

## Curator's Report to Museum Committee Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> May 2019

As part of the **Onwards and Upwards expansion project** the Museum will be working through a detailed **Activity Plan**, approved by the HLF. A key aspect of the plan involves our target audiences: **people with disabilities, low income families, low income older people, 13- 24 year olds and primary schools**. Throughout this and subsequent reports points outlined below that are pertinent to these groups or to another key area of the Activity Plan will be highlighted in purple.

### 1. **STAFFING/ TRAINING**

**1.1 Staff development** – Hannah Lyddy and Nikki Ritson attended a 'Writing for Interpretation Workshop' at the REME Museum in Lyneham. The Museum staff are soon to begin writing the text for the new graphic panels so the timing could not have been better. Techniques on how to create interesting and impactful text were discussed as well as the best physical design of graphic panels, even down to how many words should ideally make up a sentence.

**1.3 Mental Health in Museums** – HL and NR attended a 'Mental Health in Museums' forum at the Holbourne Museum in Bath on 5<sup>th</sup> April. The Holbourne have integrated a form of 'social work' into their programme, running an art group for vulnerable adults and instigating a volunteer mentor scheme for some of the members. This we were very interested in and have begun discussions as to whether might be something we can implement when we reopen.

**1.2 Volunteers** – One new volunteer has joined the team this quarter, Allan Hall who will be 'Front of House'.

**1.3 Work Placements** – HL is meeting with Megan Tallentire, Work experience coordinator at Wiltshire College on 23<sup>rd</sup> May to discuss hosting possible students. We are enjoying hosting Grace Hopkins, Masters Student at Bath Spa University.

**1.4 Value Exchange** - This quarter the Town Council has received volunteer support (35 volunteers in total) for the Museum and its activities equating to **£5400** (General: 20 hrs - £500, Learning & Outreach: 78hrs - £1950, Collections: 70 hrs - £1750).



### 2. **OPERATIONAL**

**2.1 Volunteer Handbook/Information** We have begun to assemble a new volunteer handbook which will be finalised in 2020 prior to our reopening. In addition we have created a more detailed document specific to our volunteer team including such points as training, recognition and change of placement roles.

### 3. **COLLECTIONS**

**3.1 Accessioned objects** – This quarter we have accessioned a number of new images for our photographic collection as well as a certificate for evacuee hosting during World War Two. We are scheduled to visit the home of a potential donor in Melksham who has a number of Victorian and Edwardian costumes and shoes that she has offered us.

**3.2 Library and Research Facility**– On Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> May HD and HL spent a day training with Collections Consultant Tim Burge investigating the best ways in which we might go about setting up the Library and Research Facility (which has had a slight name change since the last report). One of the things we needed advice on was how you can make MODES (our Collection database system) accessible to the public either via our website or via a P.C that is available for users within the Library. This would allow the users to freely search through the 25,000 objects in our collection and lead their own research.

**3.3 Victoria and Albert Museum-** Research done by Collections and Exhibitions Officer Hanne Dahl into the connection between the town's weaving industry and Mary Quant (60's fashion design icon) has made it into the Victoria and Albert Museum's Mary Quant exhibition and catalogue (the exhibition ends in February 2020). The cloth for her creations came from a number of UK mills, including those operating in Trowbridge. Surviving correspondence between Trowbridge's Home Mills and Mary Quant Ltd, held at the Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre, shows that Mary Quant especially ordered light weight flannel cloth. With help from the V&A's curators we have located three Mary Quant garments made of cloth produced at Home Mills which we hope to put on display when the museum reopens in 2020.

**3.4 Deaccessioning of collections –** The last remaining deaccessioned objects and items that were used as display props have found their new homes. Much went to other Museums who had gaps in their collection, some went to Mill Street Day Care Centre to be used as part of their Reminiscence Collection and some were bought by a lady who was planning on auctioning them for charity.

## 4. EXHIBITIONS

**4.1 West of England Festival of Textiles – 6<sup>th</sup> September 2019** The WEFT press release is being finalised and the textile project brief has been sent to partners. We have also finalised the contract with the hosting venue (Bridge House Drawing Projects) and are now devising the accompanying activity and workshop programme.

## 5. LEARNING & OUTREACH

*For this quarterly report the Museum's Learning and Outreach team have run 13 events and workshops and engaged with 655 people. Gross income for this quarter is £303. (to the end of April)*

**5.1 Learning and Outreach Service –** We have decided to temporarily suspend our Schools Learning and Outreach service to enable us to concentrate working on the Museum Design and Interpretation and develop the new activities that form part of the Onwards and Upwards Activity Plan. (see attached letter). **This might affect our income in a marginal capacity (most workshops are free).** Schools will be well informed before the re-opening of the Museum via our new Marketing & Events Officer and the provision of an INSET day which might attract local teachers. We have notified local schools that we will not be taking any more bookings until January 2020. We are still running a programme of events and activities during the holidays and will be honouring existing bookings.

**5.1.1** Through the spring and summer we will be developing new Science, Technology, Engineering & Maths (STEM) and History workshops that will be trialed with schools from September 2020 onwards.

**5.2 Monday Craft –** The Monday craft sessions for adults with learning difficulties are continuing in the Museum's Civic Centre Office (Bowyer Room). This quarter 3 workshops took place with 14 adults participating. We have welcomed a couple of new participants and their support worker has asked whether we are able to put together a course focusing on Maths and English skills. A number of sessions had to be cancelled due to the relocation to The Civic. We received a grant of £238 from Trowbridge Almshouse Trust which has funded resources for our Monday Medley Group.

**5.3 Life Long Learning –** We have done three Lifelong Learning activities this quarter – an illustrated talk on Saints for Shockerwick BUPA residential home, a memory session for Mill Street Centre (Alzheimer's Support) and the chair of the Museum Friends asked us to put on our interactive Science Lecture for the Friends AGM. We prepared adapted version of the Christmas Science lecture, which the Friends enjoyed.



**5.4 Easter Holidays and Family Crafts – We put on 3 activities during the Easter holidays and all of the events were well attended.**

**5.4.1 The busiest day was the Easter pottery painting workshop we ran on behalf of the Shires (299 attendance), and**

**5.4.2 The final craft in the old Museum, Woven Easter Baskets saw 57 people attend.**

**5.4.3 We put on a Woollen History Day in the Guide Hut which attracted 22 people – this involved natural dyeing, weaving and some history challenges.**

**5.4.4 The Shires asked us to run a pottery painting workshop outside the old Gregg unit for Mother's Day – 110 people took part. We will continue to run holiday activities for the Shires – they purchase all the materials and we are able to engage with lots of people. (Activity Plan 2.1)**

**5.5 Big Wednesday Weave – We took part in the Celebrating Age Big Wednesday Weave event at Trowbridge Library. This was a cross-generational day of weaving activities. Lots of children and families and senior citizens dropped in and had a go. We were joined by Geoff Travers who brought his willow weaving skills to the Library. (Activity Plan 2.7)**

**5.6 Oral History Project – We conducted our first WW2 Oral History Project interview with a fascinating man from Hilperton. He talked for over an hour on his childhood including amazing stories such as finding a dead German airman in a field and watching D-Day preparations at RAF Keevil. (Activity Plan 1)**

**5.7 Guided Walk – The guided walk on the town's woollen heritage took place on a lovely Saturday morning in April. This walk proved extremely popular and was slightly oversubscribed. It is our intention to repeat these walks, and other guided walks, on some summer evenings. (Activity Plan 1.3)**

**5.8 Not In A Pub Quiz – The April and May general knowledge quizzes took place at Leykers. Everyone is welcome to join in the fun and you may even win some cash. This quarter the quizzes have earned £50 for the project.**

**5.9 Handling Collections – A number of items were purchased using project funding for several of the new activities. These included replica items covering the Neolithic to Roman periods and some science interactives for our new STEM workshops. (Activity Plan 2.4, 3.4 & 3.8)** These will be catalogued and boxed together with the remaining handling collection. We have lent an amateur actor some items for her performance in the Trowbridge Players performance of The Ladykillers.

**5.10 Town Hall Activities – We met with David Lockwood, the new Director of Town Hall Arts and discussed opportunities for working together. We are currently putting together a list of skill sharers that can run demonstrations during the summer holidays. We also talked about working together on another Christmas event. (Activity Plan 2.1)**



**5.1.1 Darhill and Bowlish Weaving Project** – This Shepton Mallet-based project met with Nikki and Hannah with a view to borrowing handling objects connected with the woollen industry.

## **6. MARKETING/PROMOTION AND WEBSITE**

**6.1 Marketing** – This quarter we placed an advert for our Easter children's events and received free editorial for the Onwards and Upwards project in the 'Life in Trowbridge and Bradford on Avon' magazines.

**6.2 Museum Website** – Brightside (who assist us in managing our website) are planning on creating a link from our website to our Tripadvisor page. This has almost 80 reviews with an average rating of 4.5 out of 5 stars.

**6.3 Museum Vlog** – We have begun a weekly vlog which we load onto our Facebook and Instagram pages. It is another way in which we can engage with the community and a fun way of keeping people up to date with everything we are doing. This is in addition to the monthly newsletter that we have been producing since our closure to the public last year. Have a look at the first one here:

<https://www.facebook.com/trowmuseum/videos/284060649205935/>

## **7. TOURISM/VISITS**

**Visitor Figures this quarter (March, April):** Schools: 0, Other Groups: 514, Website: 756

**7.1 Trowbridge Heritage Festival** – The Committee met for a second time on 14<sup>th</sup> March and discussed the possibility of a Victorian banquet at the Town Hall as the closing event, confirmed that the Festival would take place in October half term next year and will have (if possible!) a high profile lead speaker.

## **8. FUTURE OF THE MUSEUM PROJECT**

**8.1 Museum Accreditation-NTR**

**8.2 Fundraising:** See 10.1

**8.2.1 Eco cups-** We have secured another outlet for these, the coffee area of the Town Hall is now promoting and selling them.

**8.2.2 Not In a Pub Quiz-**

Our May Quiz was held on the 12<sup>th</sup> May.

**8.3 Borrowing for the Project:**

**8.4 Appointment of consultants and contractors:** We had several meetings with the building contractors who had produced the lowest tender to ensure that they revisited their costs and reduced them to a level that was as near as possible to the original budget. On the 8<sup>th</sup> April EW Beard Ltd submitted their final lists of adjustments which were approximately £100,000 above the original budget. In addition to submitting the lowest tender, Beard also offered to complete the works in 35 weeks, following a 9 week mobilisation period. This represents a significant saving to the 52 week tender programme.

On the 15<sup>th</sup> April 2019, a letter of intent was issued by the Town Clerk on behalf of the Town Council to Beard, subject to contract and confirmation of any funding from the Landlord..

The start date for construction activities is scheduled for the 17<sup>th</sup> June 2019.

**8.5 Permission to Start, HLF monitoring:**

We met with Ellen Dempster, our HLF Monitor on the 9<sup>th</sup> May.

She was happy with the way that the Project is progressing.

She commented on the amount of work that is involved within the Activity Plan and was keen to see the latest Design and Interpretation plans which were to be updated as a result of our meeting on the 1<sup>st</sup> May with the Design contractor Chris Jones of Smith and Jones.

**8.6 Funding** – the additional cost of the main contract will be funded from:

- Already received from the Friends £50,100
- Underspend on loan repayment budget £37,662 and
- Additional future funding from Friends or the Landlord £10,000

## 9. PARTNERSHIP WORKING

**9.1 Friends of Trowbridge Museum** – HL, DB and NR met with Committee members of the FOTM on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> May to discuss joint working and possible fundraising ventures. Lots of ideas were discussed including a yearly social event, a town trail/quiz for families in the summer holidays and bake sales.

**9.2 Mill Street Day Care Centre** – We continue to have a close working relationship with Mill Street Day Centre and have answered their call for volunteers to cook their member's lunch once a month. Hannah and Nikki did the first shift (fish pie and bread and butter pudding!) with David and Richard booked in for next month's!



## 10. MUSEUM - FINANCE SUMMARY (AGENDA ITEM 7)

10.1 End of Year 2018/19 accounts are attached.

### Museum I01 (Jan '19 – March '19)

	Actual £'000	Budget £'000	Variance £'000
Gross Expenditure	261,398	276,652	15,254
Income	6,886	28,354	(21,468)
<b>Net Expenditure</b>	<b>254,512</b>	<b>248,299</b>	<b>(6,213)</b>

### Museum Project I02 (Jan '19 – March '19)

	Actual £'000	Budget £'000	Variance £'000
Gross Expenditure	457,250	367,171	(90,079)
Income	483,705	393,627	90,078
<b>Net Expenditure</b>	<b>26,455</b>	<b>26,456</b>	<b>1</b>

### Grants Cultural I04 (April 18 – March 19)

	Actual £'000	Budget £'000	Variance £'000
Gross Expenditure	30,000	13,000	(17,000)
Income	0	0	0
<b>Net Expenditure</b>	<b>30,000</b>	<b>13,000</b>	<b>(17,000)</b>

### Financial summary

**End of Year is £6213 adverse.**

Please see Museum & Museum Projects Actuals 2018/19 for comments.

*Museum Committee 28<sup>th</sup> May 2019*

**10.2 The Museum Project Reserve is now as follows:**

Underspend on loan repayment budget	£ 37,662
Unspent loan and grant income	<u>£483,285</u>
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>£520,947</b>

**Clare Lyall – Curator** with contributions from:

*Hannah Lyddy - Museum Manager;*

*Hanne Dahl - Collections and Exhibitions Officer;*

*David Birks - Learning and Outreach Officer*