

**Birmingham Heritage Forum
Member's News – March 2017**



Members had a demonstration of a jeweller's skill from Rachel West as they toured the Museum of the Jewellery Quarter before their spring meeting.

Michael Jepson, **St Martins Church**. On Sunday, the Reverend Mark Price (Chaplain to the Queen) focussed on the new Craigie Aitchison window in his sermon, describing it as a blessing to Birmingham.

Barbara Preece, **Back to Backs**. There is now a new visitor experience manager and officer. The craft workshops have sold out, and the museum is welcoming about 300 visitors a week.

Jeff Robinson, **Vintage Trains**. A new tour programme has just been launched, and the engineering works continue to be very busy.

Helen Kempster, **Saint Nicolas Place**. Following the lead theft last year, 78% of the £50,000 needed to make repairs has been raised by the friends, just giving and donations.

John Copping, **Birmingham Conservation Trust**. The Coffin Works recently held a talk by Lucy Worsley. Simon Buteux has now moved on. BCT will have five new trustees soon.

Sally Dickson, **Birmingham Botanical Gardens**. The gardens are looking lovely with lots of spring bulbs. An events leaflet will be available soon.

Carol Parkinson, **the Oratory**. The newly installed CCTV has identified lead theft. The first phase of restorations have been completed. The Victorian perimeter walls are to be repaired.

Fiona Adam, **Moseley Society**. A tree came down at the Dovecote in the recent storm. The Dovecote and Icehouse open again after Easter.

Diana Perowne. Recently attended a meeting at Highbury Hall about potential plans for a café, education area and restoring the gardens.

Chris Rice. Has been working with the Lunar Society on a HLF funded trail.

Ken Pugh, **Friends of Selly Oak Park**. The Selly Oak Festival takes place in 10th June, 11am – 3pm.

Barbara Nomikos, **Moor Pool Heritage Trust**. A fire exit is being created in the Edwardian skittle alley, meaning it can be hired out. On 26th March there is a talk by Michael Harrison on 'Moor Pool Memories', and on 30th March a talk on the Jewellery Quarter.

Kevin Harper, **Transport Museum Wythall**. The museum is open from 25th March. The first major event is on Easter weekend. Also working on building up events for families and the general public.

Judith Al-Seffar,

Capability Brown Festival

The national CB Festival formally ended in February. Locally our steering group will continue to meet to plan future local events as part of the CB legacy. Already discussions are under way to prepare for celebrations in 2018, to mark the 200th anniversary of Humphry Repton's death. He was regarded by many as the successor to Brown, and we have 2 local sites where he worked: Moseley Hall and Warley Woods in Bearwood. There are over 30 sites in the Heart of England, a similar number to those of Brown.

Pugin Society (Birmingham)

A new Pugin book by Michael Fisher about John Hardman Powell is to be launched at St Chad's Cathedral on Saturday. The annual flower festival at St Chad's has been cancelled.

Gema Tyler, **Winterbourne House and Garden**. Have now been awarded full museum status. There is an exhibition on 'Fables and Fairytales'. Holding a talk on the Edgbastonian. On 22nd March there is a Biddle and Webb valuation day, and in June a production of 'A Comedy of Errors'. The entrance and shop have also had a change around.

Marion Wilson, **Birmingham Assay Office**. It has been slow progress organising the archive in the new building but have now started to do talks for groups.

Natalie Osborne, **RBSA**. The gallery had a student work with them researching the history of the gallery building, writing blogs and a news article. Art demonstrations take place on 18th and 25th March. Taking part in both Jewellery Quarter Open Studios and HODs. In October there will be an exhibition on the work of William Gear.

Bill Esslemont, **Castle Bromwich Hall Gardens**. Held an excellent snowdrops

event and a daffodil weekend takes place in March. In April there is an event on Easter Saturday. The full programme of events is on the website. Two new trustees from the City Council are joining. The gardens were completed in 1720 so planning for the 300 year anniversary.

Anthony Hayes, **the Pen Museum**.

Have had a successful relaunch of the new facilities. Now looking to raise the museum's profile, broadening the events and creating a marketing strategy. Also have a temporary exhibition space.

Bob Holland, **the Harry Gem Project**.

Promoted lawn tennis on BBC Antiques Road Trip. This year is the 140th anniversary and will be featuring on Great British Menu. Continue to raise funds to repair Harry Gem's grave, and planning a book on the history of lawn tennis.

Ellie Gabbay, **Friends of Moseley Road Baths**.

Have had lots of support from a variety of organisations over the threat to the building. A proposal has been put to the City to keep the baths open beyond the June closure date. It is hoped it could be run by volunteers, and there has been lots of support online. There is an open day on 18th March. Members are asked to go to the website and complete a friend's survey.

Sophie Wilson, **the Barber Institute of Fine Art**.

A Francis Bacon work 'Two Figures in a Room' is currently on display. 'Excavating Empire: Gold, Silver and Bronze in Byzantium' is on display in the Barber's Coin Gallery. In April there is an exhibition of photographs called 'Works of Mercy' inspired by Caravaggio.

Daniel Callicott, **Selly Manor Museum.** 'The Magic of Medieval Music' concert takes place on 5th May with musician Ian Pittaway. A series of heritage talks are taking place including:
The Friends Ambulance Unit – 8th June
George Cadbury – 6th July
Beatrice Cadbury – 13th September
JRR Tolkien – 12th October
On 9th September Bournville Heritage Open Days will include rarely open sites across Bournville opening for free.

Jenny Smith, **St Mary's Convent.** Continue with regular tours. Heritage displays are being updated around the convent. Sisters are preparing for their 'Come and See' day on 25th March, a day for prayerful reflection for single Catholic women.

Peter Appleton, **New Hall Mill.** Extensive ground work has taken place to extend the car park field resulting in 50 extra spaces. Have pleached and laid out long sections of hedging which looks excellent. New steps have been installed to the pond viewing area. Have had to cut back some branches following the recent storms. A record number of stalls and attractions are booked this year for the open days.

Sue Ingley, **Holy Trinity Church.** About to start phase 2 of the reordering, to remove organ and reveal a vast stained glass window and decorated ceilings. Successful in the recent HLF application to begin a programme of education. Will also be introducing a stewarding scheme and train volunteers as guides. Concerts continue and to date have raised £30,000 for the church. On 24th March at 7.30pm Gilmore and Roberts will be performing contemporary folk, and on 13th May at 7.30pm the City of Lichfield Concert Band will be performing.

Jane Edwards, **Friends of Brandwood End Cemetery.** A HLF project to survey the cemetery and gardens continues. This included a hedgehog trail, work with schools and residents to improve the habitat with the Wildlife Trust and Park Rangers. Received a silver gilt for the first ever entry to Heart of England in Bloom. The Civilian Garden of Remembrance is being redesigned and refurbished by a group of students and Darren Rudge.

The next **Birmingham Heritage Forum** meeting and AGM will take place on 7th June at 10.30am at Moor Pool Heritage Trust. This meeting is for members only.

If you wish to **submit Members' News** for the next meeting by email please send to danielcallicott@bvt.org.uk