



## FRIENDS OF DISCOVERY MUSEUM (FODMS) AUTUMN 2015

### A Note From The Chairman



Another Season has passed by and here we are, well on our way to the Christmas gathering on 8<sup>th</sup> December at 12.30 at the Museum.

Activity amongst the Friends and the Committee continues apace. Ed Dinning and his group of volunteers are doing sterling work running the engines in the Science Maze for the entertainment of visitors and the Arcs and Sparks displays and exhibits continue to fascinate the parties of visitors who come to see them. Once again, thanks to Ed and his team for their hard work.

The Friends Committee continues to meet each month at the Museum (see our page on the TWAM website for details) and all Friends and potential Friends are welcome to attend.

Activities under current discussion at the moment by the Committee include a project to re-invigorate parts of the Science Maze and the establishment of a technical resource library at the Museum – space permitting!

We now have a Visits Secretary and intend to inaugurate a programme of visits to regional attractions which are related to the interests of Members. We are also currently working on a project to establish a dedicated website for Friends of Discovery and improve our 'outreach' to those out there in the wider world who might like to learn more about our activities and projects. My thanks go to Tony Stephenson for his efforts in this regard. We currently are looking for a new Treasurer to assist John Chaney in his work. John has held

this role for more years than I care to remember and my thanks go to him for undertaking this important role so diligently.

I hope you enjoy reading about these and other activities of the Friends of Discovery and I look forward to welcoming you at one of our future meetings.

**Ian Burdon**

**Chairman, Friends of Discovery.**

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## Explaining the Science

The Science Maze Gallery at Discovery Museum is a great place for children of all ages to get hands on with science. The gallery is filled with a mixture of historic objects and interactive exhibits. These interactive exhibits enable the visitor to explore the science behind many of the historic objects.

FODMs members Chris, Ed & Graham have been active in this gallery since Easter this year when they started operating the large gas and steam engines. Having the engines turning over and having people on hand able to explain how they work has made an enormous difference to the visitor experience.

During the summer holidays the engines team realised that the visitors also need some assistance in using the interactive exhibits and in understanding the scientific principles involved. After a few trial explanations and bit of reading up at home the engines team are now also "science explainers"

The Science Maze Gallery covers a wide range of electrical and physical sciences from simple switches to gravity and light. In each section historic objects are displayed which utilise these aspects of science. These include levers, switches, engines, radio, TV, radio and computing.

The challenge for the explainers is to make the link between the interactive science exhibit and the historic objects so that visitors can see how the science has been employed in everyday life. Sometimes this is quite simple e.g boiling kettles and steam engines. So far the engines team/science explainers have tackled exhibits such as the light tower and the air tubes.

The next stage is to tackle the more complex exhibits such as the "gravity well" which requires a bit more knowledge of physics. The Science Maze Gallery is quite a large area so it would be good to get a few more members in action as explainers/ demonstrators . So if you fancy trying your hand at being a science explainer please contact Graham Bradshaw at [bradshawgraham@btinternet.com](mailto:bradshawgraham@btinternet.com) or tel 01434681750.



Explaining the Science-Ed & Chris demonstrating the "black mirror" interactive in the Science Maze gallery.

## Message from the Manager

Bearing in mind the good weather visitors numbers at Discovery over the summer holidays were high. This was in large part due the wide range of family events and activities that were put on over the school holidays. Two events in particular drew big audiences. The Fireman Sam and Titan the Robot had people queuing outside the building. The Titan the Robot event attended by around 5500 people was the highest number ever for a single day at Discovery.



Whilst these events are not directly linked to the collections they do bring in visitors. Many are coming to the Discovery for the first time. Hopefully these families then return to the museum many times as their children get older.

The high numbers of visitors also meant that sales at the shop and café were good adding much needed revenue to our account.

The Great North Greats exhibition opened in the middle of August. The exhibition celebrates the millionth finisher in the great North Run and also showcases the work of a wide range of people who have made the North "Great". These include the Parsons (father and daughter) and Joseph Swan plus current leading lights such as Linda Conlan from the Centre for Life. The exhibition runs until mid October.

**Discovery Museum Manager**

**Carolyn Ball**

## Memberships

If you haven't already renewed your membership you can pay direct into our Bank Account (Sort Code 20-59-42 Acno 53813487). Please remember to put your name as a reference

Adults: £15  
Family membership: £20  
Students: £10

Corporate (11 members): £150  
Schools: £15

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