

**BOUND BY VETERANS**  
**2018**  
**Report**

**WINTER**

After the presentation of a special leather binding of Angus Beaton's photographs to HRH The Prince of Wales at Lancaster House on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2017, celebrating AMAR's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, January 2018 got off to a busy start as the remaining limited edition of 12 copies



*L to R: Jonathan Powell, Ali Strachan, Wendy Lagden (from BBV) and Angus Beaton (photographer)*

were bound in cloth and housed in slipcases by the veterans. All were enthusiastically received and the quality of work was commended by HRH as well as Baroness Emma Nicholson, Chairman of AMAR. This project raised over £1000 for the charity and was a huge feather in our caps.

In February we received a very kind donation of finishing tools and bookbinding materials from Mr Peter Downs. The tools had belonged to and been used by his late mother and he was very happy to think they would be put to good use by the veterans. We also received a cheque for £500 from the Sherlock Trust, which was put in place by the mother of one of the veterans we have helped, who achieved C&G Levels 1 and 2 qualifications with us.

**SPRING**

March snows came but we were warmly encouraged by the generous donation of £1000 from James Middleton of Ede & Ravenscroft to finance one course. Mr Middleton was reached through Wendy Lagden, who works for E&R and the charity has Wendy to thank for making this connection, and engaging the enthusiasm of her boss.

We also welcomed Lori Sauer, President of the Designer Bookbinders, on board as a teacher of the C&G Level 2 course on non-adhesive bindings. Lori is extremely experienced with

this genre of work and very much enjoyed the interaction with the veterans. One of her pupils was Gareth Roberts who had raced through C&G Level 1 at the beginning of the year, and was already completing Level 2. Lori will continue to teach at the barn next year, on both Level 2 and 3 courses.

In April Wendy was again active in raising funds for BBV and through her efforts we were chosen by Waitrose in their 'Community Matters Scheme': tokens dropped into the Bound by Veterans box at the Marlborough Branch during the month of May would contribute to a share of £1000 between three charities. We were delighted to receive £244 from Waitrose at the beginning of June.

## SUMMER

Come the long hot summer, we welcomed another highly respected bookbinder on board as a teacher: Stuart Brockman, son of Jim Brockman and part of the internationally renowned Brockman Bookbinders; came to teach gold finishing early in June. This exceptionally difficult skill is one that eludes many bookbinders, but all four veterans who took part managed to learn lettering and simple decoration in gold leaf during the weekend. This course forms part of the new C&G Level 3 Diploma, on which we currently have six veterans registered.

Early July, trustee Sally Gregory ran a Band of Sisters workshop at Tedworth House, with 12 members of this Help for Heroes group attending. It was enthusiastically received and planted the idea of expanding our endeavours to help the families and loved ones of veterans by offering them targeted lessons.

With this in mind, on August 2nd members of the committee took part in Summerfest at Tedworth House, offering an outdoor pamphlet making workshop to all Band of Brothers (BoB) and Band of Sisters (BoS) attending the Help For Heroes annual summer bash. Cunningly, the pamphlets in question were newly designed and printed information leaflets about BBV which had been created to help veterans and their families understand what we do and who we are.



*Tedfest - for young and old*

It was a swelteringly hot evening, (many thanks to Robert East for the loan of a gazebo!), but we initiated interest by rounding up children to fold the A3 sheets and sew them, thus making their first



books. Children dragged parents in and we had created quite a draw by the end of the evening, and left with the realisation that we really should offer these simple lessons to the families of veterans as a supportive and therapeutic activity, as well as to the veterans themselves.

## AUTUMN

In early September I gave a talk about BBV at Bristol University as part of its 'Living Well With Books' conference. In attendance were publishers, art therapists, writers, bookbinders,

academics and more and it seemed to be very well received, despite my somewhat emotional delivery when describing the successes we have had with some of our veterans! The talk was followed by another pamphlet making session and a small sale of marbled paper notebooks. All in all £240 was raised for BBV through the fee given for the talk and the sale of 9 notebooks.

Later in the month Wendy Lagden and I set up our BBV stall at the Stationers' Open Day at Stationers' Hall in London. This is a day when many institutions generally closed to the public, open their doors to let the general public see what is inside. In an event organised by Rob Shepherd, we joined other stalls in celebration of the book, including the Royal Bindery whose apprentices were in attendance to showcase their work in the pilot bookbinding apprenticeship scheme there.



Over 1000 people came through the door during the day, and, you guessed it, we were furiously sewing up more of those pamphlets to give out in a bid to spread the BBV word. Many people expressed interest in what we are doing and gave words of support and congratulations. The Worshipful Company of Stationers have supported us from the start and it was wonderful to give something back and be part of this event in the iconic and beautiful Stationers' Hall.

On 1<sup>st</sup> October, Wendy started formal employment as courses administrator, financed by Shepherds Bookbinders, but organising the courses and students for both Shepherds and BBV. This is hugely beneficial to the charity and we could not function efficiently without such help.

We were also lucky to gain the interest of two new volunteers: Anita Andrews, an art teacher and self-employed community artist, who has worked with people with learning difficulties and disabilities; and Ruth Sidgwick who came to the talk in Bristol, and is pursuing an MA in art therapy. Both Anita and Ruth have already taken part in classes in the barn and we look forward to working with them next year.

Mid-month, Kathy Abbott, highly respected co-founder of Benchmark Bindery and Tomorrow's Past, came to teach the Level 3 limp vellum course, with Stefan, Wendy, and Gareth as students. All made the most perfect books, and enjoyed working with Kathy and this exacting material. Wendy and Stefan are well advanced in the Level 3 Diploma, and are due to qualify by summer 2019.

Behind the scenes Wendy had been busy again, applying to Tesco Bags of Help Scheme, and in October she heard that BBV were successful in being a choice for shoppers to give tokens to in both the Amesbury and Tidworth Tesco stores. The scheme is valid through November and December and the charity could get up to £4000 from each store if we have the greatest number of tokens!



*Wendy Lagden explaining the Charity to the Mayor of Tidworth, Councillor Mark Connolly at Tesco Tidworth.*

## WINTER

Another donation of bookbinding cloths and papers was given to us in November by Mrs Shepherd-Cross, for which we are so grateful. These materials will be used in all our classes and thus save the charity money.

Kate Holland, Fellow of the Designer Bookbinders, came to teach a beginners C&G Level 1 course in November, which proved to be a particularly jolly week, with a mixture of Shepherds students (termed “civvies” by our veterans) and BBV students enjoying lots of banter, yoga and of course bookbinding. James and Kevin, the two veterans on the course, are keen to come back for the second part of Level 1 in February.

City & Guilds are a supporter of BBV as well as the provider of the internationally recognised qualifications we offer to WIS service men and women, and late in November Margaret Walker, External Quality Assurer for C&G, came to Shepherds, to sample students’ work and sign off the certificates we have issued in the last calendar year. Two veterans achieved C&G certificates this year, but we have had 64 course attendees, 9 of whom have gone on to take C&G courses, and we expect these 9 to qualify next year.

Taking stock in December, I feel this has been a year of restructuring. Our course calendar is full for 2019, with some of the most respected names in bookbinding coming to teach. In addition to those already mentioned, who will return to teach again, we will be welcoming Derek Hood, Fellow of the Designer Bookbinders, as a teacher of Levels 1, 2 and 3, and Mylyn McColl, full-time bookbinder, to teach Level 1. With a dedicated courses administrator, and an array of bookbinding courses at all levels with experienced teachers, we hope to attract many more veterans from the introductory lessons at Tedworth House, as well as members of BoS.



*Sally Gregory teaching an introductory lesson at Tedworth House*

Rob Shepherd has started product-making sessions and is putting into action some new designs for journals and notebooks with the assistance of new volunteer Anita Andrews. These sessions, which will be run on a monthly basis for BoB and BoS volunteers at the barn, will produce products which will be sold in high-end London stores, raising funds for the charity as well as offering work experience and pin money to the volunteers.

Sadly, during the year two volunteers, Brian Edwards and Jane Lightfoot, had to withdraw from duties due to personal and health reasons – I would like to take this opportunity to wish

them well and thank them for their energetic and useful contributions to our cause. As our veterans know only too well, sometimes it is hard to know what life is going to throw at you. Also, I would like to pay tribute to Freya Scott who taught the C&G Level 1 and 2 courses so well and encouraged so many of the veterans to return for more. Freya has withdrawn from teaching BBV courses and is now focusing all her energies on her photography and marbling businesses.

I would also like to thank our sponsors: The Book Trades Charity who pay our rent; The Printing Charity, City & Guilds and The Worshipful Company of Stationers who finance the Level 3 courses. We hope to hear from the Wiltshire Community Foundation in December as to whether we have been successful in our bid for a small grant from them. We are enormously grateful for the financial support they give us.

And finally, my heartfelt thanks to the Trustees and volunteers who make it all possible: Jonathan Powell, Mike Quaile, Sally Gregory, Liz Scott, Robert East, Nicole Lander, Rob Shepherd and Andy Harrison. An especially large thank you to Wendy Lagden for her stellar efforts in raising money for the charity, and her tireless work on communications and courses.

Alison Strachan  
Chairman