

# BLAKE NEWS

## Winter 2017



Those members receiving this newsletter by post will find their membership cards in the envelope the newsletter came in.

FRIENDS OF BLAKE MUSEUM

# CHRISTMAS FAIR



**In aid of Museum funds – Free entry**

**The Museum**

**5 Blake Street, Bridgwater**

**Saturday 25 NOVEMBER**

**10.00am – 1.00pm**

Home-made cakes and bread

Bric-a-brac and books

Tombola

Refreshments and Museum Shop

Charity stalls

Refreshments

Items for the Fair may be delivered to the Museum on Thursday 23 November 10am – 3pm or on the morning of the 25<sup>th</sup>. Cakes especially welcome.

### Dates for your diary

The Museum closes to the public on Friday 3 November.

Last talk for 2017 14 November at 7.30 pm by Ashley Jones on the British Honours system.

Christmas Fair, Saturday 25 November 10 00 am – 1.00.pm

Thursday 14th Dec. 10.00am is the volunteers, custodians and keyholders thank-you for this year.

Museum fully closed Monday 18 December – Monday 8 January 2018.

Spring Fair T. B. A.

The Museum re-opens to the public on Tuesday 3 April 2018.

Last coffee morning for 2017 is 30th November - all welcome.



At the Museum, Saturdays between 10 am and 1pm. These will run during shut down until 16 December, and will recommence on Saturday 6 January until the Spring Fair.

### New artefacts

Among the donations there has been a C18/19 shot gun found in a house attic in North Petherton. The stock was in very bad condition, so we have had a new one made. We have been given a book of C18 poetry which was once owned by a man who was hanged at Bridgwater in 1795 for a murder he committed at Bath. At his execution he spoke for 20 minutes, quoting from the book, then gave it to Sarah Briffet, the gaoler's daughter. The fly-leaves are inscribed with details of the story and her signature.

### Succession planning

Mike will be taking over when Tony retires next year, and we are seeking additional volunteers who can be given training in curation. To this end a trifold has been written about volunteering at the Blake Museum with the aim of giving wider publicity. A copy is included with this newsletter. Please tell your friends.

## Shut Down

As well as the regular refreshment of displays in the Bygones Room and routine maintenance the major task this year will be the re-casing of the docks model, and the fitting out of the base with plan drawers. This will permit the disposal of the plan chest in the library and the addition there of a tall bookcase, so allowing the library to be tidied up. This will include placing details of the library stock on a book-collection database, which has been purchased. A volunteer is willing to do this. We were able to purchase a run of C19 *Kelly's Directories of Somerset*.

3 new tall illuminated cases have been ordered from Access Displays to increase the amount of display in the Transport and Battle Rooms. These will be purchased by the Friends for about £3700. The two counter cases in the Transport Room will be moved to the Bygones Room, and the small free-standing wooden case there will be disposed of.

## Douglas Allen photograph digitisation

Rita and Alan Jones anticipate completing to 1970 by the end of the year – very good progress indeed, since they will have covered the first 16 years since they began in the autumn of 2016.

## Next year's plans

For next year's WW1 Centenary exhibition in August, some volunteers will be making a photographic survey of the war memorials of the villages in our collecting area, starting during shut-down.

## Programme of Talks 2017 *To be arranged*

### Mill project

A surveyor has examined the mill structure and the next stage is for an architect to draw up plans, building consents to be obtained and for costings to be made. There are some legal questions about boundaries to be sorted out.

### Exhibitions next year

Douglas Allen Photographs – April  
Sedgemoor Stitches – May  
T.B.C. June  
T.B.C. July  
WW1 Commemoration 1917 – August  
T.B.C. September  
T.B.C. October

### Friends of Blake Museum Committee for 2016/17

Hon Chairman - Vacant  
Hon Vice Chairman - Rob Gardner  
Hon Secretary - Mike Searle (Hon Deputy Curator)

Hon Treasurer - Lesley Withers  
Hon Committee Member and Fundraising Co-ordinator  
- Roger Blackburn  
Hon Committee Member - Tony Woolrich (Hon Curator)  
Hon Committee Member - Brian Withers  
Hon Committee Member - Tony Aspey  
Hon Co-opted Member and Learning Co-ordinator  
- Ruth Winson  
Hon Talks Programme Secretary – Simon Birt

## Bridgwater History Day Arts Centre, Castle Street

Saturday 11 November. 10.00am – 4.00pm

There will be seven different speakers, films, photos, and displays and the event is free so people can stay for the day or drop in and out as they wish.  
All day display by the Blake Museum.

### Programme of events.

- 10.00 Doors open, teas and coffees available.  
10.30 Welcome & Intro Cllr Kathy Pearce (Deputy Leader of Bridgwater Town Council).  
10.40 Chris Sidaway "Some Historic Buildings of Bridgwater".  
11.20 Matt Smith "A Brief History of Bridgwater College"  
12.00 Richard Filler "The Bridgwater Workhouse"

### 1240-1300 lunch

- 13.00-13.40 Sandy Maberley "Parrett's Mouth" a film  
13.40 Brian Smedley "Bridgwater's 1785 petition against the Slave Trade"  
14.20 Dave Chapple "Bridgwater's Poll Tax Rebellion 1990"  
15.00 Yvette Staelens "Don't go kissing the girls at Bridgwater Fair"  
Who were the folk? Discovering Bridgwater's folk singers.  
15.40 Summary session Glen Burrows (Bridgwater & District Civic Society)  
16.00 close

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### Websites:

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

Museum: [www.bridgwatmuseum.org](http://www.bridgwatmuseum.org)

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