

BAfM

British Association of Friends of Museums
Journal

Issue 134 / Spring - Summer 2025

Inside this issue:

BAfM Conference comes to Bristol—
see inside

2025 Awards— full details

News from our groups



The Marsh Charitable Trust and BAFM

One of the most exciting developments over the last year is the partnership that has begun between The Marsh Charitable Trust and BAFM. Both organisations seek to celebrate the voluntary sector, both directly or indirectly by raising the profile of groups that support communities by volunteering in their local heritage site, museum or art gallery. Later in this edition of the *Journal* members can read about the impact the inaugural Marsh Charitable Trust supported 'BAFM Friends of the Year Award' has had on The Friends of Oakwell Hall and Park. I'm pleased to say that The Marsh Trust will be continuing its support in 2025, again supporting the 2025 BAFM Friends of the Year Award. I'm pleased to say that we are in discussions to launch a new award, the 'BAFM Individual Volunteer of the Year Award'.

At a time when all organisations are under pressure due to financial constraints, it seems appropriate that the partnership between BAFM and The Marsh Charitable Trust transcends the present difficulties and looks forward to the future. I would encourage all of our members to consider entering the awards programme in 2025; many of our groups are overly modest about their achievements and many individuals assume that their contribution is the norm and nothing out of the ordinary. I can assure you that this is not the case. I have included some information about the founder of the Marsh Charitable Trust below, showing the impact one individual can have.

Brian Marsh OBE
Chairman, The Marsh Charitable Trust



Brian started his career in insurance broking and underwriting in Lloyd's and the London and overseas market over 55 years ago. He has over 50 years' experience in building, buying and selling financial services businesses particularly in the insurance sector.

In 1981 Brian set up the Marsh Charitable Trust with the sum of £70,000. Over the years he has been very involved as both Founder and Chairman and put a lot of time and effort into growing its resources and activities. Brian has always been an advocate of supporting 'day to day' expenses and has therefore steered the Trust away from funding projects and towards funding core costs, building long standing relationships with the organisations the Trust supports. He has also done much work in promoting and rewarding the unsung heroes of the sector. Both these activities play an important part in the Trust's underlying core values.

Message from our Chair



Dear fellow Friends,

In the over fifty years of BAFM's history members have raised huge sums for their host museums.

These have been through the hard work and generosity of individuals and groups. BAFM has always been happy to support those raising funds. Members of BAFM have also been generous with BAFM itself. In recent years our two vice-presidents, Dr Liz McKenzie and Norah Dunbar have very kindly given financial support to our conferences. In the same spirit, we are most grateful to have been remembered by our former Hon Secretary, the late Joy Heffernan in her will.

She very generously has left BAFM £1,000 to continue our work in support of Friends groups throughout the United Kingdom, which she both believed in and actively worked for.

These funds have now been placed in our investment account, and the interest will support BAFM for many years to come. Joy Heffernan's generosity is an inspiration and confirmation of the work that we do.

I hope that you and others will think of emulating her faith in us and consider copying her generosity. Please consider a donation to BAFM, both now and when preparing your will.

Sincerely,

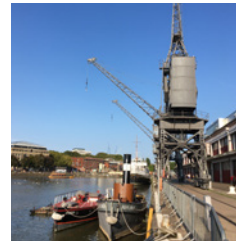
Daniel Calley / Chairman

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Our cover image

Image on front cover:
M Shed Bristol. Venue
for the 2025 Conference



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

A Visit to meet the Friends of Amberley Museum

On March 22nd this year I was appointed Chair of the Friends of Amberley Museum based in Amberley, West Sussex. I have been busy ever since my appointment, arranging fund raising events, creating new online Grant Application forms to make it easier for the Museum Staff, Volunteers and Friends to apply for a grant, as well as new Membership forms to join the Friends.

These forms are now published weekly in the Museum's Noticeboard and can be accessed and completed electronically which is proving very successful. I spent some time collecting raffle prizes for our by-annual Quiz evening held in October and hosting same which was altogether a wonderful success. Also chairing our committee meetings plus our AGM held in September. I am very fortunate to have a superb Committee backing me every step of the way and who are always willing to lend a hand and help out wherever they can.

In early September my partner Alan and I met up with the volunteer Co-

ordinator of the British Association of the Friends of Museums namely Mr Brian Lippard and his Wife Caroline, at Amberley Museum. We made it into the Lime burners cafe for refreshments then walked, yes walked in the absolutely pouring rain up to the Emporium to chat with the two lovely Ladies who run it namely Sheila Tobin and Sue White. The Emporium was formerly The Fairmile Cafe situated on the A29 in which I used to work with two of my siblings when I was a nipper, but it is now a super shop selling all manner of items kindly donated to the Friends which currently include a Lead Planter made onsite

by the Museum's very own Plumbers. Mrs Lippard was enamoured with all the wonderful items for sale inside and it was difficult to prize her out but who could blame her.

From there we walked again and yes it was still raining, up to the top of the 36-acre site to show them where Alan, myself and our wonderful team of Volunteers who are all members of the Friends, work in Pepper Lane Stop (known as PLS) for short. PLS is a catering trailer selling hot and cold drinks and several tempting snacks including Eccles cakes, Bakewell tarts, crisps and ice creams.



Left to right: Sheila Tobin, Caroline Lippard, Alan Brown, Brian Lippard, Pauline Merritt and Sue White all standing under the veranda of The Emporium. Photo taken by Sue Gillings, an Emporium Volunteer.

Both Brian and Caroline had every intention of exploring the Museum but due to the dreadful weather, they headed straight back to the Lime Burners for sustenance before heading off home. We sincerely hope

they will come back on a nice sunny Summer's Day for a good look round the Museum.

Pauline Merritt

Chair of the Friends of Amberley Museum



PLS; the Pepper Lane Stop Café on a not so nice day!

The role of the Regional Co-ordinators within BAFM

Pauline's article is a good example of how important it is for our groups to get to know their Regional Co-Ordinators. BAFM aims to support all our members with help and advice and the first port of call is the local Regional Co-Ordinators. If you would like to meet up with your local RC to discuss the situation your group is in or advice on further developments you may wish to make, please see the contact details on the back page of the Journal.

If you are interested in taking up the role of the vacant RC positions, BAFM is always keen to recruit new volunteers for these roles. Our people find this a rewarding role to undertake, and you can really make a difference in these difficult times. Please contact Jean Knight our National Co-Ordinator (again, contact details on the back page of the Journal) , to discuss your possible contribution to the ongoing work of BAFM.

Tolson Junior Park Run

'It's good to see young people out running' a quote from one of the dog walkers in Ravensknowle Park as they watched the runners in the weekly Tolson Junior Park Run.

Every Sunday morning youngsters aged from four to fourteen line up outside Tolson Memorial Museum at 9am, what ever the weather, to take part in the Tolson Junior Park Run. The Junior Park Run is one of the many activities that the Friends of Tolson facilitate to support the Museum. The Junior Park Run is part of the national and international Park Run movement.

It is a volunteer intensive event. A junior park run is three kilometres in length has to be carefully marked out and marshalled, and for safety each marshal has to be able to see the next marshal on the circuit. We need fifteen volunteers each week however there is such enthusiasm that we have never failed. The planning and organising is managed by a group of run directors at least one of whom is at the event, they

all have to have the DBS certificate.

After the event the Friends of Tolson provide hot drinks and snacks in a hut to the rear of the museum and many young people with parents and grand parents stay and chat.

Ann Denham,

Friends of Tolson Museum & Ravensknowle Park



Preparing for the beginning of the run

Sir Eduardo Paolozzi, CBE RA, Centenary 2024

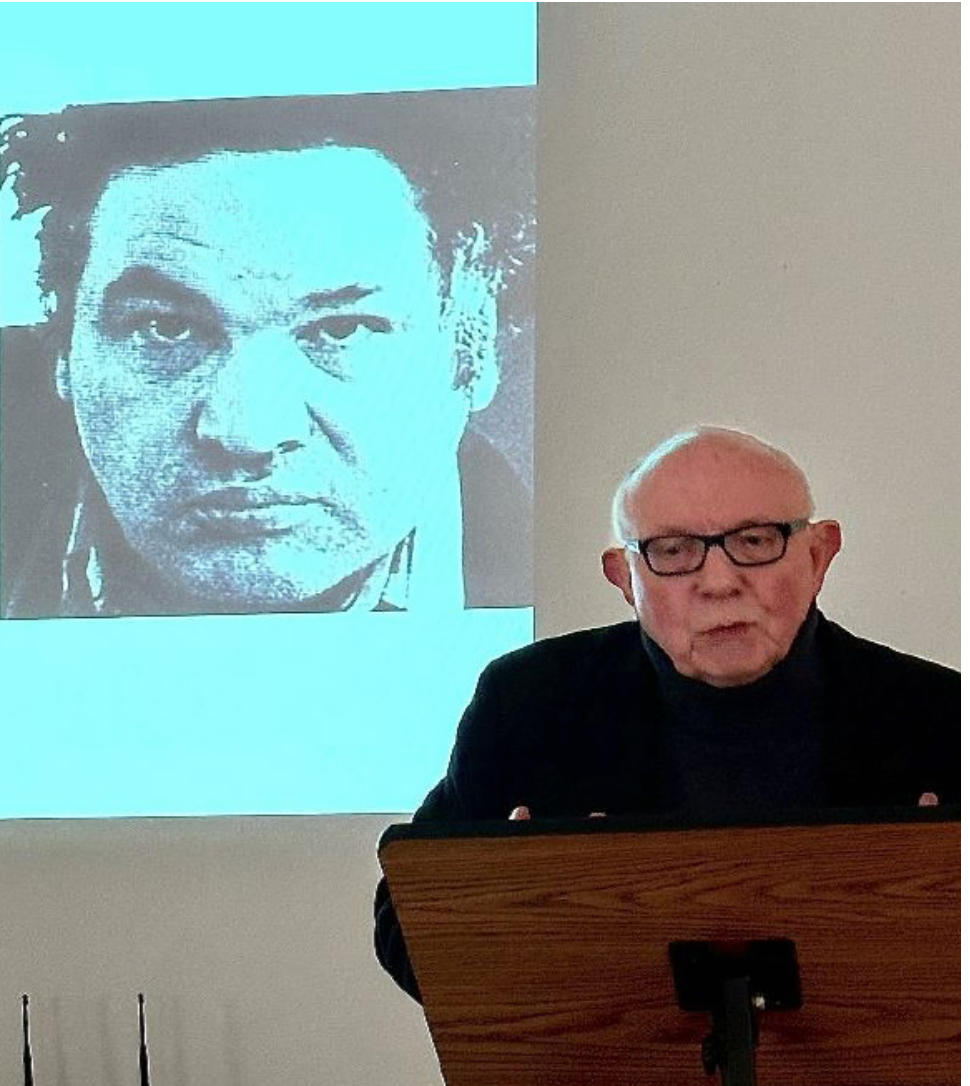
Eduardo Luigi Paolozzi, a son of Edinburgh, his legacy lies in his many artworks and sculptures that adorn Britain and throughout the world.

He was born of Italian parentage on 7th March 1924 in Leith Edinburgh and studied at the Edinburgh College of Art, and the Slade School of Art. Paolozzi who described his work as surrealist, became a prolific sculptor and printmaker. Eduardo, like his sculptures, was larger than life, both in nature and appearance. Appointed a CBE in 1968 and elected a Royal Academician in 1979, Paolozzi was awarded the office of Her Majesty's Sculptor in Ordinary for Scotland in 1986 and received a knighthood in 1989.

In 1994, Paolozzi donated large amounts of his work to the National Galleries of Scotland, which permanently display a reconstruction of his studio and contents in the National Gallery of Modern Art 2 in Edinburgh.

Edinburgh has been celebrating the centenary of Paolozzi which included the Friends of the City Art Centre and Museums of Edinburgh. Bill Hare, former teacher of art history at the University of Edinburgh, Edinburgh College of Art and the Open University delighted the Friends by giving an enjoyable and informative talk on Paolozzi.

A Friends' committee member, Ros Newton, who was a personal friend of Paolozzi was given a Maquette, Puchan by Paolozzi bearing a personal inscription from the great man to her. Ros kindly donated the Maquette to the City Art Centre so that



Bill Hare during his talk revealing Paolozzi on the screen. Photo credit: E Blair

the item could be viewed by visitors. To make the Friends' celebration very special it was arranged to display Puchan to the members during the talk.

Sadly, Paolozzi suffered a stroke and was confined to a wheelchair in later life. He died in London on 22nd April 2005 aged 81 years. He was a one-off, his works were unique and generally recognisable. Perhaps the last word in this centenary article should be from Paolozzi.

"I suppose I am interested, above all, in investigating the golden ability of the artist to achieve the metamorphosis of quite ordinary things into something wonderful and extraordinary"

Gillian Ferguson,

BAfM Coordinator Scotland

Edmund Paolozzi



Ros Newton gazes tenderly at Puchan, her companion of many years
Photo credit: E Blair

European Day of Friends of Museums

13th October 2024

The Friends of Carshalton Water Tower in south London celebrated the European Heritage Day with a film show.

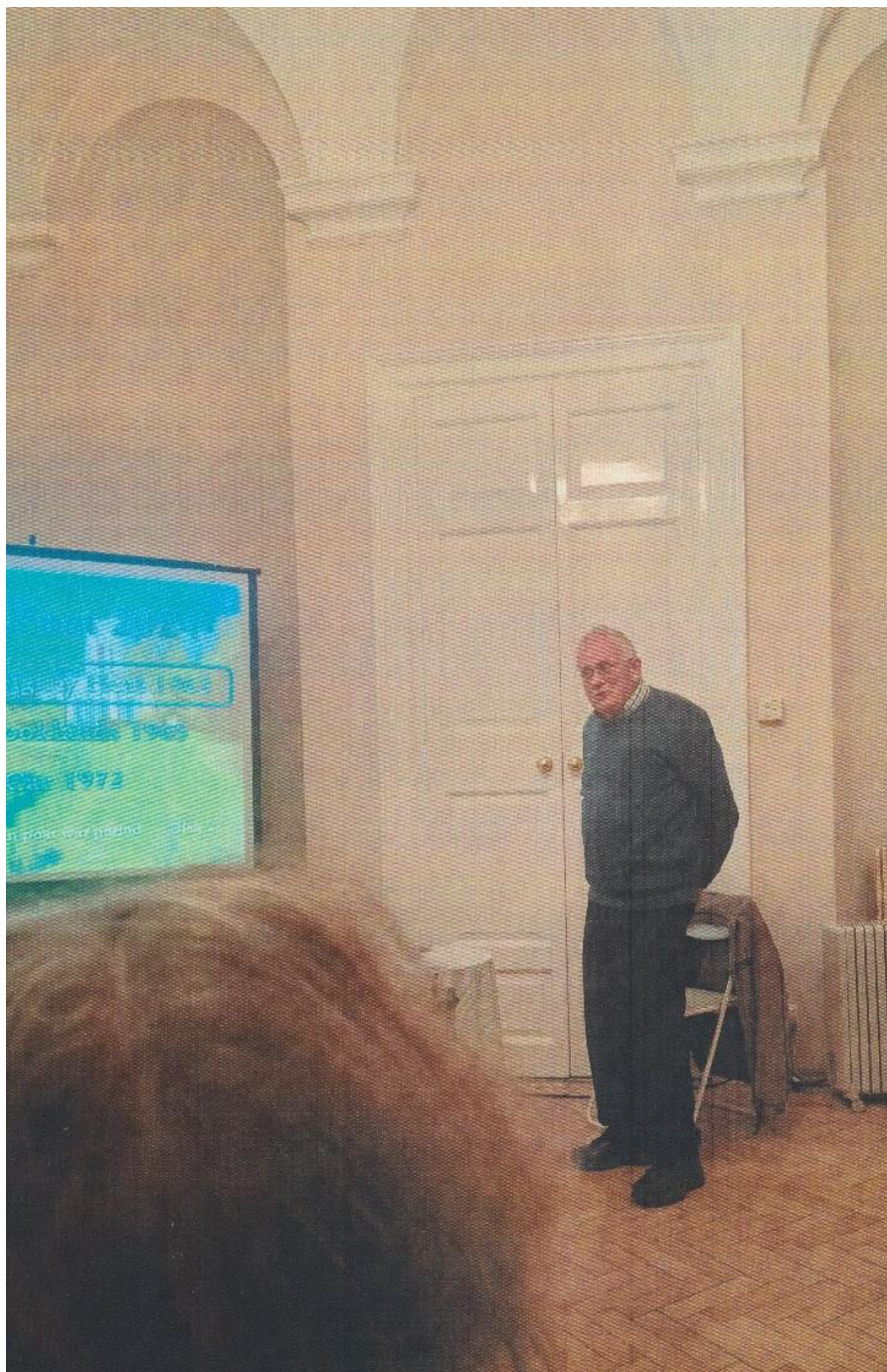
John Freeman, one of our Friends, showed six short films from his archive of historic films. The theme was mainly about transport between the years 1941 and 1972.

The programme started featuring the work of the lifeboat men off the Cornish coast. In the second half of the programme one of the films showed a day in the life of London transport, titled, All that Mighty Heart 1962. This title was taken from the English romantic poet, William Wordsworth's poem Upon Westminster Bridge, written in 1802.

Other films included The Spirit of Brooklands, Look at Life, from 1965. This related the early history of one of England's early aerodromes, near Weybridge. But perhaps more importantly we also saw footage of the Surrey motor racing circuit. This was the world's first purpose-built motor sport venue for cars and motorcycles. Now there is a museum with very active Friends and volunteers.

The Water Tower Friends are hoping that there will soon be a UNESCO World Heritage Day to celebrate our incredible Heritage!

Jean Irvine Knight



John Freeman delivering his film show

Celebrating a Gift

The Friends of Carshalton Water Tower were so pleased that Carshalton Freemasons' Lodge chose to give them another grant this year.

This enabled the Friends to purchase more new chairs to replace all their rather tatty 30-year-old chairs. As the Water Tower's 'face' is its fortune, the new chairs really enhance the furnishings for hiring out the building, which is necessary for much needed funds.



Jean and Beverly in the Pump Chamber of the Water Tower



The Worshipful Brother Kevin Field left, and fellow Mason, the Worshipful Brother Richard Pratt, right, both former Chairmen of Carshalton Lodge, by their commemorative plaque on the Pump Chamber wall.

To the Friends' surprise they learnt that this money, £800, had been raised by Beverly Field organising a Masons' Ladies' Night. The Friends are greatly indebted to her for thinking of them and the Masons for all their support.

Jean Knight

Chair of the Friends

Britain's Last Roman Hoard

An AHRC-funded project with the British Museum and Newcastle University

Researchers studying some of the last Roman hoards ever deposited in Britain visited Mildenhall and District Museum in January 2025 to examine coins from a late Roman hoard found in Worlington (Suffolk).

Dr Kelly Clarke-Neish from the British Museum writes:

I was thrilled to visit Mildenhall and District Museum to study the Worlington hoard. It's part of a large group of more than 200 late Roman hoards that contain some of the last Roman coins ever to reach Britain. We're studying about 50 of these hoards in a new collaborative research project (along with Prof. Ellen Swift of University of Kent, Dr Eleanor Ghey of the British Museum and Prof. James Gerrard of Newcastle University) funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council.

Most of the hoards have silver coins in them, some have other artefacts as well and for a few, the hoard containers are preserved. Surprisingly, the hoards have been neglected in scholarly studies; often the coins have been briefly identified and published, but the other artefacts haven't, or publications are very old. We are hoping by studying them we can bring new evidence to bear on the transition between the late Roman and early medieval periods in Britain, and transform our understanding of economy, society and culture in fifth-century Britain.

The late Roman hoard at Mildenhall Museum is a coin-only hoard and consists of 96 coins that were found over a period of ten years by metal



Dr Kelly Clarke-Neish at work in Mildenhall Museum

detectorists. The coins were probably originally placed in a container or bag and buried but ended up scattered across a wider area due to agricultural activity. The 95 silver (siliquae) coins were minted during the period 355-402. The earliest coins were minted at Trier or Lyons under the name of Julian II (361–

363) whilst the latest were minted at Milan by Arcadius or Honorius during the period 395–402.

All but one of the coins in the hoard display evidence of silver being carefully removed from their edges. This practice is known as 'clipping' and is a common feature of coins

that are found in late Roman hoards in Britain. Most of the 96 coins from the hoard are heavily clipped leaving only the bust and small or no traces of the legend. However, this phenomenon has been underestimated by scholars previously and not systematically recorded. There are four different categories of clipping: lightly clipped (CF1), moderately clipped (CF2), heavily clipped (CF3) and substantially clipped (CF4).¹ The degree of clipping can help us to explore how long coins were in circulation and assist with the dating of a hoard. Heavily clipped coins represent coins that were in circulation for a longer period and hoards with a greater amount of these coins were deposited later in the fifth century compared to those that included more lightly clipped coins. In

the case of the Worlington hoard, most coins were heavily clipped (CF4) with the legend fully removed and only the bust remaining.

Coin clipping occurs in other periods too and is usually interpreted as people trying to make a profit for themselves by removing silver clippings before spending the coin at face value. There is an ongoing debate among scholars over whether this interpretation applies to late Roman silver clipped coins as well and it's something we'll be investigating further in our project. The clipping of late Roman silver does usually avoid cutting into the portrait – as is the case with the Worlington coins – suggesting the appearance of the coin was important and the emperor's image

was still respected.

An irregular gold solidus was also discovered along with the silver coins and is an unusual find for this period. There is an error in the spelling of Arcadius (AACADIAS) on the obverse of the coin and the reverse legend reads 'CONCOADIA AVCCĒ' rather than CONCORDIA AVGGG which appears on genuine issues. In the top left corner of the obverse of the coin, there is a small indent in the edge of the coin – could this perhaps be evidence of an ancient metal test? The gold content of the coin ranges between 79-86% which suggests that the coin was intended to be used in the same way as genuine gold coinage.



Two clipped siliquae (photo: © Trustees of the British Museum)

Over the next two years, our research project 'Britain's Last Roman Hoards' will incorporate these results with information from studying other hoards around the UK, hopefully achieving some new insights into the meanings of the hoards, and how Britain changed after the withdrawal of Roman government. You can keep up to date with our activities by following the project blog at

<https://blogs.kent.ac.uk/hoards/>

Lloyd Hughes

Treasurer and Trustee of Mildenhall Museum



An irregular solidus (photo: © Trustees of the British Museum)

BAFM Invited to The King's Garden Party

I was pleasantly surprised earlier this year to receive an e-mail from the private office of our royal patron HRH The Duke of Gloucester. Every few years, each organisation with Prince Richard as its patron is offered the opportunity to nominate four representatives who will receive an invitation to attend one of the Garden Parties held at Buckingham Palace each May. As the Duke is patron of over one hundred and sixty organisations, this is not an opportunity which occurs each year so deciding which individuals should attend was not an easy task. Kensington Palace wanted representatives who volunteered for BAFM but also individuals who had made a difference to one of our member groups. I will be producing a full report on the Garden Party in the next issue of the Journal but it is important that our member groups inform BAFM of the work they do in their local communities. This edition of

the magazine has full details of the different awards BAFM allocates each year and I would encourage as many of our member groups to submit applications for the Newsletter of the Year Award and The Friends of the Year. Even if you do not win, being shortlisted is quite an achievement! Alternatively, submitting an article to be included in subsequent issues of the BAFM Journal publicises the work you do and I am happy to supply extra copies of the Journal as these can be a great way to influence your funders.

For those members based in Scotland, I am hoping to receive news of possible places being allocated for Garden Parties held at Holyrood House (fingers crossed!)

Dave Adgar

BAFM Young Museum Professional Award 2025

We invite entries to this new biennial award, which is open exclusively to museums with BAFM member Friends' groups.

BAFM aims to help young museum professionals realize their curatorial ambitions and further the aims of their institution by offering an annual award for new collections-based research and curatorial training and development opportunities.

BAFM is committed to delivering public benefit in museums, and aims to achieve this through supporting the development, conservation, and dissemination of museum collections to enhance their public presentation and accessibility. BAFM therefore wants to hear from you how our award will help further this aim. However, we also accept that training and research can and should be creative and exploratory.

We therefore welcome ambitious applications and will not always expect material outcomes (for example in the form of acquisitions, exhibitions, or publications) to be an immediate consequence of the award. However, while the award aims to help support curatorial development and collections-based research, it is not intended to replace statutory funding for equipment and resources. BAFM hopes the award will demonstrate the importance and benefits of continued investment in curatorial expertise and encourage funding from other sources.

BAFM welcomes applications for the award from young UK museum professionals to undertake training, travel and accommodation for research trips and conferences including the funding of publications and subscriptions to add to a museum's research resources or library.

The award might also support other kinds of activity, provided you are able to make a strong case for its contribution to the development of curatorial skill and collections-based research projects.

Our Judges will consider the following:

- Quality of learning and development potential
- Quality of ambition and innovation
- Relevance of the project to the museum's policies and programs

The Winning Prize

The winner of the award will receive a £1,000 prize and will be invited to present a report on the project at the next national conference (and to BAFM's Journal).

The Runners Up

Those submissions which are considered excellent will receive a Certificate of Merit.

The applications will be judged by a panel Chaired by Tim Craven, a trustee of BAFM with a wealth of experience in the museums sector. Heather Stracey, winner of the 2023 BAFM 'Museum Professional of the Year Award' will be joined by Sarah Newman, Director of the Russell-Cotes Museum Bournemouth will join Tim on the panel.

Young Museum Professional Award Application Form

Please complete this submission form and email it to **Tim Craven**: timcraven1066@gmail.com

Closing date 1st July 2025

PLEASE COMPLETE THE DIGITAL VERSION OF THIS FORM BY VISITING THE BAFM WEBSITE

Name of applicant:	Name and address of museum:	Additional information (timescale, costs/quotations, references - 250 words maximum):
Age (must be 35 or under):	Name of Museum's Director/ Curator:	Friends' group name:
Post held:	Project description (how you would employ the £1,000 award fund - 250 words maximum)	Friends' group contact (name and email address):
Professional qualifications:		
Employment history with dates:		



Heather Stracey, winner of the award in 2023, used her prize to upgrade her skills in textile conservation.

HRH Duke of Gloucester Visit to Lancaster City Museum

The idea of a Royal Visit to Lancaster City Museum originated with myself and I was privileged to be a part of the detailed planning of the visit of His Royal Highness. I was accorded a prominent role in greeting The Duke when he entered the Museum because it was acknowledged by all that, without my initiative, the Royal Visit would not have been possible.

I possess a PhD in Medieval History, specialising in monastic and religious institutional history, and I serve on the Board of Directors of the Richard III Society, of whom The Duke of Gloucester is the Patron. I was therefore tasked with explaining the significance of the medieval objects within the Museum collection during the Royal Visit. My role was acknowledged by The Duke on the day, and His Royal Highness was delighted to be shown some of the treasures which the Museum holds. A 13th-century diamond ring discovered near Warton (the earliest dated diamond ring found in this country) and a 15th-century crucifix discovered near Morecambe especially drew his attention, as did the colourful figures illuminating life in medieval Lancaster that graced the Museum exhibition. His marvellous sense of humour and passion for antiquities was a delight to behold and a privilege to be a part of. I very much hope that this Royal Visit has helped to put Lancaster City Museum on the national map of significant municipal museums and that it can act as a spur to reimagining how the Museum serves the interests of the people of Lancashire and beyond.

The visit of His Royal Highness comes at an auspicious time for the heritage economy of Lancaster, invigorated by the promise of the coming Eden Project to Morecambe, and how the museums of Lancaster City Centre can form an important locus for socio-economic development arising from the growth of Eden. Lancaster has, for a very long time, imagined itself to be a Heritage City. It is the home of Lancaster Castle, the 12th-century fortress, court and prison, where the famous 1612 Pendle Witch Trials took place; Skerton Bridge, the first bridge in England to be built as a flat-topped bridge, in imitation of Roman models, constructed in 1781; and of Lancaster Royal Grammar School, one of the earliest medieval grammar schools in the North of England, whose alumni include palaeontologist Sir Richard Owen and scientific polymath William Whewell. The stories of people and place of regional and national significance are told within Lancaster City Museum, and the FOLCM is proud to help the City Museum to tell their stories. We can do this by helping Lancaster to tell its own story, a story of hope, growth and triumph, and my sincere wish is for our

example to be an inspiration to BAFM and its affiliates to make the stories of your museums matter.

For the FOLCM, the Royal Visit also represents a moment of triumph over adversity, to bring the best of the museum which we love to the attention of a most distinguished royal guest. This is because, in common with many friends of museums organisations which BAFM represents, the FOLCM has stood on the brink of dissolution ever since I was elected Chair in 2021. Maintaining consistent membership of the Executive Committee, and momentum towards achieving our shared goal of advocating for the best interests of Lancaster City Museum, has been and remains a challenge. Yet, we have consistently risen to the challenge, and our momentum to achieve great things for our museums has grown from strength to strength. Now, we can proudly state that we are in a healthy relationship with Lancaster City Council and the Curators of Lancaster City Museum. We can claim that we have materially improved the cultural and social significance of the City Museum, from regular, critically acclaimed public lectures and financial contributions towards museum acquisitions to organising musical

events and celebrating its centenary in 2023.

Our most popular lectures have been on the history of the 1193 Borough Charter, granted by Count John of Mortain to Lancaster to establish what became the bi-weekly Charter Market, and the life and times of Sir Richard Owen, delivered by Leah George Demetriou of the Natural History Museum (South Kensington). Following on from the success of the Sir Richard Owen lecture, the FOLCM is now pioneering a one-day conference in July 2025, the Owen Lectures. Encompassing academic and non-academic speakers from Lancaster and the Natural History Museum, and based in Lancaster City Museum, the Owen Lectures will cover the life of Sir Richard Owen, mid-19th century Britain and contemporary developments in the disciplines of palaeontology and anatomy which he pioneered. We have earmarked significant financial sums towards the planned redevelopment of the Museum Education Room, as well as towards acquiring a 15th-century gold ring discovered in the local area, presently under evaluation by the Treasure Committee.

Two days before the arrival of His Royal Highness, the FOLCM filled the halls of the City Museum with festive cheer, when three community choirs sang Christmas songs in the exhibition galleries. The Bay Singers of Morecambe brought traditional Christmas carols to the visitors of the Museum, the Gladly Solemn Sound choir resurrected the glories of 18th and 19th-century Church Revival music, and the Chveni Khmebi (Our Voices) choir of Lancaster Georgian singers evoked the haunting melodies of Caucasian polyphonic symphonies throughout the Museum. We are a small organisation, but we have proven that we can achieve great things. This Royal Visit represents our crowning achievement in a most exciting year for the Friends of Lancaster City Museum.



DR Christopher Tinmouth
Chair, The Friends of Lancaster City Museum

Friends of Doncaster Museums commission a portrait

In recent times, the term 'hero' is used quite freely; a footballer becomes a hero for scoring a goal for example. The Friends of Doncaster Museums were keen to commission a portrait of a local man someone demonstrably deserving of the term.

Ben Parkinson was serving with the British Army in Afghanistan in 2006 when the vehicle he was travelling in was blown up by a landmine possibly left over from the Soviet occupation in the 1980s. Ben was thrown fifteen metres into the air by the explosion and suffered severe injuries. His comrades found him unconscious along their overturned vehicle and the two medics accompanying the patrol performed an emergency procedure which involved inserting a tube through an incision they had produced which allowed him to continue to breathe. After being evacuated by helicopter to the main base of Camp Bastion, surgeons removed his spleen and amputated both his legs above the knee. He also suffered significant damage to his brain. Ben had survived to become the most severely wound soldier to do so during operations in Afghanistan.

Ben was born in Doncaster and joined the forces at an early age. He had previously served in Iraq and Kosovo. He served in the Seventh Parachute Regiment, Royal Horse Artillery, an element providing artillery support to the then 16th Air Assault Brigade. A good soldier, he envisaged a long and successful career in the military; this was now impossible. But it was what came next that exemplified his heroism and made the Friends wish to commission his portrait.



Ben Parkinson MBE with his step father at the unveiling of his portrait, Danum Gallery, Library and Museum, October 2024



Portrait of Ben Parkinson MBE by David Jan Curtis ROI RSMA

Ben was told he would never walk again and that he would be unable to talk but he was determined to do both. In 2012, he was selected to carry the Olympic Torch through Doncaster which he did to great acclaim from local people. He was also determined to raise money for those less fortunate than himself and he has performed several fundraising activities including parachute jumps, cycling events and arctic treks. In 2013, he was awarded the MBE for his charitable activities.

Having raised the money to commission a portrait of Ben, the next step was to select an artist to complete the task. It was decided to ask David Jan Curtis to go forward with the project. David is a local artist with an international reputation. Having trained as

an engineer, he continued as an amateur artist until, at aged 40, he turned professional. He has won a series of national awards and was elected to The Royal Society of Marine Artists in 1983 and as a member of The Royal Institute of Oil Painters in 1988.

In October 2024, members and invited guests gathered to mark the unveiling of this important addition to the collection of Heritage Doncaster. Mayor Roz Jones CBE, Damian Allen FRSA (Chief Executive of City of Doncaster) were joined by Lord Graham Kirkham, Baroness Rosie Winterton together with the Trustees to celebrate the success of The Friends in bringing this ambitious project to fruition.

David Adgar FRSA

Photographs copyright Donna Adgar

The British Association of Friends of Museums 'Friends of the Year Award 2024'

One of the highlights of the Conference weekend is the presentation of awards to our member groups.

The shortlisted groups in the Friends of the Year category had been contacted prior to the weekend in Wisbech and it was a great honour to have Dan Calley, our Chair to present each group with a certificate of merit signed by himself, on behalf of BAFM as well as by Brian Marsh OBE, founder and chair of the Marsh Charitable Trust. As readers will be aware, this is the first year BAFM has been partnered by the Trust and it was indeed a difficult decision to single out any winner amongst the six shortlisted groups. The judging panel consisted of Gillian Ferguson, our Regional Co-Ordinator for Scotland, myself as Vice Chair of BAFM and Annie McCarthy of the Marsh Charitable Trust. Each entry was examined in depth prior to a face-to-face meeting and then discussed at length between the members of the panel. All agreed that the standard of those shortlisted was exceptional but a consensus about each entry was agreed.

'Commended' were two of the entries, that by the Royal Institute of South Wales in Swansea and the Amelia Scott in Tunbridge Wells. The completion of the project by the RISW to mark their history by publishing a comprehensive review of their achievements was covered extensively in the last Journal. The Amelia Scott's entry focussed on plans to sponsor an extensive exhibition of their period costume collection. The judges were impressed by both these entries and both groups received a certificate which recognised their work.



Dan Calley presenting awards at the 51st Annual BAFM Conference Wisbech.



In the 'Highly Commended' category, BAFM recognised The Friends of The Bowes Museum and The Friends of Beamish North of England Open Air Museum, both of whom had been busy fundraising to support their respective sites. The Friends of Beamish is possibly the largest group in the BAFM 'family', with approximately five thousand members. Each year, the group raises between a quarter to one third of a million pounds as well as providing the volunteer support which drives this major living history attraction. The Bowes' Friends, similarly, raises large sums of money to support this major art gallery in County Durham. I was particularly pleased to learn about the conservation work completed on the 'Silver Swan', definitely a sight to see this automaton in action!

The final two groups which had been shortlisted were the Friends of Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery and the Friends of Oakwell Hall and Park. Normally, one of

these would have been chosen as the 'Winner' and the other would have been deemed 'Runner Up' but in the event it was impossible to differentiate between the two and they were declared 'Joint Winners'.

Anyone listening to the news over the last year or two will be aware of the financial problems facing local authorities. Emblematic of these issues is perhaps the largest local authority in Europe, Birmingham City Council. In 2024, they effectively declared themselves bankrupt. It could not have come at a worse time for Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery. It had been closed for major refurbishment for a number of years and the structural work had been completed but the spending freeze imposed by the Council meant that the building could not be redecorated and made ready to welcome the public again. The solution was found by appealing to the Friends. They were asked to fund the redecoration of two parts of the building, the café and the shop.

It was felt that reopening these two areas would enable the museum to begin earning money from sales which could enable other parts of the building to be reopened in time. The Friends supplied £30,000 immediately and the process could begin. There was a real chance that this major museum would not reopen and would begin to deteriorate structurally if not put back in use. The judges were unanimous in their decision to award the Friends of BMAG a winner's certificate and a cheque for £250, thanks to the partnership between BAFM and The Marsh Charitable Trust.

Oakwell Hall and Park is situated in West Yorkshire, in an area of social deprivation. The Jacobean Hall has associations with the Bronte family and is much loved locally. The Friends group has been running the site for over thirty years and delivers an impressive range of educational activities for local children. They also help to prepare the Hall as a wedding venue, an activity which raises enough money to meet the annual routine maintenance costs. The judges were so impressed with the range of activities the group delivers and the massive amount of work they delivered to ready the park for reopening after the Covid 19 epidemic, they were happy to agree, again unanimously that The Friends of Oakwell Hall and Park were worthy winners of the award.

Postscript

Since winning the BAFM Friends of the Year Award the Friends of Oakwell have had several pleasant surprises. When the Mayor of Kirklees heard of the award, the group were invited to the Town Hall to have afternoon tea in the Mayor's Parlour.

There they were given afternoon tea by the mayor and presented with a framed certificate of thanks from the Mayor, Councillors and People of Kirklees for their efforts over the last thirty years. Roger Knights of the Friends was amazed when the mayor began the presentation by apologising for taking so long to give the group the recognition, they deserved but that it had only

been the BAFM award which had drawn her attention to the efforts they had supplied over the years. Subsequently, they were contacted by a local firm who operate a volunteering programme for their employees. Amazingly, the firm were landscape gardeners, and they proceeded to deliver a programme of work which included such things as pollarding the large trees which were in danger

of being uprooted due to extreme weather conditions. Obviously, the Friends recognise the importance of their success they have had and they would encourage any group associated with BAFM to apply for the awards on offer; the results can be surprising!

BAFM in Rome

The invitation was irresistible: come to Rome in early January for a private audience with His Holiness the Pope when he would recognise the work and thank members of the World Federation of Friends of Museums for their cultural contributions. There was a rare chance for our work to be recognised by a head of state and one of the most respected world leaders. Over 100 members of the World Federation of Friends of Museums travelled from all over the globe, from Canada to Romania, from the USA to Germany, from Luxembourg to Argentina and many more countries.

We began our visit with a meeting at the Italian Ministry of Culture where each delegation introduced themselves and told a bit about their own work. The next morning all were excited and dressed in their best for this special occasion. Rather curiously, we were asked to arrive at 7:00 am for a 9:00 am audience. We were all a little surprised that there were a few others who joined our audience in the Paul VI Hall, approximately 7,000 to be exact. Once the shock of being in the middle of such a massive crowd wore off

we were all incredibly impressed and moved by our visit. The Pope was warm and welcoming. Friends of Museums were only a small part of this happy enthusiastic group, and yet very much part of it, just as our own groups are dedicated to our own specific organisations and yet part of the entirety of British life. Our visit also included a tour of the astounding Vatican Museums. It was also a chance to meet up with other national Friends groups. After a truly fine world conference in Luxembourg last May it was a delight to meet up again. As always, their supreme organisation led to a wonderful to the Villa Medici, home of the French Academy in Rome. It was all an inspiration for a future BAFM trip to the eternal city.

Rome was not what we expected, and yet it was more than we hoped for.

Dan Calley Chair of BAFM

The BAFM Friends Group of the Year Award 2025. In partnership with The Marsh Charitable Trust

BAFM is pleased to announce the Friends Group of the Year Award will be run again in partnership with The Marsh Charitable Trust. All the information below can be accessed on the BAFM website, but it was felt useful to publish the guidance notes etc in this issue of the Journal. We would encourage all groups to apply.

Guidance Notes for applicants

1. Why apply for the BAFM Friends of the Year Award?

BAFM represents people who love museums, galleries, and our heritage. Friends Groups who are members of BAFM support museums through fundraising, voluntary work, helping advocate for museums and helping them engage with their communities. We want to recognise and reward the exceptional work that Friends Groups are doing through our latest BAFM Friends of the Year Award 2025. BAFM is proud to announce their partnership with The Marsh Charitable Trust who will help select the winners of the competition. Throughout these guidelines, for the sake of brevity, the word 'museum' or 'museums' should be recognised as referring to museums, galleries, and heritage sites, as well as organisations such as The Chippendale Society and The Gissing Trust.

- Award winners will receive a £500 donation, kindly provided by The Marsh Charitable Trust
- The BAFM Friends of the Year Award formally recognises the hard work and dedication of groups and each shortlisted organisation will receive a Certificate of Merit.
- The Award provides evidence you have a track record of success.
- If possible, award winners are expected to attend our National Conference to showcase their work and promote their group as well as collect their award certificate and cheque.
- A follow up article in the BAFM Journal will be published, promoting your group, showcasing your work, and sharing your ideas and best practice.

2. Who can apply for the BAFM Friends of the Year Award

The BAFM Friends of the Year Award, in association with The Marsh Charitable Trust is for exceptional groups of Friends who are making a positive impact on their museum and benefitting others through their work. We are looking for groups who have taken the initiative to create, organise and deliver activities that support museums and heritage.

- There are several criteria applicant groups must fulfil:
- Applicants must be members of BAFM.
- Friends' Groups can apply themselves or be nominated by the museum or heritage site they support.
- Applicants can be Friends Groups of any size as it is the impact of the work that we will consider, not simply the scale or number of pounds

raised. Whether you are a newly formed group consisting of just a few dedicated individuals, or a well-established group with 500 members, if you have done some exceptional work either in the last 12 months or over a longer period, we want to hear from you.

- Examples of work recognised by the Award may include:
- Fundraising that helped the museum achieve a goal
- Helping to engage a new audience at the museum
- Filling gaps in museum provision or service
- Preserving local heritage or the environment
- Raising awareness about issues affecting museums or local heritage

Working in partnership with other Friends groups, charities, or other organisations to achieve something that had positive impact on museums and heritage.

It is expected that applications that are based on fundraising projects go beyond simply asking for donations, but are creative, engaging and benefit the museum more widely.

We welcome applications from groups that are well run, and that have clear aims and objectives in how to support their museum or heritage site as well as those who are not affiliated with specific locations.

3. How can we apply for the BAFM Friends of the Year Award?

The Award application form is available to download from our website:

Application Form (PDF)

Application Form (.docx)

Applications are accepted from 1st March 2025 to 1st July 2025.

You will need to send your application form, a letter of support from the museum your groups supports and one supporting document that is relevant to the application. This document could be a photograph or video of the activity or a press article, newsletter article, blog posts, or a short testimonial from beneficiaries of the activity or anything which you feel best demonstrates the value of your work. If your work is of a more general nature, the judges will accept a letter of support from an individual who knows of your work BUT who is not a member of your group.

NB Any applications submitted without a letter of support from a museum or other heritage site cannot be considered.

The Award short list will be announced in the September edition of the BAFM Journal, and the winner and runners up will be notified privately before the public announcement at the 52nd BAFM Conference and AGM hosted this year by The Friends of Bristol Museums and Art Gallery

Although applications will generally be submitted by digital means, if your group would prefer to submit by hard copy, please contact davidadgar@outlook.com

Any personal data submitted to us will be processed in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

4. Completing the application form

Be concise and to the point, but make sure you give us some facts and figures and tell us why this activity is important. Here are some points you may address in your application:

- What exactly do your group do and why was it necessary? We want to see an indication of good communication with the museum or heritage site you support.
- What was impact of the activity on the museum or heritage site? How many people benefitted from it, and how?
- How did your involvement ensure the activity took place? Tell us about how your group took the initiative and overcame any problems.
- Did the activity help reach any new audiences for the museum or establish new relationships?
- What are the long-term benefits of the activity to the museum or Friends group?

5. What to include in the letter of support

Together with your application form, groups must submit a letter of support written by the museum or heritage site they support or in specific cases by an individual who knows the work of the group intimately. The letter should include.

- The name and role of person writing the letter.
- Brief details of the museum or heritage organisation itself, what the museum is and what it does.
- How the activity of the Friends group has been beneficial to the museum, who it has helped and how.
- How this activity has helped the museum achieve its goals and any long-term effects.
-

NB This letter should be clear and concise; BAFM aren't looking for an essay, just a clear indication that the Group is working in conjunction with the museum or heritage site they support.

6. What if the application is unsuccessful?

All groups considering submitting an entry are encouraged to engage with their Regional Co-Ordinator in the first instance or contacting Dave Adgar via e-mail davidadgar@outlook.com who can arrange either a phone call or a Zoom meeting to discuss any issues which groups may feel they need clarification. The final decision on the winner and those who are either runners up or highly commended will be made by an impartial panel. Groups are welcome to reapply at any time in successive years.

7. Receiving an Award

The Award winners will be notified and will be invited to attend the National Conference for the presentation of the Award. Winners will be given all necessary details well in advance and it is expected that the winning group send at least one member to attend the presentation.

BAFM Travels

Last October BAFM members enjoyed a trip around East Anglia. We took in the treasure house of Audley End, Saffron Walden's excellent Fry Gallery, Houghton and Holkham Halls, Ely Cathedral and the charm of King's Lynn where we stayed.

For so late in the year the incredible gardens of Audley End, Houghton and Holkham were in beautiful condition, reminding us that it is not just spring and summer gardens that are worth visiting. For me, the highlight of the trip was our private visit to Clifton House, home of Simon Thurley, chairman of the National Lottery Heritage Fund, who welcomed and told us the story of this rare surviving medieval merchant's house. The museum highlight of our trip was a private tour of the Wisbech and Fenland Museum, which is everything a town museum should be, set in a lovely Regency building, reflecting the history of Wisbech and the varied interests of its historic donors.

This coming May we will be travelling to the Veneto where we will be staying Vicenza, former home of Andrea Palladio, considered to be the greatest architect in history and whose influence on Britain resonates to today. We will explore his many works within the city and in the surrounding countryside, notably his masterpiece the Villa la Rotonda, and his churches in Venice. Other highlights will be the birthplace museum of Antonio Canova, the greatest neo-classical sculpture, and the former Italian home of the Guinness family, Lords Iveagh, in Asolo, perhaps the prettiest hill village in Italy, where we will have lunch looking over the incomparable Italian landscape. Another special luncheon will be at the Villa Valmarana ai Nani where we will be hosted by



The Villa Rotonda

the Contessa Valmarana surrounded by some of Tiepolo's finest frescoes. This trip is fully booked, although you may register your interest, should there be any cancellations. At the beginning of October, just before our annual conference, we will enjoy a trip to Bristol and Bath. This will include a number of historic sites in both cities and some of the surrounding area. This is England at its most typical and lyric. What is a great joy of this part of the country is the contrast between the beautiful landscape, the industrial heritage,

including the Clifton Suspension Bridge, and the warm classicism of Georgian Bath, not to mention the remains of Roman Britain. If you are interested in joining us, please register your interest with me, at djcalley@talk21.com.

Dan Calley

51st British Association of Friends of Museums Annual Conference

2024 saw the annual conference move onto its next destination, Wisbech in the Fens. The theme of the event was fundraising and the day featured speakers who discussed the various ways this vital feature of the work Friends of Museum everywhere.

I will not attempt to go into detail about every aspect of the programme, suffice to say that the speakers posed many questions as to how Friends can monetise activities which are often provided to visitors free of charge. Alison Giles spoke of how providing educational activities can result in an additional funding stream, whilst Gareth Monger explained how publishing projects could raise money from sales and also result in additional funds being generated by entering the publications into area specific publishing awards.

Perhaps the most inspirational presentation was made about the conservation and restoration of Upminster Mill. Readers may remember that this project was



the winner of a BAFM award a few years ago and the project has been ongoing for a number of years. Now completed, it was important to note that throughout all stages of the project, the sustainability of the windmill as a community asset had always been at the forefront of the plans for the building. The presentations were concluded by a speaker from The National Heritage Lottery Fund who explored the changing nature of volunteering in the last few years and the sort of project that the NHLF would like to see submitted.

After an enjoyable break for lunch, the delegates broke up into smaller groups to discuss issues of concern common to all. The group I was in met in the lobby of the independent cinema which hosted the conference in the centre of Wisbech, whilst other groups distributed themselves in areas of the auditorium. We looked at the perennial question of how to engage with 'young volunteers'. It was interesting that older members of the group in which I was sat immediately talked about the importance of social media to attract interest amongst younger adults. One or two younger people who joined us emphasised the attraction of adding useful experience to their CVs and developing both social and communication skills to enhance their future employability.

It is important that BAFM is willing to hold these important events across the nations and regions of the UK rather than focussing on large cities and we were pleasantly surprised at the response to the Wisbech Conference. We had delegates from all areas of the UK even though getting to Wisbech is not an easy proposition when using public transport. After the AGM, delegates returned to the Wisbech and Fenland Museum for the drinks reception and presentation of awards. The museum is certainly worth visiting with a unique atmosphere redolent of the Victorian Era and a fascinating collection. BAFM would once again thank the hosts for the efforts they put in to make all our delegates welcome at such an interesting venue and of course our partners The Marsh Charitable Trust for helping deliver The Friends of The Year Award 2024.

We now look forward to October this year to an equally fascinating BAFM Conference in Britol.

David Adgar FRSA



52 BAFM Annual Conference 2025 in Bristol Saturday 4 October

The Friends of Bristol Museums, Galleries & Archives look forward to welcoming you for this year's BAFM Annual Conference.



M Shed, the museum about Bristol, and our conference venue © Bristol Culture

As appropriate for such a colourful and diverse city our theme is *Who do we represent? diversity and inclusion in Friends groups and in the heritage we support*. Our speakers will be drawn from a wide range of heritage backgrounds, including our own museums, the University of the West of England, the Royal West of England Academy, and the British Museum, all with hands-on experience of re-thinking the approach to our theme.

The event will take place at M Shed, our dockside museum focused on the history of our city, which opened in 2011 to much acclaim. The building

is in the heart of Bristol and was originally created in 1950 as a transit shed to support the flow of cargo in and out of what were then thriving commercial docks. Our working exhibits outside the museum include five cranes along with three historic working boats and an operational steam railway.

Our guest speaker for the dinner on Saturday evening will be Marc Allum, all-round antiques expert known to many of you from BBC's Antiques Roadshow. Outside the formal conference we are planning to offer a heritage coach trip to see the Clifton

Suspension Bridge and a taster of one of the M Shed working exhibits. You might also choose to visit our wonderful Museum & Art Gallery in its magnificent Edwardian building. Elsewhere in the city there are many other heritage attractions to visit, such as Brunel's SS Great Britain, and for those extending their stay beyond the conference a frequent bus service would take you in under an hour to the UNESCO World Heritage city of Bath.



The famous Clifton Suspension Bridge over the Avon Gorge, which you can visit on a heritage coach trip © Clifton Suspension Bridge Museum

Getting to Bristol is easy from all parts of the UK with direct trains from across the country, our airport nearby with a frequent bus service into the centre, and the M4 and M5 making it very accessible by car. Public transport – including ferries - is excellent for getting around the city, and many of the attractions are within easy walking distance.

We look forward to meeting you in Bristol in October.

Sue Thurlow

Chair, Bristol Museums, Galleries and Archives



The Conference Hotel; The Bristol Hotel

Is your museum threatened?

Over the last few months, a number of Regional Coordinators have been contacted by our members with stories of impending closures or restrictions in opening hours for the museums they support which may inevitably lead to further cuts.

Since the pandemic, there has been a fall in visitor numbers which has restricted the income of small, independent museums and galleries. For local authority museums, this fall in numbers has been exacerbated by the pressures that local councils across the nation are experiencing. It was for this reason that several meetings were held to discuss ideas which may aid groups wishing to make a difference and help to save the sites which they love. Below are a series of ideas you might wish to consider should your museum be threatened with closure or a reduction in opening hours. Every case will be unique, and you must decide what action you will take. For example, a petition might be suitable for one but counter-productive for another.

1. Time is likely to be of the essence. As soon as you learn that something is being proposed, do what you can to establish facts – especially exactly who is proposing the closure.
2. You need to decide that what is being proposed, whether it's full closure or something else, really isn't the right thing to be done for your community. For instance, opposing the closure of your current building might not be sensible if it will cost a fortune to repair it. Searching for alternative premises might be a better solution.
3. Political considerations eg. who are the decision makers on the council, what are the museum trustees' views, museum management, local MPs. Personal relationships can be important. If a council is controlled by one party, then there will be the danger that all its councillors will be pressured to toe the party line. Here you really will need to identify the decision maker. It might just be that this person happens to have a particular interest where your museum has some artefacts in store. Now you could consider involving him/her in organising a special exhibition. A long shot maybe, but worth considering. Another point to consider is that councillors don't like bad publicity.
4. Organising a special exhibition regardless of political considerations could be a way of gathering useful publicity.
5. Challenge the stated cost savings expected from closure. Ask for a detailed breakdown. If mothballing is being proposed, it will be worth exploring this aspect as some museum artefacts, especially textiles, may need specifically controlled environments. Has full and proper protection from damp, bugs etc. been taken into account? These costs may have been understated due to faulty assumptions having been made.
6. Investigate the possibility of having to repay grants should your museum close. Some grants may have been made with contractual clauses about the need for repayment on closure or some other activity.
7. On a similar note, some artefacts may have been donated with specific clauses about what must be done with them should the museum close. Those wishing to close the museum might have second thoughts if one or more artefacts have prestige value.
8. Identify benefits of staying open and put a £value on them wherever possible. Include benefits to nearby cafes etc.
9. Identify potential cost savings eg. reduced opening hours, fewer staff. Think about whether it would be better to stay open for most days with shorter hours or fewer days with current hours. Consider the impact on museum staff; will some be made redundant or decide to leave because they need a full time job? Do any of the staff belong to a trade union?
10. If you have a large ethnic group in your neighbourhood, does the museum cater for it in any way? If not, could it?
11. Could volunteers take on or help with some aspects of the work eg. gardening? Care needs to be taken when considering this option as you are unlikely to want to cause redundancies.

1. Will the experience level drop to an unacceptable level? eg. trying to keep a museum open with reduced days/hours whilst losing key experienced staff may be problematic. Also, dispensing with the services of a specialist eg curator or archivist may have unintended consequences such as the museum no longer being allowed to retain some documents.
 2. Can you find a benefactor or local business to put up some money? Whilst benefactors are unlikely to cover contributions which would be expected to come from local councils, they might be prepared to sponsor activities initiated by the museum. Is a potential benefactor involved with a charity which the museum could usefully work with? Might they consider sponsoring activities for disadvantaged children?
 3. Suggest extra uses for the museum eg. new community uses such as OAP lunches, fitness classes Consider hiring out rooms.
 4. Explore new educational uses particularly as these might well qualify for grants from organisations rather than benefactors.
 5. Could a link be established with Community Service or a local charity looking for work experience placements for their clients?
 6. Identify ways of getting support to help make the case to stay open.
 - a. Set up a petition? (but need to eliminate fictitious names and duplicates). Consider how widespread to ask for names – would names from hundreds of miles away really help? Some councils might only count a petition as one objection regardless of the number of signatures Consider quality v quantity. A small number of well thought out responses from respected people will probably count for more than a petition
 - b. Support from local and/or national celebrities
 - c. Support from a member of the House of lords
 - d. Social media esp. influencers
 - e. Newspapers
 - f. Organise publicity esp. to local organisations
 - g. Don't make personal attacks on councillors etc.
 7. Are you registered as a charity? If not consider doing this as it might help.
 8. The possibility of including one or more appendices giving accounts of museums who have successfully fought off closure which have some resemblance to the issue you are facing. There might also be lessons from a museum that failed.
- If your group has any other suggestions, please feel free to contact your local Regional Coordinator; real life experiences, especially successful campaigns would be appreciated.
- Brian Lippard**
Jean Knight

One example where local action has been successful was the fate of the Usher Gallery in Lincoln. It was proposed that the collection should be put storage whilst the gallery be used for events such as weddings and associated receptions to generate income. There was a vocal campaign locally to save the gallery and our late President, Lord Patrick Cormack was heavily involved in the campaign, which was ultimately successful.

2025 BAFM Newsletter of the Year Award

We look forward to receiving your entries for this new Newsletter Award.

You may submit more than one newsletter publication but two copies of the same newsletter will need to be submitted in paper copy form for our Judges, even though they may only have been circulated electronically.

Your Newsletter submissions, to be accepted, need to have been produced any time from May 2024 and submitted before 1st July 2025.

Our Judges would like to find, as content, the following:

- Variety of activity.
- Clarity of Information and production.
- BAfM news

The Winning Prize

The winning Friends Group's Newsletter will receive two free places for our National Conference in 2025 and a Winner's Certificate.

The Runners Up

Those newsletters which are shortlisted will receive a Certificate of Merit.

Please ensure that your contributors will allow their articles to be read by other BAfM Members, apart from your own Friend's group.

Download the Newsletter Award Application Form from the BAFM website or contact Dave Adgar for a digital version.

Please complete this form and post it with two copies of your Newsletter submission/s to:

David Adgar, our Journal Editor, 6 Winnery Close, Tickhill, Doncaster, DN11 9JT, to forward to our Judges, before 1st July 2025.

Alternatively send a digital copy to davidadgar@outlook.com and it will be forwarded to our two judges, Gillian Ferguson, Regional Co-ordinator for Scotland and Richard Irvine who joins Gillian with a focus on Northern Scotland.

Holidays in History

In this edition of the BAFM Journal, the second of an occasional series of articles focusses on holidays in the UK. It can be the highlight of any holiday to visit an historic site, museum or art gallery. But even better is the opportunity to stay in a building which is redolent of times past. Over the years, I have been able to stay in properties used as short term holiday lets by organisations such as the National Trust, English Heritage, the Landmark Trust and the National Trust for Scotland.



Lovely views in the morning; The Presbytery Ramsgate (Photographs copyright Ross Adgar)

In early 2024, my family spent a few days in St Edward's Presbytery in Ramsgate. The Presbytery was built in 1850 as part of the Gothic Revival complex designed by Augustus Welby Pugin, designer of much of the interiors of the Houses of Parliament. Pugin, famous as the author of the books 'Contrasts' despaired at the industrialisation of British cities and their squalor and dirt and dreamed of an imagined paradise of medieval England.

He came to Ramsgate in the early 1840s determined to provide himself with his own slice of the dreamworld. He built St. Augustine's church in the Gothic Revival style he championed and a small manor house, The Grange for his family to live in. However, a church without a priest was of little use hence the Presbytery was completed in the same style. Ramsgate has some of the mildest weather in England and a holiday here was a pleasure, enhanced by being able to stay in such an historic setting. Round the corner from our home for the week was the building in which Vincent Van Gogh taught and in the corner of the square was the place he lived in whilst he was in Ramsgate.

Staying in the Presbytery was a superb experience but other places we have been able to stay in over the years includes Charles Rennie Mackintosh's Hill House in Helensburgh and the gatehouse of Queen Victoria's Osborne House on the Isle of Wight! I would recommend looking at the websites of the organisations I mentioned in the first paragraph; living in an historic building makes for an unforgettable holiday.

Dave Adgar



Cosy at night; The Presbytery Ramsgate

Patron

HRH The Duke of Gloucester
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and *Norah Dunbar*

Chair

Daniel Calley
djcalley@talk21.com

Vice-Chair

David Adgar FRSA
daveadgar@gmail.com

National Co-ordinator & Acting Secretary

Jean Knight
irvineknight@btinternet.com

Journal Editor

David Adgar FRSA
daveadgar@gmail.com

BAFM Administrator

Jayne Selwood
141A School Road
Brislington, Bristol, BS4 4LZ
tel 01179 777435
jayneselwood@live.co.uk

Regional Co-ordinators

Northern Ireland

Daniel Calley
djcalley@talk21.com

Scotland

Gillian Ferguson
fergusongillian3@gmail.com

Scotland (North)

Richard Irvine
Richard.j.irvine@talk21.com

East Midlands

Paul Howitt-Cowan
Kenmare01@outlook.com

South East – Western Counties

Tim Craven
timcraven1066@gmail.com

Eastern Counties

Lloyd Hughes
lloyd_hughes@hotmail.co.uk

Yorkshire and North East

Dave Adgar
daveadgar@gmail.com

South East – Eastern Counties

Brian Lippard
brian.lippard@gmail.com

All other regions

Contact *Jean Knight*
irvineknight@btinternet.com

Youth Ambassadors

Heather Stracey
Heather.Stracey@tunbridgewells.gov.uk
Dr Matthew Jones
chair@thefriendsofdoncastermuseums.co.uk

Vacancies

Regional Co-Ordinators form the backbone of BAFM. We currently have vacancies in the following areas; the North East, West Midlands, London and Wales. 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

