

Annual Report

2016



Details

The William Morris Society

Registered address:

Kelmscott House

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 TheWilliamMorrisSociety

 @WmMorrisSocUK

Registered Charity number 1159382

Trustees, staff and volunteers

PRESIDENT

Jan Marsh

TRUSTEES

Martin Stott, Chair

Martin Crick, Vice Chair

Andrew Gray, Treasurer (from May 2016)

Natalia Martynenko-Hunt, Secretary

Jane Cohen

Rebecca Estrada-Pintel

Michael Hall

Kathy Haslam

Simon Hawkins

Penny Lyndon

The Trustee Board operate through five committees. These are:

Finance and General Purposes,

Publications,

Collections, Library and Display,

Communications, and

House and Garden.

WMS STAFF

Curator: Helen Elletson

Society Administrator: Cathy De'Freitas

Finance and Membership Manager: Penny McMahon

WMS VOLUNTEER ROLES

Journal Editor: Owen Holland

Magazine Editor: Susan Warlow

Librarian: Penny Lyndon

The William Morris Society is extremely fortunate to be able to draw on a wide range of expertise and experience from our volunteers, who contribute many hundreds of hours of their time to help with welcoming visitors to the museum, delivering education sessions to schools and families, giving printing demonstrations, answering enquiries, cataloguing and caring for our collections, office administration, serving refreshments and maintaining our garden.

We are grateful to all who give up their time to help with the work of the Society.

Welcome



I am pleased to introduce this Annual Report for 2016 which charts the Society's progress during the year. The dominant theme of the year has been the work that has been undertaken as part of the Arts & Crafts Hammersmith project in partnership with the Emery Walker Trust. The work has been extensive and is reported on in more detail on page 9. The disruption has had a knock-on impact on the Society's activities and income, as our Treasurer reports on page 10, but the results which we were able to see by the end of the year put us in a very good place for the future.

The Society's activities continued apace; highlights included the exhibition 'The Unsung Muse' by Kirsty Buchanan and Clara Drummond featured on page 7, and the Kelmscott Lecture given by ceramicist and author Edmund de Waal to a packed hall in the Art Workers' Guild.

Our new visual identity referred to in last year's report bore fruit with a redesigned Journal and a completely new Magazine which has proved very popular with readers – and advertisers. My thanks to editors Owen Holland and Susan Warlow respectively.

Sadly, Lord Asa Briggs, one of the Society's founders and President from 1978-1991, died during the year. His deep knowledge of Victorian society and his communication skills brought many people to Morris and he will be missed.

Finally, I would like to pay tribute to the hard work of my fellow officers, Trustees, and staff of the Society and the continuing support of the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham. The effectiveness of the Society in promoting the life and work of William Morris is enormously strengthened by the dedication of its staff, and of the Trustees and the numerous other volunteers who bring so much energy to it.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Martin Stott." The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Martin Stott
Chair, The William Morris Society

What we've been doing: some highlights of 2016

The Emberton Print Room
and Morris's Albion printing
press under protective
covers

Taylors of Harrogate
limited edition coffee pack,
featuring Morris's *Jasmine*
design and the Society's
logo

The House



2016 was a busy year for the Society in many ways. Our House and Gardens team worked alongside the Arts & Crafts Hammersmith (A&CH) project team to manage clearance of areas requiring work and to ensure that the building was open to the public and the normal activities of the Society were able to continue as much as possible. In addition to the work on the Society's premises detailed in the A&CH report on page 9, the parking area opposite the house was refurbished with new signage and marking out and there are now a total of four spaces available, including one in front of the coach house.

Looking forward, we arranged a survey of our lighting with a view to converting to LED; we hope to implement this cost-saving upgrade in 2017. We also started planning an upgrade to the garden, to improve the surfaces and provide an educational space.

The Collection



We were delighted to receive two significant donations in 2016. A seat cover from HMS Torbay in Morris & Co Rose printed cotton was donated by David Mabb following his talk to the Society in December. We also received a generous donation of Philip Webb letters and archive material, together with a loan of a Philip Webb sketchbook.

Items from the Society's collection were loaned to enhance several exhibitions. Our designs for *Grafton* and *Celandine and Lily* were on display at the Arts & Crafts exhibition at Blackwell in Cumbria, while a Philip Webb display featuring our drawing *Lion with Cattle* was exhibited at two National Trust properties, Standen in East Sussex and Red House in Bexley, Kent.

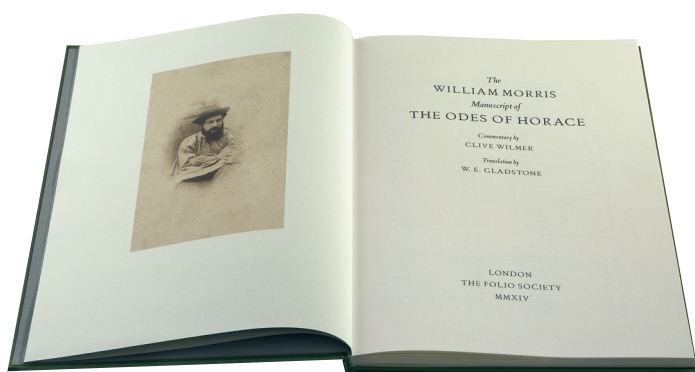
We have also begun to explore ways of using our collection to generate income for the Society. In May an approach by coffee specialist Taylors of Harrogate led to a collaboration on a William Morris-inspired limited edition coffee blend. Taylors, which was founded in 1886, in the heyday of the British Arts and Crafts Movement, felt that Morris's commitment to craftsmanship and quality of design were values which they shared and wanted to celebrate. Designers from Taylors visited Hammersmith to view the Society's collection and selected *Jasmine* to feature on the packaging of the Fairtrade coffee alongside the Society's logo. The coffee will be available in early 2017.

Almost 3,000 followers on Twitter
2,200 likes for our Facebook page
21 advertisements in our Magazine

*William Morris: The Odes of
Horace*, London: Folio
Society, 2015

The newly designed
Magazine and *Journal of
William Morris Studies*

The Library



Our library collection is a unique and valuable resource to those studying William Morris, his contemporaries and his influence in so many diverse fields. The library has benefitted over the years from generous donations from members and others, and in 2016 we were fortunate to be given three facsimile editions of Kelmscott Press titles: *The Odes of Horace*, *News from Nowhere* and the *Kelmscott Chaucer*, all donated by the publishers.

The library has also benefitted from funding from the Arts and Crafts Hammersmith project by the adoption of MODES cataloguing software. This will allow the library catalogue to be made available on our website, which will mean that our researchers will be able to do some work of selecting material before they visit, speeding up their time with us considerably.

Running alongside the editing of the library catalogue, the Society archives, including the papers of the Society from its beginnings in 1955, the collection of documents from the Women's Guild of Arts and the Verstage Collection of correspondence from the Kelmscott Fellowship are being catalogued. The Society's museum collections will also be listed, resulting in a complete catalogue of all our collections. We are very grateful for the direction of the A&CH archivist, Michèle Losse, and the work of volunteers in helping to complete this project.

Publications and Communications



The first issues of the Society's publications to carry the new visual identity appeared in February 2016 and attracted much positive feedback from members.

The renamed *Magazine*, edited by Susan Warlow, featured a wide range of articles on Morris-related topics including: the Morris & Co tapestry workshop at Merton Abbey; Morris's influence on Manchester bookbinders William and Will Mellor; and reports on David Gentleman's 2015 Kelmscott Lecture and the William Morris Gallery's conference on May Morris.

The Journal of William Morris Studies, edited by Owen Holland, continued to present research across the breadth of Morris studies as well as reviews of recent publications; articles included a meticulously researched account detailing Dante Gabriel Rossetti's gifts to Jane Morris, and an examination of Morris's dramatic monologue, *Concerning Geffray Teste Noire*.

We continued to make use of technology to improve communication with our members and supporters both in the UK and worldwide. Updates and information were posted on our website, and the WMS e-bulletin went out regularly to more than 1,000 subscribers.

Our Twitter following increased to almost 3,000 and online booking for events was introduced, enabling the Society to make savings in administrative costs and time.

To benefit from electronic updates about news and events, please ensure that the Society has your current contact details.

£7,000 investment in museum standard storage equipment.
Almost 1,000 hours of additional volunteer time to support
WMS input into A&CH.

Left to right: Trustees Penny Lyndon and Jane Cohen taking part in Open Garden Squares weekend, June 2016; Corin Mellor demonstrating the processes of cutlery manufacture at the David Mellor Cutlery Factory

Learning



2016 saw an exciting variety of events taking place both at Kelmscott House and further afield. Our programme of Saturday afternoon lectures commenced in January with *Sex, Drugs and Epilepsy*, a talk by authors Leslie Forbes and WMS President Jan Marsh and artists Julia Dwyer and Sue Ridge, which coincided with the exhibition *Embroidered Minds: William Gowers and the Morris family* at the Queen Square Library. The impact of Morris on contemporary artists also featured in our final talk of the year, in which artist David Mabb introduced his recent works made in response to visiting HMS Courageous, a decommissioned nuclear submarine furnished with William Morris fabrics.

Over the course of the year we learned more about Morris's early literary venture with the 'Oxford Brotherhood'; his fascination with carpets from the Middle East; his friendship with playwright Henry Arthur Jones; the life of Morris's business manager, Warrington Taylor; and about the Arts and Crafts renewal of stained glass. Additionally, the Society contributed to the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham's ArtsFest in May, the Totally Thames Festival in September, and to the William Morris Gallery's Symposium on May Morris, and took part in the annual Open Garden Squares and London Open House weekends.

Several Society events took place outside Hammersmith. A walking tour of Oxford in April, led by WMS Chair and Oxford resident Martin Stott and stained glass historian Jane Bingham, visited sites of particular Morrisian interest such as Exeter College and Christ Church Cathedral and was so popular that a repeat has been planned for 2017.

In May we travelled to Sheffield for the 2016 AGM. The meeting was followed by a visit to the David Mellor Cutlery Factory and Design Museum, where David's son Corin led a tour of the award-winning Round Building and spoke about his father's design legacy, before Society members enjoyed a drinks reception hosted by former WMS president and biographer of William Morris, Fiona MacCarthy.

'What a super surprise to find you here. Thank you for keeping WM's art alive.' *Visitor feedback*

1,000 subscribers to our e-bulletin.
100,000 packs of fairtrade coffee with WMS logo and
contact details produced by Taylors of Harrogate.

Left to right: Clara Drummond, First Prize Winner of the BP Portrait Award 2016, and sitter Kirsty Buchanan, with her portrait *Girl in a Liberty Dress* (© Jorge Herrera); holiday workshop: Painting on glass, July 2016

Learning



2016's Kelmscott Lecture was given by artist and writer Edmund de Waal at the Art Workers' Guild in Bloomsbury. Entitled *Crafting Democracy*, de Waal's popular lecture explored the impact of Morris's design philosophy on his own work and that of other artists and makers. Publication of the lecture is planned for 2017.

The Society also hosted *The Unsung Muse*, an exhibition by Kirsty Buchanan and Clara Drummond in which the two artists presented works made in response to their research into the Women's Guild of Art archives, which are held by the Society. Whilst the exhibition was in place, it was announced that Clara had been awarded the prestigious BP National Portrait Award for her painting of Kirsty, *Girl in a Liberty Dress*; the Society was mentioned in extensive press coverage of the award, including feature articles in *The Observer* and *The Sunday Telegraph*.

Our schools education programme continued, with classes from across London visiting the museum to learn about design, printing, stained glass and Victorian object handling. During school holidays we ran workshops for families with children aged 6-12 on a wide range of topics, including creative writing, glass painting and weaving. These were very popular, with parents and children alike commenting on how much they had enjoyed learning new skills.

As ever, we are grateful to our team of dedicated volunteers who help with events and with school visits and holiday workshops.

‘Lovely activities and nicely linked to history.’
Teacher from St Paul's CE Primary School

1,100 WMS members in 22 countries including Antarctica. £140k worth of refurbishment at Kelmscott House through A&CH.

Membership

Membership of the UK Society has dropped by 113 (13%) in 2016 as our Membership Manager has got to grips with 'paper' members who have not paid a subscription in recent years and have been lapsed. There are now 730 UK Society members (which includes countries without their own societies such as Japan, New Zealand, Iceland, Hungary and Russia - 22 in all, including for the first time, Antarctica) while the US Society has 178 members and the Canadian Society 174. The UK Society membership includes 41 Corporate members.

Subscription payment methods to enable new members to join easily and to streamline the renewal process for existing members have been reviewed and updated. Direct Debit has been added to the payment methods on offer.

Funding and donations

The William Morris Society gratefully acknowledges receipt of funding of £15,000 in 2016 from the London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham, through the 3rd Sector Investment Fund scheme.

The Society has directly received a grant for £30,000 from the Ashley Family Foundation. This was for conservation of textile collections and was paid in two instalments of £15,000 in 2015 and 2016 respectively. This work has been managed within the outputs and activities of the Arts & Crafts Hammersmith programme, and the grant has been transferred into project funds, managed by our partner organisation the Emery Walker Trust.

The Society's new visual identity was created for us by Pentagram as a pro bono contribution for our 60th anniversary.

The Society was also fortunate to receive a number of other donations during the year, which are gratefully acknowledged:

David Mabb: A seat cover from HMS Torbay in Rose printed cotton by Morris & Co.

Anonymous donor: Philip Webb letters and archive material, together with a loan of a Philip Webb sketchbook.

Books for the library were kindly donated by The Folio Society and by Charles Winthrop and Sons, The Bradford Exchange Press.

The Society made the following donation in 2016:
£5,500 to The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings' annual William Morris Craft Fellowship award.

'Thanks for the beautiful display and tranquil atmosphere. Welcome in the C21.' *Visitor feedback*

Arts & Crafts Hammersmith

Documenting and preparing collection items for storage

2016 was the year in which the Society felt the full impact of its *Arts & Crafts Hammersmith* programme: our partnership with the Emery Walker Trust supported by Lottery funding through the Heritage Lottery Fund and by charitable grants and private donations. Project manager Simon Daykin and curator Helen Elletson led the Society into new territory as building repairs, refurbishments and intense work with collections and archives impacted upon the Society's core work, and gave visitors and members tangible evidence that developments were under way.

Running in parallel with works at nearby Emery Walker's House, the Society's reserve collection was removed from site in the spring of 2016 into museum storage in south London. The contractor team, led by heritage specialists Fullers Builders, moved into Kelmscott House in the late summer. Building works and regular Society operations and public opening ran hand in hand, which presented its own sets of challenges, with works over five months to refurbish public areas, create new back of house facilities for staff and volunteers, repair building fabric and to convert the vaulted cellar space into a fit for purpose storage area. Works were mostly completed in December, paving the way for the installation of museum standard storage equipment in early 2017, and the return of the Society's collections.

In the meantime, the project team grew in 2016 to support the next phases, once capital works had completed. Learning and volunteer development officer Jessica Loukaides and marketing officer Lucinda MacPherson joined us, to lead on respective initiatives to engage participants with the activities of both the Society and Emery Walker Trust, and to spread the word to new and existing audiences. A dedicated website for the *Arts & Crafts Hammersmith* project was launched, and social media feeds have been buzzing. New learning and digital initiatives (for example, the online catalogue of the Society's archives and collections, created by archivist Michèle Losse and her team of volunteers) will come on stream during 2017.

The input of volunteers has been a massive success story, with well over 60 volunteers actively engaging with the process of cataloguing, archiving and collections management in particular, with the professional team. We are so grateful for the many thousands of hours that volunteers have contributed so far, and the many more ahead.

Simon Daykin,
Project Manager, Arts & Crafts Hammersmith



ARTS & CRAFTS HAMMERSMITH STAFF

(all posts part-time)

Simon Daykin (Project Manager)

Nancy Lyons (Archivist, to April 2016)

Michèle Losse (Archivist, from June 2016)

Alice Woodhouse (Collections Coordinator)

Jessica Loukaides (Learning and Volunteer Development Officer, from July 2016)

Lucinda Macpherson (Marketing Officer, from September 2016)

The following served during 2016 on the joint steering committee for the project:

Martin Stott (Chair from September 2016)

Penny Lyndon

Michael Hall (Chair to August 2016)

Sonia Crutchlow (volunteer representative)

Natalia Martynenko-Hunt

Financial Report

Treasurer's Report

My appointment as Treasurer came during a significant period of change for the Society. The Arts & Crafts Hammersmith project was already underway and promising a new lease of life for the Society's activities and I am pleased to support the financial objectives of the organisation as we emerge from and seek to capitalise on this.

However, this report must provide a reality check and highlights a number of financial challenges that must be addressed in the coming years if we are to secure the ongoing success of the Society. Unprecedented levels of uncertainty in the wider economy and the related squeeze on household incomes, together with cultural and demographic changes, provide an extremely challenging environment for the Society and, indeed, the charitable sector as a whole.

We have seen a reduction in surplus income from the shop and visitor donations, at least partly resulting from periods of closure of the museum necessitated by the redevelopment work driven by the Arts & Crafts Hammersmith project, and membership income is declining, though at a slower rate than the charity sector average.

We have managed a 40% (£11k) reduction in annual costs arising from the Magazine and Journal which, most impressively, has been achieved alongside an increase in the quality of the output. Other factors contributing to the drop in 2016 expenses include the one-off expenditure relating to the rebranding and upgrade of the website in 2015 which has no comparable expenditure in 2016, and the differences in inflows and outflows relating to the Arts & Crafts Hammersmith project. The Society is a joint partner in this Heritage Lottery Fund supported project, with the Emery Walker Trust, which acts as the lead partner and financial custodian. The Society acts as payroll agent for all project staff with related expenses and corresponding income from project funds.

At 31 December 2016 the Society's Funds totalled £209,708. The Society's Reserves policy sets our minimum requirement at £80k, which represents 6 months' operating costs as well as provision for certain exceptional expenditures. Whilst the reserves balance at 31 December 2016, at £197k (calculated as net assets less tangible fixed assets), is above this level, the Trustees are satisfied that this is consistent with the long term goals of the Society.

The Trustees have approved a loss making budget for 2017. This was not an easy decision, but was based on our belief that we can achieve financial sustainability without the need for significant reduction in any of the Society's key activities. 2017 affords new opportunities as we move into the final phase of the Arts & Crafts Hammersmith project, benefitting from the increased profile and marketing support this will bring. Further, we have a specific objective to introduce and/or enhance a range of revenue generating activities which will supplement our existing income.

Finally, I would like to thank my predecessor, Penny McMahon, for her many years of diligent effort as Society Treasurer and her continuing efforts as our Finance Manager. Any achievements that I make in the role of Treasurer will be built on the solid platform which Penny continues to provide, and I am extremely grateful for her continuing support.

Andrew Gray,
Treasurer

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 DECEMBER 2016

	Unrestricted funds (£)	Restricted funds (£)	2016 Total (£)	2015 Total (£)
INCOMING RESOURCES				
From generated funds				
Voluntary income				
Subscriptions	19,126	563	19,689	27,580
Grant from Hammersmith & Fulham Borough Council	15,000		15,000	15,000
Arts & Grants Hammersmith funding and income		26,670	26,670	26,051
Other Grants				4,189
Guided Tours	2,074		2,074	2,218
School Visits	454		454	489
Coach House Hire	1,889		1,889	1,465
Licensing	1,066		1,066	335
Other Donations	791		791	7,644
Activities for generating funds				
Surplus from sale of books, cards etc	3,260		3,260	7,067
Surplus from meetings and events	1,935		1,935	1,195
Investment income	19,063		19,063	19,070
Total incoming resources	64,658	27,233	91,891	112,303
RESOURCES EXPENDED				
Cost of charitable activities				
Newsletter and Journals	16,004		16,004	26,990
Grants	5,500		5,500	21,000
Support Costs	59,084		59,084	52,295
Kelmscott House Upkeep	13,770		13,770	14,907
Arts & Crafts Hammersmith expenditure and transfers		26,670	26,670	26,051
Website & Rebranding				12,627
Conservation & Education	1,494	542	2,036	2,229
Governance costs				
Trustees Expenses	2,010		2,010	3,130
Professional Fees	1,265		1,265	10,795
Other resources expended		1,038	1,038	675
Total resources expended	99,127	28,250	127,377	170,699
Net incoming resources	(34,469)	(1,017)	(35,486)	(58,396)
Profit on revaluation of investments	13,461		13,461	5,825
Net movement of funds	(21,008)	(1,017)	(22,025)	(52,571)
RECONCILIATION OF FUNDS				
Total funds brought forward at 1 January 2016	214,629	17,103	231,732	284,303
Total funds carried forward at 31 December 2016	193,621	16,086	209,707	231,732

BALANCE SHEET AT 31 DECEMBER 2016

FIXED ASSETS				
Tangible Fixed Assets	12,808		12,808	14,003
Investments	126,001		126,001	112,540
	138,809		138,809	126,543
CURRENT ASSETS				
Stocks	10,267		10,267	11,682
Debtors	4,130		4,130	12,592
Cash in bank and in hand	53,067	16,086	69,153	85,510
	67,464	16,086	83,550	109,784
CURRENT LIABILITIES				
Amounts falling due within one year	(12,652)		(12,652)	(4,595)
NET CURRENT ASSETS	54,812	16,086	70,898	105,189
NET ASSETS	193,621	16,086	209,707	231,732
FUNDS				
Unrestricted Funds				
General Fund	180,844		180,844	200,260
Emberton Fund	2,792		2,792	4,286
John Kay Memorial Fund	1,425		1,425	1,425
Syer Bequest	1,723		1,723	1,723
News from Nowhere	1,000		1,000	1,000
Crockart Bequest	837		837	935
Peter Preston Bequest	5,000		5,000	5,000
Restricted Funds				
Life Members Fund		1,394	1,394	1,869
Restricted Grants		14,692	14,692	15,234
TOTAL FUNDS	193,621	16,086	209,707	231,732

The William Morris Society exists to promote greater knowledge and understanding of the life and work of one of the greatest men of the Victorian, or any, age.

Designer, craftsman, poet, and socialist: his ideas on how we live and how we might live, on creative work, leisure and machinery, on ecology and conservation, on politics and the place of arts in our lives remain as stimulating now as they were over a century ago.

We need your support to help us continue our mission of bringing knowledge of Morris to as wide an audience as possible.

Please join us if you are not already a member, and consider making a donation or leaving a legacy to The William Morris Society.

For more information about how to support The William Morris Society, please contact the Society office or visit our website.

www.williammorrissociety.org

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