

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

Opening hours: Tuesday – Saturday 10am – 4pm (Closed Sundays & Mondays)

First Floor Exhibition Room

18-29 March

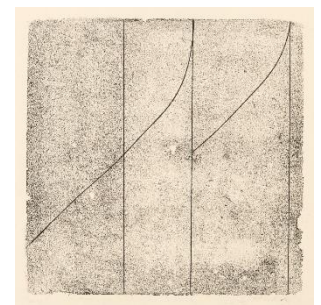
“Draw the Line” – an exhibition by Tony Martin & Christopher Binding

Christopher's work is concerned with the formal language of abstraction where flat fields of colour juxtapose contrasting surface textures. Each work is intentionally pared down to reveal the poetry of their making. Pastel, paint, ink on wood or paper reveal a delight in the physical properties of each medium. This intentional aesthetic serves the structure of each composition. Contrast and division, tension and balance, strength and fragility find their voice in the paradoxical complexity of a simple geometry. Recent exhibitions include RWA Bristol Open where the artist was awarded the St Cuthberts Mill Work on Paper



“The Ocean and the Shore”

Much of Tony's work involves paper, the fragility of cast off scraps or a humble surface retaining the history of creative process: lines drawn, partly removed and redrawn, spaces reworked into something new. His collages and drawings require a precision of construction wedding spontaneity and intention. Recent projects include collaborations with Guillemot Press and Irish poet John F. Deane, who writes : “When I see TonyMartin's drawings I think of the undertow, scales, linear up-and-down, over-and-back, cosmic geometry of all music.



“Annunciation”

As with a musical fugue you arrive after your journey where you began, knowing the clarity of line that can be resolved out of the blur of contemporary seeing”. **Free entry to exhibition**

Ground Floor Meeting Room

5 – 29 March

Art exhibition by Kes Robinson

Kes says, “I have been inspired by medieval art and armour since first seeing and learning about the Bayeux Tapestry as a schoolboy. Over the years I have developed a style that is equal parts inspired by medieval manuscripts and the great French comic artists that created Tintin and Asterix. My earlier battle pictures used flat colours and, more latterly, I have used shading, but they are all unified by a love of big movements, action and chaos.



Alongside these historic battles I also recreate medieval knightly effigies and monuments, which complements and informs my research for battle pictures. I am currently recreating 8 x 13th century knights that inhabit niches on the west front of Wells Cathedral and I will be unveiling these recreations at my exhibition.

This photograph shows one of my most popular prints, which is the Battle of Hastings 1066, clearly inspired by the style of the Bayeux Tapestry. **Included in museum entry fee.**

Artists' Postcard Exhibition & Fundraising Event

Thursday 20 – Saturday 22 February

The museum has joined together with the Wells Rotary Club to organise and promote a "Post Card Exhibition".

Over the last months artists from all over the area and beyond have been asked to contribute up to three postcard sized art works to be auctioned in support of the Museum. The artists have been very generous with their time and talent and over 250 'cards' have come in, in a great variety of media – oil paint, watercolour, lino prints, collage, pen and ink, fabric, and more.

The postcards will be on display in the museum's Lecture Hall 4pm – 8pm on Thursday 20 February, 10am – 6pm on Friday 21 February and 10am – 5pm on Saturday 22 February, where you will also be able to place a bid on any of the postcards in a "silent auction". You may also view the cards, and place bids, via the online catalogue on the Rotary Website by clicking on this link

<https://www.rotary-ribi.org/clubs/homepage.php?ClubID=1230> and scrolling down to "Wells Rotary Supporting Wells Museum"

Auction winners will be notified after the event and invited to come into the museum to pay for, and collect, their postcard.

Any remaining postcards that have not been sold will be on display and available for purchase in the museum until Saturday 1 March. **Free entry to viewing.**

Finds Identification Day

Saturday 29 March 11am – 3pm

Laura Beckwith, the Finds Liaison Officer for Somerset County Council, will be available to identify your finds from digging your garden or while walking your dog.

To book a place, please email Laura laura.beckwith@swheritage.org.uk

From The Curator

The museum's Website and Social Media platforms

I expect many of you will be reading this newsletter digitally, on your computer screens or smart phones. If you are, then you have the opportunity to see news, information and notes about the museum on our website and social media platforms.

The website has a 'What's On' page with up to date information on upcoming exhibitions, as well as a host of information about what the museum does:

<https://www.wellsmuseum.org.uk/>

Instagram: We try to post at least once a week on a range of topics – the museum's collections, events and activities. Sometimes we share posts with other organisations for

mutual benefit. To date we have created 661 posts and reels, and have 1,500 followers. Our Instagram address is: wells.museum

Facebook: The museum's Facebook page covers much of the same ground but with a focus on events and activities. We have 2,100 followers, and a search for 'Wells & Mendip Museum' will find us.

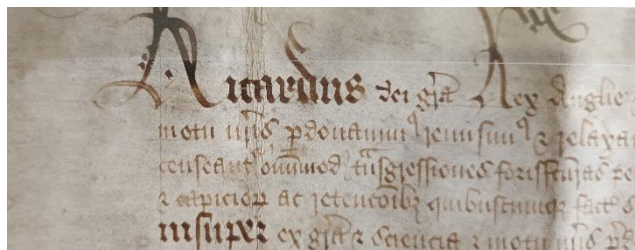
YouTube: We also have our own YouTube channel for films. One of our most recent was made by museum volunteer Steve Tofts, and is a 2025 view of what we have to offer to visitors. Many thanks Steve. Take a look:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qMQd98pyQ00>

Social media responds to reactions by its users, so do please 'like' our posts and share with us if you are posting yourselves. There is also huge scope for those of you who post to create content about the museum – give it a go!

Wells City Archives

The calligraphy for the earliest items in the collection is often very beautiful, however, it can sometimes cause difficulties in understanding them. This is particularly so when they are written in Latin! A good example of this are the two pardons given to the city by Richard III, 1484 and Henry VIII, 1512. Wells City



Archives is very grateful to the Richard III Society and the family of Hugh Warren who have kindly donated full translations, along with key contextual information, of these two items for future researchers. They have revealed fascinating details, for instance, Wells was particularly unusual in requesting the pardons collectively. It is very exciting that items over 500 years old still have the power to surprise, and Wells City Archives is very grateful to all at the Richard III Society who have made this possible!

Library News

Here are the new books that we now have in our library -

Received in December 2024

1421 City of Wells Official Guide

1422- 25 TAVINER, R.M. Somerset Underground 4 vols donated in memory of Christopher Taviner who died on 4 April 2024

1426 BURGESS, C. (Editor) The Pre-Reformation Records of All Saints Church, (Bristol Record Society 2000)

Received in January 2025

1427 ANDREWS, S., Robert Southey: History, Politics, Religion (Palgrave 2011) Coleridge Archive

1428 MOUETRI, E., Student ID No 700067754, "The Relationship Between Medieval Deer Parks in the Upper Axe Valley, Somerset"

1430 FLETCHER, K., Somerset Levels & Moors

1431 Mendip Hills National Landscape Team "Walking the Darker Side of Mendip"

1432 HOPKINS, P., Lymplesham (2024)

1433 FRASER, M. Somerset (1934) many photos SOM/1 Gift from Pat Robinson

1434 DAVIES, L., The West Countryman: "Follow the Plough" – a few thoughts on life

Other titles from the Librarian for the Coleridge Archive -

"The British Periodical Press and the French Revolution 1789 -99" (2000)

"Unitarian Radicalism: Political Rhetoric 1770-1814" (2003)

"The Lake Poets in Prose: Connecting Threads" (2021)

Stuart Andrews, Hon Librarian

Garden News

Only a few items to report from the garden as the weather has made the ground waterlogged and very heavy.

Last Autumn we noticed that one of the pear trees by the Henge (stone benches) was under stress due to its location under the large evergreen tree. We moved it last week to the opposite side of the garden at the top of the Events Lawn bank. It is a case of kill or cure, I'm afraid and only the onset of Spring will tell if it has worked.

We have raised the crown on the viburnum on the upper terrace and heavily pruned both the crab apple and spindle trees nearby. This may look brutal at the moment but will promote fresh growth and create new planting opportunities in areas that were running wild. All of this is part of our general re-appraisal of planting in the garden.

Numerous pots have been planted with tulips, Daffodils (Narcissi) and Grape Hyacinths (Nuscari) ready for Spring. We planted 50+ a couple of years ago in the wildlife area but sadly the mice seem to have eaten most of them.

We are still looking for infill materials for the bug house, so any contributions would be most welcome.



Other events in the museum

Tuesday 25th February at 2.30pm - It's nearly 10 years since Victoria Hillman introduced us to her Forgotten Little Creatures Project – an inspiring enterprise that celebrates plants, invertebrates, amphibians and reptiles through photography, historical and scientific information. Join us for an update to find out what has been happening with the project, how she's incorporated art and folklore into the work and some exciting new developments and organisations she is now working with, along with plans for the future. www.forgottenlittlecreatures.com

Wells and District Wildlife Group

Friday 7th March at 7pm – “The Hanging Pyx Cover in Wells Cathedral” (& Annual General Meeting) – a talk by John Munns, Associate Professor of History and Art History, Magdalene College, Cambridge

John Munns specialises in the material and religious culture of the Middle Ages. His talk will revisit a Victorian antiquarian dispute about the purpose of the 'curious lantern-shaped object' now hanging beneath the north-west tower of Wells Cathedral and look at some of the evidence for it being the only surviving example of a 13th Century wooden pyx cover. **Wells Natural History & Archaeological Society**

Saturday 29 March 10.30am – 4pm - SANHS Annual Archaeology Day

A panel of speakers reflecting on the range of archaeological activity in Somerset in 2024. Some of the finds will be displayed. £15 charge. Booking not essential. Tea and cake/biscuits. **Somerset Archaeological & Natural History Society**

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