

**AGENDA ITEM 8f**

**TAVISTOCK MUSEUM CHARITABLE TRUST**

(website [www.tavistockmuseum.co.uk](http://www.tavistockmuseum.co.uk)- password sale1911)

**MINUTES OF TRUSTEES MEETING HELD IN THE SUBSCRIPTION LIBRARY,**

**COURT GATE ON THURSDAY 2nd MARCH 2017**

	<b>Present</b>	Mr. T. Young (Chairman) Mr. R. Martin (Museum Secretary) Mrs. B. Watson Mr. P. Croucher	Mr. K. Shorter Mrs. L. Elliott Mr. M. Tosdevin (Advisor)
<b>Item</b>	<b>Minutes</b>	<b>Actions</b>	
<b>1</b>	<b>Apologies for Absence</b>		
	Mrs. S. Davies Mr. P. Gallie (Museum Treasurer), Mrs. P. Warne, and Mr. T. Kerswill		
<b>2</b>	<b>Minutes of Previous Meeting on the 17th November 2016</b>		
	Agreed as correct.		
<b>3</b>	<b>Matters Arising from Last Minutes</b>		
	Mrs. Watson was confirmed as a trustee. Mr. Martin reported that the both the grant applications to the Royal Society and to the Town Council for funding towards the Canal Bicentenary exhibitions and events had been unsuccessful. Other matters are dealt with under the relevant headings.	<b>All to Note</b>	
<b>4</b>	<b>Report on Museum Management</b>		
	Mr. Martin presented the Spring 2017 annual report which looks back over 2016 and ahead to our proposals this season. This document was approved by the trustees. The expenditure figures for last year will be added when the audit report is received. The purchase of the new computer has allowed a new start to be made on the archiving. Two volunteers have expressed an interest in the Modes digital archiving. Both received some initial training from Sadie Green when she visited earlier in the week.. The museum re-opens on Saturday 25th March 2017. The main exhibitions this year will be the 'Bicentenary of the Tavistock Canal' and the 'WW2 Liberator Crash on Plasterdown' (Robert Jones). A feature of the exhibitions this year will be nine large photographs taken by local photographer James Bird showing the inside of the Tavaistock Canal tunnel.	<b>PG/ RM</b>	

	<p>Additionally three displays (Canal Boats, Dartmoor Air Crashes and the Liberator Crash on Plasterdown) and a large Tavistock Canal map have been designed and were at the printers.</p> <p>A set of stocks has been made and young people will be challenged to try them for comfort. Also the drawing table for younger children which proved very successful last year has been re-located to a larger space within the alcove at the top of the staircase.</p>	
<b>5</b>	<b>Report by Treasurer</b>	
	<p>Mr. Gallie has advised in an email that to the time of the meeting there was £7,524 in the museum current account and £776 in the museum grant account.</p> <p>To date this year the banked sales income was £1,137, and private donations £250 giving a total income of £1,387. Expenditure principally on re-plastering, painting, carpentry and new computer was £2,457.</p> <p>Mr. Martin stated that he was working to a reduced budget of £1000 for the exhibitions. This included £200 for the purchase of the nine tunnel photographs.</p>	
<b>6</b>	<b>Small Grants</b>	
	<p>It was noted that whilst the Trust's two principal funding applications had been unsuccessful the appeal which Mrs. Elliott made to local organisations has resulted in two significant donations. The new desk-top computer has been purchased with donations of £300 from Tavistock Lions and of £250 from the Bedford Lodge of the Masonic. The Trust extends its thanks to both organisations, and has invited them to visit.</p>	<b>RM</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>Accreditation</b>	
	<p>Mr. Martin reported that our next accreditation submission has been set for July 2018. As stated in the previous minutes it was the intention of the Trust to make a start on the documentation and to identify any potential shortcomings which will need corrective actions.</p> <p>Mr. Todevin advised that the accreditation requirements may be subject to modification during this year.</p>	
<b>8</b>	<b>Film Project</b>	
	<p>There was another lengthy discussion about the film project. Unfortunately there are very different views both on the need for a new film, and its possible content.</p> <p>The Forward Plan submitted for accreditation in 2014 proposed the film as a measure to provide a facility for disabled people and anyone who could not get up the stairs to the first floor. In practice the stairs have not proved to be the problem it was thought it might have been.</p> <p>A budget of £5k is considered necessary for a professionally made film of ten minutes duration. Initially it was thought that ten museum objects could be identified and related to the wider history of the town thus broadening the appeal of the film.</p> <p>Mr. Tosdevin advised that for accreditation there will need to be a very good alternative case for not going ahead with the film. Mr. Young offered for his son-in-law to take some pictures of museum objects with the purpose of opening the discussion on the content of the film should the Trust decide they wanted a new film. This was agreed.</p>	

<b>9</b>	<b>Any Other Business</b>	
	Guildhall Refurbishment - Mr. Young who is the museum representative on the Tavistock Heritage Group advised that he had recently had a telephone conversation with the Town Clerk who gave him an update on the proposals for the Guildhall. These remain largely unchanged but obtaining all the funding necessary was proving difficult, and there had been some setbacks. Mr. Young was pleased to offer our support.	
<b>11</b>	<b>Any Other Business</b>	
	No other matters were raised.	
<b>12</b>	<b>Next Meeting</b>	
	The next trustees meeting will be held later this year.	<b>All to Note</b>

# TAVISTOCK MUSEUM

Charity Registration No.1098266

Annual Report - Spring 2017



**Spring 2017**

# TAVISTOCK MUSEUM

## ANNUAL REPORT – SPRING 2017

The report contains a brief summary and the audited accounts for the 2016 season, and looks ahead to our 2017 season.

### 1 Last Season (March – October 2016)

The Museum Management Committee (MMC) is pleased to report that the 2016 season has been another excellent year for the museum. A count of entries in the visitor’s book shows that the museum was open on approximately 215 days between the 27th March and the 31st October, and there were 8,213 visitors. On account of fine dry weather the museum remained open in early November when a further 383 visitors were recorded.

	<u>2013</u>	<u>2014</u>	<u>2015</u>	<u>2016</u>
March	254	294	95	334
April	813	885	665	869
May	1083	895	792	919
June	853	923	851	942
July	1071	1166	1192	1355
August	1302	1751	1601	1616
September	1151	869	980	1241
October	<u>783</u>	<u>782</u>	<u>984</u>	<u>937</u>
	7310	7565	7160	8213

The visitor numbers this year shows a significant increase on the three previous years. Factors which would have helped boost our visitor numbers were the improved museum signage, our better leaflet

distribution, and the impact of a number of town events held during the year. As in previous years there were wide daily fluctuations due to the weather. Attendances being low when the weather was really hot but were boosted by cloudy and showery weather. Saturdays remain our busiest day, and Mondays and Fridays the least busy.

Our exhibitions were 'Commemorating the Opening 75 Years Ago of Harrowbeer RAF Station at Yelverton' (Mike Hayes) and 'Weddings in the Past' (Linda Elliott). Both exhibitions have been praised by our visitors. There were 296 replies to our visitor survey which is attached to this report. The majority of visitors enjoyed their visit and all considered our stewards had been welcoming and helpful.

Our visitor donations in 2016 were £4,493 (which amounts to 53p per person). This compares with £3,222 in 2015 and £4,672 in 2014. Our income in 2016 from museum shop and outside sales was £8,251. This compares with £6,527 in 2015 and £4,652 in 2014. At the close of the year the museum had approximately £8,800 in its bank accounts. It is disappointing to record that in 2016 the museum was unsuccessful in all its grant applications to regional funders and to the local authorities. However we did receive a donation of £750 from the SGBI scheme (awarded in 2015 for museum sign), and £300 from the Tavistock Lions for which we are most grateful.

The museum has been involved with a number of town events. In May 2016 there was a historic tin working conference held in Tavistock, and on the 25th July 2016 the debut of the Man-Engine before starting its journey down through Cornwall to arrive at Geevor a fortnight later. This giant size 'transformer' was promoted by Cornwall Council to celebrate ten years of the mining world heritage site. The event brought national publicity to the town. In 2016 the museum hosted four of its own events; in conjunction with the Subscription Library a surprise birthday party for Graham Kirkpatrick to celebrate his 90th birthday (12th September 2016) organised by Sarah Smith, a donation to the museum by local inventor, Joseph Toland, of a disk recording his researches, an assemblage in Guildhall Square of nine WW2 military vehicles organised by Peter Gallie as part of Tavistock Heritage Festival, and finally a well-attended Christmas gathering of the museum volunteers at the Queen's Head, Tavistock.

In January Sue Davies, our long-serving museum manager resigned. Sue had been responsible for the running of the museum since 1985 when it first opened. It is very much due to Sue that the town has a museum today. This season approximately fifteen persons have been involved in stewarding on a regular basis. Our thanks go to Roderick Martin, Paul Croucher and Gary Peters for managing the archway books, Ann Pulsford for delivering our endless stock of bric-a-brac, Margaret Blowey and Barbara Watson for providing many plants for sale, Trevor Kerswill for running the museum shop, Irene Evans for distributing museum leaflets, and Sarah Smith for stewarding support on Sundays. Linda Elliott has given a number of talks to outside organisations and organised a group of U3A members who wanted to learn more about the history of Tavistock. She also arranged a month-long exhibition on the 'Traders of Tavistock' at the Tavistock Library to coincide with the Heritage Festival Weekend. The museum again funded a poster outside the Town Hall for this event. The museum was hired for the evening by a number of paranormal groups.

The museum has not undertaken any major building works this year but did complete the carpeting of the three rooms at the back of the cottage. This effectively completes Stage 3a of the building works. Also an outbreak of dry rot in the old pantry at the museum shop was successfully treated and replacement skirting installed.

Linda Elliott and Margaret Blowey prepared a catalogue of the Peter Tavy archive received last year. The majority of this local archive is now lodged at the West Devon Record Office. This year the museum took possession of a collection of documents and photographs from the late Gerry Woodcock. Some purchases were made at auction including a Drake Statue medallion and a large collection of Armada and Drake commemorative plates. The museum also purchased a Marie Pearce miniature which was for sale on the internet.

## **2 Next Season (March - October 2017)**

The museum will re-open on Saturday the 25th March 2017.

In its 2017 season the museum will aim to maintain its visitor numbers (target - 9,000) and maintain the levels of its income from the visitor donations (target - £5,000) and museum shop/archway sales (target - £10,000).

The main exhibitions will be 'Commemorating the Bicentenary of the Tavistock Canal', and the 'WW2 Liberator Crash on Plaster Down'. The Bicentenary exhibition will include an amazing collection of photographs taken inside the canal tunnel by local photographer, James Bird. These have been enlarged to show the jagged profile of the tunnel. Our exhibition will be coupled with a programme of towpath walks, poetry readings and talks in association with other town organisations. The Liberator Crash exhibition will be linked to the unveiling of a new plaque on Plaster Down in early April. The museum will also be challenging younger people to try a new set of reproduction stocks.

A key objective next year will be to expand the digital archiving and set up a designated computer for our archiving of records. Also to carry-out further replacement of porous plaster affected by damp and hopefully make a start on the outside courtyard.

**APPENDIX 1 – LIST OF TRUSTEES AND MMC MEMBERS**



Mrs. Julia Whitcomb was re-appointed by the Tavistock Town Council as their representative to the Trust.

**Trustees (as of February 2017)**

Tom Young (Chairman)

Paul Croucher

Linda Elliott

Sue Davies

Jenny Metcalf

Trevor Kerswill

Peter Gallie (Museum Treasurer)

Keith Shorter

Pat Warne

Barbara Watson

Roderick Martin (Museum Secretary)

Mark Tosdevin (Plymouth Museum) – Museum Advisor

**Museum Management Committee (as of January 2017)**

Sue Davies (Museum Manager)

Linda Elliott

Trevor Kerswill

Peter Gallie (Museum Treasurer)

Roderick Martin (Museum Secretary)

Jane Young

Paul Croucher

Irene Evans

Kevin Dickens (Photographic Manager)

Sarah Smith

Gary Peters

The Trustees and Museum Management Committee gratefully acknowledge the support they have received during the year from the Tavistock Town Council and the Tavistock & District Local History Society.

## APPENDIX 2 – ANNUAL ACCOUNTS FOR 2016

<b>1</b>	<b>Income</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>p</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>p</b>
	Private donations	500	00		

Museum shop and other sales	8318	99	
Entry donations	4492	57	
Grants	750	00	
	-----		
	14061	56	14061 56

**2 Expenditure**

Building repairs and renewals	2921	43	
Insurances	1403	12	
Subscriptions	179	60	
Stationery	64	89	
Telephone	395	86	
Advertising	612	20	
Electricity	1752	43	
Water	231	00	
Equipment (incl. exhibitions)	3170	87	
Volunteer training	800	00	
	-----		
	11531	40	11531 40
			-----
<b>Income Over Expenditure</b>			<b>2530 16</b>

**3 Bank Accounts**

Closing balance 1st January 2016	£9371.73
----------------------------------	----------

Closing balance 1st January 2015

£6841.57

-----

£2530.16

## **Tavistock Museum - Visitor Survey 2016**

### **Introduction**

This season the Tavistock Museum was opened on about 210 days (27th March - 31st October) and there were 8273 visitors entered into the visitor book at the reception desk. The busiest day was Saturday and the least busy were Monday and Friday.

The number of Visitor Questionnaires completed and returned was 296, approximately twice the number last year.

### **Responses to Questions**

#### **1 About Your Party**

328 males and 403 females (i.e. representing about 8% of visitors))

59	Under 11
35	Aged 12-18
36	Aged 19-24
59	Aged 25-34
164	Aged 35-54
357	Aged 55 plus

**2 Where Do You Live?**

- 75 Within 30 minutes drive
- 36 Elsewhere in Devon
- 154 Elsewhere in the UK
- 29 Overseas

**3 If on holiday what is your accommodation?**

- 45 Caravan / camping
- 47 Self catering
- 52 B & B / guesthouse / hotel
- 39 With family or friends
- 2 Second home

**4 Are you visiting the museum?**

- 73 Alone
- 182 With family
- 39 With friends
- 2 School / college / organised group

**5 How did you find out about the museum**

- 227 Just walking by
- 27 Personal recommendation
- 13 Already knew about it
- 11 Website
- 11 Leaflet
- 6 Local paper

**6 How did you get to Tavistock today?**

- 206 By car / motorcycle
- 35 On foot
- 31 By bus
- 16 By coach
- 6 By bicycle

**7 What were your main reasons for visiting museum today**

- 117 Interest in local history
- 61 Interested in finding out more about the town
- 49 Museum looked interesting / curiosity
- 16 Showing children / visitors museum
- 16 Finding something to do
- 12 Specific WHS / mining interest
- 10 Current exhibitions
- 9 Getting shelter from the rain

**8 How would you describe your visit?**

157 Excellent

130 Good

8 Satisfactory

1 Disappointing

**9 Were the stewards welcoming and helpful**

296 Yes

0 No

**10 What could be improved?**

56 Happy as it is, nothing

13 Better external directions / signage from car park

10 Improved disabled facilities / stairs

7 More for children i.e. quiz, treasure hunt

5 More artefacts, less posters

4 Information about modern Tavistock

4 More models and interactives

3 Bygone trades

3 Provision of tea, coffee, cafe

3 Bigger museum, larger shop area

- 2 More railway
- 1 Extended opening hours
- 1 Heating

**11 Have you visited this museum before**

- 22 Yes
- 274 No

**12 Would you come back?**

- 230 Yes
- 56 Maybe
- 10 No

**Comment**

The Visitor Survey findings are very similar to last year. The majority of our visitors are of the older generation, come into the town by car, visit with their family, and have a general interest in local history. Most come into the museum from seeing our external signs: so I think our new signs have been a sound investment for the museum.

Again this year we appear to be doing most things right as the majority of our visitors put the museum in the excellent / good category. Everyone considered our stewards helpful and friendly. As noted last year a concerning aspect is that the majority of visitors have not been to the museum before. This and other responses indicates that most of our visitors are on holiday rather than residents.



The majority of our visitors came into town by car: so the recently introduced £2 all day parking should benefit us. Again the number who came by coach is surprisingly low and contrary to indications from stewarding.

Visitors came up with relatively few suggestions on how the museum could be improved. However it is noteworthy that there was more criticism of the stairs than previously but praise for the exhibitions (although some thought the combination of a WW2 aerodrome and weddings somewhat unusual), for the films, and for the new colouring table area. Some of the visitor suggestions which are well worth following up: quiz for children, display of geological map of the Tavistock area, better labelling of the geological specimens, an improved trade tools display, and information about the modern Tavistock.

RM

November 2016