

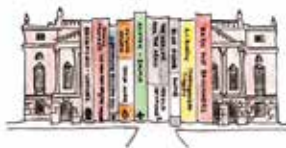
THE
HOLBURNE
MUSEUM
FRIENDS



Newsletter
SUMMER 2016

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Newsletter front cover: **In June this year we congratulate Sidney Blackmore, Chairman of the Holburne Friends from 1999-2013, on 40 years of book sales, in Bath and elsewhere, which have greatly contributed to supporting the Museum across the decades.**

Do come to browse (and buy!) the books on sale, plus many other exciting things to see and do at our special Celebration Day for the Holburne's '100 Years Here' on Sunday 26th June (see p.8).

Cover photograph © Jonathan Davis

Chairman's letter

Dear Friends

I was hoping to begin my letter with huzzahs and congratulations for all the new Friends who have been brought into the fold in the last few months, but it seems that our extra newsletter ploy last time has netted far fewer new Friends than expected, and I am shocked that our plea has not got a better response. For those of you who still have that extra copy, or who passed it on but did not adequately stress the urgency/importance/thrill of becoming a Friend, please do have another go. We set ourselves an acknowledgedly ambitious target of 2,016 Friends (currently circa 1400) and there's just less than a month at current subscription rates to get there. See the AGM Agenda included in the middle of the Newsletter, which gives the new rates we are suggesting.

The next big occasion for Friends to get together and support the Museum is over our celebratory weekend at the end of June. On Friday 24th we preview *Stubbs and the Wild*, hold our AGM, listen to the Holburne Ensemble (see p. 6), and then have a chance to wind down with a drink afterwards; those of you who have come in earlier years know you can be confident of a very good party. On Sunday 26th June Sidney Blackmore will be having a mega Book Bonanza, and we are hosting our own mini antiques



roadshow with four experts, and many other attractions, details on pages 6-9. Over the same few days we will run a silent auction, with some absolutely world-class prizes, supported by our Trustees, and I hope many of you will have a chance to bid. To manage all this we have already had a number of offers of help, but will need more, please.

Other events include garden visits (the first will have just taken place when you read this so you must check the website for reports), closer looks, or how about a chance of a visit to the Museum storeroom? Please do read the Newsletter carefully as it is always packed with info, and the website is now a valuable place to get last minute updates.

I look forward to seeing many of you soon, with many new Friends.

Antonia Johnson

Important Membership Matters

New Friends

Some of you have given us new Friends, by passing on your extra Newsletter and for that we are very grateful, and I confirm that your subscription will remain at its current rate for an additional year after the rate rise which may be introduced soon. The response was a little disappointing, but it is not too late – so please help us get to our target of 2,016 Friends by the end of the year.

New ways of doing things

1. Renewing Subscriptions:

We are to trial a new method of renewing subscriptions at the Museum, in order to simplify and speed up transactions at the Front Desk, whose volunteers are sometimes over-stretched. You will get a reminder and form and can deal with it as now, OR you can buy a renewal card/form with date-stamped membership card from the Museum's Front Desk, the Shop or the Desk on the 2nd floor, but you must fill in at least some of it (email address and/or telephone number) and hand it back to confirm your continuing membership. Email is by far the best way of contacting you and it is disheartening for us to send out messages to addresses which have changed without our knowledge. Please do NOT try to renew by telephone at the Museum, thank you.

Finally I would make yet another plea for you to renew your subscriptions when prompted as a lapse of two months or more may result in your details being removed from our database, in accordance with the Data Protection Act.

2. Donations:

Some of you have very kindly offered additional donations on top of your membership subscription. It has turned out that, because of the limitations of the Museum's ticket/database system, such donations paid by credit card or cash are not actually coming to the Friends but going straight to the Museum, and are consequently not shown as donations from Friends. Standing Orders or cheques (payable to the Friends of the Holburne Museum) are therefore the only means you can use to donate to the Friends so we would ask you to bear that in mind when you renew your subscriptions. Undine Concannon

In Memoriam

We record with sadness the passing of the following Holburne Friends:

David Bristow
 Mr. H.C. Castell-Bang
 Adam Crick
 Mrs. Christine Davis
 Dr. Earle
 Mr. E.D. Floyd
 Mrs. Joyce Halina
 Mrs. G. Kersley
 Ms. L Marshall
 Ron Millen
 Dr. P. Partner
 Mr. Pinkstone
 Commander Bob Reed (obituary on p.19)
 Mrs. P. Smith
 Michael Stokes
 Denis Wilson

Friends' Private View

Friends are invited to a Private View of the exhibition:

Stubbs and the Wild

Friday 24th June 2016, 4:30-6:00pm



George Stubbs (1724-1806)
A Lion seated on a Rock
1775, Enamel on ceramic
© The Schorr Collection



George Stubbs (1724-1806)
Marmaduke Tunstall's Mouse Lemur
1773, pencil on paper
© Trustees of the British Museum

AGM & Frank Brown evening with the Holburne Ensemble

Friday 24th June 2016, is a big day for the Friends: there is the Private View of *Stubbs and the Wild*, the AGM, the concert and a celebration party. Do join us for a great evening.

In the last Newsletter, I declared that, as well as the pleasure of hearing the Holburne Ensemble again, there would be much in the concert about the links and heated disagreements between the Linleys and the Sheridans, two of the leading artistic families in Bath. Yes, the Gainsborough, Linley, Sheridan connection will be there but my enthusiasm got the better of me! Instead, there will be songs by the Thomas Linleys, father and son, and pastoral love poetry written and passed secretly in the Sydney Gardens between Elizabeth (Eliza) Linley and Richard Sheridan before the scandal of their marriage in France broke in the Bath Chronicle. To add to the pastoral atmosphere, Nathaniel Mander has especially arranged the songs for voice, flute and fortepiano. This English interlude will be set between two works by Mozart played by our brilliant young musicians: a piano trio and Symphony no.40 arranged by Hummel for just such an intimate occasion as ours.

Tickets are £25 each, to include the party afterwards; please complete the form in the centre of this Newsletter. The AGM will be at **6:00pm**, the concert at **7:00pm** in the Brownsword Gallery.

Richard Frewer

The Programme:

W.A Mozart: Piano trio in Bb major K502

Linley/Sheridan songs and readings:

- Still The Lark Finds Repose
- Oh, Bid Your Faithful Ariel Fly
- When I Was A Dyer

W.A Mozart: Symphony no. 40 arranged by Hummel for piano, flute, violin and cello

Thomas Gainsborough (1727-1788) *Elizabeth and Mary Linley* c.1772, reworked 1785, Oil on canvas 199x153.5cm DPG320
By permission of the Trustees of Dulwich Picture Gallery, London



40th Year of Holburne Book Bonanzas!

Sunday 26th June 11:00am to 4:00pm

It is now 40 years since we first had our ('ground breaking'?) sale of books in the portico at the Holburne Museum. This book sale will be something special, with many other exciting events and stalls on the day; see page 8 for more details.

As ever, we'd be very grateful for offers of books for the sale. We will happily collect all books, whether

you have an entire library or just a few volumes to give - from paperbacks to learned tomes - on any subject.

Alternatively, donations of books will be gratefully received on the day.

Offers of books to Sidney Blackmore and David Wiltshire. Do contact us via telephone on 01985 213195, or email: sidney.blackmore@btinternet.com
Thank you.



Drawing by Sidney Blackmore

A day of celebrations: the Friends mark *100 Years Here*

Sunday 26th June 11:00 - 4:00

A chance for everyone to join the Holburne Friends as we celebrate *100 Years Here* - the Museum has been on its present site since 1916.

Along with Sidney Blackmore's Book Bonanza (see page 7), there will be lots of things to see and do. Please do get involved, and you can help the day go with a swing - by donating books, tombola prizes or hats, making cakes and biscuits, even help putting up the tents! Invite all your friends and family to join in - all offers of items or help will be very gratefully received... thank you! See contact details below.

Valuations 2-4pm: Ever been curious about what that old vase is worth? Four experts in pictures, silver, books and small general antiques will be on hand to help identify and value your possessions, for just £2 per item, £1 thereafter up to 5 items.

Hats, Bags and Beads: Donations of hats of all descriptions, **good quality** bags and beads (necklaces and bracelets only) are urgently needed. Please contact the Friends running the stall:



Nicky Hanscombe, tel: 01225 428496 or email her at: nickyhanscombe@yahoo.co.uk or Josie Angelo-Sparling, telephone: 01225 311830, thank you.

Tombola: an exciting variety of excellent prizes. Donations please - a super way to get rid of those unwanted gifts, or good quality and interesting items no longer needed. Please contact Olivia Eliot, telephone 01225 462156, or email olivia.eliot317@btinternet.com Please note that items can only be received from Wednesday 15th June.

A variety of stalls and sideshows

Teas, refreshments and ice-creams: please contact Henrietta Sherwin, email: movegreen@aol.com with offers of cakes etc or help with serving.

At 4:00pm on Sunday we announce the winning bidders of our **Silent Auction!**

A Silent Auction

Bidding at the Museum from the evening of **Friday 24th June**, and via text (phone number to be advised). Announcement of winning bids at **4pm on Sunday 26th June**

List of Lots

- * A Fortnum & Mason hamper
- * Lucknam Park: one mid-week night's stay in a suite, b&b
- * Dinner and tickets for two at Shakespeare's Globe, London
- * Half-case of Camel Valley 2008 award-winning sparkling wine
- * Spa/beauty session at Frontlinestyle Salon, Bath or Wells
- * Mozartfest: 2 tickets for the main 2016 concert
- * The King's Arms, Didmarton: bed and breakfast
- * Wardrobe make-over & advice from couturier, Simon Copeland (session either in London or Bath)
- * A pencil portrait of your pet
- * Delicious summer lunch for 4 or 6 in beautiful gardens nr. Wincanton with garden tour beforehand
- * Triple silkscreen print of the Holburne by local artist, Chris Vercoe
- * Exclusive tour of Buckingham Palace during the summer opening period accompanied by the Surveyor of The Queen's Pictures, Desmond Shawe-Taylor
- * Day's racing for 4 at Wincanton: premier enclosure, 2-course lunch, racecard – a convenient date to be agreed

Visit www.holburne.org/friends for more details on how to make bids for the Silent Auction.



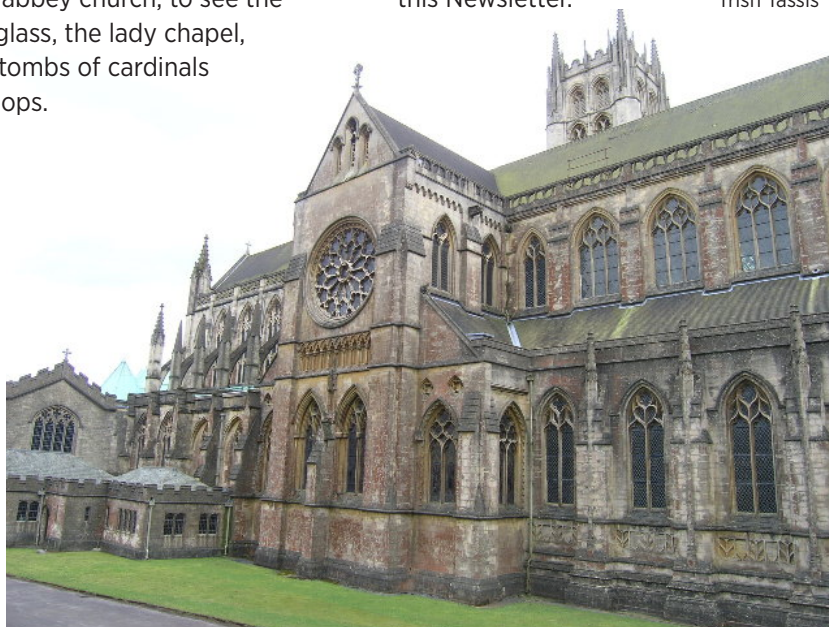
Downside Abbey visit

Tuesday 16th August 2016 2-4pm

The tower of Downside Abbey is a familiar landmark for many of us, standing on the skyline and visible for miles around - Pevsner describes the building as “the most splendid demonstration of the regeneration of Roman Catholicism in England”. Founded in 1814, one of England’s great neo-Gothic churches, it is the senior monastery of the English Benedictine Congregation, and is one of only four minor basilicas in England. Designated Grade I by English Heritage, the buildings and chapel were designed by Henry Goodridge, and the nave and the organ case by Giles Gilbert Scott. We now have the opportunity to visit the abbey church, to see the stained glass, the lady chapel, and the tombs of cardinals and bishops.

We shall also be able to visit the Library, where there will be an exhibition of some of the treasures of the collections, including the 11th century *Lambach Prophetorium*. The collections include manuscripts, maps and bound volumes, and the archive and library recently became available for research by the public. Its rare book collection is one of the finest in England.

The visit is on a “get yourself there” basis; Downside is at Stratton-on-the-Fosse, Radstock BA3 4RJ. Tickets cost £25, which includes light refreshments. Please complete and return the booking form in the centre of this Newsletter. Trish Tassis



Garden visit: Woolstone Mill House & The Old Rectory

Thursday 8th September 2016

Friends of The Holburne have been invited by top garden designer Justin Spink to a private tour of his own garden, Woolstone Mill House near Faringdon (see pictures below).

This romantic rambling garden set on chalk downland in the Vale of White Horse is not large, but is packed with surprises. There is topiary, a medlar orchard, a river with an island, large mixed perennial beds, a cutting and a kitchen garden, lots of old fashioned roses; even a thatched tree house.

Justin has kindly agreed to conduct the tour himself. We will be offered tea or coffee on arrival.

After visiting Woolstone, we'll lunch at The Star in Sparsholt before heading on to The Old Rectory at Farnborough. Voted by Country Life Magazine as 'Best Parsonage', the Rectory was once the home of Sir John Betjeman and his wife Penelope. The present owners have lived here since 1964. Their four acre garden consists of a series of immaculately tended rooms that

include both formal and informal areas. The herbaceous borders contain many interesting and rare plants.

Features include a woodland, a ha ha and a pool. The owners will be giving us a guided tour themselves and have kindly invited us to tea and biscuits afterwards. Just across the road from the Rectory is the church of All Saints and we hope to have time to make a quick visit to see the beautiful memorial window designed by John Piper, dedicated to his friend John Betjeman.

Tickets cost £45 each: this includes entrance to both gardens, coach travel, morning coffee at Woolstone Mill and afternoon tea at The Old Rectory. Lunch at The Star can be ordered and paid for separately through Minnie Tatham. Coach departs from the Holburne Museum 9.15am, returning at about 6.00pm. To enquire further or to reserve your place, please email minnietatham@hotmail.co.uk or complete and return the booking form in the centre of this Newsletter.



Walk and talk to the historic Cleveland Pools

Friday 16th September 2016 5-6:30pm

Sally Helvey, Cleveland Pools Trustee, will lead a small group of Friends on a circular walk to the Cleveland Pools which will start at the Holburne Museum.

Hidden away in Bathwick, on the banks of the River Avon, are the UK's only surviving Georgian open air swimming pools. Built in 1815 in a crescent shape, with cubicles for changing, they are an early example of a "Subscription Pool" – built with private money for public use. Once a welcome respite from the heat of the city in the summer, Cleveland Pools was a firm favourite with locals and visitors alike until it closed in 1984.

Once restored, Bath will be home to the world's first naturally treated, heated, outdoor swimming pool. The design team has completed its concept of what the Pools may look like when they are reopened. The final plans will be submitted for planning approval this summer. Cleveland Pools Trust urgently needs to raise £600,000 in matched funding this year, if they are to secure a Heritage Lottery Fund Stage 2 grant of £4.1m, which will fund the restoration.

Tickets are £10 each; please complete the form in the centre of this Newsletter, or email holburnefriends@gmail.com for more information. Kim De Morgan



Photograph © Beata Cosgrove

Garden visit: Farrs & Parnham House, Dorset

Thursday 22nd September 2016

Farrs: a house and garden tour

The furniture designer John Makepeace and his wife Jennie moved to Farrs (below left) in 2001 having spent twenty-four years at nearby Parnham House where John founded what became a world famous school for furniture designers and makers. Built in 1730, Farrs has proved an ideal setting for the Makepeaces to create an inspiring home, garden, design studio and gallery. John and Jennie have designed what is now a stunning curved garden, bounded by ten foot walls and truly towering yew hedges sculpted into an abstract outline. As luck would have it, the garden is at its best in September. After coffee on arrival, Jennie will conduct the garden tour and then John will show us around their home, talking about trees, timber and furniture design and showing us their collection of paintings, ceramics and silver.



We will all then lunch at the very popular Brassica restaurant in Beaminster.

Parnham House

After lunch a 5-minute coach trip will take us to Parnham House (below right), a beautiful Grade 1 Elizabethan manor house, where the owners have kindly given us permission for a private tour. A deer park, terraced formal gardens leading down through topiared yew to the lake, historic garden buildings, and a densely-planted walled garden are some of the treats ahead. The tour will be conducted by Simon Johnson, who designed the gardens for the present owners. The house is rarely opened to the public, but the owners have kindly offered us tea in the Great Hall after the tour.

Tickets are £45 each, including entrance to both Farrs and Parnham House, coach travel, morning coffee and afternoon tea. Lunch fixed price for two courses £16.50 to be purchased separately through Minnie Tatham. Coach departs the Holburne Museum 9.00am, returning at about 7.00pm. To reserve, please email minnietatham@hotmail.co.uk or complete and return the booking form in the centre of this Newsletter.



The Robertson Lecture 2016 - Vanessa Brett: Silver

**Friday 21st October 2016
at 7:30pm**

Vanessa Brett is co-curating the Holburne's forthcoming exhibition *Silver: Light and Shade* with Catrin Jones, Curator of Decorative Arts.

In this year's Robertson lecture Vanessa will discuss the central role of silver in society and the challenges that face contemporary silversmiths.



Vanessa lives near Bath with her husband William Parker. Her most recent book, *Bertrand's Toyshop in Bath: Luxury Retailing 1685-1765*, published in 2014, was described by reviewers as 'delightful and idiosyncratic'; 'a genuinely fresh and original contribution to social history'.

Two-handled cup and cover.
Charles Frederick Kandler (died 1778)
1736/37, silver.
Museum number
S64A-B

Tickets for the lecture are £10.00 each. The lecture will follow the Friends' Private View of the *Silver* exhibition; please complete the booking form in the centre of this Newsletter.

Overseas visit: A taste of Portugal

Wednesday 7th - Tuesday 13th June 2017

This trip, focusing on Portugal's two most important cities, will give a fascinating insight into the history and culture of this once powerful seafaring country.

We fly from Bristol to Lisbon, staying for 3 nights at the 4* Hotel Avenida Palace. Lisbon is one of the oldest cities in Western Europe, predating London and Paris by centuries and considered one of the world's most attractive maritime capitals.

We will explore Lisbon both on foot and by coach, including visits to the Museum of Ancient Art, which houses the largest collection of paintings in Portugal, and the historic Belem district. Friday will be a full day's tour to the stunning summer residence of the Moorish kings of Portugal at Sintra and to Cape Roca, the most westerly tip of Europe. Saturday will begin at the outstanding Gulbenkian Museum before travelling north to Oporto where we will check in to the 4* Hotel NH Collection Porto Batalha. Oporto is built along the hillsides overlooking the mouth of the River Douro and boasts

spectacular views and a long history. Sunday will be spent visiting many of the beautiful sites in the city as well as a port wine lodge and on Monday we travel to the cathedral city of Braga and then to Guimaraes, known as the 'Cradle of Portugal' where the first rulers founded their capital. On Tuesday there will be free time to explore Oporto before the late afternoon flight to Bristol.

The cost is £1295 per person sharing a double or twin room (single supplement: £370) which includes 6 nights bed and breakfast, dinner on three evenings and lunch on four days. ***Easyjet flight times and prices are yet to be confirmed which is why airfares are not included.*** Flights will be booked on your behalf when 2017 schedules become available. For all further information and details please contact Heritage Group Travel on **01225 466620** or email **heritage@grouptravel.co.uk** quoting the Friends of the Holburne Museum/ Portugal. After Heritage has sent you a booking form, places are reserved on receipt of the completed form and deposit.



Lisbon, view across the Old Town

Walcot Street tour

Bath's Walcot Street has a long history of small, specialist independent businesses and we were very grateful to Trish Tassis for arranging visits to a splendidly varied selection.

First was the shop and workshop of weaver Katherine Fraser. There, we were met by Charlotte who explained the weaving process: a traditional craft now with some help from a computer. The weavers work both in merino wool and in silk; one small item may take four hours to create and many examples were displayed for sale.

Next was The Framing Workshop of Martin Tracey (shown below, in red shirt), currently Chairman of the Walcot Traders' Association. He showed us intriguing old photographs of Walcot Street and gave us an insider's view of its recent history and the efforts to

keep and develop it as an area of small independent businesses and "destination" shops providing craft skills and services.

Then to the workshop (pictured below) of Bronwyn Williams-Ellis who creates hand-made tiles and ceramic sculptures. She showed us original design work, work in progress and finished pieces and told us something of the area's history as an industrial and craft site since Roman times.



Finally, to Meticulous Ink where co-founder Athena Cauley-Yu introduced us to her Heidelberg printing machines and we were shown some of the work involved in the design and production of very high quality bespoke stationery. No wonder the business is called Meticulous...

The Walcot Street tour proved so popular that Trish arranged a second visit.

Clive Toomer

Plant Sale report



Sunday 8th May saw brilliant sunshine grace our 2016 Plant Sale; the front of the Museum looked fabulous with generous and colourful stalls set up by all our invited nurseries, and an overflowing Friends' stall. Many thanks to all of you who contributed plants or eatables. Sidney Blackmore again filled the portico with wonderful secondhand gardening and cookery books for sale. We made upwards of £1000, and introduced lots of people to the idea of the Friends of the Museum.

Photograph © Jonathan Davis

Tree Walk report (and a pair of Holburne trees for sale)



Photograph © Jonathan Davis

bloom on the bare branches and the magnificent Tulip tree with its distinctive dome shape.

The strangest tree was a Western Red Cedar tree in the Dell, just to the north of the Botanical Gardens. It had 17 trunks; the centre was the 'Grandmother', she was surrounded by her daughters who in turn were surrounded by the grand-daughters. The most beautiful tree of all was a rare Fern Leaf Beech, a perfect place for children to hide with its large leaves and long branches which sweep down to the grass. Our thanks go to Antonia for sharing her passion for trees. Brenda Beeton

We assembled in Victoria Park on an overcast and drizzly afternoon in May to gaze at a very beautiful and comprehensive collection of trees. Antonia, our dendrologist tour leader and Chairman of the Holburne Friends seemed to have an inexhaustible knowledge of them.

We learned about 'Champion trees' and 'Veteran trees' and saw a good selection of each. We were told that the alder tree produces the hottest charcoal which was used in gun powder production. We marvelled at the *Ginkgo biloba* tree, a fossil species which has survived for over 200 million years and saw a Glastonbury Thorn tree, the subject of the famous legend, a Judas tree where the purple flowers

A pair of Holburne trees for sale

The two standard photinia trees in the large pots outside the Holburne need a new home. Robin Montgomery, the Museum's gardener, will happily deliver the trees within Bath and environs, when the trees are replaced soon. £80 for the pair is a reasonable price as a single tree can easily cost over £45.

If you are interested in buying the trees, please email holburnefriends@gmail.com



Commander Bob Reed 1932-2015

Bob Reed was Head Attendant at the Holburne Museum during the 1990's. The Attendants were indispensable, and nobody more so than Commander Reed, particularly when it came to mounting exhibitions as he was the person most trusted to be in charge of taking down and hanging valuable paintings. During the brief winter closure Bob would don his overalls and set to work redecorating, repairing and cleaning. He and his team were at hand to carry out the heavy duties, climbing up ladders, moving items of furniture and dealing with roof and basement leaks, as well as the many other occupational hazards which occurred on a regular basis during those difficult years before the Museum was renovated.

Besides manning the main desk and taking care of Museum security, Bob was in charge of all things technical, electronic and mechanical. He was our handyman par excellence: reliable, full of initiative, calm under pressure, and a shoulder to lean on in adversity. His sense of humour never failed to see us through many a trying day. This tall and handsome naval officer took charge quietly and efficiently, and continued to do so in his capacity as Vice Chairman of the Friends' Committee when he was their right-hand man at annual fund-raising events, such as the Summer Fair and Plant Sale. He would set up the stalls with trestle tables and awnings, and create new signage and notice

boards at the drop of a hat. He was responsible for the lighting and audio-visual systems at all the Holburne and Friends' lectures, and later, when he and Joan joined the Committee of the Mendip NADFAS, he continued in that role. However menial the task, Bob would deal with it, and never complain. Bob (to quote his son Ben) "was a lad from Tredegar, a heartland of the Labour movement, who voted Tory and was never someone who just toed the line. He was tenacious in pursuit of a principle he knew to be right."

He was an extremely talented artist in both sketching and painting. He loved steam trains particularly, but most engines, be they in cars or motor bikes. Bob died unexpectedly on 20th December 2015, aged 83. He is fondly and sadly missed by all his friends and remembered with equal affection by both the Friends of the Holburne and former Museum colleagues, together with his Mendip NADFAS associates.

Julia Naismith



Storeroom visit: Imogen Smith

As a student of History, Heritage and Archaeology at Plymouth University, news of the opportunity for this visit came with great excitement. Furthermore, as a life-long visitor and former volunteer at the Museum and as a student with hopes of a career in archaeology, to view some of the artefacts in the Holburne's collection was a very great honour. Although only around 4,000 of 10,000 objects originate from Sir William Holburne's personal collection, there are certainly treasures to be found in the vaults,

whatever their origin or route to the museum. Of particular interest to me were some of the more ancient artefacts such as axe heads, possibly dating to the early Bronze age; masonry thought to have been rescued from a demolished church; and a Roman burial urn, often referred to as a 'Cinerarium'. Despite most being in rather wonderful condition, many of these items have yet to be deeply researched and their origins remain mysterious.

Unfortunately, many collections assembled in the early days of archaeology and museology from expeditions to distant lands were never properly documented so that the provenance of artefacts is now questioned and doubted. For example, the origins of the Roman urn - shown in the photograph with the Curator of Decorative Arts, Catrin Jones and myself - are barely understood. The collections in the Holburne's storeroom reminded me very much of the Pitt-Rivers Museum in Oxford (assuredly a great compliment!); a treasure trove of bits and pieces someone once thought beautiful enough to pick up and bring home. However, parts of both collections will always have that unhappy state of an untraceable history, though their mysteries will always come as a welcome challenge to any archaeologist!



Catrin Jones, Curator of Decorative Arts (right) and Imogen Smith (left) with the marble sarcophagus, 2-3rd century, Museum number C917.1

Storeroom visit: Imogen Smith continued

Next I was shown some of the more enigmatic pieces in the stored collection; Catrin led us to see the donations from a collector and adventurer of the late 19th century, Miss Tanner. Her travels took her to Persia and Baghdad among other places and, rather more helpfully than other collectors, she labelled a lot of her souvenirs with her name and the date and location of her purchase of the piece (see example on right). I was shown some of Catrin's favourite ceramic artefacts, on many of which one can observe a nod to ancient Greek and Roman decorative designs. This observation can provide a useful overview on the evolution of art, design and society over the centuries, much like the artist and creator, then Miss Tanner. Catrin and I saw the beauty in those Persian and Indian pieces, Wedgwood saw the same beauty in silhouetted human figures as potters and painters did in Greece 2-3,000 years ago. Soon some artefacts will be given yet more new incarnations by artist Linda Brothwell in her work for the Museum's exciting upcoming exhibition *On the Table, Linda Brothwell: The Missing* (6 August 2016 – 2 January 2017).

To conclude, I would like to thank Catrin Jones for this enlightening experience. Furthermore, I must commend all those working and volunteering to keep the Holburne Museum open as place of education and heritage conservation,

thank you for being the life-blood of English history and heritage! I left the museum's store feeling only deeper in contact with Bath as the town of my birth and more in love with archaeology as an educating force. Imogen Smith



Detail of one of Miss Tanner's handwritten labels on a pearwood box, Museum number F72

An opportunity for you:

If you would like to have a look in the Museum's storerooms then please buy a ticket for the draw - we sell just a few, at £5 each, so your chances of winning are high - please complete the form in the centre of the Newsletter.

It will be your choice whether you have a chance to see decorative art with Catrin Jones, Curator of Decorative Arts, or pictures with Amina Wright, Senior Curator.

Our only request is that you report back (no need for a long essay) to the Newsletter Editor so other Friends can share your discoveries.

Thank you and good luck in the draw!

Holburne Insights: Miss Tanner's gift to the Holburne

In the late 1920s, a most unusual gift was given to the Holburne Museum by an extraordinary woman. Miss Ellen Georgiana Tanner donated around 60 items including textiles, metalwork, woodwork and lacquer that she had gathered on her extensive travels in Baghdad and Persia. Born in Frenchay in 1847, Miss Tanner received an inheritance of £18,000 from her father, a wealthy landowner and attorney-at-law, on his death in 1887. This enabled Miss Tanner to travel, first in Europe and then further afield. In 1894 she journeyed to Baghdad, where she stayed with friends at the British Residency. She then proceeded to Persia, travelling overland with local servants for the next year where she continued to buy extensively at the bazaars of Shiraz, Teheran and Isfahan. She gave important gifts of Persian textiles and other items to the newly founded Bristol Art Gallery when it opened in 1906, and also gave a collection of 'Persian curios' to the Bath Royal Literary & Scientific Institution, including a pair of dolls in traditional dress.

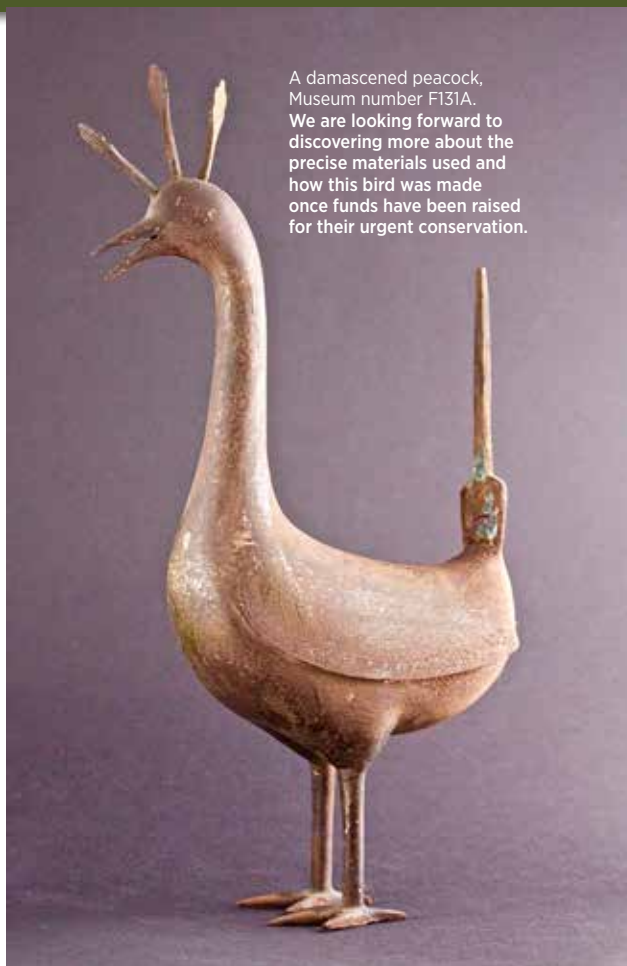
In the Holburne's collection, the range of objects is quite striking: several pieces of chased silver, Persian shellac mirrors and pen cases, an incised brass hookah, a pair of elaborately carved pearwood sherbet ladles, embroidered and woven textiles including a large

quilt, textile and carved wood boxes, large incised brass vases and a beautiful damascened peacock and hawk. Handwritten notes describing the objects and where she bought them survive for a number of objects (see image on page 21). Currently, only one of the items given by Miss Tanner to the Holburne is on display: the eagle eyed amongst you will have noticed the tile panel with a carved wooden frame in the Garden Café.

However, some of the wonderful objects given by Miss Tanner require some major conservation work before they could be put on display: years of being kept at the back of our damp basement (thankfully the conditions down there today are a great deal better!) have taken their toll on the metalwork in particular. We hope to launch a fundraising appeal so that our beautiful Persian damascened birds and vases can be returned to their former glory (see image on right hand page). This painstaking work will involve stabilising the rusted areas and carefully cleaning the surfaces without removing the gold decoration. Each of these metalwork objects will cost £1000 to conserve, and we hope they will be displayed as part of a wider research project, and possible exhibition, working with other museums in the area.

Holburne Insights: continued

Miss Tanner eventually settled in Bath, where she died in 1937. She is buried at Lansdown Cemetery. Her fascinating legacies to the museums of Bristol and Bath tell a compelling story about her life, however she also chronicled the journey in *By Road and River: Journal of Journeys in Persia and Mesopotamia*. Miss Tanner's wry tone and interesting observations make this a rather entertaining read: in Shiraz, "for hours I sat on the floor with my hostess, who found me an unfailing topic of conversation for her visitors... Why had I come? Why was I not married?" Other sections include descriptions of how to play the local card game, As-Nas (a set of lacquered As-Nas cards were part of the Holburne bequest), and accounts of her journeys and stays in caravanserai and telegraph houses. She sometimes wore Persian dress: "Being veiled duly, and bundled up in the chador, and full baggy trousers all Persian women wear, I presented nothing to shock or astonish their eyes, and passed unimpeded on my way", although she was still recognisable as a foreigner as, "I cannot attain to the Persian shuffle."



A damascened peacock, Museum number F131A. We are looking forward to discovering more about the precise materials used and how this bird was made once funds have been raised for their urgent conservation.

We are just starting to scratch the surface of this extraordinary woman and the collection she amassed, and hope that in time, we will be able to tell the whole story of the wonderful things she gave to the Holburne.

Catrin Jones

THE
HOLBURNE
MUSEUM
FRIENDS

Committee

Antonia Johnson,
Chairman

Sidney Morton,
Honorary Treasurer

Undine Concannon,
Honorary Membership Secretary

Mary Jane Wilkinson,
Honorary Secretary

Committee Members

Jennifer Bereska

Jonathan Davis,
Newsletter Designer and Editor

Olivia Eliot, Foreign Tours

Richard Frewer

Kim De Morgan

Trish Tassis, "A Closer Look" -
Short Trips and Studio Visits

Minnie Tatham, Garden Tours

Tim Locke, Friends Web Pages

Do check Tim Locke's refreshed pages
on the Holburne website for updates
and news of events and visits etc:
[http://www.holburne.org/support-us/
friends-of-the-holburne-museum/](http://www.holburne.org/support-us/friends-of-the-holburne-museum/)

The Holburne Museum

Great Pulteney Street
Bath BA2 4DB

The Museum is open daily

10am to 5pm
(Sunday and Bank Holidays
11am to 5pm)

Closed 24th to 26th December
and 1st January

www.holburne.org/friends

Contact us at:
holburnefriends@gmail.com
or for tours:
holburnefriendstours@gmail.com

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Friends of the Holburne Museum

Minutes of the 63rd Annual
General Meeting,
held on Friday 26th June 2015
at 6pm in the Museum's
Picture Gallery

1. Apologies for Absence

were received from Jennifer Bereska, Kim De Morgan, Olivia Eliot, Andrew Fletcher, Carolyn Frewer, Peter and Shelagh Garner, Margaret Holden, Michael and Mornie Jones, David Millard, Christopher Overton, Anne Pearson, Leonard Piercy, Roger Smith, Valerie Smith, Minnie Tatham

2. Minutes of the 62nd Annual

General Meeting have been circulated and there were no matters arising. The adoption of the Minutes was proposed by Richard Frewer and seconded by Mary Jane Wilkinson.

3. Chairman's Report

We would like to thank those Committee members and Friends who have organised so many enjoyable and successful trips and events during the past year: Simon and Olivia Eliot for St Petersburg; Trish Tassis for her series of Closer Looks; Richard Frewer for introducing the Holburne Ensemble and the splendid party afterwards; Simon Johnson for the Quiz Evening which also turned into an

extremely good party; Sidney Blackmore for his 39th year of successful book sales.

Exciting plans for the forthcoming season include a visit to Iford Manor, organised by Undine Concannon, which is already fully subscribed. A second trip can be arranged by popular request. Another series of Closer Looks and garden visits are being set up, as well as a Christmas wreath-making workshop.

The Friends' website pages are currently in need of attention and we are actively seeking a media-savvy volunteer to take on this task.

The Newsletter has recently been taken on by Jonathan Davis and we congratulate him on the first issue under his editorship.

Jennifer Scott will shortly give us a preview of plans at the Museum, but first I must say how much we have enjoyed her first five months as Director, and appreciate her wonderful enthusiasm and drive in the role.

4. Director's Report

Next year we will celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the Museum's opening, which is an opportunity to look both forwards and backwards, placing the Museum in its context as a link between the City of Bath and Sydney Gardens. One aspect we are particularly proud of is how much of the collection is currently accessible, with less than one third of our works in store, probably the smallest proportion compared to any other museum.

We have three major forthcoming exhibitions in 2016: *Impressionism: Capturing Life* featuring observations of humanity in masterpieces by the Impressionists; *Stubbs and the Wild* – realistic animal studies and sublime fantasies from the artist who believed nature to be superior to art, including a rare painting on enamel; *Silver: Light and Shade* features distinctive works from the 14th century to the present day.

I do hope that the Committee and Friends will support and help to publicise all these exciting events.

5. Report from the Hon Treasurer

Copies of the Report of the Trustees and Unaudited Financial Statements for the Year Ended 31 March 2015 were distributed to the Attendees.

Sidney Morton thanked Jennifer Bereska for her excellent organisation of the account which ensured an easy handover. Net income including subscriptions was down by £4,000. This deficit was mainly due to the increased income generated by the success of the Rembrandt exhibition the previous year and it is hoped that Canaletto will have the same boosting effect in the next set of accounts. The bank account for the Development Fund Appeal was closed during the year and the balance of £1618 paid to the Museum. There had been a drop in donations, and while governance costs remained the same, there had been an increase in expenditure of 2%. However, the current bank balance was satisfactory and with the Committee's good ideas for forthcoming events, a good year ahead could be anticipated.

A motion to approve the accounts was proposed by Judy Marris and seconded by Sidney Blackmore.

6. A motion to reappoint

Moore Stephens as examiners for 2015 was proposed by Josie Angelo-Sparling and seconded by Undine Concannon.

7. Resignation of Committee Members

There were no resignations from the Committee. We welcome three new members: Jonathan Davis, who is already working as Editor of the Newsletter, was proposed by Mary Jane Wilkinson and seconded by Simon Eliot. Minnie Tatham was proposed by Sidney Morton and seconded by Richard Frewer. Kim De Morgan was proposed by Undine Concannon and seconded by Trish Tassis.

8. Any Other Business

The trip to York takes place from 4-7 October and will include opportunities to visit things one cannot normally see. There are still some places left, and Simon Eliot explained that as the hotel

is close to the railway station it would make sense to go by train.

Jennifer Scott said that it is intended to use the Wirth Gallery to reinstate things from the collection that were too fragile and to reunite items that have been separated.

Antonia Johnson reminded Friends of the chance to take part in the raffle to visit the storeroom and see objects not at present on display.

**The 64th Annual General Meeting
of the Friends of the Holburne
Museum will be held at the
Museum at 6:00 pm on Friday
24th June 2016**

AGENDA

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Minutes of the 63rd Annual General Meeting and Matters Arising
3. Chairman's Report
4. Report of the Hon Treasurer and Presentation of Annual Accounts
5. Appointment of Auditors for 2016 -2017
6. Resignation and Election of Committee Members

7. Vote: subscription rates to be increased - £35.00pa for single membership, £50.00pa for joint, £500 for single life membership, £750 for joint life.

8. Any Other Business

Nominations for the Committee, proposed and seconded, with the consent of the nominee, to be sent to the Hon General Secretary of the Friends (Mary Jane Wilkinson) c/o the Holburne Museum.

Please bring your current Membership Card, to be shown at the door, as only Friends can be admitted.

www.holburne.org/friends
holburnefriends@gmail.com
Registered Charity Number 1042603

Visit to the Museum storerooms

date at your discretion

I/we should like tickets at £5 each to enter the prize draw

Name (s)

Address

..... Telephone

Email (or send stamped self-addressed envelope).....

Please send cheque, payable to the 'Friends of the Holburne Museum' to:
ANTONIA JOHNSON, c/o THE HOLBURNE MUSEUM, GREAT PULTENEY STREET, BATH, BA2 4DB

Frank Brown evening with the Holburne Ensemble

7:00pm Friday 24th June 2016

I/we should like tickets at £25 each to include the concert and party afterwards

Name (s)

Address

..... Telephone

Email (or send stamped self-addressed envelope).....

Please send cheque, payable to the 'Friends of the Holburne Museum' to:
ANTONIA JOHNSON, c/o THE HOLBURNE MUSEUM, GREAT PULTENEY STREET, BATH, BA2 4DB

Downside Abbey visit

2:00-4:00pm Tuesday 16th August 2016

I/we should like tickets at £25 each

Name (s)

Address

..... Telephone

Email (or send stamped self-addressed envelope).....

Please send cheque payable to the 'Friends of the Holburne Museum' to: TRISH TASSIS, 9 ST MARY'S CLOSE, BATH, BA2 6BR

Garden visit to Woolstone Mill House, and the Old Rectory, Farnborough Thursday 8th September 2016

I/we should like tickets at £45 each

Name (s)

Address

..... Telephone

Email (or send stamped self-addressed envelope).....

For a quick response, in the first instance, please contact Minnie Tatham by email directly: minnietatham@hotmail.co.uk
or return this form to: MINNIE TATHAM, c/o THE HOLBURNE MUSEUM, GREAT PULTENEY STREET, BATH, BA2 4DB

If you do not have an email address, please include a **stamped self-addressed envelope** so that your receipt and booking can be acknowledged. Please write a separate cheque for each event, made payable to the 'Friends of the Holburne Museum' All enquiries to holburnefriends@gmail.com

Walk and talk to the historic Cleveland Pools

5-6:30pm Friday 16th September 2016

I/we should like tickets at £10 each

Name (s)

Address

.....Telephone

Email (or send stamped self-addressed envelope).....

For a quick response, in the first instance, please contact Kim De Morgan by email directly: **holburnefriends@gmail.com**
or return this form to: KIM DE MORGAN, c/o THE HOLBURNE MUSEUM, GREAT PULTENEY STREET, BATH, BA2 4DB

Garden visit to Farrs and Parnham House, Beaminster, Dorset

Thursday 22nd September 2016

I/we should like tickets at £45 each

Name (s)

Address

.....Telephone

Email (or send stamped self-addressed envelope).....

For a quick response, in the first instance, please contact Minnie Tatham by email directly: **minnietatham@hotmail.co.uk**
or return this form to: MINNIE TATHAM, c/o THE HOLBURNE MUSEUM, GREAT PULTENEY STREET, BATH, BA2 4DB

The Robertson Lecture 2016 - Vanessa Brett: Silver

7:00pm Friday 21st October 2016

I/we should like tickets at £10 each

Name (s)

Address

..... Telephone

Email (or send stamped self-addressed envelope).....

Please send cheque, payable to the 'Friends of the Holburne Museum' to:
ANTONIA JOHNSON, c/o THE HOLBURNE MUSEUM, GREAT PULTENEY STREET, BATH, BA2 4DB

Bookings for the Portugal trip (7th-13th June **2017**) can **ONLY** be made direct via
Heritage Group Travel, on **01225 466620** or **heritage@grouptourtravel.co.uk**

If you do not have an email address, please include a **stamped self-addressed envelope** so that your receipt and booking can be acknowledged. Please write a separate cheque for each event, made payable to the 'Friends of the Holburne Museum' All enquiries to **holburnefriends@gmail.com**