

President's Report

This is the part in the AGM where I get to look back over the last year in the life of SEMFed, and say a lot of thankyou's!

Firstly I would like to formally thank the **committee** for all of the work that they do to help run the Federation. This ranges from organising events, like today, updating the website, setting up booking systems on eventbrite, membership renewals, balancing of the books, publicity and advocating for the group. It's been great to work with you all this year.

We are saying goodbye to some members of our committee today. And I, on behalf of the committee and all of our members say thankyou to them for all of their hard work and looking forward to catching up with them again on future SEMFed days:

- Sally Ackroyd who is finishing a long stint on the committee including terms as an Ordinary Committee Member, President and Vice President
- Alison Giles who has been a brilliant Secretary over the last three years, plus organising Study Days and our Study Trip to Cologne
- Will Heppa who has been on the committee for three years organising Study Days and stuck straight in with organising a Study Trip to Rome practically straight away when he joined the committee!

We've had a great year of visiting museums for **study days** around the region – so another thankyou to the museums and staff for allowing us to visit and giving great insight into what they do.

It doesn't seem a year ago that we were in King's Lynn in Norfolk July 2017 for our AGM and Study Day exploring three museums. It was great to hear about the redevelopment Stories of Lynn at the Town Hall, Seahenge and changing exhibitions at Lynn Museum and explore the independently run True's Yard Museum with their community engagement and work with volunteers.

We were very honoured to be able to visit Langley Academy in Slough, Berkshire in November 2017. Langley Academy is a school – that's right a school, not a museum! But it is the only museum learning focused school in the country so it really was a special day hearing how museum learning is integrated within lessons in a school environment and how activities were not limited to one subject – such as inspiring young children to engage with literacy work after handling archaeology objects or how older students thought about how market stalls would have been organised historically around Windsor Castle in their Business Studies lessons.

Then in May we had a really interesting Study Day at the Palace House: Newmarket: National Heritage Centre for Horseracing and Sporting Art. It was really interesting to hear how they are adapting to life after their massive transformation, how volunteering has changed and how they are continuing to engage their local community and how three organisations can work as one across the site which includes a charity re-training retired race horses!

I'm delighted that we have been able to rearrange our Study Day here at the Roald Dahl Museum, which we unfortunately had to cancel due to the 'Beast from the East!' We try our hardest to ensure that our Study Day's are spread around the huge South and East region that the federation covers so that there will be some you will be able to make without too much travel. We also try to add a write up of the day to our website so please do take a look if you want to know any more about where we've been.

Our annual **study trip** in January gives members a rare opportunity to visit behind the scenes and meet members of staff from museums across Europe and beyond, something that is unique to SEMFed. For anyone who hasn't joined a trip it's like a mini museum holiday, as it is lots of fun! But also a great opportunity to explore a city and its' museums, think about museum issues in another country and get to know fellow SEMFed members better. Recently we have visited Amsterdam and Rome and this year the Federation explored Cologne. At this point I want to extend a big thankyou and well done to Alison, who unfortunately is not here today, for organising a fantastic trip. She had organised visits to four museums meeting curators and other museum staff to hear about how these museums worked. Now unfortunately I did not join this trip but have heard wonderful things about visiting basement stores in a church, a chocolate museum, the largest collection of Roman glass in the world and German food and beer!

This has been my first year as President, with one more to go. In this year I have been working hard to ensure some sustainability for the way that the committee works. Hopefully making it a bit easier for us to manage the Fed and to organise brilliant events for you all! I'm really looking forward to the year ahead – on our next Study Day we will be visiting the brand new St Albans Museum and Gallery in Hertfordshire. This has just reopened this month after a huge redevelopment so we're looking forward to seeing the transformation and hearing about the project on Tuesday 16th October.

Lauren Ephithite

SEMFed AGM 2018, Roald Dahl Museum