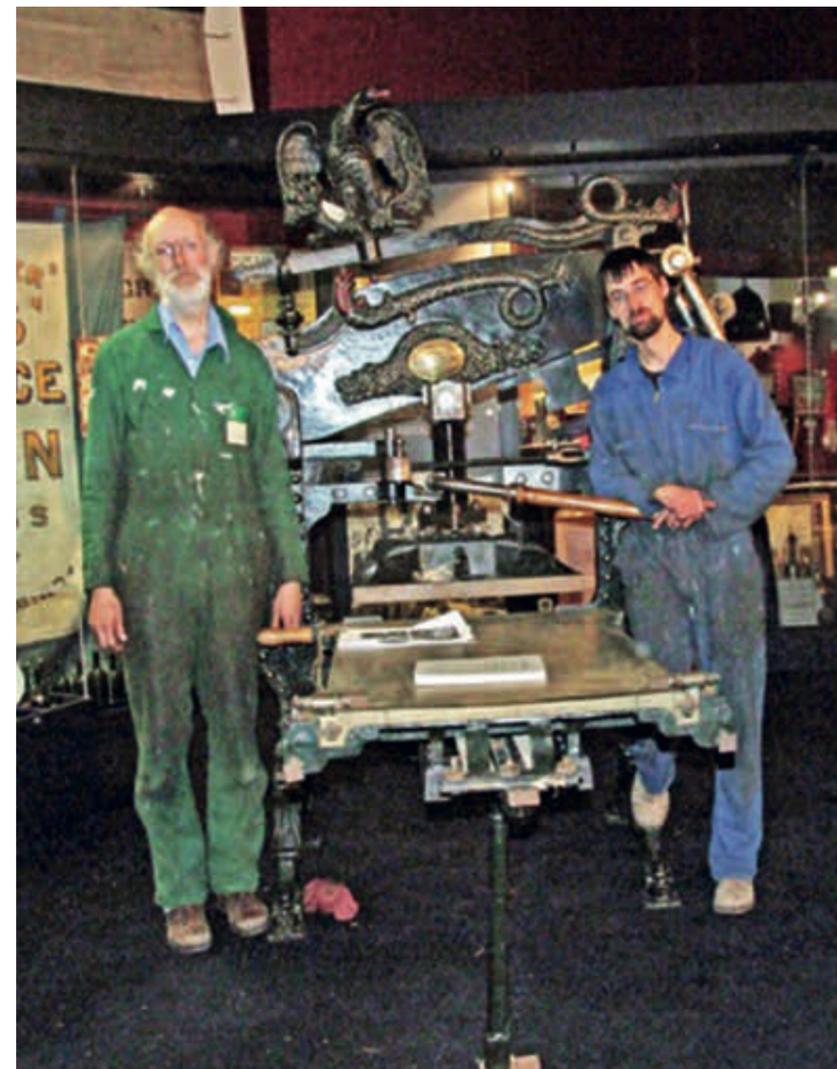
In 2015 I spent some time at Blackburn museum developing my own work while running a number of printmaking workshops often using my own homemade bottle jack press. I was interested in how my creative workshops could complement the existing collections and promote engagement.

As a result of interest in the Museum's book and manuscript collections by the University of London and the British Library, fresh attention was drawn to the press. Moved by the challenge, two experts, Richard and Brian from the St Brides Foundation in London agreed to put the press together. I was thrilled to hear that the Museum's own Columbian Press was finally coming up from the basement. It felt like a moment of synchronicity.

I had the pleasure of meeting Richard and Brian and seeing them use their expertise to put the press together. Transporting the press from the basement to the 'Skill and Labour Gallery' on the ground floor was no mean feat. The storage area is crammed to the brim with interesting paraphernalia making the passage to the lift slow and challenging. The total weight of the press was in the region of 1.5 tons and although separated into parts each piece made up a hefty load of

cast iron. The job took two long days of planning, preparing and fitting along with skilled and careful manoeuvring. They did a fantastic job of putting it all together. The press now takes pride of place in the 'Skill and Labour Gallery'.

Records tell as that this particular Columbian Press was given to the museum in the 1970's by a local printer. I understand these presses were still used as proofing presses by newspaper offices up until this time. What I don't know is where the press originally came from and it would be interesting to find out. My own great grandfather was a linotype setter for the 'Blackburn Times' and he might well have used something similar. Whatever its origins, I think the installation of the Columbian Press presents a real opportunity for visitors and friends of the museum who would like to gain an insight into the art of printmaking, its history and possibilities.



BAfM COMMENT

CULTURE WHITE PAPER

The long awaited Culture White Paper was published on 23 March 2016. BAfM welcomes the White Paper as the latest Government statement on the value of heritage and its place in national life. It demonstrates a new approach bringing together the strands of arts, heritage, libraries and museums.

Of the new measures we particularly commend The Cultural Citizens programme led by ACE and HLF to boost cultural participation in areas of high deprivation. The Great Place scheme of 12 pilot projects backing local communities who want to put culture at the heart of their local plan and policies. £3 million grant to the Architectural Heritage Fund to advise communities on how to make best use of historic buildings, including through ownership.

Historic England is tasked with identifying how it can offer more support to local authorities; to work with them on national and local heritage records so that communities and developers have easy access to historic environment records; and to work with heritage organisations to develop their international commercial appeal. The White Paper illustrates government strategy for the cultural sectors, and yet Minister Ed Vaizey commented that many of the items in Jennie Lee's first White Paper in the mid-1960s are still relevant today. In this long period of austerity, his acknowledgement that political leadership as well as leadership within and beyond the cultural sectors is needed, is possibly the most important sentence in the whole document.

ERNEST GIMSON AND THE ARTS & CRAFTS MOVEMENT IN LEICESTER – WEBSITE RELAUNCHED

From the newsletter of The Friends of Leicester & Leicestershire Museums

– Kerem Cetindamar, Digital Access Officer, Leicester Arts & Museums Service

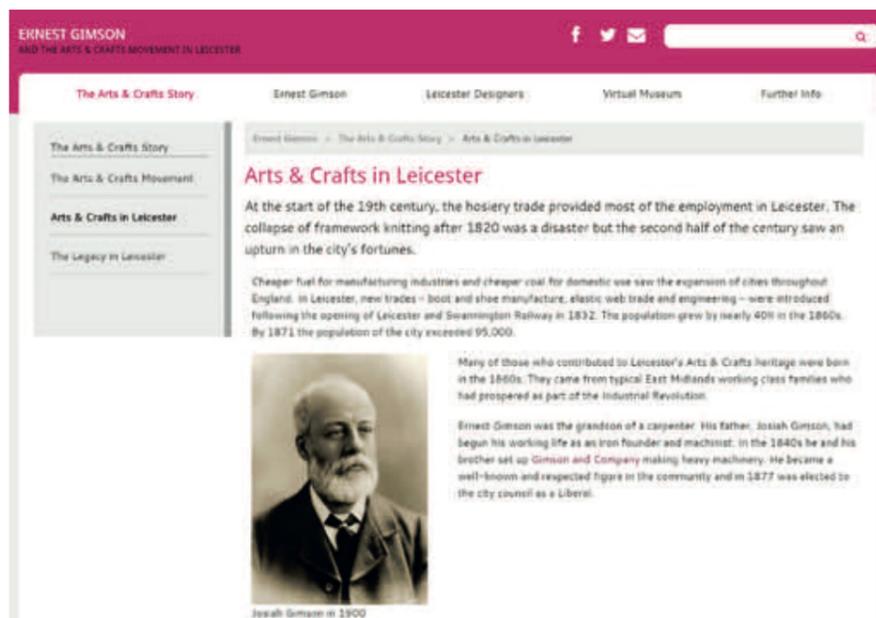
Leicester Arts & Museums Service has relaunched the 'Ernest Gimson and the Arts & Crafts Movement in Leicester' website after a major update. The website tells the story of Leicester born designer and architect, Ernest Gimson, and his involvement in the influential Arts & Crafts Movement of the late 19th Century. There is also a virtual museum with over 200 Arts & Crafts related objects from the City's collection.

Gimson was one of eleven children born to Josiah Gimson, owner of a famous Leicester engineering company. Born and educated in Leicester, Gimson went on to become a key figure in the Arts & Crafts Movement, and was inspired by William Morris.

The website was originally created in 2006/7 by the Arts & Museums Service with the support of The Friends of Leicester and Leicestershire Museums and a generous bequest from the estate of the late Daphne Plunket of Leicester, a passionate collector of Arts and Crafts furniture and of Gimson's work in particular.

Leicester Arts & Museums Service has an extensive collection of Gimson furniture and related objects that are all available to view on the website. The relaunch of the website has replaced all of the photographs with large higher resolution versions that show the objects off to their very best. The content was originally authored by historian Mary Greensted, who has now reedited the text to bring it up to date with the current understanding of the Arts & Crafts Movement.

As well as the history of the Arts & Crafts Movement and a virtual museum, the website offers films of



craftsmen using tradition techniques, walking trails as well as other resources for the casual reader and academics alike. The films are now available to view in higher definition and the website as a whole is much easier to navigate and to browse around.

The website also includes a number of objects from the Dryad Craftwork Collection which was donated to the Museum by Harry Peach. Harry Peach started collecting craft objects from Britain and around the world in about 1907. His initial enthusiasm was for cane and basketware but his interests developed rapidly.



Dragon Tree bowl by John Paul Cooper.



Plasterworks in the White House designed by Ernest Gimson.

All the items in the collection whether peasant crafts or contemporary designs, were well made and selected for a specific purpose. The Arts & Crafts Movement was inspired by these types of craft items as they were made to be beautiful but also functional objects; exactly what the Arts & Crafts practitioners aspired to.

As the Digital Access Officer for Leicester Arts & Museums Service, I have personally updated all of the images and text content on the new website and it's been a real labour of love for me as my first job at Leicester Museums was working on this particular project back in 2006. It has been a real pleasure to revisit all of the good work we were able to do with help from the Friends and the generous bequest from Daphne Plunkett. Technology moves fast and things can become quickly outdated, we hope that this website relaunch will allow the work we did to stay relevant for many years to come.

I really hope you enjoy looking at all of the high resolution images of the wonderful objects held in Leicester's Collection. The relaunched website really does do justice to these fantastic objects and to the fascinating story of Ernest Gimson's life and work. The website complements the 'Arts & Crafts Gallery' at New Walk Museum, where visitors can see a number of the objects from the website on display.

You can see the newly refreshed website at <http://gimson.leicester.gov.uk/>

All images courtesy of Leicester City Council.



Inlaid cherry box by Ernest Gimson.

WANT TO ATTRACT NEW AND YOUNGER FRIENDS?

New GooseyGoo Website Wants to Hear From You

Maryann Soper (formerly Project Manager at Grace's Guide industrial heritage website) has set up a new industrial heritage website and preservation hub, aimed, according to June's AIM Magazine, at attracting new (and we assume, younger) audiences for the sector. The site is active on social media and enables users to search for particular types of industrial heritage site and visitor information. The website features a map of industrial heritage sites. GooseyGoo wants people to submit more industrial sites to the map, and also to provide information on events. Another map "Working in Heritage" provides information on volunteering opportunities, job opportunities and training courses. Yet another map shows current campaigns and offers

encouragement through "success stories". The goal for 2016 is to ask industrial archaeology and history groups to create their own 'collections', and provide links and coverage of their own group's activities – giving them credit for work done at a particular site, but also hopefully increasing membership by raising the group's profile – a goal of great interest to many Friends' organisations. "We recognise that the "Friends of" groups are vital to the preservation and management of our industrial history and they need as much help, praise and online coverage as possible," says Maryann.

For more information see www.GooseyGoo.co.uk

INTRODUCING A NEW MEMBER OF BAFM: THE FRIENDS OF THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES

Ian Hay-Campbell, Chairman of the Friends of The National Archives



In 2015 the Friends of The National Archives marked the twenty-seventh anniversary of our foundation. The Friends is a charitable and voluntary organisation dedicated to supporting the role played by The National Archives (TNA) in the preservation, conservation and use of the nation's records. The Friends was set up in 1988, at the then Public Record Office in Chancery Lane in central London, and launched at a conference celebrating 150 years of the archives.

We are now based at TNA in Kew. Our objectives are to educate the public in the knowledge of public and other records, and to promote and assist the work of TNA through fund-raising and practical support.

The Friends provide vital assistance with various projects enabling records of all kinds and classes to be conserved, catalogued and studied. We help in other ways too by providing funding for projects, book reviews for the shop, helping with public duties in support of

staff and also we part-fund conferences and seminars. TNA is a remarkable place with so much diversity in the support that the Friends can provide.

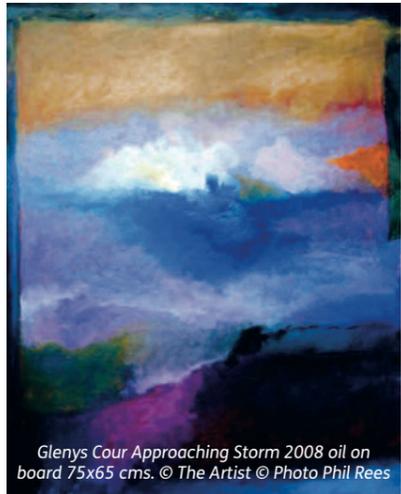
The Friends also organise and host events at TNA, several in conjunction with other institutions; as well as arranging special tours for our members to venues of historical interest and importance. We produce a members' magazine twice a year, drawing on over a thousand years of history from in the Archive's eclectic collections.

It is fair to say we are unique – the only government department to have a Friends' organisation. The more Friends we have the more we can do to help safeguard the nation's documentary heritage for future generations.

The Friends of the National Archives are very pleased to be joining BAFM. Please do get in contact with us – we would be delighted to forge links and engage in reciprocal visits with other BAFM Friends Groups.

outreach@friendsofthenationalarchives.org.uk

The Glynn Vivian Art Gallery 2016



Glenys Cour Approaching Storm 2008 oil on board 75x65 cms. © The Artist © Photo Phil Rees

THE RETURN OF THE GLYNN VIVIAN

In September 2014 the art lovers of Swansea were delighted to assist the Royal Institution of South Wales in hosting the 41st BAfM Annual Conference. The conference was a great success due in no small part to the fact that the city's various cultural associations were in the midst of consolidating a commemoration of Swansea's historic global significance as a centre of copper smelting and at the same time preparing for the 2014 international centenary celebrations of Dylan Thomas. Pride and joy were much in evidence but so too was regret, for there was no disguising the fact that Swansea's much-loved Glynn Vivian Art Gallery had been closed for development and refurbishment since October 2011 and, at that time, there was still uncertainty concerning the reopening date. Now it can, at last, be confidently asserted that the Glynn Viv will be opening its doors again – in October 2016.

Those doors had first been opened in 1911 and from the outset this elegant Italianate building with its colourful facade and decorated windows and porch occasioned local pride. Entering the gallery's splendid atrium left one in no doubt that this was to be an entirely appropriate temple celebrating artistic

creativity. The building carried the name of the area's leading copper-smelting family. Richard Glynn Vivian, the youngest son of the Vivian dynasty, had used his wealth to enjoy all the fruits of European travel and to collect art and porcelain. In 1905 he donated his collection and £10,000 to the people of Swansea. Once administrative and financial details had been sorted by the local authority the new gallery could immediately display distinguished works by artists such as Richard Wilson and Penry Williams and to the bequeathed china could be added lovely examples of local Swansea porcelain. François Depeaux, an industrialist from Rouen and patron of Sisley, had offices in Swansea and to the new gallery he donated seven French impressionist landscapes.

It had been an industrial fortune that had brought the Gallery into being and in a way it had been industry that had given the town its artistic aura. Later poets would memorably sum up the dramatic landscapes that had been developed on Swansea's stunning bay and on the lower reaches of the River Tawe. Edward Thomas spoke of how the black hills, the fire-palaces and smoke stacks *compose one of the sublimest of all absolutely human*

landscapes; for Dylan Thomas, Swansea was *an ugly, lovely town.....by the side of a long and splendid-curving shore*. It had been crying out to be painted and Thomas Lightfoot, Julius Caesar Ibbetson, Henry Gastineau, George Chambers, James Harris and many others duly obliged. One can almost feel that the building of a fine gallery was inevitable.

It was certainly inevitable that an art school would emerge out of all this entrepreneurial and artistic creativity. It was first established in 1853 and then in 1887 it moved to premises above the Library in Alexandra Road. From 1908 the school was headed by the Scot, William Grant Murray and when in 1911 the Glynn Vivian Gallery opened on the opposite side of the road he became the boss of that too. And so it was that an art zone had been created in Swansea and subsequently the interaction of Gallery and Art School (now part of the University of Wales, Trinity St David) has been at the core of all forms of artistic creativity in Swansea. Artists such as Evan Walters, Ceri Richards, Alfred Janes, Vera Bassett and Will Roberts studied on one side of the road and then exhibited on the other.

that has forged links with other local galleries, artists, school children and deprived communities. The newly reopened gallery will find itself at the centre of a greatly enhanced local art scene. Even as the countdown proceeds eight local artists are completing a book recording the images of transition. A re-opening street procession is planned highlighting the work of seven other artists. All the while art historian Kirstine Brander Dunthorne and Barry Plummer have been working on the papers and career of Richard Glynn Vivian highlighting how Edwardian Swansea had links with many aspects of European culture.

As we all prepare ourselves for our revamped gallery with its new wheelchair-friendly entrance, its learning studio, bookshop, library, lecture theatre, extended display facilities, storage and conservation areas and improved access between the 1911 and 1974 galleries, the Friends of the Glynn Vivian give thanks for the funding received from the Arts Council of Wales, the Welsh Government, CADW, City & County of Swansea together with the support of the Heritage Lottery Fund. In the last five years the Gallery has been discussed and debated as never before and many new friends have been made. Armed with this knowledge the Friends have launched **The Glynn Vivian 2016 Fund**, a public appeal for contributions that will enable this refurbishment to be rounded off with greatly enhanced facilities.

We are confident that there are many new 'friends' who will want to display their attachment to the Glynn Viv by making it more fully theirs. Our appetites are already whetted for in October things start off with exhibitions of Leonardo drawings from the Royal Collection and soon after, *The Colour of Saying*, by Swansea's best-loved and most respected artist Glenys Cour, whose brilliant use of colour developed during her career lecturing just across the road from the Gallery, where she has served in many capacities.

We have a sense in Swansea that things are falling into place very nicely.

© Peter Stead 2016

(Professor Stead was President of the Friends of the Glynn Vivian 2011-16)

www.friendsoftheglynnvivian.com

ACCESSIBILITY: THE WALLACE COLLECTION SUBTITLE FIRST TALK IN- HOUSE

There were smiles all round at the Wallace Collection on Monday 21 March 2016, as the museum successfully live subtitled their first talk in-house. This was an enriching development for the venue, who already offer live subtitled tours for deaf, deafened and hard of hearing visitors through the use of portable tablets. After a successful funding bid, The Wallace Collection chose an arms and armour lecture on Charles V's Great Tournament to subtitle in-house. The funding enabled the venue to receive training and guidance from Stagertext in order to set up their own in-house facilities, with the hope of programming 20-24 events with live subtitles over the next two years, as well as purchasing ten brand new tablets for their accessible tours.

Deepa Shastri, Stagertext's Talks Programme Manager said: *'It's fantastic that The Wallace Collection are now able to manage the technical set-up in-house for live subtitled events. This proves that any museum or cultural venue can provide live subtitling, even if they have limited resources. Stagertext can consult and guide all venues, from how much funding to apply for right through to managing the service in-house, thus making the whole process fool proof and exciting.'*

More information on subtitled events at The Wallace can be found at www.wallacecollection.org

SAVE SWANSEA MUSEUM!

Many of you may remember the exceptional BAfM Conference held in Swansea in 2014, hosted by the Royal Institute of South Wales (Friends of Swansea Museum). We saw some wonderful examples of urban regeneration through heritage projects. RISW were outstanding hosts and an inspiring, enthusiastic Friends Group, and now they need our help:

The City and County of Swansea has decided to remove **half** of the budget of Swansea Museum over the next three years.

The RISW, as the Friends of Swansea Museum, are asking the Council to reconsider its decision.

A 50% cut will destroy or severely damage the collections and their conservation, education, exhibition and outreach services. Swansea Museum would be reduced to a static display, with limited access and passive or non-existent services. This would damage local education, social cohesion and tourism.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- Sign the RISW's online petition to stop the cuts: <https://t.co/uA1pkSYf9M>

- Write a letter to the press (more info at <http://www.risw.org/>)

- Ask your friends to support the campaign

Keep in touch with the RISW's campaign through Twitter @riswswansea

FRIENDS AT WORK: FRIENDS OF THE SOMERSET RURAL LIFE MUSEUM

– what happens to the Friends when a Museum Closes for Refurbishment? The Friends of Somerset Rural Life show how through improvising new premises, they can remain as busy as ever and continue 2 invaluable projects.

Oral Archive Project

– Mary Vidal Friends of the SRLM

The Somerset Rural Life Museum has now been closed for two years for a complete updating and refurbishment and the Friends are very much looking forward to the reopening early in 2017. Advance indications suggest that the new museum will prove to be one of the jewels in Somerset's crown.

During the interregnum the Friends have continued as many of their activities as possible. The oral archive is now housed in the home of one of the Friends, for whose generosity we are extremely grateful, and we are also able to work there. For those who are not familiar with the archive, it was started in 1973 by a member of staff at Taunton museum who made about twenty recordings. But when the Somerset Rural Life Museum opened in 1975 the first Keeper, Martyn Brown, was keen to develop it. The Friends of the Museum came into existence almost at the same time and he asked Ann Heeley, who was one of the very first members and an active volunteer to go out and do some more interviews. Strawberry growing, once famous in the Cheddar area, was in decline by 1979 and it was decided this was where she should start. Ann had never done any interviewing before and she had inherited the very large and cumbersome recording machine from Taunton. She was naturally nervous the first time but since then over 850 recordings have been made, by far the most by Ann. This is a remarkable achievement and the collection is probably one of the larger oral archives of its kind in the country.

It covers a wide variety of professions, trades (some of which no longer exist) and life stories and includes several special projects. One of the first of these was to find retired farmers and many responded to an

advertisement. Some had been born in the late Victorian era and their memories stretched back to both World Wars and the period in between. Ann particularly remembers Sidney White, a well-known prize-winning cheese-maker, who she interviewed when he was 98 and in a care home. His memory was extraordinarily clear and he recalled that one day when he was at school the pupils were allowed outside to see what was probably one of the first motor cars in Somerset preceded by a man carrying a red flag.

Cider Making, the Women's Institute in Somerset, Bees and Bee-keeping, Willow Growing and Willow Products, the Peat Industry and Cheese-making are other projects that form a large and important part of the collection. More recently, retired employees of Clarks, the international shoe giant whose administrative headquarters are still in Street, and Morlands, once famous for sheepskin products, have been located and recorded. Other small collections from local history societies have been donated to the museum.

All the recordings are fully transcribed and are available in the Heritage Centre in Taunton to be listened to and read. When the museum reopens next year it will also be possible to listen to them there.

A publication based on a selection of these precious memories has been incorporated into a book, *Somerset Voices, a celebration of memories* researched and written by three Friends of the Somerset Rural Life Museum: Ann Heeley, Louise Clapp and Liz Snelgrove. It is a fascinating story and includes many wonderful photographs, some of which have never been published before. The book, which is sure to appeal to many BAfM members, is published by Halsgrove, price £10.00. Copies can be obtained through the Friends website www.friendsrlm.org.uk, in bookshops, or on Amazon.

The Digital Imaging Project

– Louise F Clapp, Friends of the SRLM

Accessibility is the key word these days, and with digital images that becomes possible. A small group of members of the Research Group, part of the Friends of Somerset Rural Life Museum, are helping to make this happen.

One of the first exhibitions held at the Rural Life Museum (now Somerset R L M) in Glastonbury after its opening in late 1975 was of old photographs of Glastonbury, many loaned by members of the newly formed Friends of the Abbey Barn. Before returning them to their owners, Martyn Brown, the first keeper of Rural Life, copied them. Thus began the collection of images – some as original prints or postcards, some as celluloid negatives. All these needed recording, filing away, and cataloguing, along with information relevant to them.

As the scope of the work at the museum broadened to all aspects of rural life in Somerset, so did the photographic recording. The collection now comprises images relating to people, lifestyles, crafts and occupations as well as recording museum activities, exhibitions, subjects of oral recordings, special events – in fact a vast range of topics too numerous to itemise.

Initially, information about all the images was cross-referenced using card indexes, with a colour code for whether the image was a print, negative or an original. There was, and is, much duplication where some images can appear in all three forms. As staffing changes inevitably took place, the systems for filing and recording were altered or improved, or even abandoned, so that we now have several differing systems to search in for a particular image and



its detailed information and provenance.

The DIP team, comprising members of the Research Group set up in 1983 to support the museum staff, is working on the collections of celluloid negatives. In 2013 we estimated there were possibly 15,000 in various formats in the early files and if they were to be digitised to a high standard we would need specialist equipment and training. With funding from the Friends, training commenced in October 2013. There were two complications: the newly purchased scanner proved, after eight months of exasperation, to be faulty; and in the spring of 2014 the Museum closed for a two to three year refurbishment. Rather than commute to Taunton – impossible for the team – we set up the required research facilities in a nearby village, and commenced the digitisation in earnest in June 2014 with a brand new scanner from the manufacturer.

The digitisation process, slow at first, has become a well-trodden path with self-written procedures for each stage, and meticulous recording of work done. One person scans the negatives, transfers the images to Photoshop for any necessary adjustments, and allocates a unique number to each image. Two people have been trained in this process, but

with only one scanner, they work at different times. Nevertheless, this is proving to be the quickest stage with over 8,000 scanned by Easter 2016.

At the second stage information from all sources is collated and used to fill in a standardised cataloguing sheet for each negative. This stage has the most complexity as information can be in several places.

Here, experience and familiarity are invaluable; after years of helping with the collections, and using them in research, publications, educational activities and exhibitions, this knowledge often unearths crucial information. Access at this point to the digitised image is sometimes crucial, jogging the memory of long-term members of the group whose knowledge of events, people, places and objects often leads to searching in places others would not consider. Without this personal knowledge and experience, the information about the content of many of the images would be lost. None of this stage is computer dependent, so unlike the other two stages several people at a time can be working here. Currently, two people work here regularly and a third is in training.

The third stage is when the unique image number is matched up with the information from stage two, and entered in a spreadsheet devised by Somerset Heritage Trust (SHT) as a

stepping stone to their catalogue database. The information has to be added in a consistent manner, so the two people involved have received training from archivists at SHT, and adhere to protocols of key words and abbreviations etc. Again, only one person at a time can operate the dedicated computer, so they work at different times, often overlapping their shifts to be able to confer. The fully completed entries are lagging way behind the actual scans, with just over 3200 completed by Easter 2016.

At the fourth and final stage all files are copied at regular intervals and sent to the SHT. An individual image file varies in size from 4mb to 120mb depending on the negative size and complexity, so these are saved onto a very large double external hard drive which is copied by SHT staff on regular visits. The Excel stage three files are sent every two weeks over the internet to SHT staff who check then transfer them over to the CALM database. This can be accessed through the link <http://somerset-cat.swheritage.org.uk/records/A/DSW>

Already, Somerset images are available that have languished unseen for decades, inaccessible through lack of knowledge of outdated systems, and forgotten indexes. This mammoth project will bring these into the public domain, and prove an invaluable resource for professional and amateur historians.

EARLY DAYS – FRUSTRATIONS

Peter Hammill

– Originally published in the Friends of Harrow Museum & Heritage Centre newsletter

English Heritage has a bit of a reputation for strange decisions when it comes to planning applications on listed buildings. Watchers of TV programmes such as ‘Restoration Man’ or ‘Grand Designs’ will be aware of the somewhat arbitrary decision making made by these architecture mandarins. At the same time, they preserve much of our heritage and work in the best interests of our architectural future. We certainly wouldn’t want to go back to the sixties when all old buildings were targets for destruction and substitution by concrete monstrosities.

The reason I mention all this is that my brush with English Heritage was singularly odd. It goes back to the early days when it had been decided that a toilet in the barn at Headstone Manor would be a good idea – not least for those of us who were there for long periods of time. (This was before the manor became part of the museum). In order to make the entrance to the toilet access safe and flat the floor plate at ground level had to be cut. This was a piece of wood about four feet long and about three inches on all sides – a pity, but not a huge sacrifice in the scheme of the project.

At that time, the fledgling Museum Group was anxious to promote the projected museum to the general public, which included a shop selling all sorts of items which conveyed the existence of the museum to the wider public – including mugs, bookmarks, erasers and various items with the museum logo printed on. The pieces of wood from the base of the barn had been to a dendrochronologist and dated as being from trees felled in the fourteenth century. They may have been used from a previous building as the barn itself was not that old, although not far short. I thought there was some potential in these bits of wood, not least because of a recent incident. I was showing a small party of Americans around the barn and they were very impressed. As I explained the nature of the site there were lots of “Aw gee” and “Ya don’t say”. When I told them that the barn was built a few years after their country was discovered they were totally overwhelmed. I



realised that we take ancient buildings for granted in this country; the North Americans have little that is more than a couple of hundred years old.

Anyway, I fished the bits of wood out of the builder’s skip and began to investigate methods of slicing the wood and mounting pieces on a small plinth with an inscription something like ‘A sample of timber from the Tithe Barn Headstone Manor, dated late thirteen hundreds.’ I knew that there were similar items from HMS Victory and similar places available, so it was hardly an original idea – but it could make a few bob for the museum.

By coincidence, a few evenings later there was a meeting between members of the Arts Council, a few members of the Museum Group and a representative from English Heritage, I believe to discuss how we could modify the barn to make it more user-friendly without spoiling the attraction of the building. I happened to have the pieces of timber with me at the time, with a view to sharing the idea with the others. Big mistake! When the English Heritage guy heard of my proposal he went pale.

“You can’t possibly do that!” he exclaimed.

“Why on earth not?” I replied.

“It’s your heritage! You can’t just cut it up and flog it off!”

“But I rescued it from a skip!” I protested.

“Not the point” he continued. “Where would we be if we sold off chunks of our ancient buildings? No, it’s quite impossible. It goes against everything that we’re working for on this site.”

He was adamant. There was no way he was going to allow pieces of the barn to

be sold off, regardless of where they came from. John Teather, then Chairman of the Arts Council, of which the Museum Group was a part, supported him and I was instructed to go no further with the project. The chunks of wood went back in the skip.

Frankly, I never understood the logic of the argument, and I still think the Americans, and others, would have been interested in a bit

of the barn, at the right price, but not everyone sees life in the same way. And perhaps that is for the best.

About Harrow Museum and Heritage Centre (Headstone Manor and Museum):

Headstone Manor & Museum (Harrow Museum) has been awarded £3.6 million by the Heritage Lottery Fund. Alongside £1m from Harrow Council, and £270,000 from the John Lyon’s Charity, this funding will totally transform this historic site. **Please note: The Manor House is currently closed for restoration and will re-open in 2017. The Museum is currently in the Granary.** The new museum in the restored Manor House will open in Summer 2017. The Small Barn & Granary will house exciting new displays and events. Entry is Free to this tranquil oasis hidden away in the middle of a London suburb.

The land on which Headstone Manor stands is recorded as part of the complete ‘manor’ of Harrow, owned by Wulfred, Archbishop of Canterbury in 825 AD. Still in ecclesiastical ownership, the construction of the Manor House began in c. 1310, as revealed by dendrochronological dating of the building’s oldest timbers. Headstone Manor remained the property of the Archbishops of Canterbury until the Reformation, when in 1546 it was surrendered to Henry VIII by Thomas Cranmer. Henry VIII was ‘Lord of the Manor of Headstone’ for six days, before selling the property to Edward North, a court favourite.

Headstone Manor Museum, Harrow Middlesex

<http://harrowmuseum.org.uk>

FRIENDS AT WORK CASE STUDY: SHARE MYSTERY SHOPPER SCHEME

Friends of Welwyn Hatfield Museums

The Welwyn Hatfield Museum Service is a member of an Arts Council funded body called SHARE. SHARE Museums East is a museum development organisation that works out of the Norfolk Museums (it had to be based somewhere!) on behalf of the Arts Council. It provides an ever-widening programme of training and support for all accredited museums in the East of England through facilitating forums; they run courses and arrange networking opportunities across all aspects of museum life; for example, working with volunteers, learning skills, Front of House and retail development, all to help toward economic sustainability with sound practices for museums.

It achieves this mostly through a peer to peer knowledge exchange that is available to all accredited museums, large and small. This is hands-on skills transfer at work, and in particular where it’s recognized that the skills and knowledge requirements are the same for all; for example, seeking to maximize Front of House skills and abilities is just as important to any museum whatever the size, as enhancing collections management skills and techniques.

One of their recent developments has been a Mystery Shopper scheme. These have of course been commercially available for many years, and are correspondingly commercially expensive. The SHARE difference is that by using volunteers from the participating museums, who are reimbursed their travelling and entry costs, operating costs can be kept to a minimum. The shopper’s training, questionnaire compilation and subsequent assimilation and distribution are all carried out by SHARE. The scheme was piloted in 2014 with 8 museums, with our own Museum Manager Linda Dobbs on the steering committee, and was judged an immediate success. A much larger roll-out involving 20 museums followed in 2015, and this article explains both the challenges and the benefits.

The double benefit comes from the shoppers taking back to their own museums the insights gained from the museums that they visited. The Friends contributed both time and a grant, and what follows is a review of just how successful that investment has been. To quote from the SHARE introductory statement: ‘Good customer service is absolutely vital to museums and their public facing mission, as well as supporting their ability to generate income in a time of uncertain funding’.

THE SHOPPERS TALE – BY ANGIE CURTIS

We began with a training day which was held at the Fitzwilliam Museum. There we were taken through the steps required to accomplish a fruitful visit. They included making a trial ‘mystery shop’ of the Fitzwilliam to allow us to practise our newly-taught skills. One object lesson quickly learnt was just how tricky it can be to make assessments in one’s head without becoming engrossed in the marvellous exhibits!

After each museum visit we would complete an on-line survey consisting of more than 90 questions to describe our

experiences, covering everything from the usefulness of the museum’s website, the weather on the day of the visit, the welcome we received (or not!), toilet facilities and interaction with staff and volunteers, to the quality of displays and information available. Our responses were processed by SHARE, who then passed them on to the museum visited. All the participating museums were sending out mystery shoppers, which meant that both Mill Green and the Roman Baths would (and did!) come under scrutiny at some point.

The SHARE co-ordinator, based in Norwich Castle Museum, had the unenviable task of allocating the 20 museums to the 49 mystery shoppers, taking into account previously booked holidays, preferred means of transport and other factors which would affect the shoppers’ ability to visit. The one thing we were not able to do was to express a preference. We would go where sent, like it or not, and so in due course we received an email telling us which museum to visit and the time frame in which we should go, and off we went.

The first museum my husband Bev and I visited was a museum of local history and transport, not one which I would have chosen! But this was all to the good: any feedback we gave would indicate to the museum what they could offer to a visitor with little interest in engineering or transport. As it turned out, I enjoyed the visit because the volunteers throughout the museum were so delightful. Once the visit was completed, we drove to a café and sat outside in the breezy sunshine to fill in the paper equivalent of the on-line survey while the information was still fresh in our minds. The questions are carefully worded so that we could present a straightforward statement of fact which was neither critical nor approving but throughout the survey there are opportunities to give a personal opinion.

Our second visit was to a sea-side museum where we learned an awful lot about fish so, if the scheme did nothing else, it broadened our knowledge!

Between our three WelHat pairs we visited seven museums, great and small, and it was very interesting to compare notes afterwards. The friendliness of the welcome varied from warm smiles and greetings to initially being ignored. In some cases, the gallery attendants were non-existent or even turned their backs. Elsewhere, we experienced helpful friendly attention with explanations and information. The age-old question of labelling – too much detail or too little? – was ever-present. Notably the quality of the websites varied. In one case it was difficult to track down visitor information and in another the website promoted its children’s activities so vigorously that it gave the impression it was aimed solely at children.

During our visits we were very aware that each museum was working hard to provide a good experience and I sincerely hope that our comments, well-intentioned and dispassionate, will help them to make the most of their available energy and resources.

FRIENDS OF GLOUCESTER WATERWAYS MUSEUM PROVIDE NEW SEATING

The Friends of Gloucester Waterways Museum latest funding project was completed during January and to celebrate the occasion a plaque was unveiled on the vessel *King Arthur*.

An important part of the Museum are the two trip boats and one of them, the *King Arthur*, was in need of new seating on the top deck. The Friends offered to fund the replacement of the seats so that from the beginning of the new season passengers may enjoy a trip along the canal and Severn in comfort.

Two other projects recently receiving funding from the Friends have been the large and still working Fielding engine and the old favourite, the steam dredger. Both are currently receiving maintenance work with everyone looking forward to seeing them in action again soon.



The museum trip boat King Arthur.

HISTORIC ROYAL PALACES

Norah Dunbar, BAfM International Representative

I was delighted to be invited to represent BAfM at a reception at the Banqueting House in Whitehall at the end of April to celebrate the completion of a major £3.5m conservation project. The Banqueting House was erected 400 years ago in the reign of James I and has a magnificent interior and a ceiling by Rubens, reminiscent of the Sistine Chapel. In those 400 years it has hosted a great many and varied functions – dining in that era was totally different to the present day. One not-so-happy occasion at the Banqueting House was when it saw the execution of King Charles I in 1649. Happily the same fate did not befall our Speakers – the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, the Rt. Hon. John Whittingdale, MP, who performed the opening ceremony, and the Chief Curator of Historic Royal Palaces, Dr Lucy Worsley, who gave a resume of what entertaining was like all those years ago.

When you are next walking down Whitehall pause at the Banqueting House, visit if you can, and be amazed at the splendour of the interior.

The Banqueting House is part of Historic Royal Palaces. Also under this umbrella are Kew Palace, Kensington Palace, Hampton Court Palace and the Tower of London. We all

remember the wonderful display of poppies at the Tower of London commemorating those who died in the War. I purchased a poppy and it is beautifully framed as a permanent reminder of that event. But Historic Royal Palaces does not stop in London. Its reach stretches to Holyrood House in Edinburgh and to Hillsborough Castle in Northern Ireland. The latter is of particular interest to me, coming from Belfast, and I am watching with interest the progress of the many changes taking place there and due for completion in 2019. The grounds at Hillsborough Castle are delightful and it is good that they are open to the public and not just to those lucky enough to be invited to a garden party.

The downside of arranging an event in Holyrood or Hillsborough is that Her Majesty takes precedence over any other booking – as I discovered in Edinburgh when our Spring Trip with 50 Friends had to hurriedly make alternative arrangements to a morning tour of Holyrood House when Her Majesty came north.

Historic Royal Palaces does not receive any government funding but relies on the support of visitors, members, donors, sponsors and volunteers.



Rubens ceiling at the Banqueting House

NEWS FROM THE FRIENDS OF THE LAING ART GALLERY, NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE



Drs William & Andrena Telford

One of the most exciting and enjoyable aspects of the Friends of the Laing is the regular travel programme, which incorporates both day trips and longer breaks. In spring, a group of Friends travelled to London to see “Painting the Modern Garden: Monet to Matisse” at the Royal Academy and went on to view the Wallace Collection at Hertford House. Closer to home, Friends enjoyed a visit to the Bowes Museum in Barnard Castle, focussing on an exhibition of quilts by Pauline Burbridge, entitled “Quiltsapes and Quiltline”.

Most recent of these trips has been a five-day visit to “The Treasures of Surrey and the Chelsea Flower Show”. Departing from Newcastle by coach, we arrived in St Albans by lunchtime and had an opportunity to visit St Albans Cathedral, with its splendid shrine to the saint and its rare wall paintings. Over the next few days we visited four historic National Trust houses (Petworth, Polesden Lacey, Ham House and Hardwick Hall), had a relaxing morning in Richmond on Thames and spent a wonderful day at the Chelsea Flower Show. The holiday not only enriched us culturally but also gave us a chance to socialise with other members of our society,



thanks to the splendid organisation of the Travel Committee under the direction of Marian Green.

The continuing programme of lectures has had a variety of topics to enthral us: from suffragettes in the North East to the Fauve painters who adopted the French town of Collioure and from the hidden places of Durham Cathedral to the only Royal Academician said to have turned cannibal, Johan Zoffany, shipwrecked en route from India to England!

The great coup of the year so far has been an exhibition of ten drawings by Leonardo Da Vinci, on loan from the Royal Collection. It was, not surprisingly, hugely popular, with over 8,000 visitors in the first two weeks and extensive press coverage. The Friends of the Laing were very much involved in this, not only making a substantial financial contribution to the cost of mounting the exhibition but also hosting visitors at the Welcome Desk and leading tour groups round the exhibition. With talks by Sarah Richardson, Keeper of Art at the Laing, and Martin Clayton, Head of Prints and Drawings at the Royal Collection (and Curator of the exhibition), the Friends were able to make the most of this unique opportunity.



FRIENDS OF WORTHING MUSEUM & ART GALLERY

Mrs Josephine Hutchinson receives Medal of the Order of the British Empire (BEM)

On Tuesday 16th February 2016 Mrs Josephine Hutchinson was awarded the Medal of the Order of the British Empire, in recognition of over 50 years services to the artistic and cultural communities in Worthing. It was presented to her by West Sussex Lord Lieutenant Mrs Susan Pyper, on behalf of Her Majesty the Queen in the Worthing Library Lecture Theatre, witnessed by a large crowd.

News of Mrs Hutchinson's award was announced in June 2015, as part of the Queen's Birthday Honours list and is in recognition of her work as the Chair of the Friends of Worthing Museum & Art Gallery, Chair of Worthing Community Arts Council and as current Vice President of the Twinning Association.



Pictured from left to right: Councillor Michael Donin Mayor of Worthing, Mrs Josephine Hutchinson BEM, Mrs Susan Pyper West Sussex Lord Lieutenant and Mrs Margaret Bamford, Deputy Lord Lieutenant of West Sussex.

WFFM MEETING IN WASHINGTON D.C.

– Rosemary Marsh



This meeting was stimulating and interesting: stimulating because there were more young (ie under 30) Friends there than regular Friends; interesting because problems and solutions were shared, news exchanged and our American hosts showed us the stunning national museums and monuments as well as some of the smaller pleasures of their capital city. We were generously entertained at the home of a collector and the A.G.M took place in a private club, which I, for one, would not have been able to visit on a normal tourist trip.

But to return to the Young Friends, it was unanimously agreed that from now on they will be able to join the Federation at a nominal rate of subscription, send a representative to the Executive Committee meetings and influence the way we oldies do things. They have a Facebook page, which is updated, almost hourly - if you want to know more go to: www.museumfriends.com as a starting point. Several people said, in conversation, that they knew about the Robert Logan award, enjoyed reading about BAfM on our web site and would like to have more contact with BAfM members.

Elsa Amatriain, the European Vice President from Madrid, reported on her impressions of the concerns of Friends in Europe which she summed up as being: shortage of funds, political uncertainty and concerns about immigration. Museums are vitally important in any civilised society. Museum groups in several countries are trying to help migrants feel less uprooted. Notably in Germany, where there is a scheme to bring migrants into museums, especially

those with items from their home countries, and re connect them with history in the hope that they will bring others from their ethnic groups once they realise that museums are safe and comfortable places. It's something, which any Friends group could easily copy, possibly in cooperation with other voluntary groups. The objective could be to train an immigrant to guide his or her fellow countrymen (or women) around their museum.

In the Argentine, Friends groups train senior citizens as guides in museums and work on keeping older people mentally healthy. In Singapore, the

Friends also offer training, scholarships for young professionals and run book groups - whether they read books about museums and cultural topics or just novels was not specified! The German Federation has raised money to help set up young groups through crowd funding.

On a more prosaic note WFFM, which was founded in 1972, is going through a re-branding exercise, asking fundamental questions about what it is for, what do members want, why do they support the Federation and, just as importantly, what opportunities are there to attract donors and sponsors? If this all sounds familiar, it might be worth watching what happens. The updated and work in progress web site is: www.museumfriends.org

Incidentally, BAfM would not exist but for the World Federation- some UK Friends (from Tate, The National Army Museum and Norwich) went to the Launch meeting of WFFM and came back resolved to establish a national association so that we could take a full part in the World Federation.

Next year the meeting will be in either Verona or Mantua in Northern Italy - date to be announced shortly - watch this space and include it in your holiday plans.

REMEMBERING KEN HAWKES (1940-2016) FOUNDER MEMBER OF THE FRIENDS OF GUNNERSBURY PARK AND MUSEUM

Ken Hawkes died on 28th January 2016. Ken was a founder member of the Friends of Gunnersbury Park and Museum in 1981. In 1982 when the organisation became a Registered Charity, Ken took on the role of Honorary Secretary.

The Friends Group grew out of the campaign to prevent the Gunnersbury stables being given away on a 99 year peppercorn lease to a property developer for an office conversion. The proposed deal had been proposed between the local authority and a former Brentford footballer who ran a company in Hoddesdon.

As well as helping to found the Friends of Gunnersbury Ken had built up a track record of community activity around the Strand on the Green. He continued his community activity in Brentford with long term involvement in the Brentford Community Resource Centre.

A Chemical Engineer by profession and a long term resident of Brentford Dock, Ken liked to be known, to his Friends at the Museum and colleagues, as "Ken of Brentford". Ken's sardonic humour enlivened Friends' meetings with welcome laughter, amidst the hard work that had to be done. Ken will be much missed.

EASTERN COUNTIES AREA MEETING AT KING'S LYNN 29 FEBRUARY 2016

– Alan Swerdlow Regional Coordinator

We had an outstanding attendance of over twenty people representing almost all of the BAfM member groups in the north of my region. The Friends of Lynn Museum gave us a warm welcome and provided a delicious lunch. Oliver Bone, the Curator, took us round the immaculate museum displays particularly Seahenge which he dated precisely as from 2049BC but there were so many fascinating things including a special display of Savage's the famous Lynn fairground makers.

Amy Cotterill gave us a presentation about the new Museums Association Code of Ethics. The Code now places public engagement as first priority even before stewardship of collections. The third strand is individual and institutional integrity which is perhaps the area most relevant to Friends groups. Accredited museums are duty bound to follow the Code and that would include Friends and Volunteers.

Break out groups discussed a series of topics before Miranda Rowlands from SHARED talked about new ideas on funding. The sector is meeting challenges with skills broadly the same whether in a large or small museum so they are scaleable. When Friends are an independent charity they can access funds that a local authority cannot such as legacies which are an important area for research.



Photo by Paul Damen.

BAfM EASTERN REGION: SHARED ENTERPRISE FUNDING FAIR

– Alan Swerdlow

SHARE is our region's member of the Museum Development Network (<http://sharemuseumseast.org.uk/>) and I attended the event at The Athenaeum in Bury St Edmunds on 9 May. I spoke to many of the delegates and discussed BAfM. I had copies of our leaflets and the latest BAfM Journal on my table. They were snapped up and created interest. A really useful day. Have a look at: <http://sharemuseumseast.org.uk/share-enterprise-resources/>

The HLF speaker emphasised that applications should demonstrate a step change for the organisation. The National Arts Fundraising School Director discussed new ideas in making the case for support. In his second presentation he introduced us to Behavioral Economics with some amusing questions that many of us got wrong. We were urged to get our data right so it can be made to work for raising funds. The Arts Council England update included information on forthcoming changes that could be relevant to those of us who might be making applications in future - watch their web site for the details. The Art Fund speaker gave advice on their take on methods of crowdfunding.

If you want further information on the day please contact Miranda Rowlands from SHARED who arranged the day: miranda.rowlands@norfolk.gov.uk

A reminder too, if you are in the Eastern Region, that the new SHARED Enterprise training programme is starting in September. If you would like to have one-to-one fundraising support to work on an HLF application, fundraise from trusts and foundation, raise funds from individual donors and set up a legacy giving scheme, please get in touch with Miranda who would particularly like to hear from smaller museums who need fundraising support specifically tailored to their needs. You could attend with someone from your museum and work together.

YORKSHIRE AND HUMBERSIDE REGIONAL CONFERENCE REPORT AND NEWS OF CELEBRATIONS TO MARK 200 YEARS SINCE CHARLOTTE BRONTË'S BIRTH

Friends of Red House Museum, Gomersal, West Yorkshire were pleased to host the regional conference at Red House on Saturday 16 April 2016. 26 guests were welcomed by Jacqueline Ryder, Chair of the Friends of Red House, who suggested that rather than revisiting discussions on funding cuts and other difficulties facing museums and libraries, the conference should celebrate what Friends groups can and have achieved.

BAfM Regional Co-ordinator Dr Haris Livas-Dawes thanked the Friends and staff at Red House and updated guests on the need for a new Chair and Vice-Chair for the organisation. She asked for a volunteer to co-ordinate the Newsletter and made a plea for venues for future conferences. She also referred to the fact that BAfM has engaged consultants to report on whether the organisation is fit for the future.

Red House is owned and run by Kirklees Council. Eric Brown, Heritage Manager for Red House, and Joanne Catlow, Kirklees Community Heritage and Education Manager, gave a presentation on what Council officers in the Museums Service are doing to try to address the challenges of budget cuts. As Eric said, they have had to consider what all councils now have to consider: reducing opening hours and eliminating some staff. Kirklees Council is responsible for 8 museums and art galleries and possibly one or more of these will have to permanently close. One problem faced by the Council is funding school visits since coaches have to be paid for and it's difficult to fit visits into the curriculum. But the Council is trying to think "outside the box." They hope to

emphasize business links, especially using the museums as wedding venues or for conferences and meetings. They also want to test the potential of volunteers. "Test" is the key word here as all new ideas will be tested to see which models work and which don't. He stressed that Friends groups all need more support and training, a more diversified membership and the raising of the Friends' profiles. Kirklees Council has a Health and Well-Being vision and Friends are important for this since most are retired and have time for a hobby that will bring them pleasure.

Joanne Catlow has formed the Kirklees Brontë Network, bringing together local groups with an interest in 2016 as the 200th anniversary of Charlotte's Brontë's birth. She co-ordinates the programme of events for this Spring and Summer. Joanne gave an illustrated presentation detailing some of the many Brontë links in North Kirklees, and an overview of the many and varied activities being planned to celebrate the anniversary. During the 1830s & 40s Charlotte Brontë regularly visited her friend Mary Taylor who lived at Red House, and her friend Ellen Nussey, who also lived in the area. Charlotte used many locations in the area, including Red House and Oakwell, in her novel 'Shirley'. She also featured Mary's family as the Yorke family in this novel. Joanne gave us a review of the buildings (houses, schools) in the area that relate to the Brontë family. There are many of these, so Brontë lovers should not rely exclusively on Haworth. Red House has a Brontë exhibition and the Museum has been redecorated to resemble what Charlotte Brontë saw when she visited here. The 200th Anniversary programme includes guided walks around sites with links to Charlotte, a two-day flower festival, calligraphy and mini-book making sessions, and of course, plenty of tea and cake!

A member of staff, and member of Friends of Red House, Mandy Tyas, donned period costume and guided guests in a tour around Red House, explaining how the house has changed, and how Charlotte Brontë described it in 'Shirley'. Guests braved the cold for a tour of the gardens, which are laid out in 1830s style, incorporating plants and designs that research has shown were here at the time. Amanda Walker, the member of staff who has the care of the gardens, led the tour and provided guests with

information to take home. Volunteers help in the gardens once a week, and the gardens have won Yorkshire in Bloom Gold awards in the last three years. Friends of Red House are pleased to pay the entry fee again this year and have our fingers crossed for a fourth win.

Friends of Red House Chris Shorten and Jacqueline Ryder gave an illustrated presentation outlining two recent projects which demonstrate how Friends can make links with other groups, and can use primary resources for research.

The first was a photograph album loaned by current members of the Taylor family, which Chris researched and publicised in local media, to ask local people for help in identifying locations. The family also allowed the photographs to be digitised and added to the Kirklees Picture Archive, now in the care of Huddersfield University, and they are available to view through the Friends' website.

The second project came about through Chris's research into the history of the Gomersal Moravian Church, of which he is a member. He discovered that the Taylor family had invited the Church to hold a Garden Party at Red House in 1915. Working together with the staff, the Church and Friends were able to organise a garden party to celebrate the event, and we were able to hold it exactly 100 years to the day.

The two projects are examples of groups working together, harnessing local talent and the history/heritage of the area. They also illustrate the effect that volunteers and Friends' groups can have on furthering the knowledge about the museum, and increasing visitor numbers by organising and publicising events.

Judging by the buzz of conversation, guests were using to the full the opportunities for informal networking during the day. The various topics discussed included recruitment of volunteers, particularly young people; funding, insurance, recording and valuing voluntary hours. It was noted that as a rule of thumb, the sum of £11.10p could be used.

In her closing remarks Dr Livas-Dawes thanked all the guests for attending the conference and noted that Friends of Tolson Museum in Huddersfield and Friends of Roman Aldborough had both volunteered to host future conferences.

NEWS FROM THE REGIONS:

YORKSHIRE & HUMBERSIDE

– Haris Livas-Dawes

For those of our members whose museums and galleries have grounds to spare, you can follow the example of the very successful park runs sponsored by both Oakwell Hall and the Tolson & Ravensknowle Museums. The latter has appointed a Run Director with help from an organizing committee. They are organizing a separate Park Run for children with help from local schools and Kirklees council. Oakwell Hall, newly refurbished, has a large area for its Runs which have been on their calendar for some time.

The Thackray Medical Museum in Leeds may not be familiar to some of you, but it's very familiar to the Princess Royal who has recently paid them a visit. She explored the exhibitions and royal collections and unveiled a commemorative plaque. One case discussed with the Princess was on Spanish Flu which killed more people than the entire First World War. The H1N1 influenza virus of the Spanish Flu is present within the current flu vaccination, showing the importance of historical collections of human disease to the present and future.

SCOTLAND

Friends of Glasgow Green are delighted to announce the proposal to raise funds for an Outdoor Gym on the original gymnasium site at Glasgow Green.

In conjunction with MY Parks Scotland we have launched a crowdfunding page, where members of the public who recognise Glasgow Green as a special historical park, and can see the health benefits of an outdoor gym accessible to all, can donate. Friends, please help us spread the word by Facebook, twitter and word of mouth to all your contacts in your Communities to help us reach our goal. <https://facebook.com/myparkscot/videos/607887166026165>

<http://www.mypark.scot/projects/outdoor-gym>.

<https://twitter.com/myparkscot>

Thank you for your help – Trisha Ingram, Chairperson, Friends of Glasgow Green

SOUTH EAST (SOUTHERN) REGION

– Ann Stobo

– **Through the Looking-Glass at Kingston Museum**

A selection of the best of Sir John Tenniel's illustrations to Lewis Carroll's two Alice books – Alice's Adventures in Wonderland (1865) and Through the Looking Glass and what Alice found there (1872) – will be on show at Kingston Museum from Saturday 23 July – Sunday 17 September 2016.



John Tenniel spent all of his life in London where he worked as a political cartoonist for Punch magazine, but in 1864 he was approached by Charles Dodgson (Lewis Carroll) with the request to illustrate a small nonsense book for children he wished to publish. The initial story had been made up by Dodgson for the daughters of the Dean of Christ Church College during a boating trip on 4 July 1862, and at the request of one of them, Alice Liddell, he wrote out the story of the little girl who dreamt she went down a rabbit hole into Wonderland where she met an amazing set of characters – the White Rabbit, the Mad Hatter, the March Hare, the Mock Turtle, the Cheshire Cat. *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* was an instant hit – as was the sequel seven years later. Part of their success was due to the unique and imaginative illustrations by John Tenniel and despite there now being many hundreds of artists world-wide who have illustrated Alice, Tenniel's illustrations remain the definitive ones.

The exhibition on show at Kingston Museum is a selection of illustrations from both books in which the creative genius of both Carroll and Tenniel is shown at its best. The original drawings were made on wooden blocks and then engraved by commercial engravers in London and the prints on show – taken from the original wood blocks – are perfect examples of the skill of both illustrator and engraver. Two art projects inspired by the Alice illustrations will give an additional dimension to the exhibition: Couture hats made by fashion students at Kingston College, and tea cups made by members of Embroiderers Guild Kingston. These projects will be on show for the duration of the exhibition period and in the Museum and the exhibition.



NORTH WEST REGION

– Friends of Catalyst

In December we had only 32 Friends, but now we have 50 and rising. Average attendance at the Widness SciBar has been 32 and while this was never envisaged as a fundraising activity, a small surplus from the £1.50 entrance fee does accrue and is a side-benefit of running this public programme. Catalyst has also won a prestigious Award: Charity of the Year in the Annual Chemicals North West Awards. Catalyst Chair (and Friend) Bryan Davies said, "We are delighted to have been given this Award as it recognises the vital contribution made by our staff, Trustees and partners in helping to promote science to school pupils and the general public."

Cumbria: Trails of the Unexpected

Cumbria's museums and galleries are some of the finest in the country. Trails of the Unexpected is a new way to explore our internationally significant collections, artworks and artefacts – each with a story to tell. There are six walking trails to follow in Cumbria and the Lake District, each one gives you the opportunity to explore a world of cultural treasures in an epic landscape and "Go Beyond the Expected". Trails of the Unexpected brings together fascinating objects, intriguing stories and historic houses and galleries. The walks also provide an opportunity to

explore the collections in some of Cumbria's finest museums and galleries including Tullie House, Wordsworth Museum and Dove Cottage; Museum of Lakeland Life and Industry, Blackwell, The Arts and Crafts House and Abbot Hall. Find out more about our venues and plan your trip to Cumbria and the Lake District on the Trails of the Unexpected website. Choose one of our Trails of the Unexpected by either downloading a pdf or following the trail online. Examples include:

Windermere Arts & Crafts Wander – Discover the inspiration behind one of the gems of the Arts and Crafts movement on this wander through the gently rolling countryside beside Windermere.

Wordsworth's Grasmere – Get to know William Wordsworth and his family on this easy, but varied walk through some of the most spectacular scenery in the National Park.

Romans at Hadrian's Wall – Unearth surprising facts about how the Romans defended their north-western frontier on this walk beside one of the best preserved sections of Hadrian's Wall.

SOUTH WEST REGION

Friends of Bristol Museum, Galleries & Archives

Friends Fund Storage Case for William Smith's 1815 Geological Map



Senior Curator Isla Gladstone and Conservator Alicia Garcia assess Smith's 1815 geological map in its original storage space © BMGA.

William Smith's 1815 map is considered to be the first geological map in the world and has led to Smith being known as 'The Father of Geology'. Much of his work, which led to his linking of rock exposures across the country through the occurrence of the same types of fossils, was undertaken whilst he worked as an engineer on the Somerset Coal Canal near Bath. The museum holds one of the original maps, and asked us in the autumn to fund a custom-built storage



Storage box for Smith's map © BMGA.

case, to mark the map's 200th anniversary. The case has now been completed, and the map has high-quality home, made of conservation grade materials, that will protect it well into its next 200 years.

Kingswood Heritage Museum: Men in sheds

Kingswood Heritage Museum has welcomed the new branch of Men in Sheds, and Made in Bristol TV was there to film the first session on 3 March 2016. The group aims to provide an exciting opportunity for men (and women) to work in wood and other materials on their own projects, using the workshop and tools belonging to the Museum. Members can also create and repair mechanical items in the workshop. So a Men's Shed is effectively a larger version of the typical garden shed. The concept was initiated in the UK by the charity Age UK, but the organisation is now independently run. It has some 250 branches in the UK, with 90 new groups in the process of forming. There are two established branches in the Bristol area. Mervyn Bishop, one the new group's organisers, said:

"What we seek to do is to provide a safe and friendly atmosphere where people can work – on their own or with others – on projects of their own choosing and at their own pace."

The group is meeting at Kingswood Heritage Museum on Thursday mornings, starting at 9.30 am. Other sessions will be added as more members join.

LONDON AND MIDDLESEX

Innovative Future and the End of an Era for Wandsworth Museum; new incarnation as the Moving Museum at BAC

Wandsworth Friends filmed their final Special General Meeting which wound up the Friends and they circulated a link to the video of the evening along with the Minutes. The video is a wonderful souvenir for the Friends and a lovely (if somewhat bitter sweet) record to keep for ever. Perhaps other Friends groups should consider doing this for other meetings and events, allowing housebound Friends, or Friends who live at a distance to keep up to date with the proceedings of the organisation or with social events or exhibitions they cannot attend.

The formal winding up of the Friends of Wandsworth Museum was accompanied by these words: **"We have completed the job we began... we have successfully brought the Museum to this next stage... the future is full of potential....** Our job here is done but the commitment and energy you so unstintingly gave to Wandsworth Museum and the emotional involvement surely continues". Wandsworth Museum has now merged with Battersea Arts

Centre. Battersea Arts Centre is now custodian of the Wandsworth Collection and we are pleased to have launched BAC Moving Museum: https://www.bac.org.uk/content_category/3377/moving_museum

You can support the museum through BAC membership. For more information, please visit www.bac.org.uk/membership or email Anne Wareing (Development Manager) at annew@bac.org.uk to find out more. Whether or not you become members you can join the BAC mailing list to receive regular emails about shows, exhibitions and updates including news about the BAC Moving Museum activities and the Wandsworth Collection. If you would like to join this mailing list, please enter your details here <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/BA> Cemails We will no longer be sending out information as Wandsworth Museum.

Friends of Kenwood House

We remain proud to have been one of the most significant funders of the overall Caring for Kenwood project: don't forget that the Friends of Kenwood funded the restoration of the Entrance Hall. When you wander through the House, take a moment to read the booklets which you can find on the tables of each room; in them you will be able to identify some of the objects we have helped acquire for Kenwood over the years. You can read more about what we have helped fund on our website.

Friends of Kenwood benefits continue to be 2 Newsletters a year, free entrance to lectures, invitations to social functions and opportunities to participate in a programme of outings and other events. Our excellent programme of monthly lectures is held in the Lecture Room in Kenwood House. Please check the website and noticeboard regularly for updates. The website is really easy to navigate and full of interesting information.

SOUTH EAST (EASTERN) REGION – Friends of Bushey Museum

– Museum Reaps Accolades

Bushey Museum has been awarded the East of England's "Hidden Gem Award", and is also officially "the best small museum . . . in the South -East of England" according to VisitEngland (formerly The Tourist Board).

We are now listed on their website with the likes of Tate Liverpool, the BBC, and the Tower of London! Are we proud? Yes, we certainly are! And what is all the more remarkable is that this fantastic accolade is all due to the dedication and hard work of our Friends and volunteers, and the result, of course is Happy Customers. Here are a few samples of what people have said about us recently:

"We recently visited your museum to have a nose around and we thought that it was the best local museum that we have ever been to. The facilities and accessibility were excellent, particularly for disabled people. The museum staff were absolutely lovely and helpful and we had a really nice day. We hope to visit again Altogether a really uplifting experience. Thank you"

"What a gem. My first visit and definitely not my last".

Bushey Museum, Rudolph Road, Bushey, WD23 3

Opening Hours: Thursday – Sunday 11a.m. – 4 p.m.

BAfM NEXT NATIONAL CONFERENCES:

BAfM ANNUAL CONFERENCE AND AGM

Saturday 1st October 2016

at Ironbridge

Theme: Marketing for Excellence
judy.mondon@ironbridge.org.uk

Contact: Jean Knight, BAfM Conference Co-ordinator

E: irvineknight@btinternet.com

T: 02086 691546

WFFM DATE

WFFM Triennial Congress and General Assembly

Autumn 2017

Northern Italy

Dates and venue to be confirmed

BAfM WELCOMES NEW MEMBERS

- Friends of Southend Museums
- Friends of the Intelligence Corps Museum

Dedicated to helping friends and volunteers

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- **Institutional: Minimum donation of £30**
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- **501-1,000 – £100**
- **1001 upwards – £150**

COVER PHOTO

Foundry Casting at Blists Hill, part of the Ironbridge Gorge Museums: Ironbridge is the venue for this year's BAfM one day conference. **Photo credit:** The Ironbridge Gorge Museum Trust

Submission deadlines for the next issue at end of first week in October 2016

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