



where
words
work

Mythstories

museum of myth and fable

**University Centre Shrewsbury
Guildhall
Frankwell Quay
Shrewsbury
SY3 8HQ**

Charity Reg. No. 1161594

Annual Report Year ended 31st March 2023



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1. Our Mission

Mythstories works with the spoken word; on-line and in outreach projects.

We encourage our users to be storytellers themselves, passing on oral heritage and keeping it alive.

2. Status of the Charity

Mythstories is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation governed by a standard 'Foundation' constitution.

Mythstories began as a website in June 1998, before opening as a museum in February 1999. The original Charity was created by a Deed of Trust in 2001 and merged with the CIO in 2015. During 2022/3 most of the museum artefacts were dispersed and Mythstories reverted to its website format.

3. Governance and Management

Contact c/o Mr. S. Poole, Fullersmoor Cottage, Smithy Lane, Brown Knowl, Broxon, Cheshire, CH3 9JY info@mythstories.com

The maximum number of Trustees that can serve is 7.

During the year six Trustees held office:

Jacob Edward Owen Williams (second term – ends 15th May 2024)

Zara Bannu (first term – ends 31st August 2023)

Philip Leslie Jefferies (first term – ends 31st August 2023)

Simon Poole (first term – ends 31st August 2023)

Jennifer Watson (first term – ends 9th February 2024)

Joseph White (first term – ends 9th February 2024)

Trustees may serve a maximum of three consecutive terms.

The Trustees cover the following skill areas: cultural and community education, diversity, health psychology and resilience, legal expertise, verbal arts practice. Some were former young storytellers, some have current experience of academic life as teachers, lecturers and researchers.

No in-person formal meetings took place during the year. Trustees held formal meetings on-line and maintained contact via a WhatsApp group. Key policy documents and governance information, all contracts and current project information together with daily ledger and management accounts are maintained on cloud storage to which all Trustees have access.

Three Trustees and a key volunteer have access to the on-line bank account, with payments being reviewed and authorised monthly.

Ongoing and routine work continues to be delegated to two key volunteers.

4. Objectives

The primary focus of **Mythstories** is educational; preserving and disseminating traditional tales. It does this by:

A Maintaining an extensive website, free at the point of use. This disseminates traditional tales, a gallery of the objects previously held in the museum and is a resource of tried and tested ideas for using stories and storytelling artefacts in formal and informal educational settings.

B. Initiating outreach projects in the Shropshire/Mid-Wales borders area, which focus on the region's oral heritage.

C. Working with other organisations to promote storytelling in the United Kingdom.

D. Exploring the educational uses of storytelling, as a gateway to literacy and to develop 'soft' life-skills.

The Trustees and management keep in mind the **Charity Commission's** guidance on public benefit when designing and delivering activities that flow from this objective.

5. Achievements and Performance

Following the request from **University Centre Shrewsbury** for the Charity to vacate its premises, and a subsequent decision to revert to a digital museum with outreach projects, the majority of the artefacts were dispersed during the year. This transition back to a virtual museum was the main focus of the Charity's activity.

Loaned items were returned to their owners.

In April 2022, the **Centre for Folklore, Myth and Magic** in Todmorden took possession of Mythstories' library, the Society for Storytelling library and the audio archive of the London Centre for International Storytelling. This enabled all 3,000+ books to be kept together and be accessible to the public, to storytellers and researchers.



We were unable to find a UK home for the two processional giants, **Bertilak de Haut Desert** and **Morgan Le Fey**. In September they were 3D scanned courtesy of the **University of Chester**.



They were then taken down and travelled to **La Maison Des Geants, Ath, Belgium** where they are now displayed alongside other European giants.

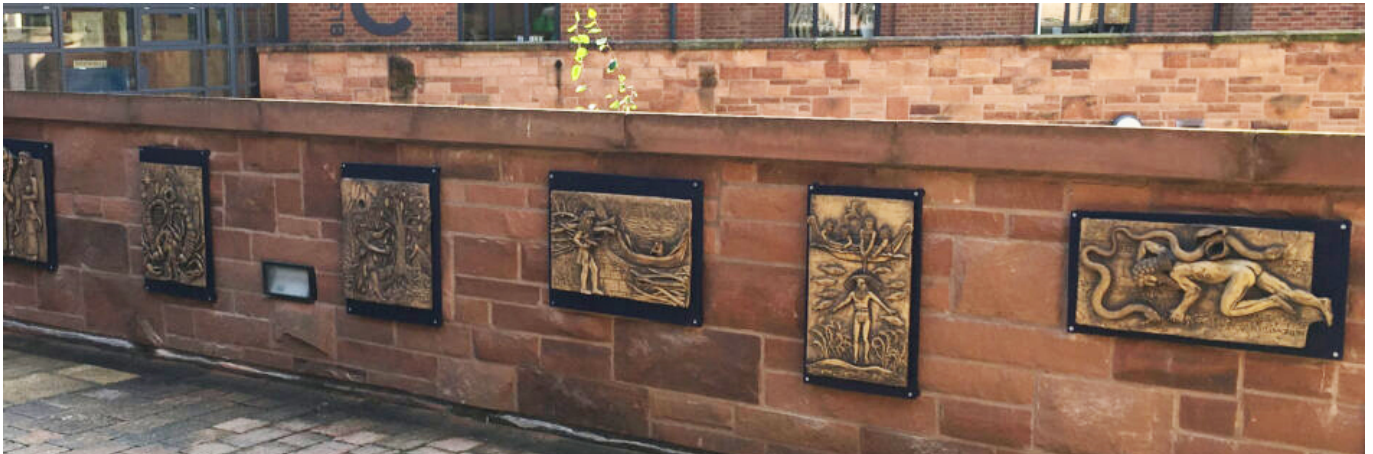


In January the screen and cartoons originally commissioned as stage and set dressings by The Flying Donkeys storyclub were transferred to **A Word In Edgeways**. This organisation promotes a spoken word festival and events in South Shropshire, so the artefacts will now be re-used for their original purpose.



The Edric & Godda Storyscape, commissioned with funding from Arts Council England, has been transferred to the **Titterstone Clee Trust**, an organisation that encourages public engagement with the culture and landscape of that part of Edric's historic kingdom.

Ownership of the Gilgamesh tablets and paintings has been transferred to **The University of Chester** so they may remain on display in the courtyard and library at University Centre, Shrewsbury.



Many of the other artefacts were dispersed to two primary schools as part of Telling Our Stories, a **University of Chester** research project exploring the use of storytelling objects in the Primary curriculum. **Grosvenor Park Academy, Chester** received the Ramayana, North American and South American constellations in July, while **Mount Pleasant Primary, Shrewsbury**, took possession of the Shropshire and Folk Customs constellations in September. Storyteller, **Dawn Powell**, has been in the schools to demonstrate sample workshops and help staff explore ways of using the artefacts.



The project, which is still on-going, has already highlighted two major difficulties schools face in integrating new forms of creativity into their curriculum: the already heavy staff workload and the lack of flexibility in a tightly forward-planned school year. We look forward to seeing the different perspectives of the final report, which will also look at the digital resources teachers feel they need. A documentary film is being made of the process by film-maker, **Phil Hirst**.



The beginning of the year saw the final two workshops for home-educating families looking at the history and stories of the now redundant Newport – Shrewsbury canal took place. These were run in partnership with **The Hive**, an arts and well-being venue in Shrewsbury. The pottery plaques created by the group will be installed along the line of the canal bed later in 2023.



Also during the year Mythstories' Arts Award Adviser worked with one young home-educated person to successfully complete his Bronze Arts Award.



The Talking Cat mug



The Hanuman's Leap mug



Mouse Tiger Cushion



Elephant Charging Cushion



Loyalist Cow Cushion

During the year Mythstories was active on social media promoting the collection and the work of the Charity. **ArtUK**, whose website displays the paintings in the Mythstories collection, also ran two features on Mythstories artist-in-residence. They also added cushions, mugs and art materials featuring Mythstories' paintings to the range of prints available from their on-line print-on-demand shop.

6. Staff and Volunteers

Mythstories had no employees during the year. Routine work was undertaken by two key volunteers, who also led on the dispersal of the museum collection. 2 self-employed artists were contracted to work on the research project with the University of Chester. In addition to the Trustees, a further 21 volunteers were involved during the year.

7. Financial Review

Income

Mythstories has no guaranteed regular funding and during the year benefitted from a great deal of in-kind support as well as volunteer time.

A small amount of donations came via the **SmileAmazon** website.

Sales revenue through the **ArtUK** shop increased, and a decision was made to continue the partnership for a further 12 months.

All other income was from the University of Chester, the majority related to the on-going Telling Our Stories project with the balance (£1,750) covering the paid costs of dispersal of other artefacts.

Expenditure

Mythstories has minimum overheads. The major costs in the year were accountancy , on-line service fees and insurance.

Reserves

Unrestricted reserves at year end will be sufficient to cover foreseeable running costs in 2023/24, and this will provide a useful buffer as Mythstories transitions to its new operating method.

8. Future Plans

The focus of Mythstories' work in 2023/24 will be based on the results of the research project, using the learning to develop digital resources.

Volunteers will also complete the 'Museum' section of the website, ensuring there is a complete record of the physical artefacts that have now been dispersed.

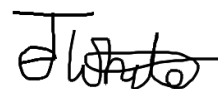
Trustees will oversee the implementation Mythstories' digital engagement strategy with a view to raising the profile of Mythstories and its work.

The Charity is also actively seeking funds for a small project with **Shropshire Supports Refugees** which will introduce these new families to the countryside and oral history of the County.

Approved by the Board



Signed:



Signed:

Date: 08.09.23

Independent examiner's report to the trustees of Mythstories

Charity Number 1161594

I report on the accounts of the company for the year ended 31st March 2023

Respective responsibilities of trustees and examiner

The trustees are responsible for the preparation of the accounts. The trustees consider that an audit is not required for this year under section 144(2) of the Charities Act 2011 and that an independent examination is needed.

Having satisfied myself that the charity is not subject to audit and is eligible for independent examination, it is my responsibility to:

- examine the accounts under section 145 of the 2011 Act;
- to follow the procedures laid down in the general Directions given by the Charity Commission under section 145(5)(b) of the 2011 Act; and
- to state whether particular matters have come to my attention.

Basis of independent examiner's report

My examination was carried out in accordance with the general Directions given by the Charity Commission. An examination includes a review of the accounting records kept by the charity and a comparison of the accounts presented with those records. It also includes consideration of any unusual items or disclosures in the accounts, and seeking explanations from you as trustees concerning any such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and consequently no opinion is given as to whether the accounts present a 'true and fair view' and the report is limited to those matters set out in the statement below.

Independent examiner's statement

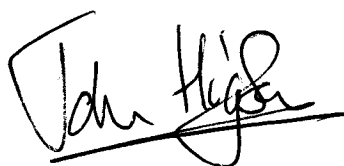
In connection with my examination, no matter has come to my attention:

(1) which gives me reasonable cause to believe that in any material respect the requirements:

- to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Charities Act 2011; and
- to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records, comply with the accounting requirements of the Charities Act 2011.

have not been met; or

(2) to which, in my opinion, attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached.



John Higson
Bank Accounts
Oak Ridge, Horderley
Craven Arms
Shropshire
SY7 8HW

Date: 08/09/2023

MYTHSTORIES - CHARITY
STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31st MARCH 2023

	Unrestricted	2023 Restricted	Total	2022 Total
Arts Council England				1490
Heritage Lottery Fund				1290
Sales	135		135	97
Donations	31		31	12
Interest Earned	26		26	1
Arnold Clark				750
University of Chester		7510	7510	
 Total	 192	 7510	 7702	 3640
 EXPENDITURE				
Employee Costs				650
General Administration - insurance, maintenance etc.	275		275	963
Travel	13	585	597	5
Artists/Project Costs	234	4648	4882	18630
Advertising				120
Accounts	250		250	500
Other	72		72	149
 Total	 844	 5233	 6076	 21017
 NET MOVEMENT IN FUNDS	 (652)	 (2277)	 1626	 (17377)
 FULL COST RECOVERY/TRANSFERS BETWEEN FUNDS	 720	 (720)		
 FUNDS B/FWD	 662	 252	 915	 18292
 FUNDS C/FWD	 731	 1810	 2540	 915

MYTHSTORIES - CHARITY

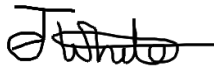
BALANCE SHEET

AS AT 31st MARCH 2023

	2023	2022
Fixed Assets		
Current Assets		
Stock		
Bank and cash	2790	1165
Debtors		
	<u>2790</u>	<u>1165</u>
Liabilities		
Creditors		
Accruals	250	250
	<u>250</u>	<u>250</u>
Net Current Assets	<u>2540</u>	<u>915</u>
Net Assets	<u><u>2540</u></u>	<u><u>915</u></u>
Funds		
Unrestricted	731	662
Restricted	1810	252
Total Funds	<u><u>2540</u></u>	<u><u>915</u></u>



08.09.23



08.09.23