



# **ANNUAL REPORT**

## **2022-2023**

**Friends of Bristol Museums, Galleries & Archives**  
**Registered charity no.276777**

**[www.friendsofbmga.org.uk](http://www.friendsofbmga.org.uk)**

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**Friends of BMGA, c/o Bristol Museum & Art Gallery,  
Queen's Road, Bristol BS8 1RL**

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## **Chair's Report**

The Friends continue to be in a strong position financially but in other respects we are seeing some of the less positive trends being experienced nationally across voluntary organisations supporting heritage and culture.

Our membership numbers are slowly declining and, as you will see from the Membership Secretary's report, are down year on year by about 8%, so new members who have joined us this year are particularly welcome. Our most significant challenge is that those of us currently taking responsibility for one or more of the many roles needed for an effective organisation will sooner or later move on, whether by choice or otherwise, and there are very few members expressing an interest in taking on those roles in the future.

The most immediate need for additional volunteers is in the Events Group but, despite diminished resources, they have run a varied and interesting programme raising an impressive total of £14,500. Without that very small group of people, led by Mary Bailey, the Friends would be unrecognisable as the organisation we all know and love, so I cannot thank them enough. Overall we are finding fewer members choosing to take part in our events, so that many are not fully subscribed, which both reduces funds raised and means that the event organisers work just as hard to benefit a smaller number of members.

Our financial health has been further strengthened by the receipt of a legacy from Jean Allan and the final instalment of funds from the estate of Margaret Kerr.

The Treasurer's report lists the ways in which our funds have been used this year to support the work of Bristol

Museums Galleries & Archives: many of them have been highlighted in more detail in our newsletter and on our website, or have been the subject of one of our Saturday talks.

Our financial contribution continues to be valued by the Service, and we are able to help with minimal bureaucracy. For larger amounts, our seed funding can unlock national funds from the Science Museum, the V&A, or private trusts, often more than doubling the value of our contribution. The availability of our funds therefore makes a very real difference to the Service and to the individual members of staff we support.

Our non-financial support is also important, and appreciated. This has been a difficult year for the Museum staff continuing to deliver on their commitments throughout a very challenging staff restructure process. I have heard privately from quite a few individuals how much our encouragement and advocacy has meant to them over that time.

## **Newsletter and communications**

The newsletter has continued to be vital in keeping us connected with all our members, not just those who join us for events, and the museum team have contributed some fascinating and well-received articles to complement our traditional reports of our own events and trips. Editors Tim and Ann Wood as always do a wonderful job of putting together each fully-illustrated edition and making it so enjoyable to read; many thanks to them both for their skill and hard work, to our many contributors of both articles and photographs, and to Mary Bailey and Richard Avery, who are responsible for printing, enveloping and dispatch.

## **Working with the museums service**

Our relationship with the museum team continues to be key to what we do as Friends, and we are grateful to staff across the service for their continued enthusiastic support. I know that in return they appreciate not just our financial and practical contribution but also the genuine friendliness of our committees and volunteers when we work with them in organising and running events and other activities.

Because of the restructure of the museums service, which aimed to reduce operational cost to the Council by over £400k a year, there have been too many staff changes to mention in detail, but as far as possible they have been reported in the newsletter. We wish all the staff who have left the best for the future. One departure was of particular significance for us: Ray Barnett, who was for many years our main contact at the museum and took early retirement at the end of 2022 after 33 years with the Bristol museums service. He will be long remembered for his helpfulness, encouragement, common sense, unflappability and untiring good humour. We wish him the very best in the new chapter of his life and warmly welcome him as a member of the Friends.

Ray's role as our primary contact has been taken on jointly by Beth Cutter and Caroline Booth-Morris, who job-share the role of Development Manager. They already run the organisational aspects of Bristol Museums Development Trust and even prior to the news of Ray's departure we had been in discussion with them about areas where the two charities, the Friends and BMDT, could work more closely together. Ray's was a hard act to follow, and Beth and Caroline have very much proved to be up to the job. We are grateful for their ongoing support.

## **The Executive Committee**

I would like to thank all the officers and committee members for their commitment and hard work behind the scenes. Special appreciation is due to our officers: Katherine Martin our Secretary; Robert Walters our Treasurer; and Richard Avery our Membership Secretary. The committee have met monthly in person throughout the year. Thanks, too, to the volunteers who are not part of the committee but whose work is vital to our success.

Gary Gostelow, a long-serving member of the committee, has decided not to stand for re-election at the AGM. Our thanks go to him for his work and support, both on the committee and as a key member of the Events Group. As well as organising some very enjoyable events, including holidays, over the years Gary has been ready without fuss to cover many impromptu jobs as they come up, such as collecting donations at the Museum's Winter Lectures and organising refreshments for the AGM. His contributions will be missed but he and Hilary will, I am sure, continue to play a full part in the Friends' social life.

## **The Future**

We are in a strong position financially and, thanks to our loyal membership and to all our officers, committee & Events Group members and other volunteers – and supportive staff from the museums service – I am confident we will continue to thrive in the coming year. To reduce our administrative workloads we have successfully introduced online booking, but to maintain and grow our activities we need to recruit new members to the Events Group and volunteers interested in shadowing and later taking on all the key roles essential to our success. If you think you might be able to help, while at the same time

extending your social circle and having the satisfaction of supporting such a good cause, please let me know in person or by email.

## **Sue Thurlow**

Chair

## **Treasurer's Report**

This has been a difficult year with the aftermath of COVID and a shortage of members willing to take on some of our key roles. However the organisation is in very good shape largely due to generous legacies: in this financial year we received a new legacy of £2,500 from the estate of Jean Allan and the final instalment of over £10,000 from the estate of Margaret Kerr. For these we are most grateful.

Our substantial funds are invested in sundry banks on short-term bonds of no more than two years. We aim to try to earn the best rates of interest consonant with safety. Fortunately we have been able to make grants to the museums of over £75,000. A new departure was a contribution to the salary of a Working Exhibits Deputy Manager for M Shed. This has enabled the museums to keep these exhibits working and to raise money from them. We were also able to give Amy Raphael a purse of £5,000 to spend in Japan on vessels and sundry items used in tea and other ceremonies. Our list of donations shows a wide and eclectic variety of ways in which we have contributed to the collections and activities of the museums.

Our sources of income have continued to consist of subscriptions and donations from members ably managed by Richard Avery, gift aid clawed back from HMRC by Dr Peter Newley and the series of lectures and outings organised and run by Mary Bailey's small Events Group.

That group has done very well to achieve a profit of over £14,000 in the post COVID period and the lack of funds of members caused by inflation. The important thing is that we still have ample funds to support donations to the museums, provided that we can find people to carry on our activities.

We are grateful to Geoffrey Clements for being our External Examiner of the accounts.

	<b>2022/23</b>	<b>2021/22</b>
<b>INCOME</b>		
Subscriptions	12,640	14,198
Donations	804	473
Legacies	13,300	57,000
Gift aid	2,801	3,079
Activities for generating funds	14,500	15,157
Winter lectures	106	271
Bank interest	3,559	1,616
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>47,710</b>	<b>91,794</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>		
Sponsorship of winter lectures	1,313	7,085
Grants to Bristol Museums - General funds	74,321	22,842
Grants to Bristol Museums - Art fund	0	6,175
Administration costs	10,753	8,773
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>86,387</b>	<b>44,875</b>
<b>NET INCREASE/(DECREASE) IN FUNDS</b>	<b>-38,677</b>	<b>46,919</b>
<b>FUNDS BROUGHT FORWARD</b>	<b>343,808</b>	<b>296,889</b>
<b>FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD</b>	<b>305,131</b>	<b>343,808</b>



### **Grants to Museums in Year**

JB Pyne Watercolour	6,750
Three Video Installations	4,246
Contribution to a pair of Lund vases	15,500
Repairs to vessel John King	7,000
Contribution to salary of Working Exhibits Deputy Manager	22,456
Purchase of painting of Red Maids School	3,000
Purchase of Print of Gio-ji temple	810
Contribution to Ray Barnett's leaving event	500
Amy Raphael's Japan Purchases	4,963
Mary Carpenter Photo Album	1,596
Painting of Avon Gorge by J S Harford	6,000
Digitising Chinese textiles	1,500
Winter lectures	1,313
	<b>£75,634</b>

### **Grants approved for 2023-2024**

Video Art	5,954
Sound Archives	2,000
Contribution to conservation of building plans	1,500
Digitising papers	1,344
Reprint Bristol Region Geology book	1,000
Benjamin Lund sauceboat	5,000
Five 18 <sup>th</sup> century glasses	5,000
	<b>£21,798</b>

### **Robert Walters**

Treasurer

## **Membership Secretary's Report**

Membership numbers fell again and at the end of our reporting year (30 June) we had 330 single members (352 last year) and 310 (342) joint members. The lifting of most COVID restrictions during the year was mirrored by the gradual resumption of our normal activities and we have seen 13 new memberships.

84% of the current membership have completed Gift Aid declarations, enabling us to boost our income, and our thanks are due to Peter Newley for processing the year's claim.

**Richard Avery**

Membership Secretary

## **Events Group Report**

This year was almost a normal year for the Events Group, working as a small team of six: Richard Avery, Catherine Dixon, Gary Gostelow, Carol Lear, Carol Ouvry and myself. We have continued to limit the number of events per month to a maximum of three and provide as wide a range of activities and topics as possible. Administrative support has been provided by Roni Edwards, so many thanks to her.

The number of members booking for our events have still not reached pre-COVID levels so very few of our trips are fully booked; in fact we had to cancel the trip to Clevedon in March due to lack of support. It does, however, provide an opportunity for members' friends to join us so we hope that word will be put around to attract more bookings. In contrast, the behind-the-scenes visits continue to attract a

high level of interest so Carol Ouvry is kept busy arranging extra visits to accommodate as many members as possible. She deserves our special thanks for this additional workload.

Highlights of this year's activity have been the gallery tours of the newly-displayed delftware and Japanese porcelain collections by Amber Turner and Amy Raphael respectively; the trip to Longford Castle – one of the most difficult destinations to get into; and the trip to Messums Wiltshire in Richard Avery's splendid vintage Royal Blue coach.

We welcome suggestions for and feedback on the programme and also any offers of help in organising events. Please do get in touch with me if you have comments or think you would like to be part of the organising team: [events@friendsofbmga.org.uk](mailto:events@friendsofbmga.org.uk) or 0117 942 1944/ 07779 244308



## **List of events**

### **11 Trips**

Longford Castle  
Messums Wiltshire  
Mottisfont House  
National Museum of Wales, Cardiff  
New Art Gallery, Walsall  
Roche Court sculpture park  
Sherborne Castle  
Southampton Art Gallery  
Stourbridge Glass Museum  
Stourhead, Wiltshire  
Ugbrooke House

### **16 Behind the Scenes Visits**

Albion Dockyard  
Ashton Court Mansion (2)  
All God's Children exhibition, Bristol Cathedral  
Bristol Archives  
8 gallery tours: delftware collection (3); Japanese porcelain collection (3); Bristol Tapestry (2)  
Hogarth Altarpiece at St Nicholas Church  
Merchants' Hall  
Royal West of England Academy

### **8 Talks**

Archive film: the Citizens of Bristol at War  
Bristol Tapestry  
Cézanne – Father of Modernism  
Delftware Tiles  
Pyronaut and the Queen's Jubilee  
The Flying Sikh  
The Windrush Tapes  
Tutankhamun – King of Egypt

## **1 Walk**

Crime and Crinolines in Clifton

## **3 Special events**

Harbour cruise on the Matthew

Quiz and buffet supper

Lecture and lunch: The Lund Vases by Amber Turner at M Shed

## **3 Public events**

Bristol Harbour Festival book and cake sale at L Shed

Seasonal sale of jigsaws, books, cakes and preserves at Bristol Museum & Art Gallery

Cake sale at L Shed for the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the demise of Bristol Commercial Vehicles

## **Mary Bailey**

Chair, Events Group

## **Volunteering**

This year saw the return of two big events: Bristol Harbour Festival and Bristol's Brilliant Archaeology Festival, both in July 2022. For the former, we had our usual books and cakes sale in L Shed but, with not many books to sell on this occasion, we made a smaller surplus than in previous years: just over £500. However, our volunteers came up trumps with plenty of delicious cakes which more than made up for the dearth of books.

Bristol's Brilliant Archaeology Festival, master-minded by Kate Iles – Curator of Archaeology, was a lively event with staged Viking battles, lots of hands-on archaeology and things for children to get involved in. The Friends' contribution, apart from Sue Thurlow being in charge of the welcome/information point for the whole day, was a display

of herbs and food from the 18<sup>th</sup> century, majoring on medicinal use. There was plenty of interest in this topic from the visitors to the festival and our time was fully occupied in discussing the finer points of some of the cures and recipes. No tasting of food was allowed but children enjoyed smelling the herbs.

We had two further baking opportunities during the year: our seasonal sale in November 2022 at Bristol Museum & Art Gallery (which also included books, jigsaws and preserves); and a cake sale in June this year at L Shed with the display of vintage buses and coaches on the harbourside to commemorate the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the demise of Bristol Commercial Vehicles. These two events generated useful sums: £400 and £370 respectively.

Our grateful thanks go to all the volunteers who supported these events with their time or donations or both.

**Mary Bailey**

## **Harbourside Working Exhibits Report**

The electric cranes have been given grade II listed status, which will not affect our programme of work to keep all four cranes operating. These iconic sentinels stand proudly as not many now exist in full working order, a credit to our volunteer team.

The steam crane and *Mayflower* are both certified to run but, due to operational pressures, we have decided to step back a little this year. This is a difficult choice to make and it upsets those who love trips on the *Mayflower*. However, she will operate at the end of the season.

The steam railway remains very popular but since January, when *Portbury's* 10-year boiler ticket expired, only *Henbury* has been in operation on the quayside. With the repair to the Cumberland Road landslip it is hoped to reinstate the service to A Bond soon.

In the spring we started work on *Pyronaut's* starboard engine, which has not been performing as it should. As a result the planned work to lift the boat out of the water for a survey and painting of the hull has been postponed to later this year and *Pyronaut* was unable to perform its traditional display, as ambassador for M Shed and the working exhibits, at the 2023 Harbour Festival.

A big thank you is due to the Friends for helping us financially to add Bill Drewett to the team. His input in sharing the workload with the Operations Manager is invaluable. We have since secured the position externally for a further 3 years through the John Ellerman Foundation.

The Friends also helped to pay for the hull of *John King* to be surveyed and painted and work is progressing to make the above deck look smart for taking visitors on trips.

Thanks again for your continuing support.

**Chris Ecclestone**

Working Exhibits Manager

# **Friends of Bristol Museums, Galleries & Archives Committees**

2022-2023

## **Executive Committee**

### **Officers:**

Sue Thurlow – Chair  
Katherine Martin – Secretary  
Robert Walters – Treasurer  
Richard Avery – Membership Secretary

### **Elected Members:**

Mary Bailey  
Clive Burlton  
Gary Gostelow  
Susan Hibberd  
Carol Lear  
Toby Pinn

### **Co-opted:**

Sir Stephen Sparks

### **Bristol Museums, Galleries & Archives' Representatives:**

Ray Barnett – Head of Collections and Archives (to Dec 22)  
Beth Cutter/Caroline Booth Morris – Joint Development Manager  
(from Jan 23)  
Allie Dillon – City Archivist

## **Events Group**

Mary Bailey – Chair  
Richard Avery  
Catherine Dixon  
Gary Gostelow  
Carol Lear  
Carol Ouvry



**FRIENDS OF BRISTOL MUSEUMS, GALLERIES AND ARCHIVES**  
**ACCOUNTS FOR YEAR ENDED 30TH JUNE 2023**

<b>INCOMING RESOURCES</b>	<b>2023 £</b>	<b>2022 £</b>
Subscriptions	12,640	14,198
Donations and legacies	14,104	57,473
Gift Aid	2,801	3,079
Activities for generating funds	14,500	15,157
Winter lectures	106	271
Bank interest	3,559	1,616
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>47,710</b>	<b>91,793</b>
<b>ADMINISTRATION COSTS</b>		
Newsletter and AGM	5,760	3,402
Postage	3,003	3,479
Sundry Expenses	832	866
Bank charges	897	890
Website	164	135
<b>TOTAL ADMINISTRATION COSTS</b>	<b>10,654</b>	<b>8,771</b>
<b>NET INCOME</b>	<b>37,056</b>	<b>83,023</b>
<b>RESOURCES EXPENDED (see over for breakdown)</b>		
Grants to BMGA – from general funds	75,734	29,927
Grants to BMGA – from art funds	0	6,175
<b>TOTAL RESOURCES EXPENDED</b>	<b>75,734</b>	<b>36,102</b>
<b>NET INCREASE/(DECREASE) IN FUNDS</b>	<b>-38,678</b>	<b>46,919</b>
<b>FUNDS BROUGHT FORWARD</b>	<b>343,808</b>	<b>296,889</b>
<b>FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD</b>	<b>305,131</b>	<b>343,808</b>
<b>BALANCE SHEET AT 30 JUNE 2023</b>		
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
Cash and stamps in hand	3,210	2,612
Current account	16,383	29,891
Deposit account	43,841	94,038
Hampshire Trust deposit	56,196	55,579
Shawbrook Bank deposit	25,000	0
United Trust Bank	83,331	81,689
Cambridge and Counties Bank	80,000	80,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>307,961</b>	<b>343,808</b>
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		
Receipts in hand per future events and creditor	2,830	0
<b>ASSETS LESS LIABILITIES</b>	<b>305,131</b>	<b>343,808</b>
<b>FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD</b>	<b>305,131</b>	<b>343,808</b>

## **BREAKDOWN OF RESOURCES EXPENDED**

J B Pyne watercolour	6,750
Three video installations	4,246
Contribution to pair of Lund vases	15,500
Repairs to vessel <i>John King</i>	7,000
Contribution to salary of Working Exhibits deputy manager	22,456
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Amy Raphael's Japan purchases	4,963
Mary Carpenter photo album	1,596
Painting of Avon Gorge J S Harford	6,000
Digitising Chinese textiles	1,500
Winter lectures	1,313
Summer walks	100
	<hr/>
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## **INDEPENDENT EXAMINER'S REPORT TO THE TRUSTEES OF THE FRIENDS OF BRISTOL'S MUSEUMS, GALLERIES AND ARCHIVES**

I report on the accounts of the Trust for the year ended 30 June 2023 set out above.

### **Respective responsibilities of Trustees and Examiner**

As the charity's trustees you are responsible for the preparation of the accounts and you consider that the audit requirements of section 144(1) of the Charities Act 2011 (the Act) does not apply. It is my responsibility to state, on the basis of procedures specified in the general Directions given by the Charity Commissioners under section 130 of the Act, 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 Commissioners. An examination includes a review of 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 such matters. The procedures undertaken do not provide all the evidence that would be required in an audit and, consequently, I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts.

### **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 requirement to keep accounting records in accordance with section 130 of the Act and to prepare accounts which accord with the accounting records and comply with the accounting requirements of the Act have not been met.

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

Geoffrey Clements July 2023

**FRIENDS OF BRISTOL MUSEUMS, GALLERIES AND ARCHIVES**  
**ACCOUNTS FOR YEAR ENDED 30TH JUNE 2023**

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Geoffrey Clements July 2023