



Athelstan Museum
Capturing the history of Malmesbury

FRIENDS OF ATHELSTAN MUSEUM Spring Newsletter 2015

Moravian Church & Athelstan Museum Appeal



The big news, of course, is our appeal. You will all have had an appeal pack and the responses have started to come in which is encouraging; people both members and others are very supportive and we have had a lot of favourable comment.

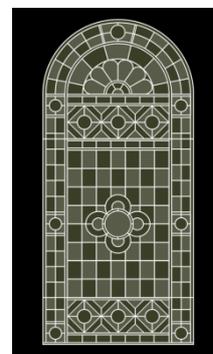
We have submitted our bid for Phase 1, the development phase, to the Heritage Lottery Fund and we expect to hear their verdict in early March. If that is favourable (and how we hope it will be) we shall use that grant to employ an architect and various other professionals and experts and with their help draw up our work plan; we shall be able to be more precise about exactly what needs to be done and how much it will cost.

One question we have been asked is, once the work is done and we start to use the church will we be able to afford to run it? There will obviously be extra expenses – heat, light, rates etc. – but

our budget shows these can be met. At present we are paying for storage and hire charges so that will produce a saving. Good insulation and careful management will keep energy costs down and a relatively low income from renting out the hall will balance the books. Several groups have shown an interest in hiring the hall.



Another worry for people is are we moving? No, we are not. The museum will stay firmly where it is in the town hall. Some of the storage and office facilities will be transferred and there are all sorts of uses for the central space, exhibitions, meetings and much more. This will enhance the use we make of the museum – not reduce it.





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Forthcoming events

Wednesday 25.2.15 7.00 for 7.30 Unveiling of our new display case.

No charge and free glass of wine. This is for rings and other finds we have acquired in recent years



The display case arriving at the Museum

Saturday 14.3.15 7.30 Quiz Night

This was so popular last year that we are doing it again. Tables of four (no more!) and for your ticket you get supper as well. Wine will be available at £12 a bottle or £2.50 a glass. Tickets from the museum.

Saturday 2.5.15 7.00

Simon Jenkins will be showing us and talking about some of his favourite places. We are very fortunate to have been able to get such a renowned author and expert to talk to us. Tickets, and more details, will be available at the museum soon.

Saturday 20.6.15 6.30 for 7.00



Charlton Park. This promises to be a great evening. A chance to see the great house – the first time for years - and enjoy some bubbly and canapés as well as being treated to a concert by **Julia Bowen and her group Salon Baroque** They will present us with a programme of music for the entertainment of ladies and gentlemen of quality. There will be recitation by **Jackie Tong** and a short talk on the house.

Other events are in the pipeline

Tony McAleavy will be giving a talk as part of the carnival programme and this will be jointly sponsored by the museum and Jackdaw.

In the summer there will be an **event themed on WWI** and also the library is hoping to arrange a **talk by an author on WWI** which the museum will be sponsoring.

We look forward to seeing you at some, or indeed all, of our events.



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Chairman's letter

Elsewhere in this newsletter you will read of the many exciting projects that are underway, including the massive effort to acquire, restore and re-open the Moravian Church for the benefit of the community; the purchase of the Malmesbury Hoard and the accompanying need to acquire an appropriate exhibition case; the pending unveiling of the Garsdon Find in its new exhibition case and the exciting revamp of our gift shop. Our volunteers have been very busy and very dedicated and for that we thank them. I would also like to sincerely thank all of you, our members, who have generously supported us whenever we have asked. Given all that we have undertaken you can be assured that we are going to continue to ask for your help. But, the outcome is equally assured that the Athelstan Museum will be an even greater asset to our town and to our community.

But, with all of this project activity and all of the effort that it involves, the Museum continues to deliver its services on a day to day basis. Our visitor numbers are holding steady or perhaps even nudging higher year on year. The new donations box is contributing to our financial health and our volunteers on the reception desk are holding up under the strain – long may they do so.

Ernest Buchner **Chairman**

Roman Coin Hoard

Thanks to your generosity we have been able to buy this. We have also acquired a safe to house it when not on display. We need now to purchase a special secure case so it can be exhibited properly. We are very grateful for the generosity of those members who contributed to its purchase.

News in brief

A group of Cubs came round one evening last week and enjoyed themselves. Our volunteers were able to dress up in the costumes we bought as part of the Civil War enactment. One delightful feature of these visits by the Cubs is that almost invariably some will be back bringing their parents with them.

Wiltshire Museums are organising a travelling exhibition – **Wiltshire in 100 Objects**. We are contributing four articles and obviously hope that the exhibition will come to Malmesbury.

Our Shop

Have you noticed? This has had an overhaul. There is a lot more stock and the presentation is better. There are some and will be more articles that can only be obtained through the museum. It's a good place to buy birthday presents which are special but don't cost a fortune.



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Appeal website

www.malmesburyappeal.co.uk is the address of the website that has been developed for the appeal. Have a look - it is brilliant. And a lot of help we had; the site is by an ex-Malmesbury lad; two of the images were created by people in Luckington; Robert Peel let us use his fantastic photographs and, of course, Front Room provided so much help with the appeal and the brochure. Thank you everybody.

Chuckle and pat on back

A report in the Wiltshire Gazette and Herald dated 8th Jan cites Devizes museum as the 'best little museum'. It has a photo of the six paid members of staff and reports visitor numbers have doubled to nearly 13,000.

I thought how well this made us look with no staff, just brilliant volunteers, and over 14.000 visitors!

Member discounts

The following traders are offering discounts to members on production of their current membership cards. We are very grateful to them for their support.

Jackdaw Café in The Town Hall
Flowers Galore, High Street
E&S Ltd, hardware shop, High Street
Hyams Autos on servicing and repairs
A4 stationers for art materials
Geddes Carpets, High Street
CH White and Son, cycle shop
Malmesbury Garden Centre
Judy Jones Gardening Services
(07973-548615)
Adeline's Farm Vegetable Boxes
(Ros Holland 07970-729899)

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