

THE FRIENDS OF THOMAS PLUME'S LIBRARY

Registered charity no. 1098311

Market Hill
Maldon CM9 4PZ

Email: friendsofplumelibrary@outlook.com

April 2024

Dear Friends,

Welcome to our April newsletter in which we bring you up to date with recent activities, future events and Library news.

But first we want to share some important information about the future of the Library. Many of you will know that the Friends of Thomas Plume's Library and its committee of trustees exists to assist in the replacement of books that have gone missing over the years. The Library itself is run by a separate group of trustees that trace their origin back to the trustees appointed by Dr Plume in his will of 1704. The following is from Sarah Dignasse on behalf of the Library trustees:

We are sure you will be aware of the current financial challenges that the Plume Library is facing. The Trustees of Thomas Plume's Library are determined to ensure that this unique treasure of regional and national importance, remains open and benefits from professional librarianship. To date we have been successful in securing short-term funding from two charitable organisations, as well as receiving individual generous donations, providing the Library finances with a cushion while other potential more regular funding schemes are explored.

The main focus of fundraising activity going forward is to set up a 'Regular Giving Scheme' for people who are able to provide financial support to the Library on a regular basis in order to generate the income needed to keep the Library open and allow it to thrive. Ideally, we would need 100 people to donate £10 per month, but even a smaller donation on a regular basis would be of great benefit.

If you, as members of the Friends feel you might be able to further support the Library in this way, please contact me, Sarah Dignasse, (dignasse@aspects.net). Forms to apply to donate to this 'Regular Giving Scheme' will be available at the Friends' AGM on Saturday 18 May and will also be circulated with the November mailing. Other organisations in the town and beyond will also be approached appealing for support for the Library in this way. In recognition of the value to the Library of 'regular' sponsors, an optional display of names in the Library entrance is being explored.

Recent activities

These are mainly covered in our annual report which is included in this mailing and which also lists the books we have acquired recently for the Library. However, we must particularly thank all of you who attended our very successful quiz night on 3 February and our quiz master Frank Garcia for setting such interesting and varied questions.

Future events

Our annual general meeting will be held on Saturday 18 May in the D'Arcy Room, All Saints Church, Maldon at 7.30pm. The agenda and the minutes of last year's AGM are included in this mailing. We plan to complete the formal part of the AGM as expeditiously as possible and, following a short break for refreshments Emma

Pound will talk to us about 'Samuel Johnson's "Nancy": An introduction to the life and library of Anne Welch' (1743-1810) an early female book collector and polymath. See our events leaflet for details.

An information and a booking form is included in this mailing for our outing to the Caird Library at the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich on Monday 8 July. We do hope you will join us.

Details about Heritage Open Day, which this year will be on Saturday 14 September and the Plume Lecture on Saturday 28 September are also in the events leaflet.

News from Dr Helen Kemp, the Plume Librarian

Many thanks to the Friends for their assistance in purchasing three replacement books for the Library since the last mailing in November. The details are in the Friends annual report for the AGM.

Paintings – I attended the winter party of the City & Guilds of London Art School on 29 November. The frames of Archbishop Laud and Mrs Margaret Oakley were on display and I had a chance to meet Charlotte Jones, one of the students who worked on them. They are now back in the Library – see below. I was accompanied by Dr Clare Finn, the conservator working on the panel portraits of Edward IV and James I. These portraits will be reunited with their frames in early summer when they have been restored by Gerry Alabone at the Art School.



Margaret Oakley

Archbishop Laud

School visits – Over 300 students in year 8 at the Plume Academy visited the Library in November and were given talks by our volunteer stewards at two exhibition tables on 1) 17th century advances in science and 2) cartography, travel and history.

Volunteers- Further to my call for volunteers, Alan Simms collected two free humidifiers from the archive in Wiltshire. Malcolm Edward has checked them over and found out how they operate. James Byam-Shaw, who created the handrail extension on the stairs is working on a new A-board and a free-standing noticeboard to display posters outside the building. In addition, we continue to have a strong team of volunteers working on the inventory, book cleaning and book shoes, as well as stewards for Heritage Open day and the school visits. Thanks to all members of the Friends who volunteer in any capacity.

Yours sincerely,

Sue Edward

On behalf of the Trustees of the Friends of Thomas Plume's Library