



WaterWords

Waterworks Museum News

Autumn 2023



Accreditation Accolade and "Wow-factor" Website !!

August gave us a refreshed website and October brought us good news from the Arts Council England, that we have been awarded full accreditation status as a museum. The future is looking bright!

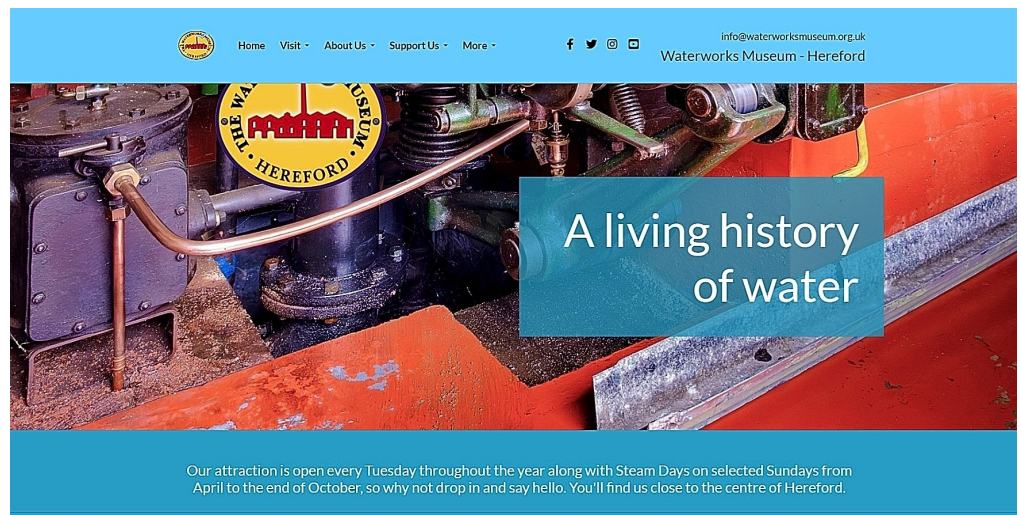
Full accreditation is the best result we could expect – the gold bar of the national standards and is the benchmark for well-run Museums and Galleries. It means that the Museum is properly managed and governed to the nationally agreed industry standard and shows the museum takes proper care of its collections, sharing them with visitors and keeping them safe for future generations.

Accreditation helps in opening doors to funding opportunities and will be significant in driving our vision forward to thrive and grow as a specialist museum. Being a working museum with one of the widest ranges of working engines in the UK and home to the UK's oldest in-situ working triple-expansion steam engine, we will be able to gain access to advice and funding to develop greater accessibility to the collection and support learning. The Museum educates across the spectrum - not just the story of water and engineering - but also deals with contemporary issues relating to the environment and sustainability.

Additionally, this accolade gives confidence to donors and sponsors who may wish to support the museum in preserving heritage and inspiring future generations.

Earlier in the year, Volunteer Andrew Apps offered to redesign the museum website for free. This coincided with a content and style review, using visitor feedback and Google Analytics, carried out by a small working group led by Mike Aitken.

The need to update the site became clear and the group agreed to focus on a refreshed design.



Today, choices about visits and access to the museum starts with digital technology and the group understood the general public will give only seconds before they decide to click away or stay! So, the focus was on showing what the museum has to offer, what events are planned and the cost of visiting. The aim was to make the home page attractive, easy to read and straightforward. However, not wanting to lose the large amount of research work and details about the collection was paramount and will be the next stage of the website refresh. Early indications have been very positive with greater public engagement and time spent on the site. Please do take a look at www.waterworksmuseum.org.uk, as members feedback is always very welcome.

The Summer Social and AGM

The Summer Social Barbeque and AGM were held at the Museum on Tuesday 18th July, and both events proved to be a great success. As part of the formal business of the AGM, four Resolutions were proposed and approved both by those present and those who submitted proxy votes.

Following the meeting, Jill Phillips, Chair of Trustee and Governance Director, had this to say;

"The July AGM saw the re-election of Trustees as the Museum's Governing Body - a vital and pivotal group of volunteers who oversee the Museum and its accountability.

During this year, however, Vicky Martin, Kathy Burrows, Brian Nelson and Richard Curtis have all stepped down and on behalf of all members, I say a BIG THANK YOU to each of them for their support and contributions over the years.

Vicky became our Dwr Cymru Welsh Water representative in September 2019 and immediately provided an encouraging and positive relationship with us all at the Museum. Whenever queries were raised, Vicky responded with both enthusiasm and a professional tone and gave us answers. Her support for the museum has been superb but due to her expanding workload she has secured another colleague to become the Trustee Representative, although she will continue to be there at the end of a phone!

Kathy Burrows joined the Trustee Group in the New Year of 2020 having been a regular, active volunteer on Tuesdays and Sundays. Her professional career at international and corporate management levels, has had a huge and beneficial impact across the whole museum. With marketing, social media and recruitment being her fundamental areas but only part of her remit! Her quiet approach and great awareness and observations of what needs to be done and how it affects individuals is a wonderful example for all of us, and she continuously helps to keep us all on track. Kathy is now focusing on her practical and regular volunteering roles, which is fantastic news for all of us.

Brian Nelson has a long history of support for the museum in several roles – some 39 years and still counting! His passion and interest have never waned and in his letter of resignation he gave a lovely comment, "This is in no way a goodbye, as all your work remains very close to my heart and playing my small part in its progress has been one of my proudest achievements".

Finally, Richard Curtis has decided that he will no longer serve as a Trustee. It is so good to hear that he is in remission and wishing to move closer to family, but this means he will be moving away from Herefordshire. Richard will continue to support the museum in the background and with remote research work.

Richard joined the Museum through Noel Meeke and became a Trustee having the skills and background as Company Secretary with Welsh Water - a good background to take the succession of Chair from Noel, which he did in 2016. Under his Chairmanship, the museum gained funding for the Heritage Water Park and each year the Annual Gala proved to be a great day for celebrating new acquisitions and displays from around the County and further afield. Prominent guests and the Mayor of Hereford opened such exhibits. All this changed dramatically with the onset of the COVID pandemic and Richard ably led the team of Directors to design and build on a host of alterations that would revamp the whole Visitor Centre and Museum. An outstanding achievement in a time of extreme change and uncertainty for everyone. Passionate about the museum and its volunteers, in 2023 the museum volunteers were recognised and rewarded with the QAVS – it was through the inspiration of Richard that this was recognised.

Back in 2021, Richard and I had a conversation about succession planning and the role of Chair and Vice Chair. I can recall his comment about wishing to continue in the immediate future post COVID time and that he envisaged being Chair for up to 10 years. Little did either of us know that in February 2022 we would be having a brutally candid conversation about his having to step down. Even with this trauma, Richard has stoically wanted to support the Museum Directors and Volunteers in driving forward with plans and having ambition for our future. May I personally, and on behalf of members, say a heartfelt thank you to Richard for his unstinting contribution to this Museum."

Chairman's Perspective—a revigorated focus!

Autumn brings an end to a busy season of visitors with around 200 strong of visitors on each of the steam days held in August and September, hopefully encouraged by the 'new look' website. We have also seen a growth in group visits and had a record 89 visitors on one Tuesday in September.

It is also the time when we look at winter maintenance and improvements we can make before the next season starts up in the spring. Gaining full Accreditation in October has given me a personal satisfaction but more importantly, a successful outcome for the Museum and Volunteer team. To me, it gives renewed vigour and inspiration to look at what we do and where we want to go. The award provides us with a solid base to state that we have a great leadership team and governance body of Trustees with a clear purpose, sound financial management with informed decision making across the volunteer team.

However, we cannot avoid the feeling that whatever we do, the main issue we face is that of generating income and that this needs some innovative and creative thinking to resolve. Reading through this edition of *WaterWords* give me confidence and assures me that we have the team, and the drive, to deal with the challenges ahead. We need to remain relevant to visitors and the public to survive – just like our engineer predecessors that took on the challenges of the past – we can support our visitors to look for solutions for the topical and contemporary issues of environment, energy transfer, resource use and sustainability for today.

As members, do consider what you can do to promote the museum and encourage visitors and celebrate all that we do here in the museum.

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Royal Garden Party

On 3 May 2023, former Chairman Richard Curtis and his wife Jan represented the Waterworks Museum at a Royal Garden Party at Buckingham Palace. The Museum became entitled to nominate an attendee following the receipt last autumn of the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service.

Richard Curtis said: "Jan and I were delighted when the Directors asked if we would like to attend the first garden party in the reign of King Charles. It was a privilege to be part of the celebrations and to see the King and Queen in Coronation week. The gardens of Buckingham Palace were glorious in the unexpected spring sunshine."



Richard and Jan on the big day.



The Hosts arrive!

Fondly remembered

Our Chair of Trustee and Governance Director, Jill Phillips expressed her sadness at the AGM on hearing of the loss of Alan Marshall, a very active past Volunteer.

Noel Meeke reflects on the his own experience of working alongside Alan, and the inestimable contribution he made to the Museum.

My first encounter with Alan was when he first walked into the Museum and said, "Who's in charge?" He was heartily welcomed and you knew straight from the start he was a person who would get things done.

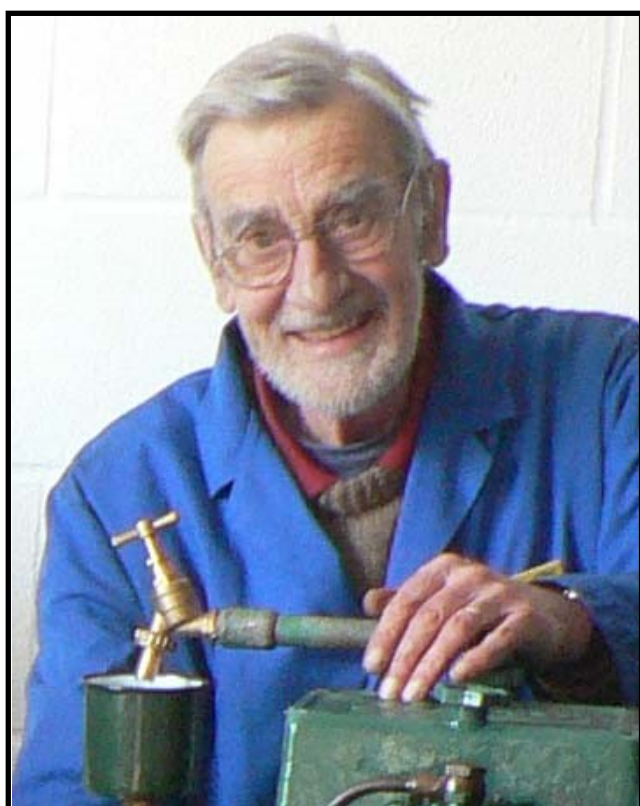
Alan was born in London, but the advent of WW2 saw him evacuated and he completed his education at Paisley Grammar School. His working life

Engineer at Ellistown Pipes Ltd (part of the Hepworth group). Ten years on and he sought an entirely new direction to become landlord of the Bateman Arms in Shobdon, following which he volunteered in a number of capacities.

One morning his charming wife, Tricia, heard me being interviewed on BBC Radio Hereford & Worcester, appealing for more volunteer engineers to join the Museum. The following Tuesday he popped his head round the door and joined the team straight away. As he said to me that morning, "I am now back as a fitter and turner but with sixty years experience!"

During his long time with the Museum, he and Clive Lafford worked together on many projects. You knew that whatever the pair took on, the outcome would always be better than you had expected. They worked as an excellent team and many finished projects in all aspects of the Museum that the visitor sees today, are the result of their high standard of workmanship.

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Alan Marshall

began in Ibrox, Glasgow as an apprentice fitter and turner, but within a year he had transferred to Guest, Keen & Baldwins, iron and steelworks in Cardiff, where he remained for the next thirty years. He continued his technical education part-time in Cardiff and gained membership of the IMechE. Over the years he was with the firm, he rose through the ranks until he became their Chief Mechanical Engineer.

With the closure of the firm in 1978, Alan joined the ceramic industry to become the Group Chief

Correction to item in Spring 2023 issue.

The Editor apologises for an error which appeared in the Spring 2023 issue of WaterWords.

Under Engineering & Site Activities on page 6, it was incorrectly reported that a new project had been started to showcase a recently restored pump set from the Brockington Estate, near Bromyard. The restored pump set, a rare example of a machine manufactured by Frank Pearn & Co of Manchester, was in fact recovered from Brockhampton Court, Fownhope and has since been restored by Museum Volunteers.

“... it was like visiting old friends!”



Picture courtesy of Liam Kirkham

Tony (aka Bill) Harrison visited the Museum in August this year with his Daughter, and was delighted to see so many Tangye machines in the Museum's collection.

I was brought up near the Tangye “Cornwall Works” in Smethwick, North Birmingham, and was with the company for an apprenticeship from 1946 to 1950. Doing my own thing among people who were on my wavelength was a breath of fresh air after a largely frustrating grammar school career.

The company was still owned and run by the Tangye family which had originally founded it in Cornwall in 1856 to serve the mining industry there. In its heyday, it had been world famous for heavy engineering, after playing a vital part in launching Brunel’s Great Eastern (then the world’s biggest ship) in 1858. The resulting publicity was said to have “launched” the company.

Although it had since lost much of this prestige, Tangyes was still a great place to get practical training: a wide range of skills was still operating there. I found it possible to influence my own progress through the various departments in the factory and offices. There was no dedicated training school. Apprentices did real work from day one in each of the workshops as they moved round the factory. Naturally, the work they were asked to do would depend on the level of skill and experience they had reached. There was a

minimum of detailed supervision but the “old hands” were mostly very helpful and proud to pass on their skills and answer any questions, as well as tell tales of engines they had built, or travelled to far flung parts of the then British Empire to install.

I was never “pushed” - motivation had to come naturally - but innovation was encouraged and the work was nearly always stimulating and challenging with freedom to pursue my own ideas. One day a week and several evenings were spent

at the local technical college studying for entry to the Institution of Mechanical Engineers.

I worked for part of my apprenticeship under Arthur Reynolds - a brilliant engineer - getting valuable experience in the design and practical development of advanced new products.

Arthur became my mentor and long term inspiration and friend, and we kept in touch until his death.

Towards the end of this time at Tangyes I was accepted as a Graduate Member of the Institution of Mechanical Engineers. I had been able to postpone National Service until the end of the apprenticeship, which gave me much better opportunities whilst in the RAF than I would otherwise have had. I have always had fond memories of my days at Tangyes, so at the age of 94 was delighted to be able to see so many of their engines again at the Hereford Waterworks Museum in August 2023: it was like visiting old friends.

Tony (aka Bill) Harrison
Birmingham, UK

Engineering & Site Activities

Chief Engineer Mike Glover reports on a very productive summer, with a wide variety of activities undertaken across the site and many projects completed. Work included:

- ⇒ Water pump reinstated in the pond on the forecourt;
- ⇒ Hedging planted along the rear boundary of the site;
- ⇒ Brockhampton building completed and now ready to receive the pump set and prime mover;
- ⇒ Paving completed in rear yard;
- ⇒ Easy Access ramp to Fire Escape completed;
- ⇒ General maintenance conducted.

Mike and the Volunteer Engineers have big plans for the Winter, including implementing recommendations from the recent Accessibility Report.

Museum Events, April to Sept 2023

The Museum welcomed visitors every Tuesday throughout April to September this year, and also opened its doors for three 'working' days and eight 'Steam' days over the summer weekends.

On Sunday 14th May the Kingston & Hereford Historic and Vintage car Club displayed 17 cars on the forecourt during our Steam Day. Twenty five members of the group attended, all keen to preserve the importance of their vehicles. The day was exceptionally successful, with Visitors and volunteers fully involved. On Sunday 24th September the Museum was delighted to host The Morris Car Club with Twenty-one members attending. Between them, they displayed twelve cars and a vintage lorry (illustrated on the right). The Club welcomed the opportunity to display their classic vehicles and thanked the Museum for such a well organised and stewarded day.



The Stirling Engines Society Exhibition and Working Display was also hosted on 24th September. Members of this group presented a fully-functioning, "Hands-on" engineering experience for visiting members of the public, by showcasing their exciting working models.



Undoubtedly, the display models engaged visitors with the 'science' and 'wonder' of these superb functioning engines.

School Visits

Since April of this year, pupils from the following Schools have visited the Museum, as part of their Key Stage 1 or Key Stage 2 studies:

- Lucton Primary,
- St Thomas Cantilupe Primary (x 2 groups),
- Tirlbrook Primary,
- Prestigne Primary
- Lord Scudamore Primary (x 2 groups), and
- Riverside Primary (x 3 groups).

In addition, eight students from Cathedral School Lower Sixth Form also benefitted from using the Museum and its facilities as a learning resource.

Group Visits

European Classic Cars

The European Group undertook a Rally in April, with a timed route from Swansea to Hereford. They arranged to use the Museum as a main assembly and display stop which coincided with our working day on Sunday 23rd April.

The group comprised of 25 vehicles of all makes, each with a driver and navigator.

The vehicles were marshalled on the forecourt, where Museum visitors were able to view the cars and talk to the owners. This event proved to be a highly successful day for both the Classic Car Group and the Museum's Visitor Centre volunteer stewards and Café Team.



"A Night in the Museum"

A "Sleep-over" took place in the Museum on Saturday 20th May involving a local group of very excited Beavers led by their Leaders, Steve and Emily Goss—who are also Museum Volunteers! The Beaver Pack spent their time in the Museum engaging in a variety of activities for their 'Badge Awards' and experiencing a night together as a camping group.

The Singer Motor Club

The Club hired the Museum and Visitor Centre as the base for their annual function for their members, on Saturday 15th July.

The day was a huge success and during the event the Museum hosted 21 cars and 40 members. Volunteers Derek Dutton and Keith Munn gave a talk to our guests about the history of the Water Works Museum and its collection of artifacts.



After a superb lunch provide by the Café staff, guests were split into small groups for a guided tour around the Museum stewarded by Keith, Derek, Mike Harries, Mike Glover and Neil Atkins.

All the Volunteers involved in assisting on the day did an excellent job of supporting our guests, outside marshalling cars and inside, serving lunch.

The guests thanked their hosts both from the Visitor Centre and the Café, for providing a most memorable day.

Key Dates & Information

★★★★★ Google Review

A recent visitor posted this review on Google, and gave us FIVE stars:

"Honestly, it was one of the best museums I've ever visited. Open Tuesdays."

Museum closed to the public for Winter Maintenance work.

The Museum is open to the public every Tuesday up to, and including, 19th December 2023. It will then close to the public for Winter Maintenance work and re-open to Visitors on Tuesday 6th February 2024.

Please be sure to check our website, www.waterworksmuseum.org.uk for the very latest information about forthcoming events.

Donations, Gifts & Grants

In August, the Museum received a bequest of £200 from the estate of Mr Clarence Attfield. Mr Attfield was a resident of Hereford and was a Member of the Museum until 2012.

On behalf of the Museum, the Treasurer Mike Harries, was successful in bidding for a Dwr Cymru Welsh Water (DCWW) Community Fund grant of £500 which has paid for two laptops and some network equipment. One of the laptops is allocated to the Archive Room to support the digitisation of the collection, and the other to the Reception in the Visitor Centre.



This fascinating miniature anvil was one of several items recently donated to the Museum Collection.

Welcome to our new volunteers

Since April 2023 a number of new volunteers have joined our ranks including:

Dominic Wilson Howe - Writer;
Jane Kent - Visitor Services;
Charlotte Potts - Visitor Services;
Pauline Garbett - Café;
Jane White - Admin and Visitor Services
Cathrine Stone - Admin & Social Media
Evan Boardman - Engineering, and
Jonathan Boardman - Engineering.

As always, a very warm welcome to each and all!

The Museum is keen to attract new volunteers, and if anyone would like to know more about current opportunities, please email us at:

volunteering@waterworksmuseum.org.uk

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Improving the Membership

The Trustees are currently considering how the membership offering can be improved to the benefit of both Museum and members. To this end, the Treasurer has recently sent out a survey to current members asking what they value from their membership, and get feedback on possible changes to the scheme. It is hoped that it will also provide an opportunity to solicit their memories of the Museum to contribute to our 50th anniversary celebrations!

Contact us:

Waterworks Museum - Hereford. Address: Broomy Hill, Hereford, HR4 0LJ

Email: info@waterworksmuseum.org.uk / volunteering@waterworksmuseum.org.uk

Telephone: 01432 342192

Website: www.waterworksmuseum.org.uk



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