

Hon Directors Report to the AGM 2019/20

The Museum had 3580 visitors during the 2019/20 season. As at 31st March we have 7 Hon Life Members; 18 Life Members; 6 Hon Patron Members; 1 Patron Member; 36 Single Members and 24 Family Members. There was a slight increase in Family Membership.

We thank our Membership for their valuable support and, in particular pay tribute to our volunteers for continuing in essential roles.

The Sumup card payment system was introduced on opening for the season. The Museum participated in the Richmond Town Ticket scheme.

In July the Museum passed Visit England accreditation and was again recommended for the Hidden Gem award and, in line with our Forward Plan, an Access Survey was carried out by Museum Development Yorkshire.

Significant repairs & maintenance were carried out within the year including reinstatement of the Discovery Center wall damaged by water ingress in 2017. In line with our Forward Plan arrangements were put in hand for external building redecoration and window replacement works.

Two successful exhibitions were held. One focused on the lead mining community at Hurst in Swaledale the other covering the life and works of William Sanderson, the local painter. A major deposit was received consisting of the trophies of Richmond Angling Society dating back to 1912. In line with the Forward Plan our collections audit progressed throughout the year.

Events held included group visits by U3A, Women's Institutes, the Teesdale Records Society and French and German exchange groups. The summer lecture series included a talk by Baroness Harris on the House of Lords. A Murder Mystery event also took place to raise funds.

The School Loan box scheme operated but at lower rate however a special lone box for a younger age group was produced for Hipswell school. Three work experience students were hosted; two from Richmond School and one from Risedale School. There was one school visit by Hunton school.

The Museum was represented at Welcome to Richmond meetings and at forum meetings of Museum Development Yorkshire. The Museum is a member of the Association of Independent Museums.

We were pleased to be granted an award in the Richmond in Bloom competition. This was presented to our Volunteer gardeners at our Volunteers 'thank you' evening in November.

As a rather sad note, we learnt in December that Anne Simpson, a long standing supporter of the museum who looked after organising the volunteers rota for many years was very ill and the Management Committee decided to award Anne The Honorary Fellowship of Richmondshire Museum in recognition of her service to the museum. Anne passed away in January 2020.

In March 2020 we entered the precautionary phase of the Covid-19 pandemic and withdrew from local events deciding not to open in April 2020 but to continue to employ our Museum Officer and our cleaner throughout the pandemic with their minimal attendance in the Museum.

Rod Issac stood down from the Committee and we thank him for his work over the last eight years. He is remaining as a Volunteer. Two new members were co-opted to the Management Committee; Mrs Lesley Tate and Mr Darryll Moore.