



APPEAL TO THE MEMBERSHIP

Earlier this year over 100 appeal letters were sent to all FOBM members and Museum Volunteers asking for help in a number of roles. There was no response whatever to this, which was very disappointing. It is vital for the future health of the Museum that fund-raising, in particular, is properly addressed: a team of volunteers could do this, This financial year 2012-13, is the last one when we shall have an assured income of £25,000 from Sedgemoor District Council. The £25,000 we shall get for 2013-14 from the Town Council will cover essential bills, such as electricity and insurance, but unless alternative funding is obtained from sources such as grants or legacies, the Museum will be unable to undertake few capital projects, which will, in turn, badly affect the next three-year plan we have just agreed with the Town Council. PLEASE HELP

BRIDGWATER TOWN COUNCIL

THE BLAKE MUSEUM

5 BLAKE STREET, BRIDGWATER, TA6 3NB

AN EXHIBITION

In celebration of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee

TUESDAY MAY 8 to SATURDAY 23 JUNE

Tuesday to Saturday, 10 am to 4 pm.



KINGS and QUEENS in BRIDGWATER
from
KING JOHN to QUEEN ELIZABETH II

Exhibitions this year

Tuesday 3rd April onwards

The Bridgwater Franciscan Friary Gallery Exhibition

Tuesday 3rd July to Saturday 28th July

Bridgwater & Albion Rugby Football Club

Tuesday 7th August to Saturday 1st September

Pirates of the Bristol Channel

Tuesday 10th September to Saturday 6th October

Dr Morgan to Haygrove - A History of the School

Blake Gardens - Band Concerts 2012

7th July: **Bridgwater College Show Choir**

22nd July **Burtle Silver Band**

29th July: **Taunton Concert Band**

5th August: **Stoke Sub Hamdon Band**

12th August: **Chard Concert Brass**

19th August: **Weston Brass**

9th September: **Bandstand Marathon** All the above take place on a Sunday starting at 2.00pm. Refreshments available from the museum

Forthcoming talks programme

Tuesday, 12 June

Michael Wilkinson

Weston, Clevedon and Portishead Railway

Tuesday, 10 July

Ashley Hale

The Siege of Jerusalem and the Ark of the Covenant

August – No Meeting

Tuesday, 11 September

David Sebborn

Such an unquiet spirit – the rumbustious life of Benjamin Blake

Tuesday, 9 October

Annual General Meeting

Friends of Blake Museum Committee 2011/12

Mr John Wilkcocks has had to resign from the Committee for personal reasons. He has been a long-standing member, and we wish him well

The Committee now is:

Chairman- Mr Nick Wallace

Vice Chairman- Mr Bryan Gillard

Secretary - Mr Mike Searle (Hon Assistant Curator)

Treasurer - Mrs Lesley Withers

Shop Manager - Mr Rob Gardner

Fundraising - Mr Roger Blackburn

Co-opted Member and Learning Co-Ordinator - Mrs Lynn Tyrrell

Committee Member - Mr Tony Woolrich (Hon Deputy Curator)

Committee Member - Mr Brian Withers

Co-opted Member and Talks - Mr Robbert Turner

Other Museum staff

Dr Peter Cattermole (Hon Curator)

Mrs Esther Checketts (Hon Assistant Curator)

SHUT DOWN 2011-12

The shut-down this year saw the reorganisation of the Battle Room and the newly re-named Transport Room. The display in the Battle Room has been expanded to cover the time from King Alfred to the Second World War. The majority of the artefacts have never been displayed before. The reorganisation involved a fair amount of electrical wiring work, readying the room for new cases.

FOBM member Cecil Luscombe, who is an expert on motor-transport vehicles, has created a display of model lorries and trucks, painted and lettered in the liveries of local companies. We are most grateful to Cecil for this.

Work is progressing on a display about the railway in Bridgwater, and the latest acquisition has been a BR sign saying BRIDGWATER that used to be on the station platform.

The Spaxton Mosaic was restored, through the fund-raising efforts of the Bridgwater and District Archaeological Society, and was unveiled in the Archaeology Room by Lady Gass in early April. The mosaic was uncovered over 50 years ago and has never been on display.

During the shut-down, a number of modern illuminated display cases were purchased. The floor of the Gallery and the upper landing, as well as the stairs, were all carpeted.

The museum shop was re-organised and new stock purchased. The child-sized museum dummy has been dressed as a Victorian kitchen maid – Emma. She is occupied in knitting and is accompanied by a sleeping cat in a basket!

In the Bridgwater Room the cased display was expanded to include material about the Bridgwater fire service, and part of the collection of painted nineteenth century constables' staves is shown.

As usual, much curatorial work was done in the shut-down, with teams of volunteers working on the photographs collection, others engaged on historical research, etc.

The task of labelling the displays in a legible and consistent typeface has continued.

Shut down 2012-13

Next shut-down, apart from curatorial work, the main task will be to re-fit the Archaeology Room with modern illuminated cases and refresh and re-label the artefacts there. Next year, shut-down will run from after Carnival to the February half term, when we will re-open. The new season will thus be a month longer.



Above – The Alfred Jewel display in the Battle Room

Other News

The recent Spring Fayre, held in the Trinity Hall, raised just on £400, and the on-going coffee mornings continue to make a useful contribution. Thanks to Roger Blackburn for organising these.

FOBM member Hannah West has been awarded a scholarship by Exeter University to study for a PhD on the Franciscans in Somerset.

Museum and FOBM publicity

Mike Searle has taken over from Tony Woolrich as FOBM Webmaster, and has completely re-written the website, making a great improvement in the process. Mike has also designed a fine advertising leaflet for the Museum which has been delivered to museums, tourist information offices and other outlets in the locality. It is too soon to know if there is any consistent increase in visitor numbers, but there have been a number of Saturdays when the visitors have been more than usual.

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5 Blake Street, Bridgwater, TA6 3NB

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tw 16/5/12

Websites:

Friends: www.blakemuseum.org.uk

Museum: www.bridgwatermuseum.org

Resources: www.bridgwatermuseum.info

Photographs: www.bridgwaterphotos.org.uk/index.php