

## WELCOME TO NEWCASTLE

### *A vibrant Northern city*

It was the Romans who settled on this site and built a bridge across the River Tyne. In the late 12<sup>th</sup> century a stone “new castle” replaced the wooden motte and bailey of the previous hundred years, and the city celebrated its 900<sup>th</sup> anniversary quite some time ago. But for all its long and turbulent history, this is a very modern, energetic place. Although much of the engineering, mining and ship-building industries that created a 19<sup>th</sup> century northern boom have gone, the city continues to thrive and innovate. Its universities and colleges



attract students from all over the world and it's a testament to Newcastle's attractions that they're often reluctant to leave! With the surrounding conurbations of Gateshead, Sunderland and the coastal communities, Tyne and Wear's programme of cultural activities rivals that of far larger places, and its museums and art galleries are supported enthusiastically by local people and

visitors alike.

### *A cultural smørgasbord*

Newcastle's Theatre Royal is the grande dame of the theatres in the area and attracts major productions and a loyal following. The ultra-modern Sage Gateshead is one of the premier music venues in the country. The 1930s Art Deco-style Tyneside Cinema is famous for its showcasing of independent and world films, as well as its encouragement of young film makers. And then there are the Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums (TWAM): the Laing Art Gallery, the Great North Museum: Hancock, the Hatton Gallery, the Discovery Museum, the Shipley Art Gallery, the South Shields Art Gallery and Museum, not to mention the



Stephenson Railway Museum, and the Roman forts of Arbeia and Segedunum. Thanks to a plan displaying great “ambition, initiative and enthusiasm”, Newcastle/Gateshead has been selected to host the Great Exhibition of the North in 2018, beating out Sheffield, Bradford and Blackpool. With a grant of £5 million, the exhibition will showcase art, design and innovation from the north of England, so it's a great year to visit and to enjoy its varied cultural events!



### *A jewel of a gallery*

The Laing Art Gallery, which is proud to host the 2018 BAFM Annual General Meeting and Conference, is unusual in having been founded without an existing collection. The building (1904; grade II listed; Baroque style with Art Nouveau elements) was financed by Alexander Laing, who was a successful Newcastle bottle manufacturer and wine and spirits merchant. Today it houses works by Reynolds, Holman-Hunt, Burne-Jones, Gauguin and John Martin, along with 20<sup>th</sup> century artists such as Laura Knight, Ben Nicholson, Victor Pasmore, David Bomberg and Gillian Ayres. It has an extensive collection of 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century watercolours, including work by J.M.W.



Turner. Its large decorative collection features Beilby enamelled glass, Sowerby glass, Newcastle silver, Maling ceramics and North East pottery as well as Japanese prints. There are regularly changing exhibitions of historic, modern and contemporary art. At the Laing there's always something to keep everyone entertained and informed, with exhibition talks, family friendly activities and artist-hosted events. Many of these events, like the gallery, are free of charge.

### *The Friends of the Laing Art Gallery (FLAG) welcome you*

The society recently celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> birthday, and is happy to report that, with a thousand members, it continues to thrive. The programme we offer at this 45<sup>th</sup> annual get-together of BAFM members and supporters focuses on the value of Friends' organisations in a changing social and economic climate. The Saturday programme features what promise to be fascinating and relevant talks by experts in the field. Over lunchtime, there's an opportunity to explore the Laing itself and its current exhibitions. The afternoon will begin with the AGM, followed by four case study sessions and a panel discussion, presentations to award winners and information on the 2019 venue.



L.S. Lowry with his friend, the first FLAG President, Leonard Jacobson; courtesy, Malcom Jacobson.

An early evening drinks reception will be held in the opulent surroundings of the city's Georgian Assembly Rooms, close to Newcastle Central Station and two of the hotels recommended for those staying overnight. For those staying on (and we hope you all will!), there will be a four-course conference dinner in the splendid Chandelier Suite of the Assembly Rooms, with a chance to meet local Friends, to enjoy a colliery brass band, and to hear our after-dinner speaker, Cllr Jackie Slesenger, former Lord Mayor of Newcastle. And on Sunday morning, there's a choice of four visits: the Discovery Museum, the Great North Museum, the Tyneside Cinema, or a Public Art Walking Tour. And with so much going on in Newcastle/Gateshead in 2018, there are plenty of other options for the visitor who can make a little holiday of it.



*A word from our sponsor*

Julie Milne, Chief Curator of Tyne & Wear Archives and Museums, writes: "I am happy to support the Friends of the Laing Art Gallery in hosting the BAfM AGM and Conference at the Laing Art Gallery next year. The Friends are loyal supporters of the Gallery, extremely well organised and efficient in all their endeavours. They are experienced organisers of numerous events and activities which generate much needed funds for the Gallery, including lectures, social activities, tours and events. Having worked at the Gallery for sixteen years now, I have seen the Friends grow and develop constantly, looking for different ways to support us. I am delighted that the 45<sup>th</sup> gathering is to be held at the Laing, and look forward to welcoming Friends from across the UK to our much-loved Gallery."



Julie in front of John Martin's painting, The Bard, Laing Art Gallery

*Some members of The BAfM Conference Working Party*



Left to right:  
 Kate Kuhn, BAfM Conference Co-ordinator  
 Pat Devenport, FLAG Chairman  
 Elizabeth McCaffrey, FLAG Secretary  
 Bill Telford, FLAG Vice-Chairman and  
 Chair, BAfM Working Party

Coloured photographs by courtesy of Bill Telford

The British Association of Friends of Museums  
 and The Friends of the Laing Art Gallery  
 invite you to

***The 45<sup>th</sup> BAfM ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND CONFERENCE***

Saturday, October 13, 2018,  
 at the Laing Art Gallery  
 New Bridge Street  
 Newcastle upon Tyne NE1 8AG



[www.bafm.co.uk](http://www.bafm.co.uk)