

## **Friends of Blake Museum**

### **First Quarterly Report to the Bridgwater Town Council Museum Sub-Committee**

**July 2009**

#### **Re-opening of the Museum**

The Museum re-opened to the public on 20<sup>th</sup> May, and to 4<sup>th</sup> July has been open for 34 sessions (total 204 hour). In addition the garden has been open for refreshments during two Sunday band concerts

#### **Visitors to the Museum**

During this period, excluding Sundays, there have been 787 visitors (677 adults and 110 children). In the two weeks, after re-opening we averaged 35 visitors a day, but since then the numbers have slipped back – this has been particularly noticeable in the last three weeks. The number and proportion of children in the Museum is considerably less than in previous years.

4 organised adult parties have visited during this period – from Cossington, Yeovil and the Czech Republic

From the information we have on 226 visitors (from details of parties and the Visitors' Book) we find that 37% came from Bridgwater (including Wembdon), 19%, came from other parts of Sedgemoor, 10% came from other parts of Somerset (including N. Somerset and BNES), 17% came from the rest of the UK, and 17% came from abroad - the Czech Republic, Germany, Canada, Australia and New Zealand.

#### **Comments from the public**

All the comments in the Visitors Book are very complimentary. There is a Suggestions Book in the Shop which contains some interesting comments.

#### **The Museum Shop**

The Museum Shop has proved a popular attraction, with a much wider range of products sold. Takings were running at an average of £15 per day during much of this period, but have dropped off latterly with the reduction in visitor numbers

#### **The Garden**

Comments about the Museum garden have been universally positive.

#### **Volunteer staffing of the Museum**

There has been no shortage of volunteers, including some excellent and very keen newcomers, to welcome visitors, operate the shop or work in the garden. There are always at least three volunteers in charge of the Museum at any one time. Bryan Gillard is to be congratulated on orchestrating all this.

#### **Management of the volunteers**

A number of key volunteers have stepped forward to coordinate the work of others, including Bryan Gillard (Volunteers Coordinator), Mary Gillard (Housekeeper), Maggie Sampson (Catering Manager) and Elizabeth Sebborn (Shop Manager). Others are in process of being designated.