



FRIENDS of MUSEUM & ART **SWINDON**

Newsletter - March 2025

Welcome to our March 2025 newsletter. And the first thing to do is give a warm welcome to those of you who've recently joined the Friends. Thank you for coming on board - your support is valuable and appreciated.



A Private View

On Friday 14th March, Museum and Art Swindon held the first private view in rather a long time. The Friends and guests were invited to the civic offices, the new home of Museum and Art Swindon, to officially launch both 'A Very British Art Revolution' running until the 5th June and 'Seriously ...' running until the 13th September. The contents of both exhibitions are drawn from the Swindon collection with the Friends choosing the contents of 'Seriously...'

Find out more here: [🌐 "Seriously..."](#)

We're getting some super, heartwarming and encouraging comments in our visitor's book. What follows is one such feedback item:

Saturday 22nd March 2025

Last weekend I was wandering around the Tate in St. Ives and this Saturday morning it's Swindon's own Museum and Art Gallery. The quality of exhibition and choice selection of photographs, paintings and ceramics are of an equally comparable quality. The fact cards are really helpful in understanding the pieces. Ben Nicholson on two separate weekends – what's not to love?

Thank You,

DB

And do check out Linda's blog about our exhibition here: [🌐 'Seriously...' the Friend's exhibition](#)

As well as our own artistic pick of the pops, MAAS has three other wonderful exhibitions running that the Friends are rather pleased to see because it means there's lots of art on show currently.

In no particular order there's **Origins** - find out more about that one here:

[🌐 Origins - Free Exhibition exploring the history of Swindon](#)

Then there's **Art on Our Doorstep** - more on that one here: [🌐 Art on Our Doorstep](#) And, running until the 5th July, there's **A Very British Art Revolution**. Information on that one here:

[🌐 A Very British Art Revolution](#)

For families - running until 4th April there's an **Extra Ordinary Stories Trail**. Find out more here:

[🌐 Extra Ordinary Stories Trail](#)

So if you've not been into MAAS for a while - do go. As you can see - there's lots to see.

The Committee

At the AGM at the back end of last year we had something of a personnel swap about as is wont to happen with committees. After a decade steering the Friends, Linda Kasmaty stepped down as Chair and Andrew Cross took over the hot seat.

You'll find who does what on the committee here:

[🌐 The Friends Committee - Friends of Museum & Art Swindon](#) It's merely a list of names and our roles - there's no background about any of us. Perhaps that's something we should do?

As you can imagine, the new Chair, Vice-Chair and committee members have been finding their feet since taking over/joining. That, in part, is why there's been no newsletter for a while - in case you were wondering ... And of course there's been a tremendous amount of activity in getting the **Seriously** exhibition together.

What else?

Well, a mere few days ago our Chair, Andrew Cross, was present at the launch of the **Vision for the Heart of Swindon** at the House of Lords on 17 March. This was an event hosted by Lord Wills on behalf of the Swindon Borough Council.

The **Vision document** sets out eight ambitions, including a creative centre. Prominent in this ambition is the inclusion and celebration of Swindon's 20th century British art collection. Andrew reported how heart-warming and encouraging it was to see how widely recognised and supported, the Swindon Collection is, by Swindon – and beyond.

The expectation is that the collection will serve as a cultural beacon and enhance the cultural development, an approach that has proven successful in other towns in the UK.

Our Talks Programme

We've got a full programme of talks planned for 2025. We haven't quite got all of them up on the website - but you'll find what there is here: [🌐 Categories - Friends of Museum & Art Swindon](#)

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| <div><div>FRIENDS of MUSEUM AND ART SWINDON</div><div>TALKS PROGRAMME March - November 2025</div></div> | |
| 27 Mar | Antarctic Explorer Edward Adrian Wilson by Ann- Rachael Harwood |
| 24 April | Friends Exhibition "Seriously" by the Friends |
| 29 May | Stephen Russ by Mark Golder |
| 26 June | Tarot Art by Michael Gray |
| 31 July | The Art of Tattooing by Gavin Jones |
| 28 Aug | Stained Glass in the Arts and Crafts Movement by Kirsty Hartsiosis |
| 24 Sept (Wed) | The Shouting Softly Project by Flis Tattersall |
| 30 Oct | The Art of Flight by Gail Brown |
| 26 Nov (Wed) | Swindon Art in the Steam Age by Phillip Garrahan |
| <div>Talks are held at the Civic Offices, Euclid St, Swindon SN1 2JH and at start at 7.30pm. Cost: £8 for members, £10 non-members For more information: friendsofmas.org museumartswindon.com</div> | |

We hold the talks in the council chamber in the civic offices. So far, whilst the seating in there is jolly comfortable the sound has been less than great. The sound system in the chamber is brilliant for what it's designed for - meetings. But it fails rather when it comes to delivering talks. Ergo, in an effort to improve the sound quality at the talks, we've invested in some new sound equipment.

And talk of buying new sound equipment forms a useful segue into mentioning that the charge for talks is going up a little - to help cover the cost of the new equipment and of course, venue costs. For members of the Friends, the entrance fee is rising to £8. And for non-members it's now £10.

Other organizations

The Friends has a close relationship with both the Arts Society Kennet and Swindon and **the Friends of Lydiard Park**. If you want to see what the latter is up to you'll find them here:

Meanwhile **the Arts Society Kennet and Swindon** is here: <https://theartsociety.org/kennet>

A Museum Titbit

And finally, as we're not only friends of the art but of the museum too, a museum mention.

If, like the writer of this newsletter, your family has a young child with a penchant for palaeontology, you should know that MAAS has a rather cool addition and accompaniment to its Jurassic fossil collection. This exciting fossil find is a Stegosaur vertebra belonging to the famous Swindon Stegosaur, housed in London's Natural History Museum. You can find a picture of the whole thing here:

🌐 Unmemorable Dinosauria of Wiltshire - Born Again Swindonian

And below, the vertebra. Dem bones, dem bones, dem dry bones ...



On the topic of museums, should you be visiting MAAS on a Saturday, why not pop into the Museum of Computing? On Regent Circus it's a mere spit from the civic offices and is definitely worth a visit. More info here: <https://www.museumofcomputing.org.uk>

Social Media

If you're the social sort you'll find us on Facebook here: 🌐 Friends of Museum & Art Swindon and on Instagram here: <https://www.instagram.com/friendsmuseumartswindon/>

If you use either of those platforms do give us a Like/Follow!