

Bank Hall NEWS

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Autumn 2022



July Craft Event and September Heritage Open Day



July saw our Craft Event take place and we were so lucky with the lovely warm sunshine, welcoming six new stallholders, who presented and displayed their many craft talents. They and visitors commented how in awe they were of the wonderful looking Hall, especially as a backdrop to the walled garden.

In September we held our annual Heritage Open Day, as part of the National English Heritage Week. In spite of the intermittent bursts of rain and wind, visitor numbers were most encouraging. Many new visitors attended with a few having travelled some distance, as has been the case with Events throughout this year.

FoBH along with members/visitors are looking forward with much enthusiasm to the forthcoming opening of the beautiful Hall to the public.

Once again, a huge thank you to our dedicated volunteers who helped to create enjoyable days and for their valuable time in supporting our 2022 Events.

Liz Rothwell

A message from the Chairman

Autumn is now here and we have had a busy year so far. Behind the scenes there has been a lot of work going on in getting the Prospect Tower area of the building ready for opening to the public. Heritage Trust North West and 24 Design have been working on fitting out the area with the artefacts and display material over the past months. We are planning to have some preview events for members, trustees and volunteers who have been integral to the Friends of Bank Hall's endeavours to save the property, and we will make contact with further details very soon. We will then have a public opening and an official opening in late November. We are actively looking for Prospect Tower volunteers to meet and greet visitors and be room guides (full training provided) - if you are interested please email Sally at: bankhallvolunteering@gmail.com

May I thank all team members for their hard work at the events, volunteer days and behind the scenes. Without your support we would not be where we are today with a beautifully restored building and a visitor centre to share the history.

Looking to the future, our next steps following the opening of the Prospect Tower will be recruiting new volunteers and working with Heritage Trust North West in reviewing plans for the restoration of the potting sheds, walled garden and wider grounds. We hope that in our next newsletter we can provide some more information on what progress we have made with these projects.

John Howard

Bank Hall link with Dan Dare



This watercolour sketch of Bank Hall is by Harold Johns. It was presented to Bank Hall Action Group on 26 April 1997 by his sister Doris Sumner to hang in the restored Hall.

During World War II Harold Johns was a cartographer for Montgomery and on return to his home in Southport he attended Southport School of Arts and Crafts. Harold Johns and colleagues spent some time painting many local scenes such as this one of Bank Hall. During the 1950s and 60s he was one of a team of artists who illustrated the Eagle comic including many of the Dan Dare strips. The Eagle comic for boys was the brainchild of Marcus Morris, an Oxford educated Vicar who had a parish in Southport. The Eagle studio was initially set up in a ramshackle old bakery in Churchtown, near Southport. The Dan Dare strips formed the front cover and were considered to be 'the strip that sold the Eagle'.

Andrew Allen

Paperbark Tree



We are fortunate that in the grounds of Bank Hall is an *Acer griseum* also known as Paperbark Maple. It has tactile, cinnamon coloured, peeling bark, hence the common name of Paperbark Maple. Translucent sections of the paper-thin, peeling bark curl ornately whilst still attached to the tree, giving year-round interest but especially in the winter. The flowers are small and are followed by winged seeds often referred to as 'helicopters' due to the way they spin when falling.

The attractive foliage has three leaflets and is a good bold green, turning a firework display of colours from pink to bright red before falling in the autumn. This small *Acer* tree will reach a height and spread of 5 x 4 metres in 20 years. It has the RHS Award of Garden Merit and will grow in both sunny or partially shaded locations. It will do well in most well drained soils.

E H Wilson brought *Acer griseum* to England from China in 1901. Wilson was a British plant collector and explorer who introduced a large range of about 2000 Asian plant species to the West; some sixty bear his name. The tree in Westonbirt Arboretum, Tetbury in Gloucestershire is believed to be a Wilson original.

Andrew Allen

Sign up with Sally !

Despite marvellous volunteer support for the grounds work and events, we've been struggling to attract new volunteers. As this impacts on current operations and the next-stage of the project plans for Friends of Bank Hall, we're developing a recruitment team supported by John Howard, our Chair. Professional recruitment artwork was on show at the recent Heritage event, which created positive interest with visitors, but there is space for further development. If you have ideas or time to support this, and wish to volunteer some time yourself, please email your interest to: bankhallvolunteering@gmail.com
Sally Wilson



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Friends of Bank Hall (Registered Charity 1147592)

(FBH is associated with Bank Hall Action Group & Heritage Trust for the North West)

