

## THE FRIENDS OF THOMAS PLUME'S LIBRARY

Registered Charity No. 1098311

### ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2024

This is the acting Chairman's report to the 37<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of the Friends and 21<sup>st</sup> 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 1179957) 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 132 each paying a subscription of £5, supplemented by generous donations. We are very grateful to members of the Friends and The Arts Society Blackwater who continue to help in the Library with cleaning of books and fitting book shoes. This work is vital to the maintenance of the Library. We would also like to thank the Friends who have made individual donations to the Library, for book conservation, fundraising merchandise and equipment, fixtures and fittings.

We are also grateful to members of the Friends who assist as stewards for the school visits to the Library by pupils at The Plume Academy and on the annual Heritage Open Day in September.

The Friends were pleased to be able to arrange a full programme of events and fundraising in the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024.

The 2023 AGM was held on 20<sup>th</sup> May 2023 in the D'Arcy Room at All Saints' Church in Maldon. At the AGM, no nominations were received for the post of Chairman, which had been vacant since the 2021 AGM. As a result, committee meetings have continued to be chaired by members of the committee, on a rotating basis. Two new members, Rachel Wood and Frank Garcia, were elected to the committee at the AGM. After the end of the AGM, we enjoyed a most interesting talk by Julie Miller about Essex Quakers.

On 10<sup>th</sup> July 2023 a group of 23 Friends visited the Pepys Library and the Old Library at Magdalene College, Cambridge. In the morning we were shown around both libraries by the Pepys Librarian, Dr Jane Hughes. The Pepys Library contains a unique collection of 3,000 books and manuscripts, which was bequeathed to Magdalene by Samuel Pepys, a graduate of the College, and is a rare example of a 17th-century private library which has been preserved as Pepys left it, with no additions or disposals. The Old Library is Magdalene's own collection of rare books and manuscripts which has evolved throughout the history of the College. In the afternoon members enjoyed free time in Cambridge.

The Plume Library was open on Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> September 2023 for the Heritage weekend. The Library had an interesting exhibition for visitors of books from the 'Pamela' collection. The Friends helped with stewarding and also ran a bookstall on a very hot day in the churchyard which raised £191, less than in previous years. Attendance at the bookstall tailed off in the afternoon, but 85 people visited the Library during the day. Many thanks to all those Friends who helped with the bookstall or acted as stewards on that day.

We held our annual quiz at Maldon Town Hall on 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2024. Frank Garcia was quizmaster for the third year and produced an entertaining quiz, which was very well attended and

raised £1,037 for the Friends. We are grateful to the Mayor of Maldon, Cllr Andrew Lay, for choosing the Friends as one of the charities given use of the Maldon Town Hall without charge this year.

The books purchased for Thomas Plume's Library during the year to replace those on the 'missing list' are listed at the end of the report, 10 books in total. In June 2023 The Friends of the National Libraries made a generous grant of £3,812 to Thomas Plume's Library to supplement our own funds, and we were able to purchase 4 books for the Library at the 4th auction of books from the Fox Pointe Manor Library. At the end of June another book came up for auction and we needed to raise funds quickly, Individual members of the Friends responded very generously to a fundraising appeal at short notice, donating a total of £3,010. In January we were able to purchase 3 more books at the 5<sup>th</sup> auction of books from the Fox Pointe Manor Library.

The Committee (Trustees) has met four times during the year. We are grateful to all members of the Committee for their help and support during the year.

The Trustees of the Charity for the year 2023-24 were:

Susan Swaffin-Smith

Janis Elizabeth Croom (Hon. Treasurer and Charity Commission Correspondent)

Diana June Arthur

Sheila Bates

Alan Louis Brown

Susan Jean Edward

Malcolm Neil Edward

Francis Garcia-elected May 2023

Rachel Wood-elected May 2023

Susan Roache-resigned Nov 2023

Committee meetings have been chaired in rotation by Dido Arthur, Sheila Bates and Janis Croom.

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

Janis Croom on behalf of the Committee

3rd April 2024

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### List of books bought during 2023-24:

- 30<sup>th</sup> March 2023 but paid in April 2023, cost £945:  
Peter Heylyn, *France & the Channel islands. A full relation of two journeys: the one into the main-land of France, the other into some of the adjacent ilands* (1<sup>st</sup> edition E Cotes for Henry Seile, 1656)
- 15<sup>th</sup> June 2023, 4 books, total cost £6,930 of which £3,118 was paid by us and the balance, £3,812, was paid by a grant to Thomas Plume's Library from The Friends of the National Libraries:
  - Nicolas de Bonnefons, *The French Gardiner instructing how to cultivate all sorts of Fruit-Trees and Herbs for the Garden*, trans. John Evelyn, by T.R. & N.T. for B. Tooke (1675) (cost £3,780)
  - Hiob Ludolf, *A New History of Ethiopia, being a Full and Accurate Description of the Kingdom of Abessinia*, First English edition, for Samuel Smith (1682) (cost £1,386)
  - William Winstanley, *Historical Rareties and Curious Observations domesticke and foreign*, for Rowland Reynolds (1684) (cost £1,008)
  - Garcilaso de la Vega, El Inca, *The Royal Commentaries of Peru, 2 parts in 1*, trans. by Paul Rycaut, printed by Miles Flesher for Christopher Wilkinson (1688) (cost £756)
- 30<sup>th</sup> June 2023 cost £3,200:  
Eucharius Roesslin, *De Partu Hominis* (1536)
- 21<sup>st</sup> November 2023 cost £2,546:  
Plato, *Platonis Opera, Venetiis a Philippo Pincio Mantuano hoc opus Impressum suit, Anno M.CCCCXVII. Die, XXII, Aprilis.*  
Works of Plato, Third Latin edition, edited by Marsilio Ficina. Printed in Venice by Filippe Pincio, 1517
- 31<sup>st</sup> January 2024, total cost of £2,016:
  - Edward Waterhouse, *Great Fire of London-A Short Narrative Of the late Dreadful Fire in London*, first edition, W. G. for Rich. Thrale... and James Thrale, 1667 (cost £693)
  - Germain Brice, *A New Description of Paris*, first English edition, translated by James Wright. Printed for Henry Bonwicke, 1687 (cost £945)
  - Pierre Jurieu, *The Accomplishment of the Scripture Prophecies*. 2 parts in 1, first English edition, 1687 (cost £378)