



The Bulletin 2000

Friends of
Bristol Art Gallery
November 2017

www.friendsofbristolartgallery.co.uk





Chairman's Letter

T H E C H A I R M A N

Photo by Ann Keenyside



Dear Friends,

40 years ago the 'Magpies' were formed as a support group for areas of the Museum service in Bristol that were not covered by the 'Friends of Bristol Art Gallery'. Since that time FOBAG was able to continue its invaluable work started in 1947 of supporting the growth in quality and quantity of the outstanding collections in the Fine Art, Applied Art and Eastern Art and Culture departments at the Museum. As times change it has become obvious that it is not

sensible to continue as two separate entities and that an institution of the size and reputation that the Museum Service in Bristol now holds needs one, not two Friends groups. It is particularly relevant in the present situation of large scale financial cuts being imposed unavoidably on the City Council with the inevitable effects being felt at the Museum. There are obvious benefits to be had from being a larger group.

Therefore your committee is currently in ongoing discussions with the other Friends group which now calls itself 'Friends of Bristol Museums Galleries & Archives' rather than 'Magpies'. Since both charities have similar objects in our constitutions a merger should not be too complicated, but there are obviously certain hurdles to be surmounted and an exact timetable for an amalgamation is not possible at the moment. However we are sure that a sensible plan can be achieved and of course in the meantime all our activities, etc. will continue as normal. I need not mention that the support of all our members is more crucial than ever.

This is all very positive, but I have to add that the loss of a designated Applied Art Curator post from the Museum staff when Helen Brown leaves at the end of the year is not good news. There are no plans to replace her at present and we are all aware of the size of the job which is now going to have to be covered by the Curators of Fine Art, Jenny and Julia, who already have large responsibilities.

I rarely visit the Museum and Art Gallery when it is not full of people so obviously something is going well and gives great hope for the future. With that in mind I wish you all a very Happy Christmas and Prosperous New Year.

Joanna

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Cover Photo: View of the Galleries from The Front Hall. Taken by Pam Sayer.



NEWS

Quarterly Report & Upcoming Events from BMGA

Service-wide developments

This is a time of change in Bristol City Council (as at 5 October) as the Mayor is introducing a new structure for the senior management. Quite what this restructure at the top of the Council means for the Culture Team remains to be seen but currently we do not expect major changes. However, the changes at the top are partly driven by the Council's need to make savings and we already are aware of savings that the Culture team needs to make as a consequence of both Council and Arts Council England reductions in funding already indicated as required from next April. Changes are therefore being looked at to several staff teams within Culture and further information on those changes will be made available in due course.

The summer has seen a very successful programme of exhibitions, events, activities and citywide festivals and events delivered by the Culture team. We continue to provide an excellent service to the public and in terms of value for money that has been demonstrated by benchmarking against other services across the country. The *Skeletons* exhibition at M Shed and the *Pliosaurus!* exhibition at BMAG have both received excellent reviews by the Arts Council England experts who visit museums to test the quality of the offer that they are investing in. New exhibitions (*Empire through the lens* and *Brave, Poor Things*) continue our programme of examining topics which can make uncomfortable reading at times.

The new Art Gallery Guide is proving an instant hit and the single bestselling item in the BMAG shop, have you got yours yet?

Staff news

In the Collections Team, Helen Brown has given notice of retiring from her job-share post of Curator, Applied Art at the end of December 2017. Helen shared the post with Karin Walton who retired herself earlier this year. Helen has most recently curated the 'Radical Clay' exhibition.

Site specific developments:

Bristol Museum & Art Gallery

A pop-up shop which was introduced over the summer in the Front Hall of the Museum & Art Gallery has proven successful and will be reappearing at times in the future, notably at the autumn half-term holiday this year.

Bristol Archives: Save Our Sounds

From January, Bristol Archives will be one of ten national sound preservation centres for a major British Library project, 'Save Our Sounds'. Thanks to the Heritage Lottery Fund and other donors, this work will save rare and unique recordings at risk of being lost forever. At Bristol Archives, project staff will spend three years digitising 5,000 recordings from across the South West. The project has the support of Mayor Marvin Rees and the Bristol City Council cabinet.

New exhibitions:

Empire through the Lens

Bristol Museum & Art Gallery

30 September 2017 – 31 August 2018

FREE, donations welcome

Bristol Archives holds an extraordinary collection of photographs and films showing both public and private aspects of life in the British Empire and Commonwealth.

From about 500,000 images, we asked 27 people to each choose one piece. The selectors include development workers, artists, photographers, historians and relatives of the photographers.

They each bring a different perspective to the collection, and represent a broad range of personal knowledge, aesthetic appreciation and academic thought on the people and countries shown in the images, the legacy of Empire and the post-colonial experience.

Most of the collection dates from the 1880s to the 1960s and is just a snippet of the many thousands of images that are being catalogued and digitised.

Please note that the exhibition may contain some challenging images.



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Brave Poor Things

M Shed, Life Gallery (Window on Bristol)

14 October 2017 – 15 April 2018

FREE, donations welcome

Disability history and architectural history have a longstanding relationship which has influenced the social landscape, as well as the fabric of our cities and the lives of the individuals within.

M Shed's exhibition tells the story of The Guild of the Brave Poor Things, founded in 1894, its members and its headquarters.

This pioneering building, which still stands today in Old Market, is thought to be the UK's first purpose-built for disabled people in 1913.

The Guild was set up by Victorian philanthropist Ada Vachell (herself deaf from childhood due to scarlet fever) in 1896. It provided a social space and a hub for crafts and apprenticeships for disabled children and adults, based on the model of the original Guild created in London.

Wildlife Photographer of the Year, 2017

M Shed Temporary Exhibitions Gallery

21 October 2017 – 08 April 2018

From frozen wastelands and peculiar species, to tropical paradises and fascinating animal behaviour; this year's selection is a call to action – a plea to band together and protect our fragile planet.

Wildlife Photographer of the Year is the most prestigious photography event of its kind, providing a global platform that showcases the natural world's most astonishing and challenging sights.

Now in its 53rd year, the competition receives almost 50,000 entries from 92 countries.

Changes to ticketing this year to include a voluntary £1 donation

Tickets: £6 – adult* £5 – concession* Under 16s free

*Includes £1 voluntary donation to Bristol Museums Development Trust.

(Standard entry £5 adult / £4 conc.)



NEWS

British Association of Friends of Museums (BAfM) 44th AGM & Conference 2017

London Transport Museum, Covent Garden, London

Museums, Members and Friends – A Harmonious Relationship?



Sue Thurlow (Chair of Bristol Museum Friends) and Lucy Bailey wonder if Bristol's long awaited Metro Bus will be this environmentally friendly.

On the same day that the Friends of the Art Gallery travelled to the Queen's Gallery for the Canaletto exhibition, committee members Lucy Bailey (Vice Chair) and Toby Pinn were also in London for the BAfM conference. The title of this year's conference, 'Museums, Members and Friends – A Harmonious Relationship?' appeared to suggest a day of Marriage Guidance Counselling; the obvious flaw being that save for the presence of the London Transport Museum (LTM) Director, Sam Mullin, all the other Friends groups present, had left their other halves behind! An afternoon case study session only added to this impression as a 'Friend' recounted her relationship with a somewhat controlling and sometimes overbearing partner named Geffrye (Museum), and caused sympathetic murmurings amongst the audience when it was revealed that they are about to embark on a two-year separation; actually the result of a planned closure whilst the museum undergoes a substantial refurbishment.

The Conference acknowledged that at a time of cuts across the arts sector, the issue of some museums seeking to absorb or replace Friends groups with in-house membership schemes as a way of increasing revenue can be a delicate subject. If such a process is handled correctly with consultation, the resulting body can still continue to offer a platform for supporting a much loved institution.

The day focussed on a number of different relationships between Friends organisations and the institution they seek to support, ranging from a well-heeled giant, such as The London Transport Museum, to, at the other end of the spectrum, The Friends of the Crystal Palace Subway, a wonderful brick-built underpass reminiscent of a Moorish Palace, that had many hurdles to overcome during its restoration, not least the fact that despite its relatively small size, it unfortunately managed to straddle two London Borough boundaries, creating a bureaucratic nightmare!

Sam Mullins and Barry Lejeune, Director of the LTM and Chairman of the LTM Friends respectively, both spoke warmly of the secret of their long and happy relationship and crucially its development over a long period of time. With a £15 million annual turnover and an eye-watering £2 million annual turnover from a modest sized shop, the relationship, when scrutinised is more akin to that of a major tourist attraction, attached to a London Transport

workers social club catering for current and former employees of London Transport. The demographic of their Friends group at 91% male and 96% white is hardly representative of society as a whole, but 'knowing your market' is a phrase that will always crop up at least once at the annual conference. LTM Friends Chairman Barry Lejeune, a former high ranking London Transport Manager, affectionately and self-deprecatingly described their Friends as typically 'largely single, white, older men who like trains and buses.' He went on to say that this demographic, perhaps not unsurprisingly, ultimately provided many significant legacies to the Museum.

Funding for the LTM is unique as in addition to its draw as a major London tourist destination and the fund raising of the Friends, the venue also hosts many transport related corporate events throughout the year where the huge companies vying for the contracts to manufacture, supply and maintain all aspects of the London Transport network are unashamedly 'invited to show their support' for the work of the Museum. The nurturing of corporate donors at the LTM is the remit of Museum employed professionals, skilled in the art of leading potential contractors to what could be described as the LTM barrel!

Sam Mullins and Barry Lejeune also discussed the balance between membership versus governance and agreed that it was crucial to leave the running of the museum to the museum management and that Friends groups perhaps need to take a step back and acknowledge the potentially narrow focus of their members and their organisation and to appreciate that these days, all museums have to take a wider view, reaching out beyond the group that supports them.

However, support for the LTM is not just the preserve of the Friends, with the split at LTM between Friends and Volunteers roughly 50/50, demonstrating that not everyone wishing to support this particular Museum, feels the need to belong to the Friends.

The 2017 BAFM Awards honoured the Newsletter of our sister group, The Bristol Museum Friends, and mention must also be made of the inspirational winner of the Robert Logan award for a museum curator less than thirty years of age. This year's winner, Fiona Carmichael, Curator of Art at the Scottish Maritime Museum gave an acceptance presentation that was an inspiration to all and her enthusiasm and achievement at her museum and in the wider community was truly remarkable.

A drinks reception at the Inigo Jones designed St Pauls Church on the Piazza at Covent Garden rounded off the day with discussions focussing on what the various Friends groups present could take from the conference to improve their own Friends groups. 2018 sees the conference head to Newcastle upon Tyne. *Toby Pinn*



N E W S



Sue Thurlow, Lucy Bailey and
Toby Pinn take cover in a
WWII roadside bomb shelter
at the London Transport
Museum



NEWS

Japanese Prints Appeal



Katsushika Hokusai (1760-1849), The Hollow of the Deep-sea Wave off Kanagawa

Thank you to everyone who has generously donated so far to the appeal, which we posted to all members towards the end of last month. If you've not yet found the time to contribute, it's not too late and everyone who supports the appeal will be invited to a special celebratory event sometime next year. Together we can help to get this stunning collection conserved and ready for display, so that the people of Bristol won't need to travel to London and elsewhere to enjoy works by Hokusai, Utamaro, and many others. Thank you.

Valerie Harland

The Friends Annual Carol Service

7.00pm, December 14th (see pg 9)



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The approach to Redland Chapel, illuminated on a December evening, is always a special delight. Georgian churches of such distinction are rare and this is late English baroque architecture of great character. Redland Green itself and the avenue of plane trees maintain the rural setting of the mid-eighteenth century. The wrought-iron gates and churchyard's high wall are both of the 1740s. The complexity and sophistication of John Strahan's umbrella-like cupola rises before you and it certainly has the 'festive quality' that one critic has noted. Outside there is excellent carving in stone by Thomas Paty. Inside, there is much superb carving in wood by this outstanding Bristol craftsman and architect, which has been recently expertly restored. There is much else of interest and quality, but of special interest to the Friends are the four marble busts by the greatest sculptor of the day, Michael Rysbrack. The two within the body of the church depict John and Martha Cossins, the builders of Redland Court and of this once private chapel, which only became Redland's parish church in 1942. The two in the porch are of Martha's brothers, William and John Innys, book sellers and publishers. All the busts were probably executed in 1734 and they were first displayed in Redland Court which was completed in the following year. They are strikingly informal, the two in the porch, especially. The brothers would surely never have entered the church with their shirts so far open, nor wearing homely caps in place of wigs.

There is a link between the Friends of the Art Gallery and these sculptures. They were first published in Katharine Eustace's catalogue to the Rysbrack exhibition of 1982 and the Friends of the Art Gallery were the publishers of that mightily impressive work. Every penny of the Friends' investment was returned, but the device enabled us to avoid the limitations of the City's Printing and Stationary Department and to go to an excellent printer of our own choice. Borrowing the four busts for the exhibition proved to be bewilderingly difficult. The Diocesan Advisory Committee argued that we would be creating a shopping list for thieves, until finally persuaded that publication would make the busts' resale impossible. Then the Council for the Care of Churches announced from London that we could not conserve them. We, with the oldest museum conservation department in the regions, were justly offended. More negotiation followed and dusting was reluctantly allowed. Fortunately 'dusting' is open to interpretation and the busts were to be returned in very much better condition.

Do come early on December 14th, look around and later sing, and afterwards enjoy a light supper in the impressive new church hall and meet also the Friends of Bristol Museum, Galleries and Archives, who will be joining us.

Francis Greenacre



E V E N T S

Booking Form

Thursday 14th December 2017 The Carol Service 7pm at Redland Parish Church

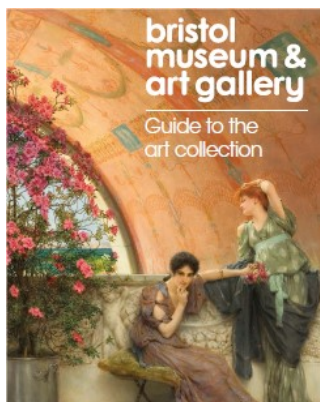
We are delighted to be returning to this beautiful 18th century church and the newly built church hall.

The Rev. Rod. Symmons will conduct the service and the Cadence Choir will lead the singing. The service will be followed by light refreshments in the church hall just across the Green

Cost £8.50

Booking Form (1)

Spring Lecture and Buffet Lunch M Shed 27th March 2018, 12:00 noon



Julia Carver, Curator of Modern and Contemporary Art, will talk about her new publication, 'A Guide to 600 years of Art in Bristol's Collection' which is now available from the Museum gift shop.

Friends members receive a concessionary discount off the cover price of this beautiful book on presentation of their membership card.

Lecture and Lunch Cost £19.50

Booking Form (2)

Day Excursion to London – Tate Britain
The EY Exhibition: Impressionists in London
French Artists in Exile (1870-1904)
Saturday 27th January 2018



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Claude Monet Houses of Parliament c.1900-1 © 2017. The Art Institute of Chicago / Art Resource, NY / Scala, Florence
 Courtesy of www.tate.org.uk

The story of the artists who fled to Britain to escape war in France, this exhibition presents captivating works by Monet, Tissot, Pissarro and their compatriots such as Dalou, Sisley, Derain and Legros.

In the 1870s France was devastated by the Franco-Prussian war and insurrection in Paris, driving artists to seek refuge across the Channel. Their experiences in London and the friendships that developed not only influenced their own work

but also contributed to the British art scene. This is the first exhibition to make the connections between French and British artists, patrons and art dealers during a traumatic period in French history.

<i>08.30</i>	Depart Clifton Down Shopping Centre
<i>08.35</i>	St. Monica's Bus Stop
<i>08.40</i>	Westbury-on-Trym (by Grupo Lounge)
<i>08.45</i>	Cribbs Causeway Bus Station (Park in K)
<i>12.00</i>	ETA Tate Britain
	Timed entries at 13.00 and 13.30
<i>16.30</i>	Depart Tate Britain
<i>19.30-20:00</i>	ETA Bristol

COST: £38.70 Art Fund £30.35
to include coach, entry fee and driver's tip

Booking Form (3)



Day Excursion to London – Royal Academy Charles I: King and Collector Saturday 10th February 2018



This exhibition is a late follow-up of the Schubart lecturer, Desmond Taylor-Shawe's excellent presentation 'Charles I, First Patron of Art' given last September.

King Charles I amassed one of the most extraordinary art collections of his age, acquiring works by some of the finest artists of the past – Titian, Mantegna, Holbein, Durer – and commissioning leading contemporary artists such as Van Dyck and Rubens. Yet, following the King's execution in 1649, his collection was sold off and scattered across Europe.

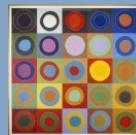
This exhibition will reunite the greatest masterpieces of this magnificent collection for the first time. It will include over 100 works of art, ranging from classical sculptures to Baroque paintings, and from exquisite miniatures to monumental tapestries.

<i>08.30</i>	Depart Clifton Down Shopping Centre
<i>08.35</i>	St. Monica's Bus Stop
<i>08.40</i>	Westbury-on-Trym (by Grupo Lounge)
<i>08.45</i>	Cribbs Causeway Bus Station (Park in K)
<i>12.00</i>	ETA Royal Academy
	Timed tickets, 14.00 & 14.30
<i>16.30</i>	Depart Royal Academy
<i>19.30-20.00</i>	ETA Bristol

COST: £38 RA members £23
to include coach, entry fee and driver's tip

Booking Form (4)

Day Excursion to London – Queen's Gallery
Charles II: Art and Power
Sunday 11th March 2018



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This exhibition should prove a lavish sequel to that of the previous month on Charles I. It will show the rich material world of Charles II's court and the role of the arts in the re-establishment of the Stuart monarchy in 1660. From John Michael Wright's monumental portrait of Charles II in his coronation robes and glittering silver-gilt which adorned the high-altar of Westminster Abbey during the King's coronation, to old master paintings, tapestries and glittering furniture, the exhibition will explore how the court of Charles II became the centre for the patronage of leading artists and the collecting of great works of art in Europe.

Members who bought tickets for the Canaletto exhibition last September will have free admission if they kept their tickets!

The exhibition will be introduced by Rufus Bird's lecture in our Art Gallery, 'Charles II, Art and Power' the previous Tuesday, 6th March.

<i>08.30</i>	Depart Clifton Down Shopping Centre
<i>08.35</i>	St. Monica's Bus Stop
<i>08.40</i>	Westbury-on-Trym (by Grupo Lounge)
<i>08.45</i>	Cribbs Causeway Bus Station (Park in K)
<i>12.00</i>	ETA Queen's Gallery Lunch Break
<i>14.00</i>	Entry to exhibition
<i>16.30</i>	Depart Queen's Gallery
<i>19.30-20.00</i>	ETA Bristol

COST: **£31 or £23 (with stamped ticket from 30th September visit)**
 to include coach, entry fee and driver's tip

Booking Form (5)



RESIDENTIAL EXCURSION to HASTINGS

Tuesday 10th to Saturday 14th April 2018



The Royal Victoria Hotel
Courtesy of Tripadvisor.com

I have negotiated a very good deal at the Royal Victoria Hotel, St. Leonards, on the sea front. Although the single supplement is a little higher than last year, the basic rate is lower. As mentioned before, seaside hotels are more reasonable than city hotels.

We shall be looking at venues mainly over the border in Kent. As there are many good NT properties around, the 1% non members might think it worthwhile to join if only for next year, as the non NT supplement will be quite high!

Our last visit to Kent was in 2007 staying in Folkestone with memories of famous gardens at Sissinghurst and Great Dixter, treasure houses en route such as Knole and the picturesque town of Rye. Hastings itself has the excellent Jerwood Gallery as well as a battlefield!

A detailed itinerary will be available in the February Bulletin, by which time the holiday should be fully booked. Final notes will follow in the usual way, after final payment.

COST: £340 Single supplement £64 Non National Trust – tba
Deposit at this stage - £25 p.p.

Final payment by 1st March 2018

Booking Form

HAST

RESIDENTIAL EXCURSION to DRESDEN

September 2018



R E S I D E N T I A L T R I P

A residential trip to Dresden is being considered for September 2018.



The 4/5 night trip would include guided tours of the Old Masters Picture Gallery in the Zwinger Palace, and of the Albertinum which houses, amongst other things, a collection of French Impressionist paintings.

Also likely to be included in the trip are Pillnitz Castle and Gardens, and a paddle steamer cruise on the River Elbe, as well as a tour of the Meißen Porcelain Museum.

At this point we would be pleased to gauge the level of interest to see if the trip will be viable.

Dates and costings will be confirmed when we have an idea of numbers.

Declaration of Interest Form

DRES



THE BULLETIN 2000

Special Feature: The Bulletin 200

To celebrate the 200th edition of The Bulletin, we invited all current and recently retired committee members and colleagues at Bristol Museum and Art Gallery to share with us one of their most memorable moments with The Friends. We extend our heartfelt thanks to all those who contributed to this special feature.



Joanna Brown, Chair, 2009 - present

My interest in the Museum was greatly enhanced when a large part of my late husband's Georgian Drinking Glass collection came to the Museum. Then eventually joining the committee (cornered by Anne Merriman) and finally becoming chairman in 2009 at the sudden retirement of John Sansom was a baptism of fire. It has meant scenes of such varied interest as we received requests from our brilliant curators for purchases, conservations, displays, even requests for commissions.

Not knowing what was coming next was always exciting. Who wouldn't want to be involved. And all this enabled by a deeply committed group of Friends producing lectures and trips to fund it all - just brilliant.



Ray Barnett, Head of Collections & Archives 2014 - present

I think I would say the opening of the refurbished Gallery 7 (Bristol School) sticks in my memory. Investment in the building had been very difficult for the Council during the 1990s and consequently we had experienced some considerable time when the condition of the decoration in the art galleries was

frankly an embarrassment. The Bristol School gallery in particular had torn and 'weather-beaten' red damask, not something to boast about, and even less so when forming the backdrop to paintings which we are justifiably proud of as telling a very important local story with national (even international) significance. The funding from the Friends of the Art Gallery enabled a refurbished gallery to re-open and in effect began a programme of working our way around the galleries improving their appearance and hang, which has continued to date. My line manager was unavailable for the unveiling of Gallery 7 so I was delighted to be able to say a few words of thanks on behalf of the organisation that special evening.



Valerie Harland, Head of Development 2011 - present

The Friends has contributed so much that it's hard to choose. It was an absolute delight in 2014 to receive such a wonderful response from the membership to the appeal to conserve The Garden Court by Burne-Jones. The £10,000 raised, including Gift Aid, meant that this

incredible work could undergo painstaking conservation so that today all visitors to Bristol Museum & Art Gallery's Victorian and Edwardian Gallery can fully appreciate it.

Special Feature: The Bulletin 200



THE BULLETIN 200

John Hibberd, Committee from 2002

Retired as Vice Chair 2017

There are many occasions that I recall with pleasure or with pride at what we achieved in our support for the museum. But one of my most vivid memories is of a trip to Troyes in August 1999. Our convivial group experienced so much in a few days, enjoyed so many glorious and varied sights which remain vivid in the memory - in Troyes itself, Dijon, Vaux-le-Vicomte, Fontainebleau, Sens, Rheims: cathedrals, chateaux, parks and gardens, museums large and small (the Sisley house in Moret-sur-Loing sticks in my mind), stained glass, statues, gargoyles, patterned tiled roofs, quaint cobbled streets, a champagne cellar ...



Kate Newnham, Senior Curator Visual Arts

2011 - present

I have many good memories of the Friends since I joined Bristol Museum & Art Gallery in 2000. Committee meetings have left a lasting impression on me, I admit to being a bit nervous when I attended my first one! It was soon apparent that the committee members were hugely supportive of what we art curators wanted to achieve. A stand-out moment for me was when, in 2015, your committee pledged support for the purchase of eleven pieces of contemporary Chinese ceramics and glass, enabling us to build the best collection of its kind in the UK.



Dr Jenny Gaschke, Fine Art Curator

2012 - present

When it comes to my most memorable moment related to The Friends - that was also my most nerve-wrecking. In 2013, with The Friends' help, we wanted to buy at auction a watercolour by the young JMW Turner, showing a cave in the Avon Gorge. We had to bid by telephone and Kate Newnham and I sat at my desk next to Francis Greenacre, who was doing the bidding on our behalf. Obviously, I could only hear half of what was going on - and bidding for this exciting picture seemed lively, to say the least. When Francis had uttered our ultimate bid at the top of our budget, it seemed ages until he said that we had secured it - all the while I could have sworn someone was outbidding us, but - no. This beautiful work by one of Britain's greatest artists is now in our collection.





THE BULLETIN 2000

Special Feature: The Bulletin 2000



Maurice Bell, Excursions Secretary, 1996 - present

So many memories. Here is one. We're on the banks of the Wear back in 1997 looking up at the majestic towers of Durham Cathedral. I mention 'The Lampton Worm' to our lovely Geordie guide who promptly sings all the verses beginning with 'Oop lad 'n haud tha gob, I'll tell thee 'bout the worm'.

Wind forward to March 2001 and John Crossley and I are photographing the New York panorama from the Staten Island ferry. Prominent are the Twin Towers which we subsequently visit. Could one have ever imagined their fate six months later in 9/11.



Margaret Bell, Excursion Bookings Secretary 1997 - present

So many memories, therefore a short comment on one or two of them.

On the first Residential to Harrogate, the coach had to chase a lady around the one-way system, catching up with her at the train station. We had a gentleman take a taxi from Marble Hill House to Bristol when we feared he could be in the

Thames! Another gentleman had designs on one of our ladies and followed us to Lincoln. Sadly, in Norwich, we found a member had vacated her room and I with Margaret Kirkham had to spend the morning with the Police!



Carol Lear, Social Secretary, 2007 - present

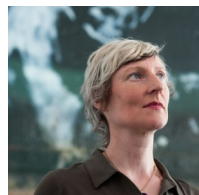
I clearly remember 2005 because of a special party and a purchase. To celebrate the Centenary of the Opening of the Museum and Art Gallery in 1905, the Friends held an Edwardian Evening in the hall of the Museum. There were tall arrangements of flowers on pedestals, there was

piano-playing in the background and everyone looked elegant - the men in their top hats and tails and the women in their long skirts or dresses. It was a sight to remember. The Friends also wanted to mark the centenary with a gift to the Art Gallery - that gift was a large silver bowl. It is remarkable because it has a smooth exterior and a wavy interior. It is, in fact, two bowls soldered together one inside the other and was made a year or so before by a Japanese silversmith called Suzuki.



Julia Carver, Curator Modern & Contemporary Art, 2005 - present

The Friends have supported the museum in developing its collection of artists' film and video, adding to Contemporary Art Society grants to acquire two 16mm films by Ben Rivers, a video work by Sarah Dobai and, just last year, Horizon, by Alison Craighead and Jon Thomson, the museum's first piece of internet art. The Friends were originally established to purchase contemporary art and acquired The Hands by Barbara Hepworth for the museum in 1948 - the year it was painted. Times have changed and so has the remit as budgets have tightened and the Friends have stepped up to support all of our collections but it's great to see the Friends continuing to support contemporary and experimental work such as these.



Toby Pinn, Committee Member, 2009 - present

Despite having sold over a quarter of million lots as an auctioneer; telephone bidding in 2014 for the Friends to secure the collection of fourteen mourning rings relating to the Smyth family of Ashton Court remains a particularly memorable event. The committee agreed a maximum bid, which I knew I must not exceed, but the greatest difficulty occurred in the minutes prior to bidding as I attempted to block out the potentially expensive auctioneers motto, 'The quality is remembered long after the price is forgotten' which kept playing in my mind. Fortunately, I was able to bid successfully within budget, securing the rings for the benefit of future generations of visitors, whilst maintaining my position as a trustee on the committee!



Muriel Harrison, Lecture Secretary 2005 - present

I became lecture organiser in 2005, after Elizabeth Herring. Elizabeth's files, advice from the National Gallery and support from our own curators, all helped me. The use of the Rear hall (instead of Gallery 4) has also been good.

Speakers vary, most are very good to excellent, but I remember one disastrous Schubart lecture. The speaker arrived late. He had forgotten his memory stick with his illustrations. Kate Newnham made about 4 he could use, whilst he consumed about 4 glasses of wine. A late start, a halting but pompous delivery and many sighs of relief at the end!!





THE BULLETIN 2020

Special Feature: The Bulletin 200



Mary Downson, Honorary Secretary, 2015 - present

Having been asked by my friend Joanna Brown whether I would be interested in joining the Friends, not to mention the Friends Committee, I turned up one Tuesday in early January 2015 to observe the workings of this august body.

Of course, committee work is committee work but when the Museum staff began to show and tell of the beautiful and extraordinary paintings and objects within the collections, I was hooked! Within a couple of months I was the Secretary and have been taking the Minutes ever since. The input from the Curators as they share their treasures, knowledge and expertise remains the highlight of the meetings. Marvellous!



Monica Freeman, Membership Secretary 2016 - present

We joined FOBAG to learn more about Art. Bologna 2009 was our first trip. A wonderful way to see Art in good company. Roger died in 2010 and with great trepidation I did my first solo trip to Berlin. In 2015 Maurice "persuaded" me to join the committee.... many jobs large and small... led 2 foreign trips, Tuscany and Madrid. 2016; membership.... a new challenge. Today 7 years since

Roger died and talking to No 2 son about what I had done in that time: "Well done Mum, Dad would have been proud of you". Thank you FOBAG for the great support.



Pam Sayer, Bulletin Editor, 2012 - present

For me, it simply has to be winning the BAfM Annual Newsletter of the Year competition in 2015. Due to a wide array of dull and boring things, I missed the initial submission deadline, so I wasn't even sure if we were going to get looked at, never mind placed!

When I read the email from the BAfM editor telling me we had won 1st place for our group, I was so stunned, delighted, excited and honoured, it took hours for me to calm down. And then I read the bit about not telling anyone for several weeks until it was all officially announced.... Oh the torture!



And from our President

Seventy years on

The Friends of the Art Gallery first met in 1947. Our founder and first chairman until 1954 was Anne Hower. When chairman, she was painted with her four children by Henry Lamb. That fine group portrait, arguably one of the last outstanding examples of a dying genre, was very recently presented to the Art Gallery. Next year, soon after the painting has been conserved and immediately after it has been hung, we must celebrate the seventieth anniversary of the society, which was formally constituted in 1948.



A year later at the society's second AGM in 1949, it was stated that the purchasing policy would be directed 'primarily but far from exclusively' at contemporary British art. The Friends, themselves, often initiated the purchases, sometimes retaining ownership for many years. They were remarkably successful and not only in the 1960s, when the Dyer Bequest enabled some exceptionally bold, even brilliant acquisitions. By the 1970s, however, committee members' own interests and priorities had changed and curators could turn instead to the Contemporary Art Society, the Gulbenkian Foundation and the VAM Purchase Grant Fund. Subsequently, as funding pressures grew (and still grow), the Friends were increasingly asked to support vital services that were previously the sole responsibility of Bristol City Corporation. At first, I was appalled. But there are advantages, here, both for the Friends, whose significance is greater still, and for the beleaguered curators, whose hand we must continue to strengthen.

**Francis Greenacre, President of Friends of Bristol Art Gallery
2012 - present**

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R E P O R T

Residential Trip to Madrid, 19th to 24th September 2017



On our initial sight seeing tour of Madrid, one of the most impressive sights was The Plaza de Toros, the bullring, built in 1929 with its intricate brickwork and dramatic statues. Our visit to the Prado concentrated on the Spanish Masters, including El Greco, Goya and Velazquez.

We also visited the eclectic collection of paintings at the Museo Thyssen-Bornemisza, the second largest private collection of paintings in the world after the Queen's. Accompanied by an enthusiastic guide we began with early religious paintings, looking at the differences between Florentine, Venetian and Sieneese schools. Other interesting paintings were not always typical of the artist, such as "Portrait of a Young Woman with a Rosary", by Rubens incorporating, unusually, a lighter background than the sitter, and "The Stevedores in Arles" by Van Gogh showing the influence of oriental art. We also looked at Nineteenth Century American Art, particularly The Hudson River School, whose existence might have been a revelation to some of us.

Some also visited the Museo Sorolla, the impressionist Valencian artist, whose paintings are well known for their depiction of Mediterranean light and colour. His house and studio along with his garden provided an oasis in the middle of a busy city.

Rita Bolwell

On Thursday, we visited Toledo. After a drive of an hour or so across an arid-looking landscape, we stopped at the side of the gorge of the Tajo, known to us as the Tagus. From there we had a marvellous view of the old city, with its quaint, narrow streets, capital of Spain until Philip II moved it to Madrid. Here stands the High Gothic cathedral, seat of the Primate of Spain. The building



dates back to the 13th century, although there was a Christian church on the site in the 6th century. In the sacristy museum we saw the El Greco masterpiece "The Disrobing of Christ", as well as Giordano's painted ceiling.

The 12th century Church of St. Thomas was built on the site of a mosque, and the minaret was converted into the bell-tower. The Moorish arches are very noticeable. Inside, we saw another El Greco masterpiece, "The Burial of the Count of Orgaz".

The last building we visited was the old synagogue, now owned by the Church, and known as "Santa Maria la Blanca". It was built during a

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Christian regime, by Islamic architects, for Jewish use. For centuries, the three groups lived amicably side by side!

Sheila & Andrew Round

On the way to Segovia we visited La Granja de San Ildefonso.

Described as a 'little Versailles', La Granja was built in 1731 by King Philip of Spain, a grandson of King Louis XIV of France. It is a fine example of European palace architecture.



Inside the palace galleries and rooms, faced with marble and with painted ceilings and stucco mouldings are lit by ornate chandeliers.

A museum on the first floor contains 16th century Flemish tapestries. King Philip and his second wife, Isobel Farnese are buried in the Collegiate church.

The palace has beautiful formal gardens, with fountains, where beds of pink roses are enclosed in box edging with yew topiary.

Segovia is a UNESCO World Heritage City situated 50 miles NW of Madrid and with a population of nearly 60,000. It is a university town and is rich in architectural history and includes medieval walls, Romanesque churches, a former royal palace and a Gothic cathedral.



The iconic Roman aqueduct, in the heart of the city was probably built in the first century AD.

It has 160 double height arches in granite, mostly without mortar.

The cathedral was rebuilt in Gothic style in about 1520. Despite its massive size it is an elegant building. The stepped east end

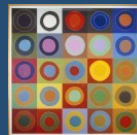
with pinnacles and balustrades and the tall tower add to its grandeur.

The famous and imposing Alcazar stands on a cliff overlooking the valley. It was built in the early 13th Century and modified in the 16th century. With its creamy stone walls, round towers and impressive keep, flanked by corbelled turrets, it is like an illustration for a fairy story. We viewed it from below before starting our journey back to Madrid.

Returning to Madrid we encountered a snow storm. For a short time the temperature in the coach went down from 24 degrees to 7 degrees and the hills turned white.

Rosalyn Rome

With many thanks to Sheila Round for the photos





C O M M E N T S

Members' Comments

Comments and photos from our members about excursions and exhibitions.

Kelmscott Manor & Buscot Park

6th July 2017

"The Burne-Jones room at Buscott was stunning - nice to see the whole series to complement the one in our gallery." *Myra Abbott*

"It was a privilege to have Kelmscott to ourselves as it is very much a 'lived in' house. The original Morris tapestries were a delight."

Mary Smith

Hidcote & Snowhill

6th September 2017

"A lovely way (and day) to say farewell to summer. Particularly enjoyed finding out about the genesis of Hidcote and Charles Wade's exotic past." *Hazell Trapnell*

"A joy to visit Hidcote, especially the newish vegetable garden, flourishing and colourful. Snowhill's vast, intriguing collection of objects was diverse and so eclectic. Thanks FoBAG for a lovely Cotswolds day out!" *Joanna Towner*

Queen's Gallery - Canaletto and the Art of Venice

30th September 2017

"The *very* large landscape paintings of Canaletto were a great surprise, with religious and mythological subjects. A very enlightening exhibition with the Ricci influences and Joseph Smith patronage explained."

Sheila Round

"A lovely sunny day to see such beautiful luminous paintings. The skill and technique shown in the drawings were very impressive. We should thank Joseph Smith for his vision in supporting Canaletto."

Joan Littlewood

National Gallery - Van Eyck

21st October 2017

"The Pre-Raphaelite artist's painting of vibrant fabrics was awesome - one could feel the velvet of a dress etc. To see the Arnolfini close up was stunning." *Glenda Lindsay*

"I have a vivid image in my mind of all the Pre-Raphaelites clustered round the Arnolfini portrait whilst ignoring everything else in the Gallery. It was great to see the inspirations and the magnificent results."

Cheryl Silverberg

Committee Contacts



Please sign your membership card and keep it safe. You will need to produce it for entry into lectures and some events. If you lose or misplace your card, please contact our Membership Secretary for a replacement.

Bulletin & Website

Copy Deadline for next Bulletin issue is **Friday 12th January 2018**

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AND FINALLY

Coffee at the Café

The jolly group which collects in the Café at the Museum once a month is becoming well known by the staff for filling several tables. New members are warmly welcomed. All is left in good order as we set off to view our interest of the day. In October it was the display of photographs with comments by those who had chosen them. The photos were from the British Commonwealth & Empire Collection now in the charge of Bristol Museum. We enjoy seeing these things as a group as we have a chance to discuss views – in this case they were mixed!

Our next dates are December 12, January 9 and February 13.

Lecture Reviews

Desmond Taylor-Shawe LVO, surveyor of the Queen's Pictures, gave the Schubart lecture in September which was a great success. A Japanese PhD student of Anglo Saxon literature was present, and was delighted to see the painting of 'Judith and Holofernes'. She had studied a very early poem about the event shown in the picture and was so excited she texted me in Canada.

Dr Justine Hopkins gave an excellent lecture on October 18th. She began with the Arnolfini portrait of 1434 by Van Eyck. She

detailed how its relatively simple setting appealed to the Pre-Raphaelites. The PRB or Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, rejected what they saw as 'sloshy' painting. They wanted painting to be more direct, and looked back to the period before Raphael.

The Van Eyck painting shows two people in a well furnished room. The natural setting, intense colour and skilful detail, led the PRB to develop their skills with oils. The increased layers of colour on a wet white base, and the use of hatching with fine brushstrokes gave the subtle, luminous light achieved by Van Eyck.

A mirror in the painting shows visitors arriving, the roundels on it have exquisite detail of Christ's passion. This level of detail went on to become a feature of PRB painting. They used nature with flowers, trees, gardens and birds to add further detail and symbolism in their work.

The lecture was excellent preparation for those travelling to the Exhibition on the following Saturday.

Muriel Harrison

From The Editor

There are many milestones to celebrate with this edition of The Bulletin.

Not only is it issue 200, it's my 20th time around of compiling and editing this wonderful newsletter-cum-magazine. But there's more. 200 editions of The Bulletin, 4 times a year, mean The Bulletin has been in production for 50 years.



Photo by Pam Sayer

It was very hard deciding how best to celebrate such an auspicious occasion, and nothing I could think of really seemed grand enough. In my mind's eye I was envisaging The Bulletin bursting out of envelopes with fanfares and flying streamers.... Not terribly practical though.

However, when the changes explained by Joanna in her letter (inside the front cover) started to solidify, it instantly became clear that issue 200 was the perfect opportunity to invite our committee and BMAG colleagues to share some memories with us, and the special feature started to take shape.

Nevertheless, I knew limiting everyone to around 100 words was going to be an incredibly hard ask. The majority of the committee and the museum staff have a great many years of working with The Friends to draw from, as most have been involved far longer than their current role suggests.

The hair pulling and pleas for more words that ensued was a testament to how many wonderful memories have been made with The Friends. Trying to pick just one or two that stood out more than the rest was no easy task.

With much perseverance, and many rewrites by many of the contributors, The Bulletin 200 Special Feature slowly formed itself into a wonderful record of the strongest memories of those who have worked so hard for so long, running The Friends and providing vital support to the Art Gallery and its staff.

With our future looking sure to hold some big changes, I am delighted to have had this chance to encourage us all to look back at some of the amazing things we have done, and I'm extremely proud to be the editor of such a special edition of The Bulletin.

Issue 200

November 2017

Pam Sayer



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Adoration of the Magi, Illumination from the Sarum Antiphoner - a service book containing both words and music, early 15th century. St Helen's Church, Ranworth, Norfolk

**We wish all our members a wonderful Christmas and a
Happy New Year**



"Orchard Tambourines"
Terry Frost

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