

# BLAKE NEWS

## The Museum's 90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary



Photo: Bridgwater Mercury

Cutting the birthday cake.

L-R: Eleanor Dixon, Tony Woolrich, The Mayoress, Mrs Tracey Redman, the Mayor, Cllr Leigh Redman, Jayne Cornish & Lesley Withers

The Museum was reopened on 29 March by the Mayor, Cllr Leigh Redman and Eleanor Dixon. The Anniversary exhibition material has been digitised and is on line at [www.bridgwatmuseum.info](http://www.bridgwatmuseum.info) as a permanent public record of what we have achieved.

### Mary Gillard 1937 - 2016



Photo: Paul Berryman

Mary died on 27 April 2016, aged 79. With her late husband, Bryan she had been a stalwart of the Museum

## Summer 2016



since the formation of the Friends in 2000. Until her recent illness, she was always active, being a custodian, helping serve teas at events, and running the tombola stall at the Museum's fairs. We will miss her. Our thoughts go out to her family.

### Accreditation

The Accreditation documentation arrived during March, and we were astonished to discover there were no areas of our activities needing attention. It is almost unheard of for a Museum to be given a full bill of health. Well done us!

### The Museum's portrait of Robert Blake featured on a commemorative coin.



Picture: Bradford Exchange

The Blake Museum's portrait of Robert Blake is included in an 18-piece collection of gold-plated crown coins which will feature Queen Elizabeth II's portrait on the obverse.

The full set is a tribute to noted naval captains and ships throughout the history of the Royal Navy.

This commemorative coin, issued by the government of Tristan da Cunha, will be available from Bradford Exchange, and it is expected to be released for sale during the summer.

The oil painting is by an unknown artist, and is a copy the portrait which was commissioned for Greenwich Palace in about 1820 and is now in the collection of the National Maritime Museum.

### New museum publicity leaflets

A programme has begun of writing and publishing a series of trifold illustrated leaflets on aspects of the town's history, which visitors can take for free as they go round the galleries, so they can better understand what they are seeing.

Topics covered so far are:

- Robert Blake
- The Siege of Bridgwater
- The Battle of Sedgemoor

- A brief economic history of Bridgwater
- The Port of Bridgwater
- Bridgwater's Railways
- John Chubb
- The Town Mill
- The History of the Museum
- The Bridgwater Brick and Tile Industry
- British Cellophane Ltd.

We have also re-published a brief account of the last Bridgwater sailing ships.

Other topics are planned. All may be downloaded from the Museum's web page.



**Esther Checketts  
Deputy Curator 2012-2016**

Esther began as a volunteer in 2009, having worked in the Horniman Museum in London. Many FOBM members will not know her well, since she did much of her work on the collections during the shutdowns and on Mondays, especially on the Art and Textile collections. She also worked on new displays in the Bygones room.

As well as volunteering with us, she also volunteered at the Heritage Centre, Taunton, in the artefact stores. In recent times she has been very active helping organise refugee aid, through her church in Taunton.

In 2012 she was appointed Assistant Deputy Curator under the late Dr Peter Cattermole, and later Deputy Curator. Her husband has taken a post with the government of Qatar, and the family will be moving there soon. She will be much missed

**New to the Museum**

The Museum has been given an earthenware jug with the wording BRIDGWATER EXHIBITION, 1854. This was made for the arts and crafts exhibition held in that year in the Assize Court – later rebuilt as the Town Hall – to raise money to help pay off the debt arising from the reordering then of Saint Mary's church. It is apt we have this as the church is about to close until early next year for another re-ordering to make it better suited to modern needs



**The Exhibition jug**

**Coffee Mornings**

These are held on the last Thursday of every month, 10.30 am – 12 noon.

**Spring Fair**

We made £724.16 at the fair this year. Well done everyone.

**Programme of talks for the remainder of 2016**

- 14 June: Kay Wych.  
**How I became a 16<sup>th</sup> Century Kitchen Maid.**
- 12 July: Vicky Garnett  
**Language Use in Somerset.**
- 13 September: Denis Warren  
**The Gramophone Sequel: Bing, Swing and Rock 'n' Roll.**
- 11 October. **AGM.**
- 8 November: Rhian Childs  
**Sea Trials and Tribulations  
– Restoring Historic Boats.**

**Band Concerts**

- 10th July - Chard Concert Brass
- 17th July - Taunton Concert Band
- 24th July - Wells City Band
- 31st July - Weston Brass
- 7th August - Burnham and Highbridge Band
- 14th August - Stoke Sub Hamdon Band
- 21st August - Wells City Band
- 28th August - Awaiting confirmation

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**Websites:**

Friends: [www.blakemuseumfriends.org.uk](http://www.blakemuseumfriends.org.uk)

Museum: [www.bridgwatermuseum.org.uk](http://www.bridgwatermuseum.org.uk)

Museum history: [www.bridgwatermuseum.info](http://www.bridgwatermuseum.info)