



## **COWPER & NEWTON MUSEUM – Reg Charity 310521: PRESS RELEASE**

Following the announcement of the Award on 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2020, the Vice Lord Lieutenant of Buckinghamshire Mr Alexander Boswell today presented the Cowper & Newton Museum Volunteers with their Queen's Award for Voluntary Service at an online ceremony.

The group supports all aspects of the running of the Museum including front of house, conservation, catering, maintenance, gardening, events planning, fundraising, administration, and guiding. The museum tells the stories of William Cowper (a nationally renowned 18<sup>th</sup> century poet), and his friend John Newton (the local curate-in-charge and former slave ship captain), who together wrote a total of 348 hymns known collectively as "The Olney Hymns", the most famous of which "Amazing Grace" was written by John Newton in Olney in 1772. Both men also played a significant role in the campaign to abolish the slave trade.

The volunteers also promote the museum in the wider community through delivering talks and lectures and by giving costumed displays of 18<sup>th</sup> century dance.

The Queens Award for Voluntary Service aims to recognise outstanding work by volunteer groups to benefit their local communities and was created in 2002 to celebrate the Queen's Golden Jubilee. Recipients are announced each year on 2<sup>nd</sup> June, the anniversary of the Queen's coronation.

Paul Collins, Chairman of the Museum's Trustees commented:

"Coming just 5 weeks after the 120<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the museum in 1900, I am delighted that the hard work and commitment shown by our volunteers, and so appreciated by our visitors both local, national, and international, has been recognised by this prestigious award"

ENDS

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NB: The Museum is currently closed as a result of the COVID 19 crisis & paid staff are furloughed.

## Notes to editors

1. Lord Lieutenants represent the monarch in each of the UK's ceremonial counties.
2. This year there were 230 recipients of The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service from across the UK. More information on the recipients and the Award can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/queens-award-for-voluntary-service>
3. Any group of two or more people that has participated in voluntary work for more than three years can be nominated for the award. Full details on how to nominate are available at <https://qavs.culture.gov.uk/>
4. Nominations for the 2021 awards closed on 25th September 2020.

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