

# 49th Annual General Meeting 2025



Registered Charity No. 274492

## Notice to Members

The 49th Annual General Meeting of the Friends of Southampton's Museums, Archives and Galleries (FoSMAG) will be held at 02:30 on Wednesday, 12th November 2025, at Learning Deck 2, SeaCity Museum.

## Agenda

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the 48th Annual General Meeting: Matters arising and ratification
3. FoSMAG's year in review
4. Treasurer's Report: Matters arising and ratification
5. Election of Committee Members and Officers
6. Market research survey results
7. Any other business (please advise the Chair in writing if you wish to raise any issues not covered elsewhere on the agenda two days in advance of the AGM)
8. Date of next Annual General Meeting

## Chair's Report on the Year 2024-2025

Last November, we held an in-house talk at Tudor House, featuring John Jones, Alan Langford, Ian Caddy, Deborah Birch, Jenny Leonard, and myself. Each of us delivered ten-minute presentations on a varied array of paintings and objects within the City's collections. Our Christmas party, on 18th December at God's House Tower, was highlighted by a captivating performance from the Vox Humana Choir, who sang seasonal plainchant dating from the 6th to the 10th centuries.

The New Year commenced with a monthly talk by art historian Peter Davies on the Crypt Group. In February, Peter Jones presented "The Rough Poetry of Gwyther Irwin." April saw PhD student Tara McKinney discussing "Betty Joel – the overlooked interwar furniture and interior designer." In May, historian Alan Turton delivered a talk on the Sieges of Basing House during the English Civil War, followed by Jenny Leonard's June presentation on "Art

and the British Climate." To conclude the summer, Clare Mitchell's July talk focused on the life and career of Czech artist Alfonse Mucha. The autumn series began in September, with Andy Skinner's talk, "Southampton and the Second Hundred Years' War," and in October, curator Steve Marshall introduced his new exhibition at St Barbe Museum & Art Gallery: "The Life of the Fields (art and the history of agriculture)." These talks were well attended and enjoyed by both FoSMAG members and guests.

Due to the closure of the Art Gallery lecture theatre for refurbishment, all talks took place at Tudor House. Our summer party was held at SeaCity Museum in Learning Deck 2. Andy Skinner, Lifelong Learning Manager, provided a tour and talk on selected Gateway displays before we enjoyed tea, sandwiches, and cake. During the summer, we organised two out-of-town visits. The first, on 4th June, was to Portsmouth Museum & Art Gallery, where Curator of Art, Emily Worsdale, led a tour of the Benjamin Haughton gallery, part of the "Quietness of Feeling: an Exploration of Trees" exhibition. This was followed by my own tour of the second part of "The Arborealists" in the gallery above. On 28th July, Jenny Leonard arranged a guided tour of the distinguished private art collection at Longford Castle, near Salisbury, whose owners have a long-standing connection with the National Gallery. To help fill the coach and reach the required numbers due to the higher cost per person, Southampton Art Society was invited to join us. Interest was so high that a waiting list was created for this popular outing.

Throughout the year, FoSMAG provided vital support by funding the purchase of Julian Grater's "Biomarkers (x2)" (charcoal, ground meteorite, and iridium asteroid ejecta on paper, 102 x 72.5 cm, 2002–07) for £3,300, following his recent solo exhibition at SCAG, for the fine art collection. The group also funded the conservation and reframing of "Firebird" by Bridget Riley, including the treatment of the paper support and new framing with Optium Museum Perspex for £575 and £482 (Dannatt Fund). Similarly, "Study for Broken Ice" by Wilhelmina Barns-Graham received paper support treatment and new framing with Optium Museum Perspex for £154 and £120 (Dannatt Fund).

In February, FoSMAG participated in the Humanities in the Workplace careers event at the University of Winchester, with Nina Lazarski and myself representing the group. We promoted our charity, its role, and aims to students, gathering contact details from around 20 who were interested in learning more about possible project work with us to support their career development. Despite these efforts, engagement from this demographic proved challenging, with no immediate outcomes. However, the initiative did result in recruiting one student from the 2024 event. Working alongside Nina, Matilde developed a market research questionnaire for FoSMAG members to inform future planning and programming. The results of this survey will be shared at the AGM.

On 4th October, together with committee members Deborah Birch and Nic Boyer, I attended the British Association of Friends of Museums' national conference in Bristol. The theme, "Who do we represent? Diversity and inclusion in Friends' groups and in the heritage we support," was addressed by speakers including Linda Coote (Bristol Museums), Shawn Sobers (University of the West of England), Alison Bevan (former director, RWA), Sian

Hoggett (The British Museum Friends), and Kate Newnham (Bristol Museums). After a panel discussion and the BAFM annual awards, I was proud to accept the runner-up certificate for our newsletter – a testament to the work of editor Jenny Leonard and designer Ken Lymer. I also delivered a promotional presentation showcasing Southampton's art, history, and cultural venues, which will host next year's conference under the theme "Partnership Working." I continue to serve as a Board Member and Regional Co-ordinator, South East/West, for BAFM.

The committee has convened every two months throughout the year to oversee FoSMAG's activities and planning. Jenny Leonard has produced and edited another set of four award-winning newsletters, with valuable contributions from members. These newsletters play an essential role in raising FoSMAG's profile and visibility. As Membership Secretary, Jenny has maintained excellent communication with members, including welcoming new ones, and her efforts have helped sustain steady membership numbers.

I would like to extend my gratitude to Nic Boyer for his diligence and commitment to accuracy in his first year as Treasurer, ably supported by John Jones throughout the handover process, which I also attended. Thanks are also due to Paul Brown for examining the accounts prior to the AGM.

Special thanks go to Matt Tantony, Secretary, for meticulously recording committee meeting minutes, managing the website, and overseeing our straightforward event booking system, as well as for his attention to records management. My appreciation also goes to Nina Lazarski for successfully realising our first student project and market research survey, and to Deborah Birch for managing the recordings of our talks. The entire Committee has contributed their time generously and enthusiastically, providing invaluable support to me as Chair. Next year marks the 50th anniversary of FoSMAG and sees us hosting the BAFM National Conference – an exciting milestone to anticipate.

**Tim Craven, Chair, FoSMAG**

# 48th Annual General Meeting 2024: Minutes



Registered Charity No. 274492

**Minutes of the 48th Annual General Meeting of the Friends of Southampton's Museums, Archives & Galleries (FoSMAG), held Wednesday 13th November 2024 in Learning Deck 2, SeaCity Museum.**

On the panel were:

- Tim Craven (TC), Chair
- John Jones (JJ), Treasurer
- Matt Tantony (MT), Website Manager

There were 23 attendees. TC chaired the meeting. MT took the minutes.

TC opened the meeting by welcoming everyone. Southampton Cultural Services staff had very generously provided two free Conservation Studio tours for attendees before the start of the meeting.

TC informed attendees that, sadly, Kay Welham (FoSMAG Chair 1983-2002) passed away in October. He paid tribute to her stalwart support of FoSMAG for many years, and mentioned several funding projects that she had personally supported right up to this year. Her funeral and wake details were read out, for those who wished to attend.

MT apologised for the incorrect start time in the agenda. The meeting was meant to start at 2:30pm, *not* 2:30am.

## 1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Jenny Leonard (Membership Secretary and Newsletter Editor), Muriel Arnold, Karen Wardley, Jenny Turner, Judith Hope, Jenny Harrison, Marilyn Ramsen, Jo Bressloff, Dianna Tizzard, and Ian Caddy.

## 2. Minutes of the 48th Annual General Meeting: Matters arising and ratification

JJ advised on the following corrections to the minutes:

- FoSMAG's donation for two paintings of relevance to the Poole family was £200, *not* £2,000.
- JJ queried the 0.5% interest rate stated for the fixed term investment of £50,000 from the George Dannatt Trust fund. TC said he would highlight this for investigation and correction.

The minutes were proposed by Nic Boyer and seconded by Roger Pearcey.

TC signed the minutes as the official record.

## 3. FoSMAG's Year in Review

Jenny Leonard had prepared a PowerPoint presentation surveying FoSMAG's work over the past year. As she was unable to attend the AGM, TC delivered her presentation.

The presentation began with images featuring Kay Welham at various FoSMAG activities over the years.

This year, renovation work finally began on the Civic Centre roof. This will go on for some time. We (FoSMAG) have had to relocate our monthly talks to Tudor House while the Lecture Theatre is temporarily out of use.

FoSMAG members Deborah Birch and Ian Caddy have given talks this year. Ally Hayes and Wendy Stokes of Bevois Mount History gave a talk on the French Raid during the Summer Tea Party. The LS Lowry talk in August 2024 proved a bit too popular. We exceeded the room capacity at Tudor House during this event. This has necessitated the introduction of a seat reservation system on our website while we are temporarily meeting at Tudor House.

On this subject, TC advised attendees to book ahead for talks so that we can manage the limited capacity, and to take care to book once only. MT said that anyone who reserves a seat via the website should receive a confirmation email at time of booking and a reminder email shortly before the event; if these are not appearing, you should check your junk email filter. MT also announced that the first three monthly talks of 2025 are now live on the website.

Returning to the presentation, a small group of FoSMAG members visited the Curtis Museum and Allen Gallery in Alton. They were well looked after by the Friends of the Curtis Museum and Allen Gallery and went out for a combined pub lunch and tour of the town.

Following the winding-up of the George Dannatt Trust, FoSMAG has received just over £94,000 from the Trust's funds. We will administer this money and will accept grant applications for conservation work on 20th century art in Southampton. In consultation with Southampton City Council, we have invested £50,000 of this money in a three-year deposit with the United Trust Bank.

Our major funding awards in the past year were:

- £2,000 for conservation of "An Extensive Landscape" by Philips de Koninck and "A Mountain Landscape" by Salvator Rosa, both at the City Art Gallery, supported by a member's donation.
- Training and conservation work by Ben Hall on "Portrait of a Man" by Anthony van Dyck at the National Gallery Conservation Studio, supported by a donation from Kay Welham.
- £2,000 for Ian Giles's *Everyone Involved* exhibition at God's House Tower.
- £833 for a conservation survey and £525 for storage of artworks from the Schlee Bequest at the City Art Gallery.
- £250 for conservation of "Skirt" by Lisa Milroy at the City Art Gallery.
- £5,200 towards conservation and a new frame for "Portrait of a Man" by an unknown artist at the City Art Gallery.
- £1,600 to the Clausentum Quays Project (archaeology). The participation of FoSMAG as an independent charity helped the project to secure a further grant of £5,000.
- £610 for greetings cards featuring works from the City Art Gallery collection, with FoSMAG's details on the reverse, now on sale in the Gallery shop.
- £455 on the auction purchase of a 19th century photograph album from Withedwood House in Shirley, for the Museum collection.

We currently have 127 members, which is a small increase on last year. On this subject, TC welcomed new members who were in attendance at the AGM.

The Committee has begun reviewing the way we keep our records, including the use of Google Workspace cloud services, to increase our efficiency and resilience as a volunteer-run organisation.

We now use the Brevo platform (free tier) for all mass emails we send out to members. On this subject, MT advised attendees that they can unsubscribe from the mailing list at any time, and that FoSMAG cannot and will not send out more than 3 email campaigns in any rolling 30 day period.

FoSMAG has a new logo, which has been designed for us by Ken Lymer. Unlike the previous logo, FoSMAG owns the copyright.

Nina Lazarski, Nic Boyer and TC represented FoSMAG at Winchester University's humanities careers day in early 2024. While we were only able to retain contact with a handful of students, this was still a worthwhile endeavour that increased our reach both geographically and in terms of age range. We hope to participate in next year's careers event.

FoSMAG's newsletter was Highly Commended by the British Association of Friends of Museums (BAfM). On this subject, TC paid tribute to Ken Lymer, who has been very generously giving his time and expertise to support FoSMAG for nearly 20 years. We are hosting BAfM's AGM in October 2026.

The presentation concluded with an expression of thanks from the Committee to all FoSMAG members for their continued support.

## 4. Treasurer's Report: Matters arising and ratification

JJ presented the Treasurer's Report with PowerPoint slides. The accounts run from 1 September 2023 to 31 August 2024.

Income from subscriptions is up on last year, due to last year's increase in 2023 AGM. JJ thanked Jenny Leonard for her efforts in chasing up those of us who have not paid our subscriptions on time.

Our events income is slightly down on last year, but still made a profit of £687. The reduced events income compared with last year was largely due to three factors:

1. Last year's events included a one-off tour for the Arts Society that raised £200.
2. Attendance at monthly talks is overall slightly down on last year.
3. The outstanding catering invoice from last year's Tudor House event was received and paid this year.

Our administration costs are almost identical to last year's. The key expenditures were: £216 for the website annual subscription, £200 for leaflet design, £135 for printing, £100 for BAfM membership, and £47 of sundry expenses such as postage.

Newsletter expenses (printing and postage) appear to be down on last year, but this is due to the fact that the printing invoice for one of last year's newsletters did not arrive until after the start of the current financial year and will therefore be included in 2025's Treasurer's Report. Each newsletter edition costs FoSMAG approximately £120 for printing and postage. We have 60 copies printed for each edition, making the cost of each individual newsletter copy equal to c.£2. JJ expressed gratitude to members who make a donation towards newsletters with their subscription.

Our financial year is summarised as follows:

- Our net profit from events and subscriptions was £1,993, compared with £2,291 last year.
- We received a total of £2,134 in donations (from members and collection boxes, including Gift Aid).
- Our total income was £4,128.
- The total amount we gave in grants was £5,772.
- We therefore finished the financial year with a deficit of £1,644.
- We have c.£111,000 deposited in several bank accounts, of which:
  - c.£24,000 is FoSMAG's own money, and
  - c.£87,000 is Dannatt Trust money, of which:
    - We invested £50,000 of the Dannatt Trust money in a bond that will mature in February 2027 raising an additional £6,486.

JJ thanked Paul Brown for examining the accounts prior to the Treasurer's Report.

The Treasurer's Report was proposed by Marion Hubble and seconded by Claire Faughey.

## 5. Election of Committee Members and Officers

TC announced the following nominations:

- Matt Tantony for Secretary, proposed by Tim Craven and seconded by Jenny Leonard.
- Nic Boyer for Treasurer, proposed by Paul Brown and seconded by John Jones.
- Tim Craven for Chair, proposed by Jenny Leonard and seconded by Paul Brown.

The above were all voted in unanimously.

This AGM marked the departure of John Jones from the role of Treasurer, which he has carried out expertly for the last five years. TC thanked John for his enormous contribution to FoSMAG and presented him with a gift.

Jenny Leonard has decided to stand down as Newsletter Editor after the forthcoming year. TC encouraged any interested members to put themselves forward for this position.

## 6. Any other business

Linda Fair raised the subject of seat reservations at monthly talks, given that the remaining talks in 2024 were already fully booked. She asked if the Committee might consider a rota/rationing arrangement to avoid the situation of the same people getting the limited

seats each time. In response, TC said that the relocation to Tudor House is temporary. Monthly talks in recent years had very rarely exceeded 30 attendees, and so the Committee did not foresee that we would find ourselves fully booked while at Tudor House. The Committee will put some thought into whether the new system can be made fairer.

On the same point, MT advised that there is a waiting list for talks and, when seats become available, they are offered to people on the waiting list in sign-up order. TC commented that it would be possible to hire a larger venue but that this would cost money, whereas the room at Tudor House is provided for FoSMAG free of charge. He agreed with Linda and Howard Fair that it was not a great experience for new members to find all the upcoming events to be fully booked.

Marion Andrew asked if a second talk on LS Lowry might be programmed in the future given that this year's talk on the subject proved so popular. TC said that next year's programme was already fully booked but that we could revisit the theme in the future.

Jane Foster asked if the talks were livestreamed. TC said that they were not livestreamed; however, they were recorded and Deborah Birch (Events Secretary) was uploading them to YouTube in batches as unlisted videos.

Charlotte Scott-Beveridge asked whether FoSMAG had to pay for the use of Learning Deck 2. TC said that we were not charged for the room, *however* it was only available in the afternoons and its capacity was only 5 more than the room at Tudor House. TC said that the Committee would look at event times/days, as these were unchanged from when he took over as Chair.

Gary Burt asked whether the FoSMAG YouTube URLs could be re-advertised to members. TC said that this would be arranged once Deborah has finished the uploads.

A member (name not recorded) asked whether the Committee would consider hiring a larger venue for talks and charging more for tickets. TC said that this would be highly likely to lose money. On the same subject, Marion Hubble expressed an interest in using Learning Deck 2, and Edward Chaney suggested St Michael's Church.

## 7. Date of next Annual General Meeting

The next AGM was scheduled for November 2025.