



Holst Birthplace Museum Newsletter



From the Chairman

The independent Holst Birthplace Trust was set up, as a Company Limited by Guarantee, in 1999 with two governing documents - a Memorandum of Association and Articles of Association. Both were relevant to the Trust and its activities at that time.

Ten years have elapsed since then and, whilst the memorandum still appertains and therefore needs no change, the powers contained in the original Articles have not kept pace with the growth and development of the Trust. The Trustees have become increasingly concerned that the people who were doing so much to support the Museum (the only reason for the establishment of the Trust) had virtually no voice in its management.

We therefore approached Margaret Austen of Willans, our Honorary Legal Adviser - our most grateful thanks to her for all her work and guidance - and we can now confirm that a new form of Articles of Association for the Holst Birthplace Trust was adopted by the current board of Trustees on 19th August 2009. Copies of these will be available on application to the Museum - but, beware, there are 25 pages of them!

In essence, these Articles widen the membership to embrace all of those who are involved with the Trust: Volunteers, Patrons, Benefactors, Trustees and Friends. The Friends in particular deserve a very special mention - they have during the four years of their existence done a marvellous job, raising both funds for and interest in the Museum. However, two organisations even working closely together cannot be as effective as one united one, so everyone becomes a **Member of the Trust** - with the right to vote at AGMs or EGMs and a voice (even if it is a proxy voice or vote) on Trust business.

Article 51 allows "the directors to make such reasonable and proper rules or bye laws as they deem necessary or expedient for the proper conduct and management of the charity". Under these powers we have agreed a set of Bye-laws to cover membership - these are explained in detail in Richard's article on the next page.

The revised Articles, together with our draft Business Plan (which is summarised in Graham Lockwood's piece on page 3), will enable the Trustees to concentrate on a number of small committees. One of the most important of these will be the Membership Committee, with responsibility not only for management of the membership, but recruitment and communication. We sincerely hope that the members of the current Friends' Committee will feel able to become involved with the new Membership Committee.

I hope that all the Members of the Holst Birthplace Trust feel that they will have a much greater ownership of the organisation into which they have placed their commitment, their gifts and their support.

This is one major step - there are more to take but we hope that you will value this first one.

Marjorie Imlah

Special Issue *October 2009*

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Membership of the Trust

Friends and Volunteers will no doubt be asking themselves 'What do these changes mean for me?'. We hope that, in practice, the answer will be 'Not a lot'. The most important difference is that all Friends and Volunteers will now be **Members** of the Trust. Members will have no financial liability for the affairs of the Museum.

Former Friends of the Museum will now fall into one of several categories of paying Member, depending upon the type of subscription they pay. So Friends may become Annual or Life Members, Standard or Benefactor. We have no plans to change our subscription rates or renewal dates. Former Friends will, as Members, receive exactly the same benefits as they do at present.

The other main category of Member will be Volunteer Members. The Museum is critically dependent upon its loyal Volunteers, without whom it could not function. All of our Volunteers will now become Volunteer Members of the Trust, **completely free of charge**, and will receive all the same benefits that paying Standard Members also receive – plus, in addition, the annual Volunteers' Outing. Volunteers become Members in return for the duties they undertake at the Museum. If after a period of six months Volunteers are no longer able to undertake duties they will then cease to be Members.

Other categories of membership are Honorary Members and Patrons (Annual, Life or Honorary).

All Members, other than Honorary Members, are now entitled to the following benefits:

- Free admission to the Holst Birthplace Museum during normal opening hours.
- Discounts on selected Museum events.
- Free Newsletters by post (4 a year).
- The right to attend and vote at the Trust AGM.
- Discount of 10% on Museum shop purchases.
- 2 for 1 admission at the Elgar Birthplace Museum and at the Handel House Museum.
- Discount of 10% on CDs bought at *Sounds Good* (7 Henrietta Street).
- Discount of 10% at *Storyteller* (11 North Place) and *Toute Sweet* (8 Prestbury Road).
- Discount of 10% on accommodation and breakfast at the Cheltenham Lawn Hotel (5 Pittville Lawn).
- Discount of 10% at *Real India* (317 High St) and at *Asiana* (108 Winchcombe St).

One of the things we are trying to do as part of this exercise is to bring together all the supporters of the Museum into one structure, and, in

particular, to remove as far as possible the former distinction between Friends and Volunteers. Everybody will now simply be Members of the Trust, and as such able to have a say in the choice of Trustees and in how the Museum is run. We feel that this is a significant enhancement to our democratic credentials – previously, the only people entitled to vote at the AGMs of the Trust were the Trustees themselves!

A further consequence of these changes is that the need for a separate Friends organisation has disappeared. The Friends Committee is being recast as the Membership Committee of the Trust, with rather different responsibilities and a wider membership. There will, for example, no longer be any separate Friends' events, which will become Museum events and, like other Museum events, be organised through the Events Committee. On the other hand, the Membership Committee will probably take on a greater role in the recruitment and support of Volunteers – for this reason, we would like to add one or more additional people to the Membership Committee from among the Volunteer Members. However the continued involvement of those who have contributed much to the running of the Friends or as Volunteers will be welcomed by the Trustees.

The winding up of the Friends and their incorporation fully into the Trust was approved at an Extraordinary General Meeting of the Friends on 22nd September. We shall in due course be issuing new Membership Cards to all Members.

Richard Smith

Heritage Open Days

I am very pleased to report to all Members the success of the Heritage Open Days at the Museum. The lovely September sunshine contributed perhaps to the high number of visitors – 164 in total, including many children who followed enthusiastically the Mouse Trail around the Museum. The balloons and banner on the railings outside made a welcoming sight at the entrance. An impressive display of books, CDs and wonderful vintage music scores filled the Music rooms, kitchen and outside yard as part of the Music Sale. Over the two days a total of over £300 was raised including a very successful raffle. I would like to thank all those who contributed items to the Sale and another huge thank you to those Volunteers who helped set up the sale and who manned the Museum throughout the weekend.

Liz Auster

Planning for the next three years

It makes good sense for the Trustees to look ahead, sort out the priorities and plan the action needed to ensure that the Museum becomes an even more attractive place to visit and is a growing source of interesting information for the casual observer and the serious student. Preparing a plan is also a regulatory requirement and very helpful information for trusts from whom we seek a grant. By a happy coincidence of timing the current changes arising from amending our Articles of Association and the expiry of our previous three plan come together so the plan for 2009 – 2012 can be prepared on the basis of the new structure. The Trustees are still completing the final document but here, by way of preview, are the main features.

Obviously finding the money just to keep the Museum going remains the top priority. Our Honorary Treasurer calculates that, if we carry on as at present we shall fall short of the amount required by an average of £5,000 a year. We have some useful reserves but some of these must be kept as a contingency fund to cover unexpected building repairs so the first priority is to increase our annual income by £5,000 before 2012. Every member can help to achieve this by encouraging more visitors, by finding new members and encouraging shop sales. We shall look for some supporters to subscribe generously on a regular basis or by special donations. We shall encourage the leaving of legacies to the Trust.

An active events programme and other fundraising initiatives remain vital as well as more marketing effectively targeted. The Trustees want to heighten the profile of the Museum both at home and abroad through more effective

publicity, an appealing website and to have stronger connections with like minded institutions. This should provide scope for more collaborations including exhibitions.

We must continue to grow the splendid collection of Holst archive and related memorabilia and ensure that it is conserved and displayed properly. Among our members are those with the appropriate knowledge that will assist the Curator to do this and, thanks to the past efforts of the Friends, we have some accumulated funds available to help achieve this.

Education, as well as other forms of outreach, is an important part of the purpose of the Trust and thanks to the Curator, much more has been done in the last two years. The new appointment of a part time Education and Events Assistant is an important further step forward but the Trustees have set the criterion that the costs of the education projects should be self-financing as far as possible. This can be achieved only by finding regular supporters for such projects.

A real strength of the Museum is the enthusiasm and energy of its members. Nothing in the Plan will be achieved without this strength continuing especially the key nucleus of 50 Volunteers manning the Museum and those involved in the sub-committees and advisory groups now being re-formed from those who were active in the Friends and others. But everyone can help by sustained financial support and active encouragement. The Plan will be demanding but the rewards will be very satisfying.

Graham Lockwood

Secretary Wanted

Following the revisions of the Articles of Association of the Holst Birthplace Trust and the organisational changes arising from that, the Trustees seek a volunteer to take up the position of Honorary Secretary. The Trustees are most grateful to Brian Carvell who has held this position effectively for some time but now has to concentrate on other activities.

It is envisaged that the Honorary Secretary will be invited to attend all monthly meetings of the Trustees but will not normally be expected to take minutes. Duties will include ensuring that the Trustees act in a manner consistent with the constitution of the trust and, together with the Honorary Treasurer, ensure that they meet all regulatory requirements such as submitting

regular reports and advice of new trustees and officers to the Charity Commission and Companies House. The accounting year of the charge runs from 1st April to 31st March.

The Honorary Secretary will also be asked to make all the relevant arrangements for the Annual General Meeting of the Trust including sending out the agenda with proper notice, any voting arrangements and supervising the preparation of the Minutes.

Previous experience may be an advantage but is not essential. If you are willing to volunteer, please advise the Chairman, Marjorie Imlah, the Curator, or any Trustee.

Events

I am taking the opportunity provided by this special Newsletter to remind Members of the remaining events which we have organized for this year.

The first of these takes place in the **Museum** on **Thursday October 22nd at 7pm**. The distinguished tenor singer, Gordon Pullin will be joined by composer Philip Wilby on the piano and David Barlow in a very attractive programme of music and poetry exploring in particular Holst's link with the poet, Thomas Hardy. As you will all know the seating capacity in the Museum is limited to 30 so we urge early booking for this evening.

In a different mode, on **Saturday October 31st at 7.30 pm**, the **Pump Room** will be the setting for an evening of Beethoven Sonatas played by the accomplished violinist, Krysia Osostowicz, leader of the Dante Quartet, and Simon Crawford-Phillips of the Kungsbacka Trio. Members will be able to purchase tickets for this concert from the Museum at a special concessionary price of £12. The concert forms part of a weekend in which all Beethoven's Sonatas will be performed. Further details of the other concerts, in Malvern on the Friday and Sunday, can be obtained from the Museum or from Malvern Theatres.

The last musical event of the year will take place on **Sunday November 29th at 3pm** in the **Pump Room**. The English Ayres Group will perform with accompaniment on lute and violin a selection of English Songs in settings by Holst, Vaughan Williams and Bliss. This Concert has been made possible with generous sponsorship from The Vaughan Williams Charitable Trust. Tickets are £10 to include tea or coffee in the interval and are available now from the Museum or from the Town Hall Box Office.

To conclude the year we look forward to the **Victorian Christmas Activity Day** on **Saturday December 12th**. This event will bring festive cheer to the Museum and we invite families to come and enjoy the special atmosphere of the

Museum decorated for Christmas.

All of these concerts and events have been arranged in support of the Museum, and we urge all Members to come and enjoy these varied musical experiences, in the knowledge that their attendance at each event will hugely benefit the work of the Holst Birthplace Museum. Do not miss any of these very special occasions!

Liz Auster

Trustees

The present Trustees of the Museum are as follows:

Marjorie Imlah (Chairman)

marjorie.imlah@virgin.net

Andrew Ellis (Treasurer) daphne.ellis@tiscali.co.uk

Liz Auster lizauster@btinternet.com

Steven Blake steven.blake@deltonglos.plus.com

Brian Carvell brian.carvell@tiscali.co.uk

Keith James keith@kjames4.plus.com

Graham Lockwood gandel@waitrose.com

Jenny Ogle ogle1welly@waitrose.com

Other appointments, such as Hon. Secretary (see article on page 3) have yet to be made.

Become a Member

If you are not already a member of the Trust (either paying or volunteer), please do consider joining. Not only would you have the satisfaction of giving financial and general support to the Museum, but you would also enjoy many other benefits (listed in the article on page 2).

Annual Membership rates are:

Single £15, Joint £20, Family £25, Corporate £50, Benefactor £60, Joint Benefactor £100, Corporate Benefactor £300.

For further details and application forms, contact the Membership Secretary, Sue Adlard:

tel: 01242 579334

email: holstfriends@dsl.pipex.com

If you would like to become a Volunteer at the Museum, and thus a Volunteer Member, please contact the Curator, Laura Kinnear, at the Museum (see left for contact details).



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