



Chairman's Message

There has been a lot happening since the last Newsletter. Firstly the '*Gustav Holst's WW1 - With the Salonika Forces*' exhibition was officially opened by Mayor **Councillor Bernard Fisher** on 13th July, with several Volunteers and people who had helped with the exhibition in attendance. Councillor Fisher warmly complimented the Museum and noted its importance to Cheltenham, adding that he would like to see a biennial Holst festival in the town. A very interesting idea, which would clearly require substantial financial backing.

The lost **Holst manuscripts** discovered in New Zealand last year were delivered to the Museum on 16th July. **Bronya Dean**, a member of the **Bay of Plenty Symphonia**, in one of whose cupboards the manuscripts were discovered, arrived with them carefully wrapped for their journey halfway around the world. It is appropriate that Bronya should officially present the manuscripts as she was instrumental in selecting us as recipients. We are planning to arrange for a performance of the pieces in Cheltenham in 2020.

On 4th July we were delighted to welcome **Adam Heron** to the Museum. Adam is currently studying at the Royal Academy of Music and he performed a captivating recital on the 'Holst Piano', which was much appreciated by those lucky enough to attend. See page 3 for Tom Clarke's review. We are very grateful to Adam and we intend to make this the first of a series of recitals. Although we can accommodate only a small audience, such recitals do allow us to raise money from having the piano played, which we need to do each month. It also enables some people to hear the piano played by extremely skilful musicians and provides a very enjoyable evening.

The Trust held its **AGM** on 2nd July. There were 45 Members and supporters present and it was very pleasing to see our three Vice-Presidents in attendance. **Jenny Fortescue** and **Sue Walker** stood down as Volunteer and Events Trustee respectively. We thank them for their work during their terms of office. **David Addison** (Collections) and **Alan Parker** (Events) were elected as new Trustees. Since the AGM **Alan Gilmour** has been co-opted as Marketing Trustee. We are hopeful that further Trustees will be co-opted in the near future. Following the AGM David Addison was immediately put to work by giving a presentation about how Holst's birthplace came to be acquired and the establishment of the Museum. This was a fascinating insight into our origins.

At the end of the official AGM business there was some discussion about the decline in Volunteer numbers and the consequent pressure on the remaining Volunteers. This continued at the **Volunteers' Forum** on 23rd July and the points raised will be acted upon in the near future. Also discussed at the Forum was the idea of giving visitors an annual ticket, valid for multiple visits. This would enable Gift Aid to be claimed in respect of eligible and willing visitors. We expect to implement this scheme shortly. And while on the subject of Volunteers, I must mention the following new recruits: Chris Cuthbert, Issie Griffin, Rowan Lovegrove, Will Smith and Hugo Till. You are all most welcome.

Let me conclude with our **Queen's Award for Voluntary Service**. This will be presented by Dame Janet Trotter, Lord Lieutenant of Gloucestershire, on the evening of Friday 7th September at the Museum, with refreshments to follow at the Sudeley Arms. This event is very much about the Volunteers and we hope that as many as possible will attend.

Steve Wood

Issue 61

August 2018

Inside this issue:

<i>The Cultural Front: War Composition</i>	2
Food for Thought	2
Adam Heron Recital	3
Meet Lucy	3
Wycombe Sound	3
Future Events	4
Membership	4

The Cultural Front: War Composition

Just a stone's throw away from his childhood home is a new, rather striking, portrait of the Cheltenham-born composer Gustav Holst. It is perhaps not the portrait you'd expect. There are three portraits of the composer in the town: two in the Holst Birthplace Museum - one in oil and the other in cement fondue; and of course there is the well known Gustav Holst Memorial Fountain in Imperial Gardens, showing Holst conducting in bronze. This new, arguably less conventional portrait has been created using spray paint on hoardings in North Place car park. It is a collaboration with Cheltenham Paint Festival's **Andy 'Dice' Davies** and shows Holst in the uniform of a YMCA worker during WW1. The piece has been titled *The Cultural Front: War Composition*, and it is a response to Holst's work during WW1 when he was Director of Music in Salonika with the YMCA. As well as Andy's portrait there are posters pasted on the boards with hand-printed headlines and content taken from the trench newspaper, *The Balkan News*. These are the work of **Pittville School pupils** and members of the public during letterpress workshops with the artist **Andy Kinnear**. Statements such as "A World of Complete Ruin" and "Dust and Toil Race to Victory" are given an added poignancy when separated from the actual newspapers themselves.

The Cultural Front: War Composition will be on display until the art work lasts. Street art is notoriously ephemeral. The North Place car park is the main site of this year's Cheltenham Paint Festival, which takes place 8-9th September. Fortunately many of the works from 2017's Paint Festival are still visible on the hoardings, although they are soon to be obliterated by the 2018 art works. It is hoped then that *The Cultural Front: War Composition* will last until the 2019 festival. We are sure that Holst would have approved, even though he was a famously reluctant portrait sitter!

Laura Kinnear

Food for Thought

The site of the Holst Birthplace Museum is very residential, with the neighbourhoods of Pittville, Fairview and St Paul's on its doorstep. Many local residents are not familiar with the Museum and perhaps may feel that it is not necessarily 'for them'. In an attempt to address this assumption the Museum ventured out this spring, working directly with the St Paul's community. Supported by funding through Cheltenham Borough Council's **Community Pride** pot, Museum staff and members of St Paul's Residents committee ran free baking and prop-making workshops. These were held at the Museum and also at the Herrington Rooms, the community hall in St Paul's. The project was titled, 'Food for Thought' and was inspired by the history of food shops and eating establishments in St Paul's both in the past and today.

In the 19th and mid-20th centuries St Paul's had well-loved bakeries and fish & chip shops, which were well used by the local residents. Until fairly recently the area had experienced some decline, with businesses closing. This has all changed in the past year or so and now the area can boast the fabulous **School House Cafe, St Paul's Fish Bar** and the award-winning Sri Lankan street food restaurant, **The Coconut Tree**.

Tapping into both the heritage and the present resurgence, residents were asked to write down their St Paul's food memories on labels in exchange for cake baked on the Museum range. The labels were then displayed on a Victorian cart which was pulled around the neighbourhood by some very willing young volunteers! The following week, during the May half-term, children and adults attended the prop-making workshops, making fake apples and cakes. These were then placed in the cart and were put on display in the Museum basement.

The local residents were also invited to a special evening when they were able to visit the Museum for free and enjoy baking on the range. Those present included the Mayor and a group of very lively women in their eighties, one of whom had lived in St Paul's all her life. They shared many stories about St Paul's and Cheltenham, including the fact that one once had to wear gloves while walking down The Promenade! The whole project was extremely rewarding and the Museum hopes to work with St Paul's again in 2019 and beyond.

Laura Kinnear

Adam Heron Recital

It was a pleasure to hear Holst's venerable piano by Collard & Collard come to life at the hands of one as young as Adam Heron from Cheltenham. Now aged 19 Adam was a finalist in the BBC Young Musician of 2018, and in 2016 was Gloucestershire Young Musician of the Year. He has received several awards in recent years. He was a chorister for four years under **Adrian Partington** at Gloucester Cathedral which, as Steve Wood pointed out, brought an immediate Holst connection because Adrian is one of our new Patrons. Adam is currently studying at the Royal College of Music.

In deference to the age of the piano and its famed light touch Adam told us that he chose the Baroque masters rather than the Russian composers he likes. We were delighted to hear polished performances of **Handel** (*Suite No.5 in E Major*), **Bach** (*Partita No.2 in C Minor* and *English Suite No.3 in G. Minor*) and **Chopin** (*Nocturnes Op.32*, and *Barcarolle Op.60*). An audience of 15 filled the Music Room and the adjacent display area. I was tempted to mention to Adam that Holst composed *The Planets* on this very piano and if it was able to withstand that, then perhaps we could entice Adam back to try Russian pieces after all. A memorable evening.

Tom Clarke

Learning & Administration Coordinator

Hello and thank you for the warm welcome from everyone since starting at the end of April. As a history graduate I was delighted to be offered the job, as Victorian Social History is my favourite topic. I grew up in Cheltenham and have very fond memories of visiting the Museum and making drop scones on the range as a schoolgirl 25 years ago. I have been working in museums for 5 years now, most recently at The Wilson and for the Gloucester Life Museum and Museum of Gloucester, where on Wednesdays I take their education sessions. I am especially interested in making museums accessible and relevant to their dynamic and ever-changing audiences. I am currently chugging my way through an MA from the University of Leicester in 'Socially Engaged Practice in Museums and Galleries', and I hope to be able to bring some lessons learned from their expertise to the Holst Museum.

I hit the ground running in the Learning part of my job with a visit to **Warden Hill Primary School** as part of their Cheltenham week, showing them some of our collections and talking about Holst's life. I have also run a successful baking workshop with the **Brownies**. I hope to be able to expand on these to bring in more youth groups and take more of our handling collections out to those who struggle to reach the Museum. We have lots of school bookings lined up for the Autumn term. As for Administration I have taken the reins from Jenny Fortescue in leading on Volunteer rotas and Group Tour bookings. I am also working with some Volunteers to rationalise the Volunteers' Room.

I am looking forward to arranging a community event in the Autumn, '**Food Away from the Western Front**', in which we will partner with local charity **Food Impact** to celebrate the end of WW1 with a taste of cuisine from some of the lesser known participants. This will include Salonika where we know Holst was stationed.

I look forward to meeting more of you in the coming months.

Lucy Moriarty

Wycombe Sound: Classical Music Coverage

A recent visitor to the Museum was Amanda Bolt, Arts Editor and classical music presenter at Wycombe Sound. Amanda produces and presents *British Classics* (Sundays, 6-8am) and *Classical Travels* (Sundays, 1-3pm). "Being able to devote two hours to British repertoire in my *British Classics* programme is really exciting. Both Gustav and Imogen Holst are featured on my playlist. It was also a pleasure to visit the Museum and present it alongside an interview with the Curator, Laura Kinnear, for my *Classical Travels* programme on 6th May. Coming to the Museum, broadcasting its history and finding out more about Gustav Holst I hope will help attract more visitors to the Museum and ultimately bring more to Holst's music."

Editor

Future Events

Sunday 26th August: Car Boot Sale

Now an annual event, this is your opportunity to give the Events Committee your no-longer-needed treasures and thus raise a significant sum of money for the Museum. Please contact Sue Walker: 01242 224459 or susanwalker893@btinternet.com.

Saturday 29th September, 7.30pm at St Andrew's Church Montpellier : The Birthday Concert

This is a joint event with Cheltenham Choral Society, who are celebrating their 80th anniversary, and will feature **James Gilchrist** and **John Wright**. It will be preceded by the Holst Society AGM.

Friday 19th October, 7.30pm at St Luke's Church Hall: 'Holst as an Opera Composer'

A talk by writer, musicologist, teacher, conductor and Holst expert **Nigel Simeone**.

Friday 30th November, 7.30pm at Christ Church's Harwood Hall: 'The stained glass of William Morris and Edward Burne-Jones'

A talk by **Adrian Barlow** who is President of the English Association and an authority on Victorian architecture, ecclesiology and stained glass. Tickets for this and the September and October events are now on sale at the Museum, the Tourist Information Centre and online via the Museum's website.

Alan Parker

Membership of the Friends

We are delighted to welcome new members **Christopher Collier, Gill Colver** and **Phillip Dann**.

If you are not already a subscribing Friend of the Trust, please do consider joining and also tell your friends. Not only would you have the satisfaction of giving financial and general support to the Museum, but you would also enjoy many other benefits. The Museum leaflet contains an application form.

Annual Membership rates are:

Single £20, Joint/Family £30, Young £5, Single Benefactor £60, Joint/Family Benefactor £100, Single Life £300, Joint Life £400, Gift Membership £20.

For further details contact me at membership@holstmuseum.org.uk or 01242 227720.

Please note that we have a reciprocal arrangement with the **Holst Society**, whereby Friends of the HBT are entitled to a 40% discount on membership of the Society. More details can be found on their website at <http://www.holstsociety.org/>.

If you would like to become a **Volunteer** at the Museum, and thus a Volunteer Friend, please contact the Volunteer Coordinator, Jenny Fortescue, at volunteers@holstmuseum.org.uk or 01242 514627.

We would like to be able to deliver this newsletter exclusively by email where possible, which would save us both postage costs and effort. If **any readers** (whether already on our mailing list or not) would like to take up this option, please email membership@holstmuseum.org.uk.

Tom Clarke



4 Clarence Road
Cheltenham
GL52 2AY

Curator: Laura Kinnear
email: curator@holstmuseum.org.uk
Learning & Admin Coord: Lucy Moriarty
email: learning@holstmuseum.org.uk
Newsletter editor: Mike Jenkinson
email: newsletter@holstmuseum.org.uk
Website: www.holstmuseum.org.uk
Registered Charity No. 1078599

The Trustees are most grateful to the following:

President:

Martyn Brabbins

Patrons:

Lord Berkeley of Knighton CBE
Dame Felicity Lott
Adrian Partington
Dame Patricia Routledge
Jeff Wayne

Supporters:

Cheltenham Borough Council
Willans LLP