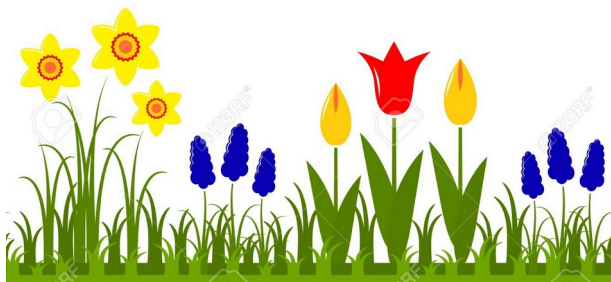


BLAKE NEWS

Winter 2019 &
Spring 2020



SPRING FAIR



In aid of Museum funds

The Museum

Blake Street Bridgwater

Saturday 21 March 2020

10.00am – 1.00 pm

**Home-made bread, cakes, jams,
marmalade & pickles
Nearly new & unwanted gifts**

Books

Tombola

Refreshments

& Museum Shop

Charity stalls

Bric à Brac

Free entry

**Please bring any items for
the Fair on a Monday or
Thursday beforehand**

Book Sales

The book sales held during the shut down have been highly successful and have raised, as we go to press, £340. It is anticipated that over the next few weeks leading up to the Spring Fair, that last years total will be exceeded.

Christmas Fair

The fair was also highly successful, raising over £714.87. Much work by many people, but well worth it.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Saturday 21 March 10.00am – 1.00 pm *Spring Fair*

Monday 23 March 10.30am – 12.00 noon *Custodians & Keyholders welcome and updates.*

Thursday 26 March 10.30am – 12.00 noon. *Usual coffee morning.*

Thurs 2nd April *is the museum deep clean in the morning if an hour or two can be spared.*

Tuesday 7 April. – 10.00 am *The Museum re-opens to the public.*

Town Mill by Stewart Richards

The main items for the ownership plan are:

1. The Possessory title claims for the South room and the bridge adjacent to the archaeology store have been completed successfully.
2. Transfer of the ownership of the stable area to the town council is delayed due to the transfer being a little more complex than first envisioned by the current owner.
3. The land registry title is now one for the museum and the mill instead of two separate titles.

A grant application has been submitted to the Architectural Heritage Fund for start of project funds of £15,000. The project start grant will be for feasibility studies, architects, structural survey, quantity surveyors and options assessment.

David Mears and I met with a representative of the Heritage Lottery fund and two issues were made very clear to us during that meeting to obtain funding.

1. That the restoration should be of use to the community and not just an extension to the museum. To that end it is felt that the following would need to be considered, lower floor would be turned into a large room that could be used for school visits, talks by the Friends and other groups and catering (e.g. Coffee Mornings). This would alleviate the need to dismantle exhibitions and use of the Blake Room. Provision of better kitchen facilities and Disabled Toilet Facilities. Also, it may be possible to include a disabled lift to the upper floors.

2. It will be necessary to demonstrate that the facility is wanted by the community and that visitor numbers are increased. An initial rough analysis from the visitor book shows that 40% of our visitors were from UK or abroad, 27% from Bridgwater & Somerset the remainder were could not be assigned. This demonstrates that we are going to have to work out how we can increase the numbers for local visitors to help with grant applications. Ideas will be gratefully received.

Work in progress during the shut down by Mike Searle

Nothing really huge to report on shutdown things. A few more items have been put out on display and some re-located. The Chubb display has been re-arranged and changed. Old photos of Bridgwater now added to the Gallery.

Colin Hall has been touching up the paintwork and repainted the toilet door.

The work on the stud partition to create a secure work room for Nick will begin shortly This will give some much needed wall space to display things on.



The blue tape shows how the partition will go

OBITUARY Paul Besley

Paul died on 1 February 2020, aged 86, after suffering severely from Parkinson's disease in his later years. He was trained in psychiatry and worked with people with learning difficulties. He was head of his department at Social Services in Taunton. He also helped start up the U3A in Bridgwater area. He was responsible for the planning and execution of the restored garden at the rear of the Museum when it was taken back from the District Council in 2009.

He was a benefactor to the Museum as well, having donated a number of artefacts. The two Lustre-ware dogs that grace the kitchen mantel-piece are his gift. He was a valued member of the team and will be fondly remembered by those who knew him.

Biographical information by courtesy of Alison Cook.



Paul, with Alison Cook behind him, planting new trees in the garden bed by the Durleigh Brook on 2009

THIS YEAR'S EXHIBITIONS

- April Bridgwater and Taunton College Students
Art Exhibition entitled 'Commuting'
- May Wembdon Rd Cemetary
Celebrating 10 years.
- June Sedgemoor Stitches
- July Douglas Allen photographs.
- August Possibly Sedgemoor Camera Club
- Sept Possibly the Bridgwater Baptist Art Group.

PROGRAMME OF TALKS 2020

- 10 March – Chris Sidaway, *The Glastonbury Pilgrims Way - A new Somerset Trail.*
- 14 April – Dave Bown, *The Bridgwater Railway*
- 12 May – Dr Miles Peterson, *New research and Conservation in Wembdon Road Cemetery.*
- 9 June – David Baker, *A Medieval History of Bridgwater*
- 14 July – Mary Winning, *The Blake Drama Group*
- 8 September – Chris Hocking, *Bridgwater Carnival*
- 13 October – AGM.
- 10 November – Brian Wright, *Humpty Dumpty sat on the wall! Nursery Rhymes, a hidden history.*
- Tues 10th December – No talk

NOTE

All talks will be held in the Blake Museum, starting at 7.30pm unless otherwise stated. Any variation to the programme will be announced on the News page of the Friends' web site, www.blakemuseumfriends.org.uk, and if possible will be published in the *Bridgwater Mercury*.

Please bring a small item to the talks for the Raffle

COFFEE MORNINGS IN AID OF FOBM FUNDS
LAST THURSDAY OF EVERY MONTH
10.30-12 NOON
Next one 26 March

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Websites:

Friends: www.blakemuseumfriends.org.uk
Museum: www.bridgwatermuseum.org.uk
Resources: www.bridgwatermuseum.info