



History Store

58 Friars Street, Hereford HR4 0AS

Registered charity 1171756

Herefordshiremuseumsupport.org.uk

Welcome to our spring 2025 newsletter.

A brief update on latest news, changes within HMSSG and the future.

Firstly we have a change of Chair. After a long tenure, Jane Adams opted to step down from that role earlier this spring and we decided it was time to review and prioritise our work as we await news of when/if the process may start to campaign and assist with grant bids to acquire the next tranche of Hoard coins.

Many of our members and others involved in governance and as members of Woolhope Club, Friends of Hereford Archives and in the campaigning group against the then Herefordshire Council's swingeing cuts to staffing and services in the cultural arena, will remember the key role Jane has played at various times over the years; a pivotal part in events and the continuation of the county's library, museums and archive assets. We will say a more formal thank you at our AGM in September. The good news is that Jane is still a Trustee of HMSSG so we have continuity around the table and we plan to prevail upon her to give a lecture (or two, please?) at future events we plan to host.

In summer 2024 Damian approached HMSSG to ask for support in accessing grants via the UK Shared Prosperity Fund's Cultural Development Programme to enable enhancement to the Museums Service assets in this case the Black and White House and Museum Resource and Learning Centre. We were pleased to support the team in the initiative, a demonstration that not all grant monies need be large to be effective.

At the end of March Chris Bucknell and I went to the relaunch of The Black and White House Museum as Old House and the Museum Resource and Learning Centre as History Store. Damian and team felt it time to refresh branding, images and, in the case of the Old House, carry out a gentle but thorough declutter exercise and refocus to allow the glorious building to show more of itself and its recent external refurbishments. No more scaffolding nor flapping fabric sheets to provide cover as external walls were beautified. I know I don't go in as often as I might but when I do the building seems to have perked up considerably. I hope you will go and explore soon and encourage family, friends and visitors to see our 1621 beauty.



Thanks to Sam and the team for all their efforts in transformation. This cooperative approach is why we at HMSSG do what we do and support the professionals in their efforts despite the frustrations and timelags.

At the time of writing we await news of the fate of the 44 coins recovered and adjudged in Durham crown court as part of the Herefordshire Hoard. We assume that the same process to that in 21-22 will be necessary once the coins declared treasure and the Museum Service granted the right to mount a campaign and funding drive to acquire these further coins to add to those held at present.

In March Woolhope events include a talk by Lucinda Orr a barrister specialising in fraud cases who is a member of the Treasure Valuation Committee part of Department Culture Media and Sport. She is a member of the panel who decides the value of treasure items and hence the amounts campaigns need to raise to acquire the objects in question. One of the things I gleaned was that the UK has one of the most generous rewards schemes for

those who make valuable finds. Enterprising detectorists and hunters have been known to make discoveries in mainland Europe and bring them to the UK misrepresenting them as found here, with rewards granted. For every system there are opportunities to circumvent it.

Typically a coin find reported by the Metropolitan Police to West Mercia Police is linked to the Hoard. Found in Croydon. Only about another 200 to locate.



Damian and the team have many events planned in spring and summer including stores tours, opportunities to handle the Hoard replicas, hands on activities with STEM themes, Saturday spotlight talks themes of history and culture, local and further afield. Details on Facebook and in print form. Copies available at Old House and History Store and various city lobbies. Facebook followers and those wishing to get tickets for events can do so via Facebook@HerefordMuseums.

HMSSG continue to offer talks about the Hoard to groups such as U3a, History Societies, WI, Civic Societies. We would like to offer them also to school Parent Teacher Groups and boards of governors. Lara Lourie offers the student and school pupil workshops tying in with KS curriculum requirements as a separate activity and we at HMSSG use our talks to boost our fundraising to support future research and conservation of the treasures.

If any readers are members of a group and would like to have us give a talk please contact Denise North on dzn20@aol.com. The speaker fees donated directly into the charity boost the sums we can offer to the team for Hoard conservation and research work.

For those who want to get more detail than press pieces can offer, BBC Sounds now has the full series Fool's Gold, and a one off Strange but True Crime - Treasure Traitors history documentary by BBC Midlands journalist Nicola Goodwin who has followed the story of the find, the crime, the treasure and all the machinations from the early days when awareness of a major find was limited to a few people.

We would like to increase our number of members in the next few months which will in turn allow us to host events, some themes and subjects related to county collections held currently at History Store; others more quirky subjects which will boost our fundraising efforts. This way we can increase our ability to assist the team with funds to explore more of the diverse treasures held in Hereford.

Membership is £10 for single members, £15 for two people. The forms are at herefordshiremuseumssupport.org.uk and enable you to join via Direct Debit, online or via posting a form to us at History Store, 58 Friar Street Hereford HR4 0AS. Please excuse that our website refers to MRLC and Black and White House Museum. Our website will have a refresh in the summer and we will update contact details and links.

Further afield, national press today announces opening in London of V&A East Storehouse, a 16,000 sq ft facility open to the public to view artefacts ranging from Vivienne Westwood corsets to Egyptian textiles to a 17th century bass viol. Housed in the refitted 2012 Olympic media centre this will run as an open access centre for 363 days annually with opportunities to preselect specific artefacts for research purposes and general interest. We know well that resource centres and holding facilities are not a new idea but boost public access to diverse holdings and underline the sheer volume of historically and culturally significant objects held up and down the country. Do let us know if you visit and what you think.

Finally for this edition many congratulations from us at HMSSG to the Museum Services Team recently awarded Team of the Year at a Herefordshire Council event held at the Courtyard.

Our next edition will be in late summer and will include details of our AGM

Enjoy a summer of history, culture, music and changeable weather.

Denise North

Chair HMSSG