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National Conference

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members



From:
HRH The Duke of Gloucester KG GCVO



KENSINGTON PALACE
LONDON W8 4PU

**TO THE DELEGATES OF THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION OF FRIENDS
OF MUSEUMS 50TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND
CONFERENCE**

Dear Members

Welcome to the British Association of Friends of Museums 50th Annual General Meeting and Conference being held in the magnificent Mansion House in Doncaster. My regrets to you all that I am unable to be with you today to take part in what promises to be another stimulating and informative event.

The theme of the Conference is ‘Regeneration in challenging times’ and it will explore, among other things, the vital importance of the work of Friends’ groups in supporting their local and in some cases national museums. There is no doubt that without the many hundreds of Friends and volunteers around the country, many museums would not be able to tell the nations’ story to their visitors and, in some cases, it is unlikely that some museums would be able to function at all.

So, please continue to do what you do in maintaining the essential relationship between museums and their Friends and volunteers, and I hope that you enjoy the Conference and feel inspired to continue supporting our Museums, which are the portals to understanding our past.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Richard', which is the name of HRH The Duke of Gloucester.



The 50th anniversary celebration of the founding of the British Association of Friends of Museums culminates with our annual conference, being held in the city of Doncaster and a preconference tour of some of the glories of south Yorkshire.

Reflecting upon the history of BAFM and our role in British cultural life, it is well worth noting that you, our members, have been major fundraisers, organisers, volunteers and administrators of many of our host organisations. You have created and maintained organisations which foster friend and companionships. Most importantly, we have been an independent voice, in a milieu where so often the original purpose of museums, to enlighten and share, has been subsumed in local government budget debates or marketing exercises to increase footfall and income levels. In this corporatist bureaucratic world, it is so important that there is an independent voice made up of individuals whose only concern is to support museums and their collections. It is through the individual Friends groups that make up the British Association of Friends of Museums that that voice is expressed. Long may the independent voice of Friends be heard in this country.

One such long term independent cultural voice, which I believe perfectly fits with your own devotion to the historic and cultural life of the nation, is that of our new president, Lord Cormack. Patrick Cormack served for 40 years as a member of parliament and since 2010 as a member of the House of Lords. He has devoted much of his professional and private life to the preservation of our nation's cultural life. He began his working career as a teacher and has since written a number of books, on subjects ranging from the history of Parliament, British castles, English cathedrals, to William Wilberforce. Over the years he has been a trustee of the Churches Preservation Trust, President of the Staffordshire Historic Buildings Trust, Trustee of the Staffordshire Historic Churches Trust, Vice-President of the National Churches Trust, Chairman of the William Morris Craft Fellowship Committee of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings, Chairman of the Historic Lincoln Trust, Vice-President of the Lincolnshire Churches Trust, President of Heritage Lincolnshire, and Trustee of the Usher Gallery Trust, Lincoln. A not atypical, if very fulsome, resume of a supporter of BAFM.

Along with our patron, HRH The Duke of Gloucester, the role of president is of great importance in recognising and promoting the work we undertake. We are most indebted to both our patron and to our new president for the guidance, knowledge and advice they provide.

Daniel Calley / Chairman

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Our cover image

The Doncaster Waites



Membership of BAFM



Friends Group

Under 100 Members	£60
101 – 500 Members	£100
501– 1,000 Members	£130
1,000+ Members	£200
Individuals	£30
Corporate/Institutional	£100
Individual Membership	£30
Individual Membership (Under 25)	£15

For more information about Membership and our group insurance scheme, please contact our Administrator *Jayne Selwood* at jayneselwood@hotmail.co.uk tel 01179777435

The British Association of Friends of Museums welcomes its new President.

Baron Cormack of Enville in the County of Staffordshire

BAFM are delighted to welcome Lord Cormack who has agreed to take on the role of President of the Association. Lord Cormack has had a lifelong interest in heritage and the arts which he continues to champion in his role in the House of Lords

Lord Cormack has spent fifty-three years in Parliament, forty in the House of Commons and nearly thirteen in the House of Lords. During his long period in the Commons, he was a Senior Chairman of Committees and served on numerous Select Committees, including the Foreign Affairs Committee. In 1974 he founded the All Party Arts and Heritage Group and served as Chairman for some twenty-five years. He is currently its President. From 1997 until 2001 he was the Opposition Spokesman on Constitutional Affairs and from 2005-2010 Chairman of the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee.

He is Chairman of the All Party Campaign for an Effective Second Chamber, was one of the founders of

the Parliamentary "House" magazine in 1976 and is its Life President. He currently serves on the Executive Committee of the Association of Conservative Peers.

He has published eight books including one on English cathedrals and another on British castles and a Life of William Wilberforce. When he left the Commons, he moved back to his native Lincolnshire and lives close to the Cathedral. He is Chairman of the Historic Lincoln Trust, President of Heritage Lincolnshire, and a Patron of the International Bomber Command Centre. He is a Trustee of the Usher Gallery Trust and Deputy High Steward of the Cathedral. In March 2022 he was given the Freedom of the City of Lincoln.

July 2023

Lord Cormack has spent fifty-three years in Parliament, forty in the House of Commons and nearly thirteen in the House of Lords



Baron Cormack of Enville in the County of Staffordshire

THE LORD CORMACK, DL, FSA



HOUSE OF LORDS
LONDON SW1A 0PW

4 August 2023

Dear Members,

I am honoured to be your new President and, in that capacity, to associate myself with the welcome extended by our Royal Patron, His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester, to the 50th Annual General Meeting and Conference being held in Doncaster's splendid Mansion House.

I have been associated with heritage projects throughout my 53 years in Parliament and, from personal experience, I know what a vital role is played by associations of friends, not only in museums and galleries up and down the land, but in country houses open to the public and, of course, in our thousands of churches and, in particular, our great cathedrals.

Without volunteers very few of these places could function properly and so I greatly value the achievements of each and every one of you and thank you most warmly for what you do to maintain the heritage of our wonderful country.

I look forward to getting to know many of you in the years ahead and send my very warmest good wishes for a stimulating and successful conference. I very much hope to be with you in Doncaster.

With my warmest good wishes for the next fifty years,

Paul Cram

World Federation of Friends of Museums

2023 is a vintage year for our World Federation of Friends of Museums (WFFM). Two of our Members are celebrating their 50th Anniversaries.

Congratulations to the French Federation Friends of Museums Societies (FFSAM) who celebrated their anniversary over three days from 2nd to 4th June in Paris.

The FFSAM was built on an international basis, with the associations of museums friends in Europe sharing the same values and the same objectives.

To further promote the sharing of ideas and experience, while still respecting their diversity and specific requirements, the FFSM brought together Friends and Young Friends of French museums at the Musée d'Orsay. The theme was 'The Europe of the Friends of Museums, values, resources and shared actions. Those attending also included Friends of other European museums, professionals, and students in the museum world.

The event highlighted the societal and cultural contributions of the 'Friends of Museums' that strengthen their sense of commitments, promote common European ideas and actions and encourage the mobility of Young Friends in Europe.

One such action is the celebration of a European Day of Friends to be held on Sunday 8th October 2023. Our Italian Colleagues have chosen a theme of 'Portrayed Landscape – Lived Landscape'.

Their poster, significantly portrayed in the Valley of the Temples in Agrigento, European Capital of Culture for 2025 synthesises the theme of the Day by juxtaposing an 1849 view by Ferdinand Georg Waldmüller with the corresponding current photograph of the same subject: the hill temple of Juno Lacina. The landscape in question is virtually unchanged due to the

good policies undertaken. In contrast, we must examine the frequent instances where the landscape is profoundly transformed, disfigured and in need of regeneration.



Carolyn Foster, WFFM President speaking at the French Conference

Our European Friends have also designed a logo especially for this year's 'European Day of Friends' which will be used by various Friends Groups to promote this great initiative.

Congratulations also to the British Association of Friends of Museums for their celebration to be held from 29th September to 1st October. An anniversary such as this is a testimony to all the hard work and dedication of the wonderful volunteers who first envisaged such an association. Also, those who have continued to maintain and build on the concept of a national Friends Association. I am sorry not to be able to be there to help BAFM celebrate this important milestone and to wish you well for a most successful 50th.

'Of all possessions, a friend is most precious', Herodotus.

The FFSAM asked me to say a few words at the start of their program on 3rd June and to explain how The World Federation of Friends of Museums was set up and its history. WFFM was first envisaged in 1967 as a non-

profit international organisation that would gather together the existing societies of Friends of Museums around the world.

In 1972 the first International Congress of Friends of Museums was held in Barcelona and then in 1975 at the second International Congress WFFM was officially set up and David Mawson from the United Kingdom was elected the first President. At this time the Statutes

were approved by the delegates of six international federations (Australia, Belgium, France, Italy, Poland,

United Kingdom) and by three national associations (Spain, Atlanta USA and Germany).

The British Association has been involved since the very beginning of WFFM and I was most fortunate to have met David when he was still actively participating with our association.

On behalf of WFFM I would like to thank BAFM for your longstanding and considerable contribution to this worldwide organisation of Friends.



Bruce Bolton, Vice President WFFM North America, Roberta his wife with young friend Robyn Treleaven at the farewell dinner Council Meeting Brussels.

*'Of all possessions,
a friend is
most precious',
Herodotus.*

WFFM's most recent Council meeting was held in Brussels this June with a theme of 'Art Nouveau/ Jugendstil'. There is a wealth of wonderful examples of this period of architecture and design and attendees felt most privileged to be there in the Year of Art Nouveau in Brussels 2023.

It is with pleasure that I can let you know that the Friends of Museums in Luxembourg have invited

WFFM to hold the next General Assembly in their country.

The dates have not yet been confirmed but it will be early June 2024.

Carolyn Foster OAM
President World Federation of Friends of Museums
August 2023

ARTscapades update

ARTscapades' exciting autumn programme offers you special opportunities to enjoy unique talks and short courses given by leading experts and art historians.

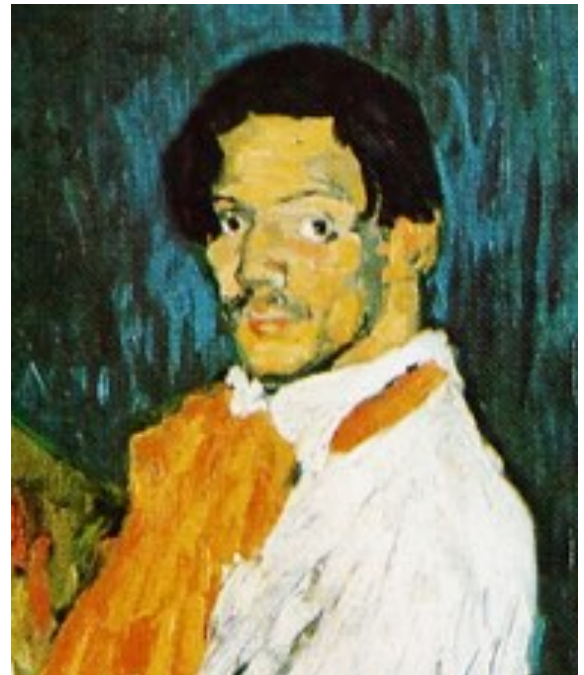
Income raised goes towards grants to museums, galleries and other arts-based organisations. All ARTscapades events can be booked on-line at www.artscapades.org/events and remain available on demand for a month afterwards.

From September you might like to join Clare Ford Wille's two-lecture morning on Frans Hals and the National Gallery's major exhibition; or, marking the 50th anniversary of his death, look more closely at Picasso's extraordinary work, life and legacy with Jacqueline Cockburn's specially created short course.

You could book to hear Martin Gayford speak about his new book Venice, City of Pictures, or Alicia Foster, on Gwen John: Art and Life in London and Paris. You might like to join Charlotte Mullins and Simon Morley as they look anew at Modern Painting: A Concise History or, alternatively, join Julian Bell for Natural Light: The Art of Adam Elsheimer and the Dawn of Modern Science.

ARTscapades events are available to everyone, and you can join their mailing list at www.artscapades.org/contact

Catherine Corbet Millward



Pablo Picasso self portrait.

Memories of the early days of my involvement in BAFM

In 1970 at the age of 24 I went into “digs” in Exeter. The people who owned the house were members of the Friends of Exeter Museum.

I was asked to join them one evening in the Museum for a Friends Social event. To my amazement the main activity was a dance in the main Art Gallery, cartoon films being shown in a second Gallery, followed by supper. As the evening concluded I became a member of the Friends and became its Honorary Auditor. This really was my introduction to the world of Museums and Art Galleries.

In a short while I became Secretary to the Friends and that introduced me to BAFM as its representative for the South West. I was involved with the duties of being the Secretary of the Friends and added to this were periodic trips to London as a BAFM Committee Member. On occasions as a BAFM Representative I was asked to advise groups in the South West on how to set up a Friends Group and how to proceed with their projects. I became the Treasurer of the Exeter Friends in about 1978 which I did until I left for Poole in 1989.

The first BAFM Committee Meeting I attended was slightly daunting as I found myself amongst a group of highly experienced and knowledgeable people. To feel I was playing an active part in the group I eventually undertook various tasks assisted by the Friends of Exeter Museum and the Museum itself. In 1977 I had joined the Museum staff in Exeter as their Administrator which helped me greatly in aiding BAFM. The Association then aimed to produce a journal each year and hold annual conferences as it does now. I undertook to produce a journal, the second for the organisation. News from groups around the country came in and my secretary typed them up. The text including illustrations went to the Council's print room and back came a simple black and white booklet for distribution. On another occasion we supplied a coloured cover picture for the Journal on the opening of Rougemont House Museum in Exeter, together with an article by the Head of Leisure and Tourism in the City. Today's Journal is superb and it makes our efforts then seem so amateurish but it did its job. Another event was arranging the second Annual Conference. This again was a combined effort by the Friends and the Museum and was seen as a success. Our speaker at the evening dinner held at the University was

the Head of Dartmoor National Park Authority. In around 1980 I resigned from the BAFM Committee and my role was taken over by Dr Elizabeth Mackenzie, who is now your Honorary Vice President. I did attend conferences in Penzance and Nottingham enjoying them greatly.

Now to my memories of the Committee Meetings. They were held in various offices around central London and then in the Museum of London. They were led by David Mawson (Chairman and I believe BAFM founder), Warden Swinfren (Vice Chairman) and Rosemary Marsh as Secretary. I cannot remember the names of other members except after a time Lord Wolfenden joined us. It was during this period that HRH The Duke of Gloucester agreed to be our Patron. The meetings gave me a valuable insight into the thinking of and about the Museum world, not for once about my own Museum. In the later years of my career this was to prove invaluable to me. The Committee received reports by David Mawson about his meetings with appropriate Government Ministers involved with the sector, which again I found fascinating. The Chairman came from Norwich, the Vice Chairman from Brighton, the Secretary from Manchester, others from many different places including Northern Ireland. The country as a whole was well represented but at times struggled for replacement representatives. One personal silly thing I shall never forget was when offered tea or coffee at one meeting, I was the only one to ask for sugar.

In 2003 I became Honorary Treasurer to the South Western Federation of Museums and Art Galleries. During my time as Treasurer, I was party to it becoming a limited company and I made it a Registered Charity, both were for financial reasons. I finally retired in 2007 after having obtained a Heritage Lottery Grant to revitalise Poole's Museums. It all ended for me with a Stroke in 2013. I could do no more except when asked give advice or an opinion and sit back and enjoy reading through your superb Journal about the efforts and achievements of others.

Do please keep up the valuable work that you all do. Museums and Galleries across the Country I believe need your support more than ever in to-days environment.

Clive Fisher



Clive Fisher

When The Apple Ripens

On 24th May 2023, 115 members of the Friends of City Art Centre and Museums of Edinburgh attended an exclusive private view of the eminent artist Peter Howson's exhibition at the City Art Centre in Edinburgh.

The exhibition, 'When the Apple Ripens: Peter Howson at 65' was a major retrospective of Howson's work. Peter, one of the UK's leading figurative painters was extremely approachable and stayed the whole evening happily conversing with many of the Friends. Some of us even got a photograph with him.

The exhibition displayed over four floors brought together over 100 works spanning the artist's career, many never seen before in Scotland. It included Peter's early work, dominated by depictions of working-class Glasgow men – dossers, boxers, bodybuilders. The huge Heroic Dosser from the National Galleries of Scotland was a key painting from this period, and was hung alongside images of army life and nightclubs.



Friends Committee member Ros Newton, Peter Howson, Chair Gillian Ferguson



Peter Howson, Wagner, © the artist courtesy of Flowers Gallery

Many of the works exhibited were inspired by Howson's ongoing faith journey, including the Stations of the Cross series. His graphic responses to recent global events including the covid pandemic and the Ukrainian war were moving and sometimes brutal. His work is clearly painted with feeling and emotion much of it conceived while he was in the depths of despair and at a very low ebb.

The Friends were delighted to be invited to this once in a life time opportunity to see the works assembled from public and private collections. The exhibition which closes on 1st October 2023 is not to be missed.

The Glories of South Yorkshire

A four-day visit to south Yorkshire based in the famous racing city of Doncaster.

Tuesday 26 September –
Friday 29 September 2023

Price £725 per person
(Single Supplement £130)



Wentworth Woodhouse

The tour will include private visits to Oakwell Hall, an Elizabethan manor house, the fabulous Yorkshire Sculpture Park, Wentworth Woodhouse, one of the grandest of all British stately homes, along with Carr of York's Rockingham Mausoleum and the Hooper Stand, a tower commemorating the defeat of the Jacobite 45' rebellion, Temple Newsam and its unique collection of documented Chippendale furniture, the York family's newly created gardens at Hutton Wandesley, a tour of Regency Doncaster, the Doncaster Mansion House and Doncaster Museum. Throughout our visit we will be well fed and watered (and wined) by our various hosts. Accommodation will be at the Art Deco style Earl of Doncaster Hotel.

Itinerary (subject to amendment):

Day One: Tuesday 26 September

Private visit to Oakwell Hall (tour and luncheon), Yorkshire Sculpture Park (private tour), Dinner

Day Two: Wednesday 27 September

Private visits to Hooper Stand & Rockingham Mausoleum, Wentworth Woodhouse (luncheon), Holy Trinity & Old Holy Trinity Churches, Dinner

Day Three: Thursday 28 September

Private tour of Temple Newsam, private visit to gardens of South Park, Hutton Wandesley (luncheon), Dinner

Day Four: Friday 29 September

Walking tour of historic Regency Doncaster, private tour of Doncaster Mansion House (morning coffee), private tour of Doncaster Museum (luncheon)

What is included in the price: Three nights' Accommodation on B&B basis, entrance and tour fees, four lunches and three dinners (with wine), morning/afternoon coffee where appropriate, transportation to and from all venues

What is **NOT** included in price: Transportation to and from Doncaster

For more information or to reserve a place contact Daniel Calley 07 703 360 260 or djcalley@talk21.com

Young Friends

Do you know a young person passionate about museums and heritage? If so, there is a place for them in BAFM. We currently have a vacancy for a 'Young Friends Advocate' on the BAFM Council. This is a voluntary role, although expenses will be paid. It would be a perfect opportunity for a young professional to

gain a greater understanding of how the voluntary sector operates. Additionally, The World Federation of Friends of Museums is keen to appoint a European Co-ordinator focussing on encouraging young people to engage with the sector. For more details contact daveadgar@gmail.com

Wisbech – Capital Of The Fens

Nikolas Pevsner wrote “Wisbech is one of the most attractive towns of East Anglia” and of its riverside development he wrote “the two Brinks, one of the finest Georgian brick streets in England”.

Today the town and port of Wisbech on the River Nene is Cambridgeshire’s only connection with the sea. In its heyday it handled 70,000 tons of cargo annually, creating great wealth in the area.

A mansion built by John Thurloe, Cromwell’s spymaster and its grounds were bought by Joseph Medworth in 1793. He developed the Georgian circus consisting of The Crescent, Union Place and Ely Place.

On the North Brink stands the Georgian Elgood’s brewery founded in 1795, Wisbech Grammar school (founded in 1379), Town hall and Corn Exchange (1811), National Trust’s Peckover House and gardens once belonging to Alexander, Lord Peckover (1830-1919). His sister Priscilla (1833-1931), also a Quaker and pacifist, was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize on four occasions.

Algernon Peckover built the Quaker meeting house. The cemetery behind that contains the grave of Jane Stuart (1654-1742), an illegitimate daughter of James II. She lived in the basement of a house on the Old (Saxon) Market.

On the South Brink stands the Octavia Hill Birthplace House, now also home to the National Army Cadet Museum.

The Peckovers created the Wisbech Institute and Working Men’s club (1868), one of the largest teetotal working men’s clubs in the country. Its clock tower, containing carillon chimes, overlooks the Horsefair.

The Old Wisbech Grammar school, attended by John and Thomas Clarkson, is now a Conservative Club. One pupil was Thomas Herring (1693-1757) later Archbishop of Canterbury. The former Peckover Bank building on the Old Market became a Barclay’s branch and closed in 2023.



Peckover House

Alderman Richard Young (1809-1871) MP, the town’s largest shipping fleet owner, was buried in All Saints church and has a memorial in Wisbech Park. He died days after he was Sheriff of London and Middlesex.

Blue Plaques on properties abound in the town. One such is that of William Godwin, father of Mary Shelley, the author of Frankenstein. Another marks an Infant School built and run on Pestalozzi principles by James Hill and Caroline Southwood Hill (parents of Octavia Hill). In the 1970s this became part of The Angles, one of the oldest working Georgian theatres. Actor William Macready and Madame Tussaud’s waxworks toured there.

Wisbech & Fenland Museum, one of the first purpose built museums in the country, was opened in 1847 by Professor Adam Sedgwick. In its 175th anniversary year the ageing

building received a new roof and a new entrance which faces St Peter's church founded in 1111. Today the museum provides exhibition space for artists and photographers and space for poets and craftworkers. Built in 1847 on a filled in castle moat, the building suffers from issues of subsidence.

Charles Dickens' manuscript of *Great Expectations* and the chest which accompanied Thomas Clarkson on his anti-slavery travels are in the Museum's collections. The display cases date back to the Museum's opening.

With such gems it is no surprise that Wisbech has over one hundred listed buildings and that The Wisbech Society, the town's civic society, was formed in 1939 to preserve the townscape.

Wisbech once had three railway stations and rail sidings on both sides of the river. These provided material for the *Thomas the Tank* books by local clergyman the Rev Wilbert Awdry OBE. A stained-glass window in St Edmund's church, Emneth, commemorates this author.

Garry Monger
Friends of Wisbech and Fenland Museum



Title?

Submitting Articles for publication

Many Friends Groups are contacting me to submit articles for publication in the BAFM Journal. The Journal is published twice a year, with a Spring/Summer Edition and an Autumn/Winter Edition. I am pleased that more and more groups are sending me copies of their own newsletters so I can select items for inclusion. I would recommend that way of submitting articles. Not only does this allow for the selection of items for upcoming editions of the Journal, but it can also encourage entries into the revived 'Newsletter of the Year Award'.

If you do wish to submit specific articles for publication, can I ask you to do so as a Word Document, so that editing can take place. The preferred font is Times New Roman, and the article needs to be in a font size of 12 so as to comply with the recommendations of the RNIB for readability for those experiencing sight issues. If you feel an article is particularly relevant to members who are experiencing such issues, we can increase the

font. Photographs submitted with any article must have copyright permission, even if they relate to objects within the collection of the museum which the group supports. Any photographs showing children and vulnerable young people must have the written consent of a parent or guardian for use by BAFM before we can publish it in the Journal. I would recommend scanning such permission and sending it alongside the photographs concerned. This only applies if the photograph clearly identifies the subject, so that a picture taken from behind of children watching a performance for example should be fine; but still ask the parent or accompanying adult for permission.

Please send all items digitally to my e mail address daveadgar@gmail.com

Dave Adgar (Interim Editor)

Newsletter of The Year Award 2023

This year BAFM relaunched the Newsletter of the Year Award to celebrate the outstanding work members of our groups do to produce the newsletters which help to educate, inform, and entertain their members. Editors, proofreaders, and authors all work hard to produce this contribution to the smooth running of their organisation. During the Pandemic, many groups used this outlet as a means of maintaining the links between individuals and their Friends' Group. From my own experience, I know that for many members, regular newsletters provided a lifeline to the outside world during lockdown.

It was a great pleasure therefore to receive so many entries to this year's award. The winner was incredibly hard to determine given the high quality of entries and both judges were delighted to receive a hard copy which enabled them to make their decision. I know we live in a digital age but there is something magical about the written page. Six groups were shortlisted and will receive a certificate of merit to be presented at the 50th Anniversary Conference of BAFM to be held at The Mansion House in Doncaster on the 30th September. For those groups unable by circumstances to attend, the certificates will be subsequently posted to the contact given.

Of the shortlisted groups, three were awarded a 'Highly Commended' certificate. These included an old friend, The Friends of Oakwell Park who were repeat winners of the previous incarnation of the Newsletter of the Year Award when the award was split to support groups of different sizes. I was pleased to meet up with them in 2018 to present their certificate and I'm always pleased to receive their regular copy, both in the post and digitally. The Friends of Southampton City Art Gallery were also in this category. After chatting to their editor on the phone, I was keen to receive their example. She was very modest about the newsletter sent out to their members, being more of a 'homemade' item, printed off on a home computer. However, the content was excellent and in keeping with the reputation of the Gallery as a centre for the collection of modern and contemporary art, there were several fascinating

articles highlighting their collection. The final publication in the category of 'Highly Commended' was 'Discovery', the magazine of the Friends of Rayleigh Town Museum. Appropriately, the lead article on the front page was entitled 'The Coronation and a Small Museum' and the author, David Pymer, could only end by saying 'God save the King'! Personally, I am also a great believer that God helps those who help themselves and obviously the group at Rayleigh kept that in mind. As well as articles, there were several advertisements from local firms, which had evidently helped fund the very professional design and production of the magazine. Funding this sort of publication can be difficult for small groups and they had been very successful!

Three other groups were shortlisted. It proved exceptionally difficult to decide on an eventual winner or runner up but after lots of discussions between the judges, it was decided to award two 'Runners Up' Certificates of Merit. Both the Friends Bowes Museum and the Friends of Bristol Museum and Archive produce excellent publications. The 'Bowes Arts' Newsletter (or more properly magazine) may have as its title a 'pun' on the French word for beautiful or good art and if so, a superb choice for a title. As many readers will know John Bowes spent many years in France and married his wife Josephine before deciding to build a French Chateaux in County Durham to form a museum collection of Fine and Decorative Art. The four-page article 'Magical Mister Merlin' by author Dorothy Brenley, celebrated the two hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the construction of the famous automation, the silver

swan. Together with the other articles in the magazine, it certainly whetted my appetite for a repeat visit to this magical museum.

Sharing the award as 'Joint Runner Up' is the Newsletter produced by The Friends of Bristol Museums, Galleries and Archives. I am a regular reader of the magazine as copies are often sent to BAFM and forwarded to me. Again, like the Bowes, the magazine is of a consistently high standard. Bristol, as many of our readers will know, is famous for producing glass and ceramics and naturally this is reflected in the collection (and newsletters). Although the awards were based on the latest example to be forwarded to the judges, I would like to refer to a fascinating article which appeared in the December 2022 Newsletter. 'New Acquisition from Japan' by Amy Raphael (Project Curator, Japanese Ceramics) described a recent visit she has been able to make to Japan due to an external funding grant. This research trip was accompanied by an opportunity to acquire new examples of more modern ceramics for the collection thanks to funding provided by the Friends. I chose this example from what is a fascinating series of articles in each of the Newsletters I've had to privilege to read but also to highlight the importance of supporting the development of professional expertise with our staff. Please remember this if you can encourage young professionals to apply for our BAFM Young Professional of the Year Award' £1000 may not fund a research trip to Japan but it can encourage young museum staff to develop a project which will help them in their future career.

We now come to our outright winner. After much deliberation, the Friends of Birmingham Museums have been selected as Winner of the 2023 BAFM Newsletter of the Year Award. Against a difficult time of Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery closure for refurbishment, The Friends have recognised the very real importance of the newsletter to continue to engage with their members. As Peter Miles wrote in the latest issue of 'Artefacts' with BMAG being closed at the moment 'now is the time when Birmingham Museums really needs its Friends more than ever'. What was so impressive about Artefacts was the way it was designed to be a gateway publication for the arts and heritage within the wider area of the West Midlands. Members reading the magazine are being kept aware of exhibitions in museums in Coventry, Worcester, and Kidderminster. There is information about theatre, dance, and musical

events as well. But the heart of the magazine is still focused on the collections of Birmingham Museums and the work of the Friends. I congratulate The Friends of Birmingham Museums and as their prize, two places at the Doncaster Conference have been allocated to them. I look forward to all delegates at the Conference and AGM on September 30th and hope we can share examples of each other's newsletters. Please continue to forward examples; digital copies, which can be edited are always welcome as we can incorporate them into the BAFM Journal and share stories within the wider community.

Editor's Note

I normally try to incorporate illustrations into articles, but this is an exception. It is planned to display PDF copies of our group's newsletters on the BAFM website. If you would like to take part in this initiative, please send a copy to my e-mail address daveadgar@gmail.com. I can ensure that your submission is written in Times New Roman font and that the font size is '12'. Images should be attached separately, so that our designer can

edit it to fit the spaces available. If you would like to highlight the work of a long term volunteer in the next two issues, that would be especially welcome as next year BAFM turns 50. If you remember a founder member of your organisation or remember a BAFM Council member from the last few decades, please send in your memories to me at the above address.

**Dave Adgar FRSA
(Interim Editor)**

STOP PRESS

In the last issue of the BAFM Journal, it was announced that Southampton would be the host city for the 2024 Conference. Due to unforeseen circumstances, this event has been delayed until 2025.

Southampton City Art Gallery, which was to be the venue for the event, will be undergoing extensive building upgrades which may not be completed in time for the 51st Annual BAFM Conference to take place.

This is obviously a good sign that local authority museums continue to attract the support they need to continue to operate effectively. However, it does mean that BAFM were very pleased that The Friends of Wisbech and Fenland Museum came forward to offer to host the event in 2024. Tim Craven, Chair of The Friends of Southampton City Art Gallery and his team will continue to prepare for 2025. In the meantime, Garry Monger and The Friends of Wisbech and Fenland Museum will be going into overdrive to ensure that the 2024 event will be a great success!

Details of the event will be announced at the Doncaster Conference and of course, in the March 2024 issue of the Journal.

Dave Adgar

Doncaster 2023

Preparations for the 50th Anniversary BAFM Conference are almost complete, and The Friends of Doncaster Museums are looking forward to welcoming delegates from across all countries and regions of the UK to Doncaster.

Readers will remember the very full programme of talks which will be delivered in the magnificent 18th century Mansion House in the centre of the city, with keynote speakers Dr Dean Lomax and Professor Joann Fletcher being joined by speakers from local groups and a presentation by award winning architects James Wignall and Bradley Moore. They will be explaining how delegates may enter a competition to 'Win an Architect', delivering £10,000 worth of design work in a heritage or arts setting.

Many of the delegates are also planning to attend the Gala Dinner which will be held after the Conference. The Friends of Doncaster would like to thank our Vice President Norah Dunbar for her generous sponsorship of this event! The Doncaster Waites (as featured on the front cover of this edition of the Journal) will welcome guests to the event. The Waites represent the town bands which operated during the medieval and early modern period in towns and cities across Europe, including Doncaster. After our dinner, The Friends will welcome bestselling author and raconteur Gervase Phinn who will be sharing tales of his wide and varied career.



Gervase Phinn

Working with The Contemporary Arts Society

Doncaster Museum Service, now Heritage Doncaster, has enjoyed a long and fruitful relationship with the Contemporary Art Society (CAS), dating back to 1952, when we acquired two small studies in watercolour by Graham Sutherland. countries and regions of the UK to Doncaster.

Since that time the acquisition of over 100 works through the CAS has helped to add important works by artists of a national and international reputation, to what would otherwise have remained a local collection.

Included in those artworks are pieces by Henri Gaudier-Brzeska, Jacob Epstein, Dame Laura Knight, and significant contemporary artists including Sarah Lucas and James Turrell.

In 2007, due to pressures on the Local Authority budget (our primary funder), we were forced to discontinue our membership, an event that had a significant impact on the development of our Fine Art Collection. The break in membership continued until 2019, when after discussions with our revitalised Friends organisation, we were able to re-join the CAS as Museum Members.



Bernard Meninsky, Illustration for L'Allegro and Il Penseroso, Bernard Meninsky, Ink, 1947 Gift of The Contemporary Arts Society to Heritage Doncaster

Our Friends organisation agreed to pay the entire cost of our membership for the first four years, in the hope that at the end of that period we would be able to evidence the benefit to Heritage Doncaster of our CAS membership, with continued membership then reverting to core funding.

2022 saw Heritage Doncaster included in the Contemporary Art Society acquisition process, and this led to discussions within our Service about collecting priorities.

One of the themes that emerged strongly from those discussions was that of migration, a theme that reflected both the history of Doncaster, with migrant workers coming to the town to work in the coalmines and railway industry, and contemporary migration, with a large Polish community now settled in the town. We were also interested in acquiring works by artists who would add diversity to our collection.

At the end of the acquisition process we were absolutely delighted to be able to add to our collection two photographs by the Ghanaian artist Ibrahim Mahama. These arresting images speak powerfully to the viewer of the impact of migration

and displacement, and with their references to the railways, have a strong link with Doncaster's industrial heritage.

In 2023 we came to the end of the four-year funding period agreed with our Friends organisation. Happily, due to the obvious benefits of our CAS membership, we have been able to continue as Museum Members, with our Friends contributing 20% of the annual costs, and the rest coming from our core funding.

Heritage Doncaster have an excellent relationship with our Friends organisation, and appreciate all that they so for the Service, not just in terms of raising funds for things like acquisitions and educational activities, but for also for their passionate advocacy for the service that Heritage Doncaster provides. We are also of course delighted, and greatly appreciate, the role that they play in our ongoing membership of the CAS.

Neil McGregor

Collections and Exhibitions Officer Heritage Doncaster



Henri Gaudier-Brzeska, Scene Amoureuse, Serravezza marble, 1914
Gift of The Contemporary Arts Society to Heritage Doncaster

The Herefordshire Hoard

Readers may remember last year's Impact Award shortlist. Featured amongst these six projects was the story of The Herefordshire Hoard.

After the close of the award, I asked Denise North if she could produce a more extended version of the story behind the acquisition of this hugely significant group of objects. It provides a salutary lesson to those metal

detectors, (thankfully in a minority) who chose to ignore the law and the consequences they may face!

Herefordshire Hoard – so history hardly ever happens? Think again!



The campaign in Herefordshire in 2022, a formal partnership project between the County Museum Service and the Herefordshire Museum Service Support Group (HMSSG) garnered much interest, particularly once the existence of the Hoard and the campaign to acquire it for the people of Herefordshire and wider public were launched. This opening sentence skips several key steps in the long road to getting to this stage so perhaps some context around the reason for the campaign, the importance of the artefacts in the Hoard and some of the time constraints on a fundraising campaign may help.

Although the finds were originally discovered in 2015, there was a long period during which West Mercia Police, experts at the British Museum, Portable Antiquities Scheme staff and Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) had to grind through the process of awaiting expert opinion as to whether the finds – at that time the jewellery items, the ingots, and the 29 coins – were to be declared Treasure. Only at this point could there be a concerted effort to launch a local public campaign to raise funds to acquire the artefacts for public benefit. Although groundwork had been done on potential sources of funding from national grant bodies, public appetite for supporting a campaign with local individual donations had to be gauged and evidenced in bids to National Lottery Heritage Fund and others. Then the local processes for Herefordshire Council to provide staff support to work with the HMSSG had to be ratified. Do I need to mention the pandemic which effectively shut down the processes at local and national level? That the campaign team morale kept up at times was no mean feat, but it did seem rather one step forward, two steps back for a long period. Then the green light for go, and a four month period in which to raise the required £776,250. The sum is not the actual value of the artefacts which are priceless in terms of their rarity (in the case of some objects unique) but a notional value.

Why the fuss? In 2015 two metal detectorists in farm fields near Leominster, Herefordshire dug up items which, contrary to the practice which the many 'Honest John' detectorists follow, they decided to not declare to the relevant authorities. This despite one of the men being an experienced detectorist who had had previous finds logged and knew the protocols to follow. They did nevertheless take pictures on their mobile phone and share with their contacts news of their plunder. Once cultural authorities and the police were aware of the find and the attempts to offer some coins for sale, the pace quickened and eventually both men were sentenced at Worcester Crown Court in 2019, with their sentences, originally set as eight and a half and ten years, one reduced on appeal, the longest at that time for heritage theft crimes.

The lack of co-operation from the two detectorists made and continues to make difficult recovery of all they recovered in 2015. Now that the market for artefacts is alert to the existence and national importance of the Hoard and the missing coins (around 250-300 were originally dug up as evidenced by photographs retrieved from a mobile phone gallery, of which only 29 have been recovered) still at loose possibly being offered for sale, there may be opportunities to obtain more of the coins and expand the story of the relevance of the Hoard location to Herefordshire and wider context. It is very fortunate that some coins from the 2015 find were recovered as these provide first evidence of Viking presence in the county and, from the Two Emperor coins, the important alliance of Kings Ceolwulf of Mercia and Alfred of Wessex, despite the latter writing the former out of the history as recorded in his Chronicles. The find helps reshape the history of England as written. I need hardly go into the outrage of detectorist club members and individuals who supported the campaign somewhat miffed at their reputations feeling more than a little sullied by the actions of the two thieves. It is not yet over for the two criminals either. In late December 2022 they were ordered to pay compensation individually or serve more prison time. One has paid and the other has not.

Why hoard, why there and the owner(s) of the objects all remain to be clarified. It may be that as with many historical explorations all the questions may never be answered in full. Recent sampling conducted by Oxford University of one of the coins and one ingot will tell us more of the source of the silver from a period in which Vikings were known to have travelled into Russian territory down to the Islamic empire, trading extensively and eventually bringing very small quantities of foreign coinage into England. What is already known from the artefacts recovered is that their importance and rare quality of craftsmanship is unparalleled in finds thus far declared and historical relevance will be underlined as more is known through research.

For a more comprehensive article on the Hoard and its discovery read Rebecca Mead's November 2020 New Yorker article <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2020/11/16/the-curse-of-the-buried-treasure>

For pictures of all the Hoard artefacts and brief information link here to Hoard website <https://www.herefordshirehoard.co.uk>

A recent development is that in May 2023 a Crown Court case in Durham resulted in sentences of over five years for two men, also detectorists. Found guilty of conspiring to sell coins the judge declared confidently to be part of the Herefordshire Hoard, the story rolls on. The team behind the original 2022 campaign to Bring Home the Hoard may well be gearing up for another programme of grant funding applications and public appeals. We await further developments...

Meanwhile HMSSG has partnered with other local bodies to fund educational events to be run in county schools featuring trading, raiding and parading where the pupils study the context of the Hoard artefacts prior to the c878 burial, and values around the crime of the rediscovery and concealment in 2015. Who says history has little relevance to today's morals, rules and standards?



King Ceolwulf II of Mercia whose alliance with King Alfred is evidenced by the minting of the Two Emperor coins.

Alfred's chroniclers made light of Ceolwulf's importance, decrying him as "a foolish king's thegn". Alfred would not have troubled to mint coinage with images of Ceolwulf and himself had the former been of no importance. It may be that Wessex was the lesser kingdom to Mercia at the time and Alfred needed to show allegiance.

A unique ring showing signs of wear. Craftsmanship of rare quality niello rosettes and flower motifs. **Trewhiddle style decoration denotes Anglo-Saxon manufacture.** Two Viking oz in gold weight equivalent to 52oz modern weight.



The 5-7th century rock crystal orb is practically flawless, despite its pearlescent appearance in this picture. Similar objects have been found as grave goods of females in England and Europe, but this rare quality piece appears almost modern in its goldwork cage and basket suspension ring. Possibly raided from Francia.

In the meantime, as the redevelopment programme of the Hereford Museum and Art Gallery gets underway, the Hoard is in safekeeping with the other collections with scheduled open days for viewing. Plans are being made for the original artefacts to be shared with the wider public ahead of their move in late 2025 into their new 21st century

facilities and exhibition space. Information on how to see the Hoard meantime is available on www.herefordshirehoard.co.uk see Events.

Denise North

Trustee HMSSG

News from Knutsford

Knutsford is a market town situated in Cheshire, approximately 14 miles southwest of Manchester. Knutsford Heritage Centre was set up in 1988 through the Groundwork Trust and is a registered charity.

Its aims are: "To preserve, protect and promote the historic past of Knutsford for the benefit and enjoyment of residents and tourists."

The Centre is housed in a reconstructed 17th century timber-framed building, which was originally a tinsmith's shop. It is tucked away in an almost hidden courtyard behind the bustling streets of Knutsford. It provides an ideal introduction to the story of Knutsford, its famous people and events such as Elizabeth Gaskell, Sir Henry Royce, Richard Harding Watt, the Racecourse and the Royal May Day Festival.

The Centre is proud to be the custodian of the unique Knutsford Millennium Tapestry which took four years to complete and involved over 3,000 people. It is displayed on three magnificent panels in the Tapestry Gallery. The exhibition gallery has artefacts and collections on display,

including Knutsford's first Royal May Queen's dress and crown from 1887. They also have regular themed exhibitions.

The Friends are investigating the possibility of holding the BAFM National Conference in 2026. More information will be issued as their plans develop.

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King Canute finds a permanent home in Knutsford

King Canute would have been thrilled to know he was centre stage again, one thousand years after his last visit to the town, as Knutsford Heritage Centre welcomed guests to the unveiling ceremony of the King's likeness in the form of a giant wood carving.



Agusta Thorarinsdottir, Honorary Consul in Manchester of the Kingdom of Denmark (second from left) at the unveiling of the statue of King Canute

Stepping across the Canute mosaic at the top of Heritage Way, guests made their way down to the Heritage Centre where they were greeted by volunteers and were able to chat to Viking Re-enactment members who gave a real sense of drama to the occasion.

In opening the proceedings, Lord Ashbrook said we were about to witness the unveiling of arguably one

of the most famous individuals ever to have been associated with Knutsford – King Canute – king of England, Denmark and Norway until his death in 1035.

Since 1401, Denmark has had diplomatic connections with the United Kingdom, and today the two countries enjoy a close relationship.



Using a replica Viking Sword to cut the celebratory cake

The Danish Ambassador René Dinesen, who was to have performed the unveiling ceremony, had been unavoidably detained in London, but fortunately Agusta Thorarinsdottir, the Honorary Consul of Denmark in Manchester was able to deputise. Consul Agusta delivered the Ambassador's speech which spoke of the long-standing association and friendship between our countries, and gave a short history of King Canute.

Consul Agusta and Henry Brooks of Tatton Estates then took their places either side of the covered statue

and gently tugged at the braided cord. There were cheers and gasps of delight as the purple silk cloth fell away to reveal the king in all his glory. More speeches followed ;Henry Brooks spoke of his parents' close association with the Heritage Centre and how they both would have enjoyed this day. He thanked David Rymill, the archivist at Winchester Cathedral and Canon Riem for allowing us to use the Cathedral's image of Canute for our wood carving.



Henry Brookes assisting the Danish Consul at the unveiling.

Andy Burgess, the chain saw artist, was praised for his skill and expertise in creating the stunning six-foot six-inch statue using locally sourced wood from the Peover estate.

The Lord Lieutenant of Cheshire Lady Redmond MBE echoed the many acknowledgements and spoke of the friendship between the two countries and their rich and colourful histories. She paid special tribute to the work done by Heritage Centre volunteers.

The final speech of the afternoon was from Knutsford Town Mayor Cllr. Peter Coan who thanked everyone for coming and particularly the guests for making this such a special day. He raised a toast to our two Kings – Canute and His Majesty Charles III.

Guests enjoyed a buffet lunch and were able to view the Centre's Viking exhibition which is on display until the end of August.

Celebrating the official opening of the extension to 78 Derngate

78 Derngate Northampton is a Grade II listed Georgian house in the Cultural Quarter of Northampton, originally built in 1815, the year of Waterloo!*

Its interior was extensively remodelled in the early 1900's by the architect and one of Britain's most influential and celebrated designers, Charles Rennie Mackintosh. Commissioned for businessman Wenman Joseph Bassett-Lowke as his first marital home, Mackintosh's designs for the house are considered to be one of the first examples of the Art Deco style to be seen in Britain.

78 Derngate is the only house in England designed by Charles Rennie Mackintosh and is now a multi award-winning visitor attraction, having been meticulously restored and opened to the public. It is the only place in the world where Mackintosh's mature architectural and interior style can be seen in their original setting.

As the East Midlands Regional Coordinator, I had the privilege and pleasure of being invited to the opening and was given a warm welcome on arrival. Everything conspired to make this occasion a memorable event as we were blessed with exceptional weather, and it was heartening to meet representatives of the Community to share it with.

Organisations across West Northamptonshire came together on Friday, 7 July to celebrate the official opening of the expanded 78 Derngate. Darren Henley, CEO of Arts Council England, cut the aptly coloured yellow ribbon for the splendid, sunny, celebratory occasion.

Part of the reception involved guests taking self-guided tours of Northampton's iconic and historic 78 Derngate - which has been expanded to offer a larger visitor centre,

rejuvenated secluded garden and totally revamped shop following the completion of the extensive £950,000 refurbishment in June this year - and flowing through the galleries, shop, and gardens.

As the only public building located outside Scotland with interiors designed by renowned artist, Charles Rennie Mackintosh, this local gem, and former home is now a museum. Following funding from West Northamptonshire Council (WNC) of £400,000 through the Town Funds, £200,000 match funding from WNC and generous donations from a multitude of individuals and organisations the expansion to this cultural facility reached completion in May this year, following more than 12 months of regeneration work. Naturally, The Friends of 78 Derngate have been involved with the project and raised £18,000 over the course of three years.

The site now boasts an extension to the main buildings and enhanced gardens, allowing larger groups to visit and enjoy the museum, as well as benefit from an enriched visitor experience at one of Northampton's most popular attractions.

Liz Jansson, House Manager at 78 Derngate, said: "It was a great pleasure to welcome Darren Henley, CEO of Arts Council England, to officially open this wonderful extension. We are thrilled with it and are settling in well to our enhanced surroundings! Visitors past, present and yet to come will thoroughly enjoy the added spaces inside and out, which already feel harmonious with the original heritage buildings.



New Atrium



The cutting of the yellow ribbon



The donors of the project are inscribed on glass.

78 Dergate is not to be missed. I was most impressed both by the House and the volunteers and students doing work experience there!

Paul Howitt-Cowan
BAFM Regional Coordinator
(East Midlands)

Editor's Note

The architect Charles Rennie Mackintosh is associated in the minds of most people with the City Glasgow. Two iconic buildings are currently undergoing a massive process of conservation. The Glasgow School of Art suffered catastrophic damage in two fires in 2018. In 2019, The National Trust for Scotland began a ten year conservation project at Hill House, Helensburgh, designed by Mackintosh for the publisher Walter Blackie; the house

is currently encased in a metal box whilst work progresses. It is encouraging that the Friends of 78 Derngate, founded in 1997 and instrumental in saving this unique building, continue to support this fine example of Mackintosh's work. The Friends, who have been members of BAFM for over twenty years, demonstrate the impact that local people can have in saving their local heritage.

**Dave Adgar FRSA
(Interim Editor)**



Front door of 78 Derngate



78 Derngate

The launch of the Friends of Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery's Acquisitions Database

Since its formation in 1931, the Friends of Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery have enhanced Birmingham's collections by supporting the purchase of over 2,700 acquisitions, funding conservation work and enabling the public to access and enjoy the collections. The process of collating information about these acquisitions began over 20 years ago and the database is now complete and provides a comprehensive list of all of the items which the Friends have purchased for Birmingham over the last 90+ years.

In 2006, to celebrate the Friends' 75th Anniversary, Margaret Boniface, the then Friends' Honorary Archivist, working closely alongside Birmingham Museums' staff, set to work to complete the task of producing a comprehensive database of all the financial support which the Friends had given to Birmingham. In a talk which Margaret wrote at this time, she explained that it had been, and would continue to be, a long and complicated process as, historically, the Minute-taking had been sketchy. Other complications included the introduction, during the 1980s, of the Friends' 'Small Purchase Scheme'. This gave Birmingham Museums' Curators the opportunity to buy an item for under £100

without asking the permission of the Friends' Committee. According to the Acquisitions Database, over 90 items were purchased using this Scheme, including a number of woodcuts by the Birmingham artist Arthur Joseph Gaskin, a Cadbury's Chocolate Box from the 1920s, two jugs and a vase decorated by the ceramicist Charles H Brannam and a Confraternity Medal by John Hardman. From 1998, the Curators were required to fill out application forms for their proposed purchases and to present each case to the Friends' Committee. As a result, records for anything purchased from that time to date have been kept on file.



'Portrait of Mumtaz Mahal', Artist unknown, 1840-1890, Presented by the Friends of Birmingham Museums & Art Gallery in 1932; 1932P240, Photo by Birmingham Museums Trust, licensed under CC0; Birmingham Museums Trust | Image Details - 1932P240 Portrait of Mumtaz Mahal

At the inaugural Meeting of the subscribers to the Association of the Friends of the Gallery, which was held at the Art Gallery on Wednesday 1 July 1931, the following three items were purchased: a portrait miniature of Mumtaz Mahal; a Sardonyx Cameo by

Schmidt from the middle of the 19th century; and 'Cyclamen', a painting by Florence Engelbach from 1931. The cost of these three acquisitions came to a total of £61 – 15s – 0d.



'Cyclamen' by Florence Engelbach, 1931, Presented by the Friends of Birmingham Museums & Art Gallery in 1932; 1932P238, Photo by Birmingham Museums Trust, licensed under CC0; Birmingham Museums Trust | Image Details - 1932P238 Cyclamen

Birmingham Museums to approach other bodies for match funding and grants towards purchases. At present, we are exploring the possibility of funding an apprenticeship, which demonstrates the range of support we are able to offer.

With the assistance of staff at Birmingham Museums, a team of volunteers worked together to compile a comprehensive database cataloguing all of the instances in which the Friends had financially supported Birmingham Museums since 1931 – over 2,700! A simple version of this Acquisitions Database is available in the 'Publications' section of our website: <https://fbmt.org.uk/publications/friends-acquisitions-history/>. It is still a work in progress, as we will be adding more images using Birmingham Museums Trust's Digital Asset Resource. And, of course, the database will be updated as we continue to offer financial support to enhance Birmingham's collections!

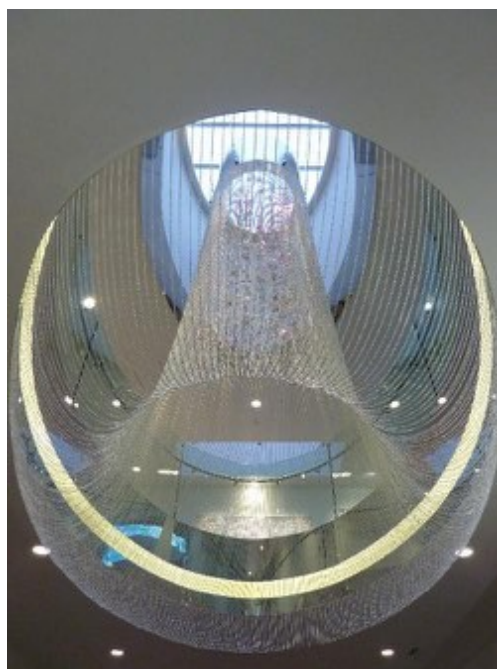
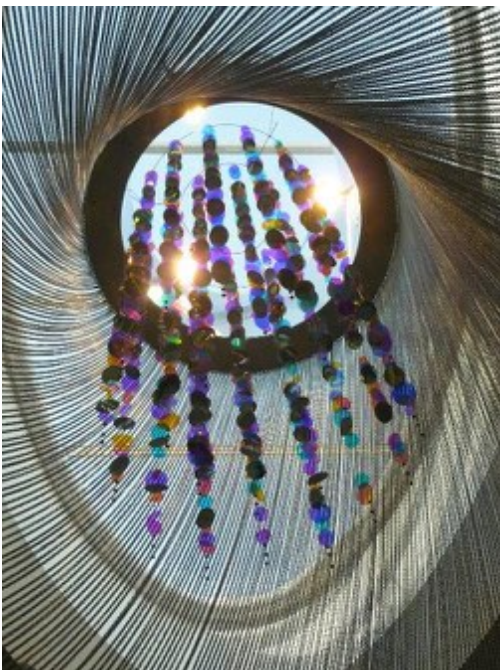
From the three items purchased at our inaugural meeting in 1931, to our commission of 'Transporter' by world-renowned artist Keiko Mukaide and engineer Ronnie Watt in 2011 to celebrate the Friends' 80th birthday and the opening of the Birmingham History Galleries, and our latest 'outright purchase' of 'Conniveo', a vinyl photographic image printed on plexiglass by contemporary artist Georgia Tucker in 2021, the Friends continue to adhere to the objectives laid out

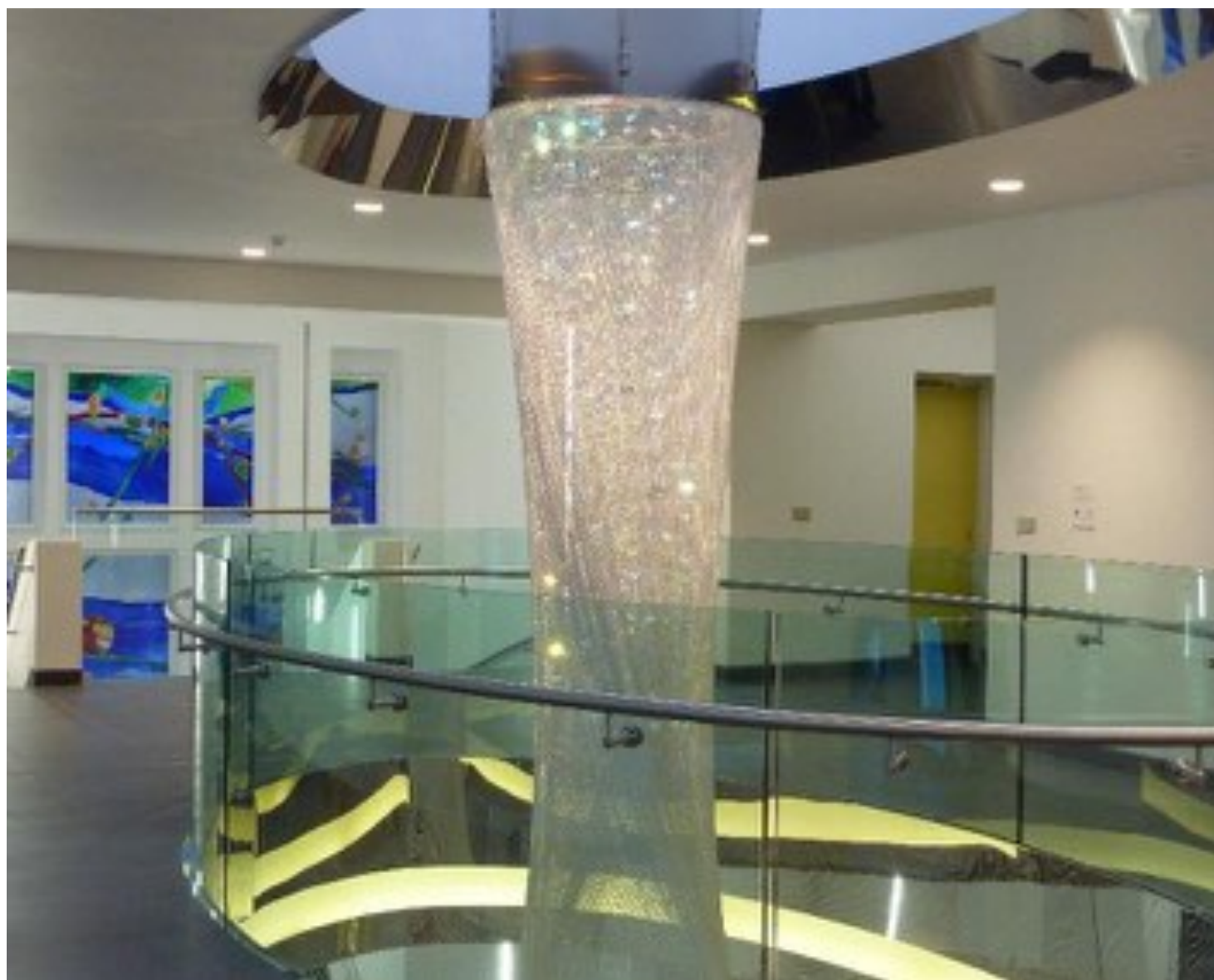
in our Constitution: 'to support and assist Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery and to promote their use and enjoyment by the public'.

This is particularly pertinent for us when, after its partial reopening for the Commonwealth Games in 2022, Birmingham's flagship Museum and Art Gallery closed for essential maintenance works in November 2022 and will not reopen until 2024. This closure has been – and will continue to be – very disappointing for many people, but the ongoing building work is vital and will ensure that the Museum can continue to be enjoyed in full in the future. Using the resources available to us as Friends: our members and loyal supporters, our core team of committed volunteers, our new online acquisitions database, our quarterly magazine 'Artefacts' and our social media presence, it is more important than ever that we support our Museums.

We are proud that, despite the pressures which have been felt both historically and in more recent times, the Friends have continued to maintain our strong and supportive relationship with Birmingham Museums and to help them to continue to develop and care for their world-class museum collections.

Melissa Hughes, Administrator and Editor of 'Artefacts' for the Friends of Birmingham Museums





'Transporter' by Keiko Mukaide and Ronnie Watt, 2012; Commissioned for the Friends' 80th Birthday and presented by the Friends of Birmingham Museums & Art Gallery in 2021; 2012.0179.

‘With The Chinese National Academy of Art’ Art exploration of the Silk Road and associated caves of Northern-west China

The Silk Road was a trading route in ancient China, so called due to the large amount of Chinese silk and silk products often transported westward on this road. It not only connected by land commercial trade in China, Central Asia, South Asia, West Asia, Europe and North Africa, but also served as an important route for the transmission of culture and art.

It was a privilege and a great honour for me as one of 13 artists invited to take part in this year’s project along the ancient Silk Road. This is the second time I have been invited to participate in the mural research and art project organised by The Chinese National Academy of Art.

This time our project is divided into two parts. The first part is to investigate along the ancient Silk Road for 10 days, visiting the more than 2000 years old route stretching 2300km from the time of Wei Jin to Qing Dynasties (AD

300-AD1900). We visited temples, caves, and museums in 11 different locations. Many of these murals are precious relics of cultural and artistic heritage that have never been developed and never been opened to the public. These ancient murals in our investigation, research and reproduction are mainly based on religious themes. They were seen by people for more than 1,700 years. People used art to interpret religion and used paintings to make Buddhist scriptures intuitive and easy to understand, allowing people to be inspired by art enlightenment.



Members of the team produce an exact photographic record on site

The second part is to reproduce the murals as flat paintings using traditional methods — mineral inks and pigment.

I reproduced two murals, one large mural believed to be of the Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms period (907-960), and the other is around the Yuan to Ming period (1271-1644).

Copying murals is not just “painting” murals, we start by making a wall. We often spend more than half of the time choosing soil, mixing mud and straw, and adding layers of paint. Each step requires precise material ratios. The last step is painting.



Olivia preparing her work on reproducing the murals of the Dunhuang Caves

These cave paintings have a history of hundreds to more than one thousand years. Due to changes in time and environment, natural disasters continue to occur, and they are slowly disappearing. If one day the cave paintings are seriously damaged or even destroyed due to natural disasters, people in the future can at least see our copied works. Therefore, copying murals is of great significance.

Grotto murals are the product of cultural exchanges between the East and the West on the Silk Road. They are a precious cultural heritage of China and an important cultural heritage of the world. After the completion of copying of these murals, they will be collected by major museums of China, so that more people can see the beauty of ancient cave murals in the cities.



Inside one of the many caves

The ancients have won my full respect for their art on the wall murals, also this has given me a lot of inspiration for developing my own contemporary style of painting.

Olivia Pang
The Friends of Doncaster Museums

Editor's Note

On her return from China, Olivia will be accompanying a visit to the GOMDE Buddhist Temple in Doncaster where she will present a artwork.

The Next Fifty

Friends of the City Art Centre and Museums of Edinburgh

On 6th June 2013 the Friends of the City Art Centre and Museums of Edinburgh commenced celebrating their Golden Jubilee year. A buffet luncheon was held at the City Art Centre, Edinburgh in the presence of the Friends' Honorary President, The Right Honourable Lord Provost and Lord Lieutenant of Edinburgh. Following his speech, the Lord Provost was invited to cut the Golden Jubilee cake to open the celebration.

Over sixty guests attended the event. Among the guests present were the eminent artist, Victoria Crowe OBE, Karl Chapman, Head of Heritage, Cultural Venues and Museums, Elizabeth Cumming, former keeper of Fine Art, museums and gallery curators and the Friends. Each guest received a commissioned booklet, 'The First Fifty; A Brief History of the Friends of the City Art Centre and Museums of Edinburgh' as a souvenir of the occasion.



The Rt Hon Lord Provost & Gillian Ferguson, Chair of the Friends cut the Jubilee cake



Michael Walton MBE, Victoria Crowe OBE, David Patterson Curatorial & Conservation Manager

In celebration of our Jubilee year the Friends asked the City Art Centre curators what they would like. They decided a welcome corner sofa would be beneficial in the reception area.

The Friends also purchased a commemorative wall plaque with the dates 1973-2023 to grace the wall by our notice board.

We held a very successful Golden Jubilee primary school competition for schools in deprived areas of Edinburgh on the subject of 'Friends'. The results were amazing and the first three winners and the winning school all received Cass Art Vouchers as prizes. As the Scottish Landscape Exhibition is being held in the City Art Centre, the Friends contributed a £1,000 Jubilee award for photography. Our annual autumn party is being held on 9th November 2023 which is the date of the Friends first inaugural meeting fifty years ago. It is still in the planning stages - but it will be special.



The Friends Committee L-R: Lesley McClymont -Treasurer, Rose Fleming- member, Paulette Hill- Membership Secretary, Gillian Ferguson- Chair, Sheila Godman-Vice-chair, John Beaton- member, Ros Newton- member

The Friends continue to support the City Art Centre and Museums of Edinburgh. They have purchased or paid to restore artwork, children's workshops, museum furniture, museum artefacts, workshop materials, plants and even part payment of the restoration to the famous Walter Scott stature in Princes Street.

From a handful of enthusiastic members fifty years ago the Friend's membership has blossomed to currently over 500 members.

Commencing at £15 annual membership, the Friend's annual benefits include three broadsheet newsletters and twelve organised monthly events. This year's programme has included four talks and bus excursions to The Burrell Collection, Paxton House and Summerlee Industrial Museum. Shorter visits include a guided tour of Blackie House library, The Wilhelmina Barns-Graham Trust, the James Clerk Maxwell Foundation, the Great Tapestry of Scotland, Warriston cemetery and the annual coffee morning with a curator led tour of the current exhibition.

It is hoped to resume the annual holidays which ceased during covid. The members also benefit from invitations to exhibition previews, free entry to paying exhibitions, and discount at the City Art Centre café and shop.

So, with a strong membership behind us, we now salute the next fifty years.

Gillian Ferguson
Chair
Friends of City Art Centre and Museums
of Edinburgh



The Friends' Golden Jubilee cake

Front cover: Doncaster Waites recreate the time when many medieval and renaissance towns had their own Town Bands to play during civic and religious festivities'

Patron

HRH The Duke of Gloucester
KG, GCVO, GCStJ

Honorary President

Lord Cormack DL FSA

Honorary Vice Presidents

Dr. Elizabeth Mackenzie MBE
and *Norah Dunbar*

Chair

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Regional Co-ordinators

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All other regions

Contact *Jean Knight*
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Vacancies

Regional Co-Ordinators form the backbone of BAFM. We currently have vacancies in the following areas; the North East, West Midlands and the South East. If you would like more information about the roles available please contact *Jean Knight* our National Co-Ordinator on irvineknight@btinternet.com.

We still require a Treasurer for BAFM. If you are interested in this role, please contact *Dan Calley*, our Chair, on djcalley@talk21.com

Join us!

Are you Friendly?! Want to meet like-minded people and make new friends? Looking to use your skills to champion the value of volunteering in the heritage sector and the contribution that Friends make both regionally and nationally? Then we may have a role for you!

Social Media Contributors spread the news of BAFM's work to our members and beyond! Regardless of whether you are an avid Facebook user or tweeter or someone who is interested in learning new skills, get in touch via journal@bafm.co.uk

Journal Editor co-ordinates the content for BAFM's national magazine seeking out interesting stories and writing articles for members to enjoy. This role could be shared by two people and support is available from the Comms group. If this sounds like something you may enjoy, email journal@bafm.co.uk to arrange a time for a chat

Regional Co-ordinators are the backbone of BAFM. They are the first point of contact for local groups and are the conduit of information between BAFM and the wider membership. We currently have vacancies in North East, West Midlands and the South East. If you are interested in finding out what is involved contact *Jean Knight*. National Co-ordinator irvineknight@btinternet.com