

**Welcome** to Wells & Mendip Museum's newsletter with information about exhibitions, talks, events and developments at the Museum. If you would like to receive a copy by e-mail please contact [admin@wellsmuseum.org.uk](mailto:admin@wellsmuseum.org.uk)

**Opening hours:** Monday – Saturday 10am – 5pm. Closed Sundays.  
From Monday 29 October Monday – Saturday 10am – 4pm. Closed Sundays.

### **SMALL ART EXHIBITIONS IN MEETING ROOM**

#### **8 October – 12 November an Art Exhibition by Anna Dmochowski**

Anna lives in Wells. She uses watercolours and oils to paint local landscapes and views of the City. She is also fascinated by animals, especially horses.

Recently she has used watercolours almost exclusively as she loves the fluency and spontaneity of this medium. **Museum Entry fees apply**



#### **12 November – 21 January 2019 an Art Exhibition by Derek Smart**



Derek's introduction to the world of art was at the age of 8 years old, sitting in the school classroom applying watercolours to paper. At the age of 12 he was then introduced to technical drawing and his love of sketching grew, and he was often to be found with a notebook and pencil in his hand – but never a paintbrush.

At the age of 64, his wife, Linda, put a paint brush in his hand for the first time with the words "Trust" and "Believe" and presented him with a set of watercolour paints. A whole new world of colour opened before him and art became his passion. Drawn to nature and his love of animals, but best of all his won imagination, brought about a desire to capture the essence of the living world. **Museum entry fees apply**

Proceeds from the sale of his work will be donated to The Children's Hospice South West.

There will also be a special preview event on Friday 26 October – details of this event can be found under "Exhibition Room"

### **1<sup>ST</sup> FLOOR EXHIBITION ROOM**

#### **16 – 20 October "A Book is a Dream you Hold in your Hand"**

An exhibition by ABCD (handmade artists' books) and John Rowlands-Pritchard (painted inscriptions). ABCD is a group of book-artists who meet monthly at Dove Studios in Butleigh. The group includes creative writers and visual artists, and some who are both.

Their new work for this exhibition includes one-off books and small editions, and ranges from traditional forms of binding to inventive



and sculptural pieces that challenge preconceptions about what may be described as "a book". The content is just as important as the cover.

Individual members have work collections as diverse as The Library of Alexandria and The Queen's Collection. John Rowlands-Pritchard is well-known both as a singer and for his lettering on paper, canvas, glass and stone. **Free Entry to exhibition only**

### **Friday 26 October 6pm – 10pm - A Special Preview Evening of Art by Derek Smart in aid of the Children's Hospice South West**

Preceding Derek's art exhibition in the Meeting Room in November, there will be a special preview evening of his work to raise money for the Children's Hospice South West, a wonderful charity that cares for, and provides respite for over 500 families across the South West who have children with life limiting conditions.



A representative from the charity will give a short talk and answer any questions you may have regarding the charity and the work they do.

All money raised during the evening will be donated to this worthwhile charity, and your support would be much appreciated. **Entry fee £5 to include refreshments.** AS THEIR SLOGAN SAYS – "LET'S BRING A SMILE"



### **MUSEUM EVENTS**

#### **Saturday 13 October 10am – 4pm - Wells Museum and Wells Art Contemporary**



During the Wells Art Contemporary exhibition at the Bishop's Palace, (8-22 October), the museum is going to have an exciting and innovative display of contemporary art by the Somerset Guild of Craftsmen. The 10 pieces, known as "Interventions" will all be inspired by the museum's collection: with fabrics, glass, ceramic, mosaic and stone, the craftsmen and women are producing work that will help us look at everything with new eyes.

People are being invited to get involved in this creative process, and we will be holding a free workshop, open to both children and adults, which will also use the museum's exhibits as inspiration. Led by local artist Philippa Threlfall and local historian Clare Blackmore – both Trustees of the museum, there will be an opportunity to make original pieces in clay, paint, pen, pencil and collage.

There are lots of things in the museum to use as a basis for an original work of art: the original swan who was taught to ring the moat bell, the finds from Wookey Hole Caves, fossils, skeletons, glass and ceramics, embroidered samplers and of course items from the First World War display.



Working alongside Philippa and Clare, it is hoped that people will enjoy this free opportunity to be creative. There is also going to be an opportunity to help make a mosaic using antique shards from the museum's collection, which it is hoped will go on permanent display in the museum garden. **Free entry to workshop**

## Saturday 27 October 10am – 4pm – “Portraits of the People of Wells”

Wells and Mendip museum is the custodian of the Philipps Portrait collection, which is an unique and fascinating archive of the faces of the ordinary Wells residents around the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, and a selection of these stunning photographs will be on display in our Lecture Hall. Some of the sitters in the portraits have been researched and some fascinating stories are beginning to emerge about their lives – some happy, some sad and some tragic. It is hoped that by putting on this display, more stories will begin to unfold and the social history of Wells enriched by their telling.



Box 25-313 Miss Francis. Swan Hotel

### Miss Isamilia Kate Francis who was a chambermaid at the Swan Hotel

Isamilia Kate went on to marry a slaughterman, Thomas Bennett and they had four children. Thomas died young, at 32, and he and Isamilia were buried in Easton Church. With the help of the church warden, Clare Blackmore, a museum Trustee and local historian, found a little stone cross under a tree in the churchyard overgrown and covered with ivy. The stone has now been uncovered, and flowers have been placed there, so she is once again remembered. **Free entry to display**

## NEWS FROM WELLS CITY ARCHIVES

**Archives Catalogue** – The main focus of work continues to be the Archives Catalogue, which will be released online once it's complete. Only about half of the collection was catalogued when Julia (the Archivist) took over, so it's a mammoth piece of work!

**The National Archives'** Engagement Officer for the West visited the City Archives in August and was very encouraging about all that we're doing.

**Heritage Open Day** – On 8<sup>th</sup> September, the Town Hall opened its doors for Heritage Open Day. Julia had organized displays of local interest there, and collaborated with the **Wells Mills Interest Group** to produce the wonderful exhibition they had researched and written. It and the rest of the displays received an incredible 821 visitors in the space of six hours. If you missed the Mills exhibition, do not fear - you'll be able to see it at the Museum next February!

## OTHER EVENTS IN THE MUSEUM

**Friday 5<sup>th</sup> October at 7.30pm – “Downtown Wells”** – a talk by Sarah Villers  
**Wells Natural History & Archaeological Society**

**Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> October 9.30am – 4pm “Geo Resources in our Lives”** A day of talks and lunch, celebrating the finale of **Mendip Rocks! 2018**. Speakers include: Prof Chris King “Mining for Diamonds” Doug Robinson (Bristol University) – “Wells City Building Heritage – a 350 million year old story” Other speakers tbc Also: Local fossil collections on display and view the “Mendip Rocks! Box”. **£15 to include ploughman's lunch, tea and cake. To Book tickets, please visit - [www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/mendip-rocks-festival-finale-at-wells-museum-geo-resources-in-our-lives-tickets-46939887467](http://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/mendip-rocks-festival-finale-at-wells-museum-geo-resources-in-our-lives-tickets-46939887467)**

**Tuesday 30<sup>th</sup> October at 7.30pm – “Somerset's Wonderful Wildlife”** – Our own “National Treasure” and well-known local naturalist, Les Cloutman, will be looking at Somerset's wildlife and flowers through the seasons, from your own back gardens to the wild places. From hills to levels, lakes, rivers and coast, and why our county is so very special.  
**Somerset Wildlife Trust**

**Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> November at 7.30pm – “When and Why was the River Brue Diverted?”** – a talk by Bruce Garrard. **Wells Natural History & Archaeological Society**

**Friday 9<sup>th</sup> November at 7pm** - Telescope making, building an observatory, exoplanets, spectroscopy, journalism, photography, research...a chance to hear about and discuss real amateur astronomy. **Wells and Mendip Astronomers**

**Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> November – “Birding in the Land of the Summer People”** – James Packer is an experienced birder and photographer and chairs the Rarities Committee of the Somerset Ornithological Society. His talk will include plenty of photos of exciting bird sightings in Somerset. **Somerset Wildlife Trust**

**Friday 7<sup>th</sup> December at 7.30pm – “Two Hundred Years of Mendip Archaeology”**  
A talk by David Dawson. Please join at the meeting for a glass of mulled wine and mince pies. **Wells Natural History & Archaeological Society**

## **OTHER NEWS**

**NATIONAL LOTTERY – AWARDS FOR ALL** We are very happy to announce that our recent application for funding to install a new hearing support system in our Lecture Hall was successful. We hope to install the new system in the next few months, which will greatly improve the quality of events for many of our Lecture Hall users.



## **MUSEUM SHOP**

Don't forget, our museum shop when you are looking for that perfect Christmas gift! We have a lovely selection of traditional toys and games, books and many other items, all at very reasonable prices. We also stock Christmas cards and wrapping paper.

## **CHRISTMAS CLOSING DATES –**

The Museum and Visitor Information will close at  
4pm on Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> December  
and will re-open at  
10am on Wednesday 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2019.

We would like to thank everyone who has supported us this year and wish all our Friends, Supporters and Visitors a very Happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year

