

Outreach

A Friends
of The National Archives

The newsletter of the Friends of The National Archives

Vol 4: No 6 December 2017

At the end of another year: The Chairman looks back

Tony Wakeford reflects on another successful year for the Friends.

Time seems to slip by ever more quickly and here we are at the end of another year and one that has seen us build upon past successes. Last summer we funded the *Somme Tales* project – students seeking inspiration from original documents to make a short film with Roger Kellaway, a professional film-maker. Early this year the film won an international award; a fine achievement and a very satisfying success for our funding.

This year we funded another project to enable Roger to work with a group of students to produce *Suffrage Tales*. This will be premiered in February next year. These projects are part of a scheme introduced a couple of years ago to promote partnership working between teams at The National Archives and ourselves, and to help with longer term planning by making funds more readily available up front and not hampered by the start-stop cycle of financial year planning.

This also applied to a project from last year when we funded the successful outreach drama project *Loyalty and Dissent* based on experiences of South East Asian experiences in the First World War. Again, this was based on using original documents as a source of inspiration for playwrights. This year we supported an extension of the project to turn the scripts into radio plays to make



Some members of Council, l to r: Cathy Quinn, Sara Hill, Lord Hennessy (our President), Tony Wakeford, Friends' member and our IT tech, Henry Wright, and Simon Gregor.

stories more accessible to a wider audience. These are now available at: <http://media.nationalarchives.gov.uk/index.php/tag/loyalty-and-dissent/>. The *Chronicles of the Reformation* was another successful project we supported this year when a professional artist worked with a group of students to illustrate stories from the original documents. Some of the remarkable artwork is showcased in the current edition of *Magna*.

In each case our funding has helped to create powerful pieces of work to open the Archives to new, younger and diverse audiences by highlighting the richness of the collections. While document related projects, such as our support for the ongoing transcribing of Royal Navy WWI crew lists, using archival material as sources of inspiration in new and innovative ways

is something I am keen to promote and extend. The Friends' role is to assist in making the records more accessible and unlock history for everyone.

One pleasing development has recently occurred with our agreement to fund a research fellowship next year. The Friends of The National Archives Fellowship will be an opportunity to suit an early career academic and enable a piece of bespoke

research to be undertaken that is linked to a particular need or issue for TNA. I am looking forward to this getting underway in spring next year. There will be an update in due course.

In August we sponsored the inaugural presentation of the summer lecture series. This was a series of five themed talks: *Secrets and Lies: Suppression, Distortion and Fiction in Past Societies*. The talks were well attended; the only aspect missing was the summer weather. The intention is to make this series an annual event.

We have been busy too with our practical support through our volunteers on and offsite transcribing records and helping to make them more accessible. We have also supported staff at various

(continued on page 2)

 FOLLOW US! @FriendsTNA
ftna.org.uk

MEMBERSHIP COUNTER

1144

**At the end of another year:
The Chairman looks back**
(continued from front cover)

events during the year on various meet and greet duties.

We celebrated our year with a well attended evening event at TNA on 5 December when members and staff gathered for the end of year 'thank you' event hosted by the Friends' Council. It was an opportunity to show our appreciation for all the voluntary help through the year to help to make the Friends a successful organisation. It was also a chance to thank staff for their interest and involvement with us – all working for the common good.

We had a splendid buffet and some delicious cup cakes with the Friends' logo courtesy of Eileen Wicks, our vice chairman. We were very pleased to welcome our distinguished guest, and the Friends' president, Lord Hennessy of Nympsfield. Peter Hennessy gave an interesting talk entitled 'Writing the history of one's own time', which was followed by a thoughtful Q&A session. The evening concluded with a book signing and was a fitting way to draw this year's endeavours to a close and put a spring in our step for 2018.

On behalf of Friends' Council, I send my best wishes for the Season and a happy and prosperous New Year.

Christmas Gifts

Membership of the Friends may also be a welcome and unusual gift for your history loving friend or family member. Membership brings lots of benefits, as you know, including a twice yearly magazine, regular newsletters like this, events, visits etc. As an encouragement we do offer a discount of £5 on the annual subscription for gift purchases. This means the cost could be as little as £12. You can apply online via our website.

The bookshop at Kew has lots of items suitable for giving away at Christmas (and other times of the year, of course). Don't forget your membership card for 20 per cent discount on most purchases.

And looking forward: The Chairman sets out the plans for 2018

Tony Wakeford summarises the Council's plans for the coming year.

Next year marks our 30th anniversary and we will be looking to mark it in diverse ways during the year. Although a relative newcomer (barely ten years next year) I am aware we have members who were not only there on 'Day One' but plotted and hatched the idea in the first place. Over the coming months we will be seeking reminiscences from those trustees and members involved over the years to highlight the activities of the Friends. I am grateful to those of you who have already made suggestions for events and I shall be following these up in the New Year.

At the recent meeting of the Trustees, we agreed and set down the plans for what we want to achieve next year. We intend a year of consolidation, finalising our work on governance, policies and working practices. One early challenge will be the change in data protection regulations and the need to contact all members to renew or revise permissions about the data we hold, how we use it and how members prefer to be contacted. Your assistance will be greatly appreciated in making this process as manageable as possible by returning the forms promptly to avoid precious time being spent chasing replies. Our administration is done on an entirely voluntary basis so will present organisational challenges. The data protection form will be circulated from

January onwards and the process must be completed before the regulations take effect in May 2018.

This last point raises a key issue for us in deciding if we need to change our charitable status so that we can be in a position to offer paid support at some point in the future. We will be seeking additional volunteers and intend to begin campaigning in the New Year. We are not looking for big commitments in time; rather we are seeking volunteers who can offer a couple of hours at a time to assist in various ways on a weekly or monthly basis. If we cannot increase our voluntary administration time to keep pace with the growing membership, then paid employment will have to be considered. I am concerned that at some point fairly soon it will become unreasonable and untenable to expect some aspects of our management to be carried out solely on a voluntary basis.

In 2018, we also hope to begin fundraising and introduce a legacy scheme, as highlighted at this year's AGM. We have introduced training for trustees and fundraising and this will continue in 2018. There is much to look forward to in 2018 – we intend to make it a defining year to celebrate 30 years of loyal commitment and dedication to the Public Record Office and The National Archives.

The Membership Team: January Renewals

At the time of writing, the membership team are gearing up for our busiest time of the year, when over 700 people are due to renew their membership. The majority of members have made arrangements to pay by standing order or by recurring annual payments through PayPal and this greatly helps reduce administration for the Friends.

We will be sending reminders to those members who have not made such

arrangements within the next week. You can now pay on the website with a debit or credit card using PayPal's guest check out facility. Please see the Home page, then the Renewals tab.

New membership cards will be issued in batches during January as payments are received and processed. If you have any questions about your membership, please do let Cathy know at membership@ftna.org.uk.

A big thank you from Friends' Council

A message about the December Talk and the TNA Archives at Night event.

Council would like to thank all of our supporters very much for all their help throughout the year. We would particularly like to thank the volunteer help who joined our vice chairman, Eileen Wicks, at TNA's Archives at Night event on 27 October. TNA's David Langrish and Lee Oliver officially thanked Elizabeth Prior, Barbara Radmore and Eileen for



Friends' helpers, l-r, Sue Dani, Eileen Wicks, Jane Buckingham and Elizabeth Prior who helped make our December Talk such a memorable evening – but with non-alcoholic drinks!



their help and assistance given to TNA staff. The ladies worked really hard and were excellent ambassadors representing the Friends, so Council would like to thank them too and for being there on our behalf.



The buffet and amazing Friends' cupcakes made and organised by Eileen Wicks, together with her helpers, who Council would like to thank very much for all their hard work at the Talk.

Important information about our website and emails

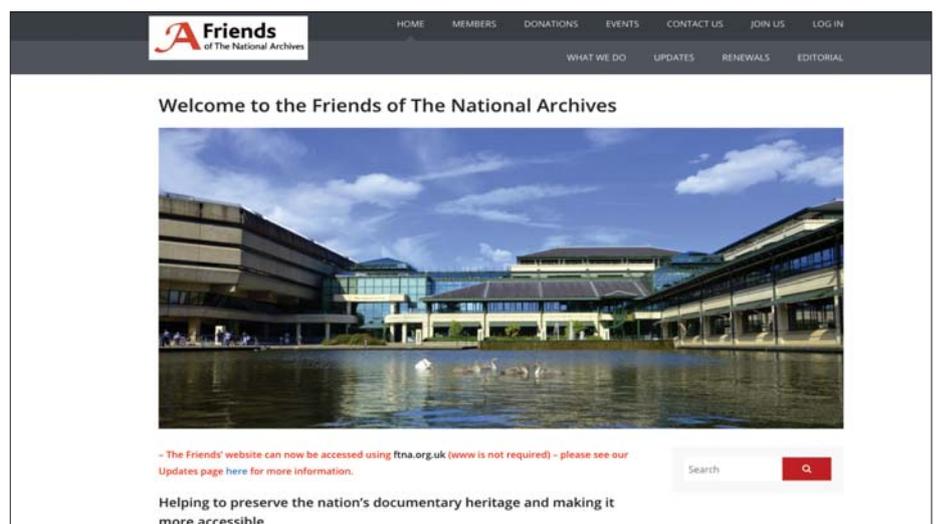
A message from the Editor regarding changes to the website and email addresses.

Website - we have changed the secure website domain name to ftna.org.uk. This is to provide easier access to the site by using this abbreviation (no www is required). Please would members update their bookmarks and favourites.

Emails – we are now using shorter email addresses with the suffix [@ftna.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@ftna.org.uk), so e.g. enquiries@ftna.org.uk. Please would members update their address book contacts.

For members – please always see the Home page of the website for **urgent or update messages in red** at <https://ftna.org.uk>.

Additional information – members can also find information on the Home page and Members' tabs of our website. This includes help with changing passwords for logging in, forms to download for the Standing Order payment option and Gift Aid



Declaration, members' new 2018 Bookshop code for their online discount with the TNA Bookshop, and a link to the Friends' Updates page.

For members and authors of *Magna* articles – please see the Editorial page

at <https://ftna.org.uk/editorial/>. This provides details of the next issues of *Magna* magazine and information for authors contributing articles in future editions.

Blythe House, London

A recent visit to the Science Museum Store at Blythe House.



Our chairman, Tony Wakeford, recently made a visit to the imposing Blythe House, near the Olympia Stadium in West Kensington, London. This Grade II listed building, formerly the Post Office Savings Bank, is a storage facility for the Science Museum, the British Museum and the Victoria & Albert Museum and holds a huge collection of items.

Tony was visiting to see a stored piece of audio equipment relating to the Second World War research undertaken by the Decca Record Company. They assisted Coastal

Command by recording the sound of submarines for training gramophone records and helped to distinguish the distinctively different sound of German U-Boats compared to their British counterparts. Tony is researching the history of the company during the war for a forthcoming book to celebrate Decca's 90th anniversary in 2019.

The building holds a treasure trove of items from all three museums. The Friends enjoyed a behind-the-scenes tour of the V&A's Beatrix Potter collection in October last year.

Bookshop – online discount Code for Members of the Friends

Friends receive a discount of 20 percent on most items bought in the bookshop. Please remember your membership card for purchases at Kew. You can also

receive a discount for online purchases using a special code. This changes each January and can be found in the Members' area of our website.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Do you enjoy meeting and helping new people?

If so, and you can spare some time (on a regular or occasional basis), you could be just the person we need to be part of our team that supplies volunteers to help with various functions at The National Archives.

These include stewarding at conferences, helping with family days and other TNA and Friends events, as well as helping staff our recruitment / members enquiry stalls (the 'pressgang'). Which kind of activity you wish to be involved in, and how often, is up to you. To find out more about what the team does and how you might fit in please contact Howard at the email address below:

recruiting@ftna.org.uk

or drop by at one of our stalls to have a chat. The dates when the team are available can be found under the Kew Desk tab (via Contact Us) on our website.

EASYFUNDRAISING

We have raised over £1938 with grateful thanks to the 59 members who subscribe to this scheme. Please join us and help to raise even more funds to help support projects and activities at The National Archives.

Go to www.easyfundraising.org.uk and create an account. Select the Friends as your charity. When you shop online go via easyfundraising who will link you to the online retailer of your choice (there are over 2000 of them!). When you have completed your purchase in the usual way, the retailer will make a donation to easyfundraising (usually between 1 and 6 per cent of the purchase price).