

## THE FRIENDS OF THOMAS PLUME'S LIBRARY

Registered Charity No. 1098311

### ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2021

This is the Chairman's report to the 34<sup>rd</sup> Annual General Meeting of the Friends and eighteenth Annual General Meeting of the Charity as required by our constitution. The objects of the Friends are to advance the education of the public in Maldon and the surrounding areas by providing support and assistance to Thomas Plume's Library (Registered Charity number 310661) through activities and projects and in such other ways as the Executive Committee may from time to time determine. In planning our activities, the Trustees have kept in mind the Charity Commission's guidance on public benefit.

Membership of the Friends now stands at 134 each paying a subscription of £5 supplemented by generous donations. Due to the coronavirus pandemic and subsequent lockdown the AGM was held by email/postal communication. The AGM agenda outlined the items to be included in the minutes including the proposed election of Honorary Officers and committee members. The membership was offered the opportunity to disagree with proposals made by the executive committee and acceptance was assumed if no comment was received by the date of the AGM. The usual format of the AGM as a social occasion with an interesting speaker was greatly missed but it is to be hoped this can be returned to in 2022. Due to the pandemic, the July 2020 annual outing had to be cancelled. Arrangements had been made to visit Westminster Abbey and the Abbey Library. We look forward to rearranging this in a future year when the museum, galleries and cathedrals are open again and we all feel more comfortable travelling in groups. Virtual tours will also be considered.

The Plume Library was able to open for the Saturday of the Heritage weekend though visitors had to book a timed visit. The Friends were unable to hold their usual 'Tea in the Garden' event but we were able to support the Library by monitoring visitors attending. Many thanks to all those Friends who helped in the churchyard and acted as stewards on that day. The Assistant Plume Librarian, Paula Thomson has completed a list of all the books from the missing list that have been purchased with funds donated by the Friends. This was on display in the Library together with an excellent exhibition of some of the books. We normally report here on the Plume School Year 8 visits. This could not take place this year but the Plume Librarian, Dr. Helen Kemp, compiled a virtual tour of the Library with detailed commentary on the exhibition of 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> century books that was made available for the students to view at the school. Many thanks to those Friends who assisted with the presentation on this occasion.

On a positive note, a Zoom Quiz was held on Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> February which was well attended and raised £785 for the Friends. This has also been a very good year for the replacement of missing books. Ten books from the missing list were purchased at an auction in September funded jointly by the Friends and the Friends of the National Libraries. The books are listed overleaf. A further book was replaced in March '21 entitled; *Psyche: or loves mysteries in XX Canto's displauing the intercourse betwixt Christ and the soule*, by Joseph Beaumont (1648). A Plume book entitled *Positions* by Richard Mulcaster (1581) that has been in the possession of Liverpool University Library since 1925 has been returned to the Plume Library during this year. The generosity of this return was recognized by a

donation to the Liverpool University Library funded by the Friends. We have also provided money for the repair of two books purchased from the missing list.

The Committee (Trustees) has met four times during the year, three of them on Zoom. I would like to thank all the members of the Committee for their help and support during the year. The Trustees of the Charity for the year 2020-2021 were:

Susan Swaffin-Smith (interim Chairman)  
Janis Elizabeth Croom (Hon. Treasurer and Correspondent)  
Diana June Arthur  
Sheila Bates  
Alan Louis Brown  
Michael Kneller  
Robert Anthony Doe  
Susan Jean Edward  
Susan Roache  
Mary Carmen Wells

The principal address of the Charity was that of the Correspondent, Mrs Janis Croom, 10 Blacksmiths Lane, Wickham Bishops, Witham, Essex CM8 3NR.

Sue Swaffin-Smith  
31st March 2021

\*\*\*\*\*

**List of books jointly bought with the Friends of the National Libraries:**

Gregory Martin, *A discoverie of the Manifold Corruptions* (1582),

Herman Hugo, *The Siege of Breda* (1627),

Gildas, *The Epistle of Gildas* (1638),

Martin Lluelyn, *Men-Miracles* (1646)

James Shirley, *Poems, etc* (1646)

Thomas Heywood, *Merlins Prophecies and Predictions* (1651)

Nicolas Villaut, *A Relation of the Coasts of Africk called Guinee* (1670)

Juan Palafox Y Mendoza, *The History of the Conquest of China by the Tartars* (1671)

Murtadhaibin Al-Khafif, *The Egyptian History* (1672)

Samuel Haworth, *A description of the Dukes Bagnio* (1683)