

New CEO: Why I value the Friends

Roly Keating, the Library's new chief executive, tells **Michael Leapman** how he approaches the challenges of "this amazing place"



On the day before I went to interview Roly Keating, just a month after he joined the Library as chief executive, he had been passing through the Entrance Hall and saw two of our volunteers at the Friends' recruitment desk. On a whim, he walked over, introduced himself and asked pertinent questions. The volunteers were flattered and delighted.

"I saw them sitting there and I just wanted to go up and say hello," he told me. "What the Friends do is of huge value to the Library. That extra injection of support for mounting an exhibition or a small or medium-sized acquisition can make all the difference... The Friends represent a vital community of supporters, people who care deeply about what the Library is and is for."

Keating comes to the British Library from the BBC, where he had worked for nearly 30 years. Although both are large publicly-funded institutions, many would say the resemblance ends there. So how, I asked, does his past career feed into his new position?

"It isn't as different as you might think," he replied. "Although the Library is unique and has an extraordinary mix of expertise and different professional cultures, there's a surprising amount that I recognise from life at the BBC. It's a very ethos-driven organisation, although every bit of it expresses that purpose in a different way. I recognise that sense of pride and fascination with what this amazing place is here to do."

"There's an awful lot of creativity here and that's the world I come from – cultivating creativity of different kinds. I feel at home with that. The surprise is just the sheer range of things the Library does; but even that shouldn't be so odd because, like the BBC, this is an institution which by its nature and its remit is interested in everything."

In the years when he was researching and producing factual television programmes he occasionally used the resources of the Reading Rooms – first at Bloomsbury and Colindale, then here at St Pancras. "Once I had to look at old editions of *Robinson Crusoe* for a TV documentary; and another time I found in the Sound Archive some extraordinary recordings of John Gielgud on stage."

He forged closer links with the Library in the last four years when, as the BBC's director of archive content, one of his principal tasks involved digitising the programme archive. "With that huge project I found that we were asking many of the same questions as the British Library. Both of us are in different ways collectors and accumulators of the national memory in both cultural and historical areas and were working out how to make it available."

That common interest led to a partnership agreement and such joint initiatives as the Listening Project, the series of personal conversations broadcast on Radio 4. "That partnership was one of the elements I was most proud of in my later years at the BBC. It's an excellent example of how public institutions do better when they work together." It also allowed him to meet some senior people at the Library and, in his words, this "was one of the connections that led to the conversations that led to me being here".

Keating is the first to admit that he comes to the British Library at a difficult time. The reduction of the Government grant forced his predecessor, Dame Lynne Brindley, to make cuts in staffing and other areas, and there will be more pain to come as the country struggles to emerge from recession.

"As I've said to the staff, I've been very impressed by the resilience with which this institution has confronted the inevitable challenge of the reduction of core public funding. Everyone is facing this at the moment. We're in a very very broad and deep recession and all organisations have had to cut back."

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We look forward to seeing you at the
Friends' Shopping Evening
Wednesday 28 November, 3 – 7pm

For details see page 6

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Close encounters at the lobby desk

Molly Lamphear relishes the unexpected joys of being a volunteer



When I relocated to London from Texas several years ago to begin life as a reluctant retiree, I searched

around for something interesting and worthwhile in which to involve myself. I also wanted to meet people in my new home town.

A friend who has been a Friend of the British Library for many years had read in the Newsletter that volunteers were needed to sit at the desk in the lobby. As a lifelong user of libraries – and because my daughter is a librarian – I thought this might be worth exploring. After an interview, I was accepted to begin my new 'job'.

Working as a volunteer approximately once a week truly has met my hopes and expectations. I've been introduced to some remarkably interesting fellow volunteers, and have had the opportunity to meet a great variety of visitors from all over the world. Of course there are times when activity at the Friends' desk is lacking but, as a naturally curious person, I take great pleasure in people-watching and engaging visitors in conversation as they approach the *Sitting on History* sculpture (pictured).

It must have been during my first month of volunteering that I had

a lovely experience. I was sitting at the desk with a colleague when we spied a fascinating visitor attired in spectacular blue robes and a headpiece that gave him great presence. We were quite excited when he came over to our table for a chat. We discovered that he was doing work as a conservator in Timbuktu, Mali, and had received a grant to train with the Library's conservation department. His desire was to go back to Mali and train others in ways to conserve the many priceless and precious manuscripts in private collections there.

Often I arrive early for my shift and have learned a tremendous amount by exploring the various permanent collections (the stamps are a source of endless excitement) and new exhibits. Recently, because I had spare time after desk duty, I wandered to the upper ground floor and delighted in the exhibit devoted to Jack Kerouac and the Beat Generation (*see opposite*).

This is the point of my volunteering experience with the British Library: it has stimulated me and reinvigorated me at a time in my life when this has been very important. I do encourage others to take advantage of this unique opportunity to assist in maintaining a truly vital part of Britain's heritage, while enriching their lives at the same time.

If you have spare time and would like to discuss becoming a volunteer, please contact the co-ordinator, Jean-Anne Ashton, on 020 8964 2292 or ashtonjeanne@aol.com.

Roly Keating interview (Continued from page one)

"Here there's clearly been a determination as far as possible to protect user-facing services. It's been tough for staff sometimes because they're committed to quality. But I've been struck by their resourcefulness in finding new ways of doing things, trying to protect Readers and visitors from the negative effects of the cuts as far as possible, by working harder or more innovatively behind the scenes and using resources more efficiently.

"But I don't know how much further that can go. There comes a point where you might have to make more visible cuts. I hope we don't get there... It will be my job at the top of the team here, working with all our supporters – not least the Friends – to spread the word about the value and range of what we do."

On the controversial issue of overcrowding in the Reading Rooms at certain times in the academic year, Keating believes that the Library is coping well with the friction this can cause between older, traditional users and the young students who come in increasing numbers.

"The Library is here to serve everyone who wants to do research and can demonstrate that they have a research project that rightly can make use of the resources that the Library has. Inevitably, with any public service based on a building there are limits, but on the whole I've been very impressed with the way this is managed. What I particularly love is that hum of diverse research going on here: there are some undergraduates and some who have been researching here for decades.

"It shows great social mix and you can see innovative patterns of research happening in the Reading Rooms, many of which are increasingly digital. That inevitably affects patterns of use but in the end I think it's the library of the future coming to life in front of our eyes."

He is touched by the welcome he has received from the staff. "People are united in love for the Library. Whatever the financial

challenges there's a great sense of shared determination to perform. I have been made welcome and I feel very much at home."

So saying he crossed the corridor into the boardroom, where the Digital Scholarship Department was holding an open day, showing some highlights from the collections. He spent time talking to curators and looking at the maps, stamps, eastern scrolls and other material they had brought along: making connections; learning on the job.

The editor would welcome comments on this interview for possible publication.

Nominations invited

Friends wishing to nominate candidates for the Council should do so in writing to the Honorary Secretary, c/o the Friends' Office, by Friday 14 December. Nominations should include brief biographical details of the candidate(s). The Nominations Committee will meet candidates early next year.

In addition, after five successful years in which he has overseen the reorganisation and reinvigoration of the charity, Lord Hameed's term of office as chairman comes to an end in March 2013. We are seeking a successor with the same high profile in public life and the same active commitment to the British Library and to the Friends, to carry the charity forward for the next five years. Members who would like further details of the post and who might be able to suggest suitable candidates are encouraged in the first instance to contact the Membership Secretary.

The war that failed to end wars

The Friends have given £20,000 to a collaborative project among ten national European libraries to digitise more than half a million items relating to the First World War, marking the centenary of its outbreak in 2014. For the first time, rare materials previously available only in individual libraries, documenting the experiences of combatants and civilians on both sides, will be brought together through a single online portal, quickly and easily available to historians and to the general public.

The British Library is a key partner in *Europeana Collections 1914–1918* and will contribute by digitising a considerable portion of its rare collections in this field. Among them are manuscripts relating to the war poets Wilfred Owen, Siegfried Sassoon and Rupert Brooke and the entire wartime output of Rudyard Kipling (pictured) and Arthur Conan Doyle, including hitherto unpublished letters and

drafts. The position of both these authors on the war was coloured by the loss of their sons in the field.

The Library will also be contributing material on wartime experiences in Britain's dominions and colonies. In particular, the records of the old India Office are a rich source of insights into the role played by the Indian Army in the fighting, and the relationship between British ministers and colonial administrators.

The Friends' grant will specifically support an associated learning and education programme to assist schoolteachers in accessing the material in a way that will engage students between 11 and 18. To this end a microsite will be developed enabling teachers to incorporate digitised primary sources into their lessons.

Although the project is partly funded by the European Commission, some £80,000 has to be raised by the Library. Says Alex



William Strang, Portrait of Rudyard Kipling taken from *A Series of Thirty Etchings...* 1901.

Whitfield, manager of the learning team: "The Friends' grant contributes to our overall match-fund target and greatly assists us in achieving it, helping us to deliver this exciting and significant project effectively."

A cartographical Dutch treat



A map of the Delft area from the *Atlas der Neederlanden*.

because it is strongly linked with the much larger 24-volume *Buedeker Atlaas* of 1600–1750, which the library has in its collection. Says Tom Harper, of the Cartographic and Topographical Materials Collections:

"Extensive study of the similarities and crucial differences between the two sets of maps will be made possible for the first time

The Friends have met the full £5600 cost of a newly-published facsimile of an historic Atlas of the Netherlands in the collection of the University of Amsterdam. Produced between 1650 and 1820, the nine-volume atlas contains 600 maps and the facsimile edition is limited to 125 copies.

The *Atlas der Neederlanden* is of particular interest to the British Library

through the acquisition of the facsimile. The British Library will be the only institution in the United Kingdom to possess the atlas for the use of researchers."

An inscription will be added in the front of the first or all of the volumes acknowledging that the facsimile has been purchased with a grant from the Friends.

No messing with us

At last, literary immortality for the Friends! Our vice-chairman, Christopher Wright, reports that we play a vital if brief part in Christopher Fowler's detective story *Bryant & May Off the Rails*. In the macabre tale, with moments of high comedy, the eponymous sleuths, based just around the corner from the Library, are pursuing a serial killer and track him down in the tunnels of our neighbouring tube station. At the climax of the tale the police make use of the Friends to defuse a potentially disastrous situation and Detective Arthur Bryant, the somewhat shambolic hero, testifies to our sterling qualities: "I wouldn't want to mess with them." The moral is to look very closely at the person standing next to you. They might be a murderer or, even more spine-tingling, a writer.

Correction

In Dr. Mary McAuley's article in the last issue on her visit to the State Public History Library in Moscow, she appeared to be saying that the Library's buffet served the best pastries in Moscow. This was an editing error. The word she had written was "pasties". The buffet does not serve pastries. Apologies.

An enthralling celebration of knowledge



Andrew Prescott reviews the Library's new flagship book

At a time when the value and future of libraries is frequently questioned, Michael Leapman's engrossing and beautiful *Book of the British Library* provides compelling testimony of the continued cultural importance of major research libraries. Leapman's

powerful opening chapter uses the Library's recent acquisition of archives by such English writers as Harold Pinter, George Bernard Shaw, Ted Hughes and J. G. Ballard to illustrate how the Library is not a fusty storehouse but preserves for future generations the means to explore and understand contemporary life.

The Book of the British Library is sumptuously illustrated, with stunning pictures of many of the Library's greatest treasures, ranging from the *Lindisfarne Gospels* to Mozart, Lewis Carroll, Karl Marx and beyond. A delight of the book are the illustrations of less familiar items, such as the sketch of Dalston Station by John Betjeman or a propaganda poster from Vichy France showing Winston Churchill as a cigar-chomping octopus whose tentacles grasp Africa and the Middle East. *The Book of the British Library* should not only be purchased by all Friends, Readers and visitors to the British Library, but a copy should be sent to every Member of Parliament, so that they better appreciate the importance of the Library's work.

Michael Leapman conveys the complex story of the British Library in a clear and entertaining fashion. This is the first historical survey of the Library to describe it in its new home at St Pancras, and is valuable for that alone. The story of the St Pancras building is as titanic and engrossing as the battles of those great nineteenth-century librarians

Panizzi and Madden, and Leapman's account of these stirring bibliographical episodes is even-handed and authoritative. It is surprising, however, that Leapman refers to Boston Spa as simply an off-site store in Yorkshire. The National Lending Library for Science and Technology established at Boston Spa under the redoubtable leadership of the scientist Donald Urquhart sought to reinvent information provision in Britain, and the subsequent history of the British Library is impossible to understand without describing that pioneering work at Boston Spa.

The story Michael Leapman tells here is very much an English one, and my only disappointment was that *The Book of the British Library* gives a limited sense of the Library's international character. The Library's astonishing European printed book collections are barely mentioned. It is just as amazing that the British Library has the only known copy of a 16th century Hungarian book in honour of Archbishop Cranmer or a unique collection of pre-revolutionary Russian bonds as that it has presentation pamphlets by Milton or the first edition of *Robinson Crusoe*. But this just shows how there is always more to discover in the British Library, and it is to be hoped Leapman will follow up this first enthralling *Book of the British Library* with another exploring more widely the international character of the Library's collections.

Andrew Prescott is Professor of Digital Humanities at King's College London. He was formerly a Curator in the Manuscripts Department of the British Library, and has written a number of books and articles about the Library and its collections.

***The Book of the British Library* is available to Friends for £12.50 – half the cover price – until 31 December. You can buy it at the Library Shop in person or online, using the voucher code BLBOOK1.**

When Conan Doyle was all at sea

Andrew Lycett reviews the youthful exploits of a literary icon

Dangerous Work: Diary of an Arctic Adventure by Arthur Conan Doyle. (British Library Publishing, 368pp.)

In February 1880, the 20-year-old Arthur Conan Doyle took a sabbatical from studying medicine at Edinburgh University to act as 'surgeon' on board the whaling ship, the *SS Hope*, bound for the Arctic. During the five-month voyage he compiled a meticulous daily diary, which he complemented with evocative pen and ink drawings, some of them highlighted in water colour. (Not for nothing did he come from a noted family of artists which included the caricaturist Richard 'Dicky' Doyle.)

The British Library has published a handsome facsimile edition of this unpublished diary. Although Conan Doyle's writing is easy to decipher, it has also been transcribed and carefully edited by Jon Lellenberg and Daniel Stashower. The result is fascinating as much for its chronicle of the interaction between a bookish undergraduate and a company of weathered tars as for its often gory details of culls of seals and whales.

Conan Doyle fell into the sea so often that he became known as the "great northern diver". He earned the crew's respect by blackening the ship's steward's eye in a boxing bout (his main form of exercise). He was impressed by his shipmates' range of interests, recording "a typical conversation with the harpooners on zoology, murders, executions and ironclads".

With time on his hands he read widely, including Boswell, Goethe and Macaulay. At one stage he attributed a couplet to "Holmes I think". The editors rightly note this was Oliver Wendell Holmes, but they might have pointed out that this Boston writer provided the name for Conan Doyle's consulting detective, who first appeared only seven years later, after the author had become a general practitioner in Southsea.

The eeriness of the frozen north gave rise to one of his first stories, *The Captain of the Pole-Star*, published in January 1883, just after he started in Southsea. Later that year he lectured the Portsmouth Literary & Scientific Society on the Arctic Seas. It had been a formative trip in every way, and this edition of *Dangerous Work* does it proud.

Andrew Lycett is the author of Conan Doyle: The Man Who Created Sherlock Holmes (Phoenix).

The art and culture of a glorious empire



In the 332 years of its existence, from 1526 to 1858, the Mughal Empire spawned some of the most exquisite and powerful examples of Indian art. Many of these are held by the British Library, along with historically important texts from the period. Most were inherited from the old India Office Library, which in turn had incorporated the collections of the East India Company after it was wound up in 1873.

Some 200 of the finest Mughal holdings are on display in the Library's winter exhibition, *Mughal India: Art, Culture and*

Empire, which opened on 9 November and runs until 2 April 2012. They document an empire that, at its peak, covered most of what are now India, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh.

The founder of the dynasty was Babur. He is depicted together with three later emperors – Humayun, Akbar and Jahangir – at the feet of their common ancestor Timur, in an image that dates from 1620. Also on display is a manuscript of his memoirs, written in an idiosyncratic style and describing, among other things, his decision to give up alcohol.

"It's a very personal memoir," explains Dr. Malini Roy, Curator of Visual Arts at the Library, who is curating the exhibition. "It has a lot about flora and fauna and events at court. At one point she writes about an attempt to poison him and the punishments imposed on his cook and food taster. One was skinned alive and the other trampled by elephants."

Akbar, who ruled from 1556 to 1605, was one of the greatest of the emperors. As well as in the composite painting, he appears in a folio from a manuscript created in 1595, in a scene that will delight modern-day opponents of hunting. Horrified by the slaughter of the animals surrounding him, he orders it to stop, and rules that those animals captured but not yet killed should be set free.

Animals figure, too, in some of the exhibition's other highlights. From the first decade of the 17th century comes *Squirrels in a plane tree* (pictured left), a delightful composition including elements borrowed from western art, then being seen in India for the first time. It is remarkable for the artist's naturalistic depiction of the squirrels running up and down the tree.

From the same period comes a scene from a book of fables produced for the future Emperor Jahangir. It shows a fox being crushed between two fighting goats.

One of the latest exhibits is a painting of 1817 that shows part of the Red Fort in Delhi (pictured below). By the beginning of the nineteenth century the Mughal Empire had virtually disappeared, and the rule of the emperors held sway only inside the Red Fort. It ended in 1858 when the last emperor, the 83-year-old Bahadur Shah Zafar, was imprisoned by the British, then exiled to Burma for his role in Indian rebellion. As one empire vanished a new one was established, though destined to be shorter-lived.



Dr. Roy makes the point that it is all essentially aristocratic art. Although the items on show open a window into a fascinating world, there is nothing that throws light on the lives of ordinary Indians. Maybe that helps explain why the empire declined and virtually disintegrated during the eighteenth century.

Kerouac's long, long road

One of the more unusual exhibits to grace the Library's Folio Society Gallery went on display in October. The American writer Jack Kerouac, a leading light of the 1950s Beat Generation, wrote his novel *On The Road* on a continuous sheet of architectural tracing paper that he found in the apartment where he was staying in April 1951.

He cut the paper to the correct width and fed it into his typewriter as a continuous roll, explaining that he did not want his train of thought interrupted by constantly having to change the paper. He finished writing the novel in three weeks – fuelled, he said, only by coffee.

The complete manuscript, typed in single spacing with a number of deletions and emendations, measures 120 feet. The Library is displaying the first 50 feet in a specially constructed

case. Surrounding it are photographs of the young Kerouac and his circle of fellow writers, poets and musicians. First editions of his books and those of some contemporaries are also on show, and visitors can listen to recordings of him and others reading from his work, as well as of contemporary jazz and other music.

A surprise visitor to the press preview of the exhibition was the musician and composer David Amram, a friend of Kerouac's from the early years, who identified himself in one of the blown-up photographs in the gallery. He said that Kerouac – who died in 1969 aged 47 – would have been delighted that his scroll was being exhibited in such a prestigious institution, because he constantly fretted that his work was regarded merely as the transitory outpourings of a Beatnik and he yearned to be taken more seriously.

The exhibition runs until 27 December.

A wealth of winter warmers to choose from

There are visits and events to suit every taste and interest to carry Friends over the winter until March. To book for them, please use the form enclosed with this Newsletter. There is no need, though, to book for the Christmas Shopping evening or the Annual General Meeting: we are hoping for large turnouts for both.

ANNUAL CHRISTMAS SHOPPING EVENING

Friends' Room
3rd Floor, British Library
Wednesday 28 November, 3pm-7pm
Free, no need to book

After the disappointment of last year's cancellation, we are pleased to be able to run this much enjoyed social event. Friends will again be entitled to a 20 per cent discount in the Shop (some exclusions apply) as well as mulled wine, mince pies and more.

NEW CONSERVATION VOLUNTEER

British Library Centre for Conservation
Tuesday 4 December, 2pm, Free
Limit 25 places

The third overseas' conservation volunteer sponsored by the Friends is Luis Enriquez Vazquez. Nearing the end of his three-month attachment to the Centre for Conservation he will tell us what he has gained from the experience and how it will relate to his work when he gets back home.

THE BOOK OF THE LIBRARY

British Library Centre for Conservation
Monday 17 December, 2pm, £3.50
Limit 25 places

Michael Leapman, the author of the Library's new flagship book (see review on page 4) will describe how he went about distilling the Library's massive holdings into a book of only 70,000 words. He will be introduced by David Way, head of the Library's publishing arm. The Friends contributed £5000 towards the book's costs, allowing an exceptionally high standard of production. The book is still available to Friends at £12.50, half the normal cover price.

OLD VIC BACKSTAGE TOUR

The Cut, London, SE1
Wednesday 16 January, 10.30am, £13
Limit 20 places



The Old Vic is one of the best-loved theatres in the world. Nearly all of our greatest actors have played there in its 192-year history, among them

Laurence Olivier, Peggy Ashcroft, John Gielgud, Ralph Richardson, Judi Dench, Maggie Smith, Albert Finney, and Peter O'Toole. Since opening in 1820 as the Royal Coburg Theatre it has gone through many changes of style and ownership but has generally reverted to the production of serious, exciting drama – a tradition brilliantly sustained and enhanced by its present artistic director, Kevin Spacey. The stage door manager will take us on a journey through time as he shares some of the secrets of this historic building.

KEW BRIDGE STEAM MUSEM

Brentford, TW8
Thursday 24 January, 2pm, £14
Limit 20 places

The Kew Bridge Pumping Station was originally opened in 1838 by the Grand Junction Waterworks Company, following a decision to close an earlier pumping station at Chelsea due to poor water quality. In the years up to 1944 the site expanded, with the addition of more steam pumping engines as well as four Allen diesel pumps and four electric pumping sets. Today the site is an internationally recognised museum of steam engines and a reminder of the many pumping stations that once operated throughout Britain.

BRITAIN'S MUSICAL TRADITIONS

British Library Centre for Conservation
Friday 1 February, 2pm, £8
Limit 25 places

As reported in the last issue, the Friends have made a grant of £10,000 to enable the Library to digitise selected recordings from the Peter Kennedy archive of musical traditions from the British Isles. Picking up from work begun by Cecil Sharp and Ralph Vaughan Williams in the first decades of the twentieth century, Kennedy, who died in 2006, started recording in the early 1950s. In just over 50 years he amassed a collection of audio and video recordings amounting to approximately 1500 hours, plus several hundred photographs. In this talk Janet Topp Fargion, curator of world and traditional music, will tell us about the archive and the work the Library has done to make it available to everyone.

ROYAL BALLET SCHOOL MUSEUM

White Lodge, Richmond Park, TW10
Wednesday 13 February, 1.30pm, £10
Limit 16 places



White Lodge Museum and Ballet Resource Centre is the first dedicated ballet museum in

Britain. It is housed within a Grade I listed building, now the home of The Royal Ballet Lower School. We will learn about the daily life of students at the school, the history and development of classical ballet and the fascinating story of White Lodge itself. Displays feature material from the Royal Ballet School Collections, including Margot Fonteyn's shoe, the death mask of Anna Pavlova and the school reports of famous alumni.



ALL HALLOWS BY THE TOWER

Byward Street, London, EC3
Tuesday 19 February, 2.30pm, £10
Limit 30 places

The Saxon Abbey of Barking founded the church of All Hallows by the Tower in 675. An arch from the original Saxon church remains. Beneath it is a Roman pavement, discovered in 1926, evidence of city life on this site for the best part of 2000 years. Following their execution on Tower Hill, many beheaded bodies were brought into the church, including those of Thomas More, Bishop John Fisher and Archbishop Laud.

In 1940 the church was bombed and only the tower and the walls remained, but the late Queen Mother laid a new foundation stone in 1948 and attended the re-dedication service some nine years later. *(More visits opposite)*

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND LECTURE

British Library Conference Centre
Monday 4 March, 5.30pm (lecture at 6.30)

Free, no need to book



We are pleased to announce that Dame Penelope Lively (*pictured*) will be our guest speaker for the annual lecture. More information will be sent out in a separate mailing in the new year.

BRITISH POSTAL MUSEUM STOREHOUSE

Debden Estate, Loughton, Essex
Thursday 14 March, 2pm, £10
Limit 20 places

The storehouse displays a range of items from small objects – office equipment, scales and balances, telephones – to the national collection of letter boxes, numbering more than 200, and a fascinating array of motorised vehicles. It provides a great way of seeing parts of the collection that would not be possible within a traditional museum environment. The tour will last approximately two hours.

WILLIAM MORRIS GALLERY

Walthamstow, London E17
Tuesday 19 March, 2pm, £12
Limit 30 places

The William Morris Gallery is in a Georgian house built in the 1740s, set in Lloyd Park in Walthamstow, north-east London. The Grade II* listed building was Morris's family home from 1848 to 1856. The only public Gallery devoted to William Morris, it reopened last August following major refurbishment. The Friends will enjoy a guided tour on a day when the Museum is not open to the public.



Report

In the footsteps of bishops



Once the summer palace of the Bishops of London, and later their principal residence, Fulham Palace is approached from Putney Bridge along an attractive riverside walkway. It leads to a bridge across a moat that it is thought might have been dug by the Vikings, for the site has been inhabited since Neolithic times. The palace was taken over by the local council after the bishops moved out in 1973.

Thirty Friends gathered in the Tudor courtyard, the oldest surviving part of the palace, with characteristic diamond patterns on the red brick. The rest of the building has been embellished frequently

over the years, with a Georgian wing and a Victorian chapel designed by William Butterfield. Two lottery grants have enabled some of the fine Georgian interiors to be attractively restored.

In the garden, we were shown a curious monument carved from the trunk of a cedar of Lebanon, depicting four of the most notable Bishops of London (*see picture*). Among them is the notorious Bishop Bonner, a Catholic, said to have tortured Protestant prisoners in the great hall of the palace during the reign of Queen Mary.

Another of the four is Bishop Compton, a keen gardener who imported some rare trees and plants from overseas in the late seventeenth century. Some of the species that he grew have been planted in the palace's extensive garden, now a public park. The walled garden contains a knot garden and a collection of dahlias named after bishops, which were in splendid bloom on the afternoon of our visit.

National Theatre discount offer

Written in 1635 by the Spanish dramatist Tirso de Molina, *Damned by Despair* is an exploration of faith and the transformative power of love, brought to life in a fast-paced version by Frank McGuinness at the National Theatre. Obsessed with his salvation, the hermit Paulo dedicates himself to ten years of prayerful penance. When his faith wavers, the Devil seizes the moment to convince him that he shares the fate of Enrico, a notorious Neapolitan gangster seemingly destined for damnation.



Friends can claim the best available seats (normally £32) for just £20, for any performance between 23 November and 17 December, subject to availability. For tickets, call 020 7452 3000 and quote "British Library offer", or book online at www.nationaltheatre.org.uk, entering the promo code P6912.

Prize Crossword

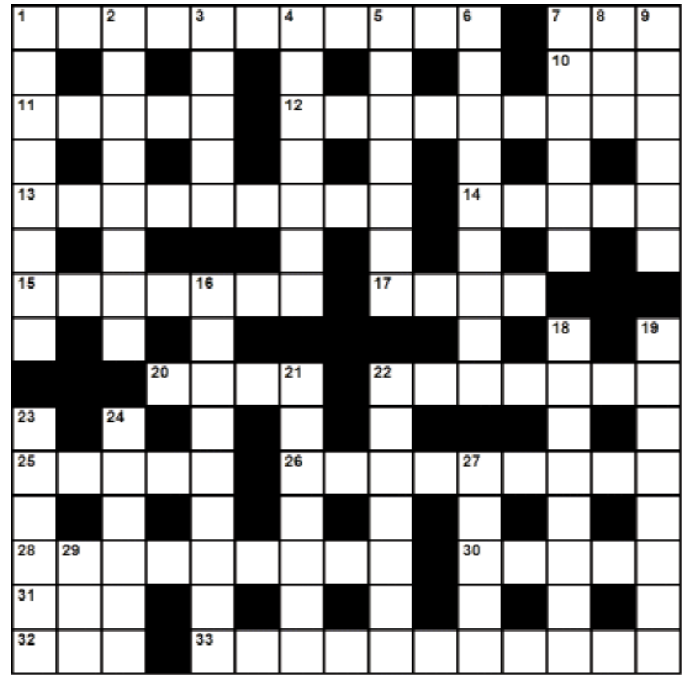
Win a family theatre treat



The sender of the first correct solution opened will win a family ticket (two adults and two children or one adult and three children) to the West End production of *Goodnight Mister Tom*, a play by David Wood from the much-loved novel by Michelle Magorian. Originating at the Chichester Festival Theatre, the play, described as “enchanting” by *The Independent*, follows a child evacuated into the

country during the Second World War and his friendship with Tom Oakley, an elderly recluse played by Oliver Ford Davies. Its West End run will be at the Phoenix Theatre in Charing Cross Road.

The prize family ticket, subject to availability, is valid for any performance except on Saturdays, until 9 December. Send entries to the Friends' Office at the address below, marking the envelope “Crossword” and including your name, address, membership number and an email address or phone number, so that the winner can be contacted quickly by the theatre's representative. Closing date is 20 November.



Across

- 1 A terminal process, less fluid than it sounds (11)
- 7 The law according to Mr. Bumble (3)
- 10 Payment in a safe environment (3)
- 11 Conscious of a conflict ending in the Orient (5)
- 12 Replaced your electronic reader? (9)
- 13 (with 22) Their key error, sir, is to upset a sweet northern pet (9,7)
- 14 Herein Norma metamorphosed into a dramatist (5)
- 15 Pleasant enough, though I blame a mix-up (7)
- 17 Approval on social media (4)
- 20 Too stuck up to get a proper grip (4)
- 22 See 13 (7)
- 25 Coward's talent is one that inspires (5)
- 26 When sorted, it is clear it appears authentic (9)
- 28 Showcase among dreaming spires (9)
- 30 Italian madam and no messing (5)
- 31 4 down with nothing at heart can squeeze the life out of you (3)
- 32 Ailing American state is cut off (3)
- 33 Osborne's role for Olivier (11)

Down

- 1 2016 is next (4,4)
- 2 Lyrical foursome (8)
- 3 Objects for turbulent times (5)
- 4 Carrier goes straight after a tune (7)
- 5 Ken will mix in this largely redundant vessel (7)
- 6 No puff for one of the virtuous majority . . . (3-6)
- 7 . . . unlikely to end up thus (6)
- 8 Look at this holy base (3)
- 9 Stay calm when putting 8 about slight reverse (6)
- 16 Steer well clear: don't make contact with it (9)
- 18 Tune to the turbulent Leninist (6,2)
- 19 After a mixed month, a song helps us relax here comfortably (8)
- 21 Blake's Satan didn't know it from the man (7)
- 22 Keeping fit? Here's a personal option (7)
- 23 Inside was a big oriental vegetable (6)
- 24 (with 27) Stupid little Harry makes new exhibition of himself out east (6,5)
- 27 See 24 (5)
- 29 Alternative to the rain in Spain (3)

Solution to Autumn puzzle:

Across: 8 Trying, 9 Ice house, 11 Let, 12 Bathroom, 13 Ersatz, 14 Effete, 15 Near miss, 17 Olympic, 19 Stadium, 22 Rousseau, 24 Delete, 25 Petrel, 28 Istanbul, 29 Ami, 30 Mot juste, 31 Creche.

Down: 1 Dreadful, 2 Michaelmas, 3 Ignore, 4 Diamond jubilee, 5 Relevant, 6 Dots, 7 As it is, 10 Her, 16 Mudslinger, 18 Idealist, 20 Untruths, 21 Jubilee, 23 Oberon, 24 Detect, 26 Raja, 27 Emu.

Winners of the autumn prize – tickets to the touring production of *Great Expectations* – were Ross Bourne of Salisbury, Donna Foster of Sutton and Elizabeth Woodruff of Seaford.

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