

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

## **First Floor Exhibition Room**

**Until Tuesday 10 October**

**“Clay, Paint and Transformation” an exhibition by Philippa Threlfall & Anneke Dissevelt of work inspired by the museum**

**Philippa Threlfall** - Philippa has lived and worked for a long time in her Black Dog Studios in Wells. She trained as an illustrator and ceramicist and has been illustrating in clay and paint all her working life. As a trustee of the museum, she has



been able to use the building and its contents as the inspiration for this exhibition. Before starting work, she drew many of the artefacts and these drawings form part of the exhibition. Working in both paint and clay, and depending on the subject matter, she has found herself taking very different approaches: accurately, figurative and abstract, decorative and illustrative. Paintings and ceramic panels in a similar idiom are also on display.

**Anneke Dissevelt** - Anneke lives in North Devon. Her work, showing how she has become fascinated by the possibilities of clay its many forms has not been seen in Wells before. She has been playing with clay for 20-odd years. For her it is about play, the results happy accidents. She loves the flow and freedom of it and does not particularly plan what she makes. Frankly the clay tends to decide for itself. Ending up with objects that are functional with a twist.

She makes plates, platters and vases, switching to buttons and beads for a bit after the cupboard collapsed. Figurines, and recently the head on display. Some pieces live in friends' houses when they seemed to belong with that person. Currently she is into little boxes. Everyone needs a little box for trinkets. **Free entry to exhibition only**



**14 - 21 October –**

**“Out & About” - a textile exhibition by the Avalon Stitchers**

This exhibition showcases the best in textile art and encompasses the full range of what can be achieved with a needle, thread and fabric. From traditional work to pieces encompassing mixed media the Avalon Stitchers will delight you with what they have on offer.



There are a number of group projects on display where members have collaborated to produce pieces informed by our title. They will have Inspiration Packs for sale and some of the work on display will be available to purchase

Avalon Stitchers meet monthly in Ashcott and full information about them can be found on their website

[www.avalonstitchers.org](http://www.avalonstitchers.org) They are always keen to see new people so do please talk to them about what they do and how you can join them. **Free entry to exhibition only**

## 24 October - 4 November

### An art exhibition by the Old Bakery Artists

The Old Bakery Artists are a group of experienced successful artists from the surrounding local areas who come together to exhibit their art. They offer a wide variety of paint styles as well as textiles, ceramics and art cards.

This is an opportunity to buy a very reasonably priced original artwork for yourself or as a gift as well as supporting local artists.

The artists will be available to talk about their art and answer any questions so why not pop in and take a look, all welcome.

**Free entry to exhibition only**



## 14 - 25 November

### "Shades of Shipham" - multi media exhibition

This group of professional artists have been exhibiting as 'Shades of Shipham', the Mendip village where they all live, for over eighteen years.



Anne Carpenter exhibits internationally specialising in fabric collage, which she describes as painting with fabric and drawing with scissors.

Lorna Brown is a renowned local sculptor currently focusing on animal forms.

Tina Dodd is known for her landscape drawings and monoprints of the Mendip Hills and trees.

Samantha Gilrairie is a photographer who will be exhibiting fine art prints.

Sean Edmonds will have paintings on show with a flora and fauna theme.

New this year is silver jewellery by Deborah Barrett.

In addition to the artwork there will be greetings cards and prints for sale. There will also be a chance to meet the artists as they will be taking it in turns to steward the exhibition and very much look forward to meeting you. **Free entry to exhibition only**

## 29 November – 16 December

### Art exhibition by Michael Brobson

Michael says – "Art is my passion, I love to draw and paint. I live in the city of Wells in Somerset, and much of my original art work is related to the City of Wells and the surrounding Somerset Levels but I also have a fondness for the sea, having sailed small boats so my artwork often features the sea.

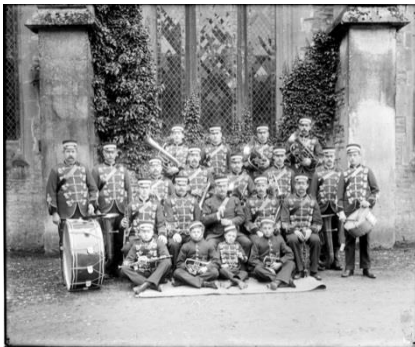
I paint mostly in acrylic but also in other mediums. Unlike my other exhibitions in the Wells Museum's superb gallery, this exhibition will be a picture stock that built up during the Covid restrictions. If you are looking for a Christmas present for someone or if you have a wall space that you think will look better with a picture, this is a chance to buy an original piece of art work at a reasonable cost. I shall display my work unpriced and will accept any reasonable offer for any art piece that takes your fancy. I shall also have greeting cards for sale. These cards are all my own design and are not on sale in any shops. A chance to send a card that is a bit different". **Free entry to exhibition only**



## **Ground Floor Meeting Room**

**14 October 2023 – 20 January 2024**

**“The Band Plays On”**



An exhibition celebrating the Wells City Band, including material from the museum collections, Wells City Archives and private collections.

Made possible thanks to the National Lottery Heritage Fund and the late Jean Imray.

**Museum entry fees apply**



## **Spitfire Model**

We were really pleased when this Spitfire model was given to the museum recently. It is the actual model which was used to chart the City's fundraising to buy a Spitfire fighter aircraft, on a 'thermometer' type hoarding in front of Wells Town Hall. From 1941 the War Savings Scheme was used to raise considerable sums of money for the war effort. The first appeal was made in the summer of 1940 at the height of



Wells Market Place, WW2

the Battle of Britain, and the objective of the appeal in Wells was to raise £5,000 to purchase a Spitfire. £5,000 was the equivalent £369,000 today. By the end of August the fund stood at £512, reaching £3,020 at year-end. It took until February 1942 to achieve the target, and on 6<sup>th</sup> March Councillor E. de M. Kippax presented a cheque for £5,000 to the Minister of Aircraft Production.

The hoarding and the model feature in contemporary photographs of Wells Market Place like this photograph by Phillips in the museum collections.



## **Library Report**

A new assistant has joined the Library team. Juliet Faith is the author of two books on Somerset: *The Knights Templar in Somerset* (2009) and *Glastonbury, the Templars and the Sovran Cloth* (2012), which is a new perspective on the Grail legends.

Three new books have been added to the Library since our last report. The first, presented by the Librarian, is the handwritten diary of Margaret Barnard dated 1869-70 with her own charming drawings of the West Country. As the volume is not confined to Somerset, it should be shelved in the Attic with Devon and Dorset, but the diary has a considerable section devoted to Wells and the personalities of the Cathedral – and so will be shelved in the Main Library under 'Wells'.

The other two titles are additions to the Coleridge Archive. The first, published in 2023, is *The New Cambridge Companion to Coleridge* edited by Tim Fulford. Tim is the author of many books on Coleridge, and is the co-editor of the on-going on-line *Letters of Robert Southey* – of which there are six volumes so far. Fulford's introduction to the *Cambridge Companion* is followed by 15 chapters by different Coleridge scholars on topics ranging from 'Political Coleridge' to 'Coleridge and the Theatre' and from 'Coleridge the Walker' to 'Coleridge the Historian'.

A more curious addition was found, seemingly uncatalogued, among discarded volumes in the Library itself. Published undated by Novello – though with the pencilled date of 1909 on the cover – the title is: *Coleridge S.T. The Ancient Mariner: A Cantata* by J.F Barnett. We have not yet asked any musician to play it!

**Stuart Andrews, Honorary Librarian**

## **Search & Learn project**

It has been a busy couple of months since the last Newsletter. Work on the new Wells City Galleries and Herbert Balch's Study has continued, and we have been planning a temporary exhibition with the Wells City Band, which will be on display in the Meeting Room from 24 October.

We have also been working with Somerset Film to develop two further short films which explore different aspects of the social history of Wells. One celebrates the Wells City Carnival, and we have been delighted to welcome Maurice Day (outgoing President) and Sue and Gordon Stockman (of the Carnival in Somerset Promotion Project) to the Museum, to record their memories.

The other film focuses on the Mendip Hospital, and aftermath of its closure, and we are most grateful to our project partners HeadsUp Somerset, and to the Friends of Mendip Hospital Cemetery for their contributions. The film also features 'Welcome to the Brown Moth Cafe' – a collaborative artwork created by Jade Ogden and Sally Dempsey with people experiencing mental health difficulties, dementia and learning disabilities at HeadsUp Somerset. This was on display in the meeting Room during September, as part of our ongoing partnership with Somerset Art Works.

Looking ahead, we will be running the second round of our creative mentoring programme 'Get to know your museum' between November 2023 and January 2024. This is an 8 week course which pairs participants with one of our experienced museum volunteers to explore the museum in depth, and develop a creative

response. If you know of anyone who might be interested in taking part, do put them in touch with me: [searchlearnwells@gmail.com](mailto:searchlearnwells@gmail.com)

**Victoria Northwood, Project Manager**

## **Other events in the museum**

**Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> October at 7.30pm – “BBC Wild Isles – Behind the scenes”** Nick Gates was one of the producers for the BBC series Wild Isles. His talk will focus on how the series came about, the choice of stories, how the sequences were developed, and how they were filmed and finished with the music. He will also talk about the outreach off the back of the series with the Save Our Wild Isles campaign.

**Wells and District Wildlife Group**

**Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> November at 7.30pm – a talk by Bob Buck**

Bob Buck is the most experienced volunteer at Ham Wall, having worked at the reserve since its earliest days. This talk will cover that involvement and how the site has developed from abandoned peat-diggings to a very successful wildlife site.

**Wells Natural History & Archaeological Society**

**Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> November – 12pm – 4pm** Renaissance and Baroque concert by Jenny Bliss

**Saturdays 18<sup>th</sup> & 25<sup>th</sup> November – Film making workshops with Somerset Film**

Celebrate 100 years of 16mm film by developing your filmmaking knowledge with an opportunity to use a H16 Bolex clockwork 16mm camera guided by Artist James Holcombe.

In 1923, 16mm film was released by Eastman-Kodak, it was a cheaper alternative to the existing 35mm film and a more accessible format for amateur filmmakers. It was one of the first formats to exclusively use acetate safety film as a film base, replacing nitrate film stock which was notoriously highly flammable. The 16mm film would become a very popular format and used by television, but lost popularity when the smaller, cheaper 8mm and Super 8mm film formats were introduced in 1965.

These formats became less popular over the years due to the rise of tape and digital formats. However, 16mm, 8mm and Super 8mm are being revived as an alternative to recording endlessly on a smartphone. A Frome-based Artist, James Holcombe, is passionate about passing on photochemical filming and processing techniques to ensure they do not become lost skills.

There's an opportunity to shoot on H16 Bolex clockwork 16mm film cameras and process the film on a two-day course with James Holcombe at The Wells and Mendip Museum on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> and Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> November.

James has extensive experience of working with 16mm film equipment, on this highly practical workshop you will learn how to use an H16 Bolex clockwork 16mm film camera, as well as hand processing film using caffenol ecologically sound developer. No previous experience required. All equipment provided, everything will be digitised and made available for participants after the workshop.

Find out more on the **Somerset Film** website:

<http://www.somersetfilm.com/.../16mm-camera-filmmaking...>

**Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> November at 7.30pm – “Strawberry Line Progress - a talk by Richard Jones** The “Strawberry Line” was the nickname of the Cheddar Valley Line, a Great Western Railway branch line that ran from Witham Junction to Yatton via Shepton Mallet, Wells and Cheddar until the late 1960s. Since the 1980s, the route has been in the process of being transformed, step by step, into a beautiful greenway through North and Mid-Somerset. The path will be suitable for walkers, cyclists, wheelchair users, mobility scooters, and on some sections, equestrians. Come and hear of the latest developments and sections which will shortly be coming 'online. **Wells and District Wildlife Group**

**Friday 1<sup>st</sup> December at 7.30pm – “Battling Bishops”, by Revd Dr Mark Hutchinson** Mark is a member of the Society and has stood at the speaker’s rostrum before. This time he is talking about the intense rivalry between the Bishop of Bath and Wells’ men and the Abbot Bishop of Glastonbury’s men between 1173 and 1493.  
**Wells Natural History & Archaeological Society**

**Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> December – 11am – 3pm - Christmas Craft Market.** Come and browse the unique handmade, gifts, decoration and sweets made by local artisans that are on sale. Tombola and raffle, plus Christmas carols with members of the Wells City Band 1pm – 2pm. Refreshments will also be on sale. **Free entry**

**Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> December - 12pm – 4pm** Renaissance and Baroque concert  
Folk infused with influences from around the globe, with unique arrangements and flashes of theatrical genius. **Ash Mandrake** - voice, poetry, story telling, guitars  
**Jenny Bliss** - voice, flute, violin, viola da gamba, folk harp

**The museum will close at 4pm on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> December and will re-open at 10am on Tuesday 2<sup>nd</sup> January 2024**



## Come and join our team!

### Front of House volunteers needed

Our Front of House volunteers co-ordinate the smooth running of the reception area by extending a warm and informative welcome to all our visitors.

This is a key role and ideal for anyone who likes to work in a varied, customer orientated environment, and who are happy working as part of a team but are equally happy to work alone if necessary. Computer literacy an advantage.

For more information or an application form, please contact:  
Christine Fewer, Museum Manager at: [admin@wellsmuseum.org.uk](mailto:admin@wellsmuseum.org.uk)

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