

**We are now at the end of our season. Read on for the latest news and our plans for our closed period.**

## **Trustee meetings**

The last meeting papers are available to read. Click on Trustee Meeting Docs and you will be taken to the user name and password. These are the same as you use for the Volunteers (Restricted) area. User name = BHVC, password = stmichaels.

## **10 years – worthy of a celebration**

Our celebration day, on Wednesday 20<sup>th</sup> September was a great success. We welcomed over 100 people throughout the day. This included local residents, volunteers and other invited guests. We had a group of trustees from Crediton history society and museum who took away some of our activities and practice to help them. We met Amy Dugard,



the Mid Devon District Council officer responsible for the Visit Mid Devon project. Amy was very impressed with what we have to offer and will continue to work with us closely. We had a visit from Jonathan Hill, former owner of a shop and small museum in what is now The Toucan. Jonathan had previously donated to us his whole

collection, after moving to Exeter and retiring. He brought us two new items he had found – a school photo and a harvest bread. This was made by Brian Seward and baked in the bakery in Swards shop. It is amazing that it is still in one piece and Ken is researching how best to preserve.



We were visited by Helena Jaeschke, Conservation Development Officer from the South West Museums Development Trust who was very moved by our passion for what we do and how our primary aim of connecting with our own community in all that we do.



Katrina travelled from home in Cardiff to be with us, and Barney and Esme travelled from their home in Salisbury. It was so good to see them all and to hear from Katrina about where we started 10 years ago. They all drove home later that night!

10 years on and we are every bit as enthusiastic and committed to continuing to grow and care for Bampton's heritage.



## Visit from Tiverton Museum volunteers

We welcomed 14 volunteers from Tiverton Museum on Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> October. This was an invitation which followed our visit to them earlier in the year.

They arrived at 10.00 and after receiving a warm welcome, they split into two groups. Each group had a tour of the church with Andy Macdonald and a chat about our overall

work and heard from some of our volunteers and Trustees talking about their roles.

After stopping for hot drinks and cakes and then they had time to

look around and ask questions. We had some generous donations

and some sales and a lovely thank you message from them following

their visit. I am confident that we impressed them with what we

provide in a small space, along with outreach activities we offer.

They went away with some ideas that they will press for at the

Museum and very willing to recommend a visit to us knowing what

visitors can expect when they arrive with us. Building on our close

partnership with Tiverton Museum by raising awareness between

volunteers is a really positive move and will benefit both organisations.



## Tom Talk 2023

Our annual heritage lecture this year was by Dr Todd Gray from Exeter University who

gave us Devon's Changing History. Todd started his talk being

pleased to come to Bampton for the first time. Joan Fagg, in the

audience, was very quick to remind him that he had been here

before in 2012. He was suitably chastened! His talk was

entertaining, and he made some book sales too. We received very

generous donations and covered the costs of his lecture fee.

A lady in the audience asked me why we call the lecture Tom Talk. She had googled it

and said she only found information of male cats. That did make me laugh and I

explained our link to historian Tom.

If you know of good speakers for our 2024 lecture, please let us know.

## New volunteers

During the summer, we welcomed Gail Laurence as a new volunteer. Gail has met many of you now and is working hard for us, meeting local residents who have agreed to share with us their memories of Bampton.

At the point we were closing the Centre for the winter, we welcomed Sue Ingrams who has very recently moved to Bampton, having had many holidays here as a child visiting her grandparents who owned shops in Bampton over many years. Gail and Sue will be meeting each other shortly as Sue shares her memories, recorded by Gail.

## Reredos update

We have the following update from Tony Mount:

'The reredos, we have the go ahead to reposition the reredos on the west wall of the tower. However, there were some caveat's from the DAC (*Diocesan Advisory Committee*). One is that we need to arrange for a "Joinery conservator" to do a survey of the reredos to inform the Joinery companies that might quote for the job on what is expected of them.

We had an expert visit last week and await his summery on how much the survey will cost and what will be involved. If it goes ahead the reredos will be removed and taken away for a complete survey, including producing a set of drawings. The Diocesan Chancellor has given us a 10 month extension to complete the survey and find a joinery company to do the work'.

## Graveyard research

Volunteer Linda Middleton-Jones came to us with an idea for some new research which we were quick to accept. Linda is researching the stories of the names on some of our oldest gravestones with fascinating initial results. We will ask Linda to talk to all of us about her research and findings in 2024.

## Photo competition – the results

The competition, organised by Marian and Rachel was a great success. Our independent judges, Sarah Diggle, Jon Walker-Morecroft and Laura Grant had a difficult time as the entries were impressive, not least, Benji who won our junior section with a superb picture of his dog Lucky on the Batherm Bridge terrace. The adult winners were Garry Girling, Hugh Saxby, Samuel Minnion and Alison Davies. You can see winning the photos which we have had made into our new seasonal cards. Buy them quickly while stocks last.



## **New shop stock for Christmas**

We have some beautiful Christmas gifts and hampers again, thanks to hard work by Rachel and Alison and of course the new range of cards in packs of 4 or 8. We made good sales during Bampton Fair and we will (with your help), be running stalls at a number of Christmas events in November and December. Do take a look at the new stock and encourage your friends and neighbours to look too. You can find it on our stalls throughout November and December or contact Rachel to get your hands on them before they go!



A small selection of our hampers and gifts that are available.

## **Winter closure**

It's a little ironic that the church heating has been fixed just in time for our winter closure period! Our last day will be Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> October and we will reopen in half term week in February. Trustees and volunteers will continue to work on plans for the coming year and carry out a full review of the BHVC strategy. As ever, your ideas are welcome. We will pick up the farm history project with the Scouts and get to know the new school head with the hope of a school visit or two in 2024.

## **Stalls**

You will have seen the email from Alison with the rota of dates and times of our stalls, between now and Christmas. Thank you to everyone who signed so quickly. We need to sell as much of our stock as possible we can so these are important dates. Note specially Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> December. Andy Macdonald is running two tours of the church for visitors, residents and of course, you volunteers. Even if you are confident that you know the church well, please try to come along as Andy, with Peter Freeman, has done extensive research and there is new information to be shared. The tours will be at 10.00 and 11.00 and will run for around 30 minutes each.

## **Time for change**

At their last meeting the Trustees approved a proposal to refresh our offering in St Michaels within the present allocated area. Simply put, the railway exhibit will be placed under the aerial photograph so that the two can better correlate, whilst the shop/office furniture will move to the space vacated by the railway exhibit to better project the Centre and a new shop/information centre. The tall glass cabinet will stand alongside the other glass cabinet and be used for exhibits. Trustees have asked Andy Macdonald to

lead on this project. The scheme will require careful co-ordination between moves and the church's programme of services and events. It will also require pairs of hands for all manner of moving, cleaning, polishing, model repair, dismantling and assembly etc. etc. – if you feel that you could contribute, however competent or confident, please e-mail so that a pool can be formed. The scheme has been discussed with the Vicar and Church Wardens, who are providing a schedule of events, but with the Christmas celebrations across the middle of our closure period, time is precious. Please contact Andy Macdonald ([armacdonald\\_2@hotmail.com](mailto:armacdonald_2@hotmail.com)) for further information and with offers of involvement!

### **A huge thank you**

To mark our 10<sup>th</sup> year, I set a very demanding timetable at the beginning of the year of 10 activities/events for 10 years. I am immensely proud that we achieved that goal. We could not have done that and kept up the punishing schedule without your help. We met residents old and new, we greeted visitors, we raised donations, we sold shop stock, we launched our Friends scheme. In addition, there was work on maps, talks, research, magazine articles, new videos and more.



I believe that in everything we do, the most important is that we connect with people. We tell Bampton's unique story in many different ways but connecting and communicating with people is thing which brings us such a rich reward – memories, anecdotes, pictures and objects and really brings history alive. All of us, in whatever volunteer role we have, connect with people – face to face, on social media, via the website, via email, in research, electronically and digitally.

Please accept my sincere personal thanks for the role you play in our work. Please keep doing what you do so well and talk to us about new ideas, your hopes for your role and for our future.

We will be in touch again very soon about our strategy and how we want to have your voice at the centre of in our plans for the coming years.