

Quarterly Report to Museum Committee, Tuesday 30th March 2021



**Trowbridge
MUSEUM**

Clare Lyall - Curator and Head of Cultural and Neighbourhood Services

Hannah Lyddy - Museum Manager

David Birks - Learning and Outreach Officer

Vacant Position - Apprentice Learning and Outreach Officer

Nikki Ritson – Collections and Exhibitions Officer

Tessa Kerslake - Marketing and Events Officer

Andrea Bartlett - Retail and Income Generation Officer

Richard Alley - Museum Assistant

1. STAFFING/ TRAINING

1.1 Impact of Covid- 19 – Having been working in our two bubbles of 3 staff members since October, we are looking forward to coming back together as one team and working with volunteers again from Tuesday 6th April.

1.2 Staff – The Museum Curator has been on sick leave since 1st January this year, we wish her a speedy recovery.

1.2.2 Team Vacancy- We are currently advertising for a 30 hours per week Learning and Outreach Apprentice. The closing date for applications is 24th March with interviews following on 31st March.

1.2.3 Staff Training- TK took part in South West Museums Development Programme's 'Digital Storytelling with a Collections Focus' free workshop sessions on 23rd & 25th November 2020.

1.3 Volunteers – This quarter we have welcomed 2 new members to our volunteer team.

1.4 Mill Street Day Centre- HL and NR have volunteered for a number of sessions to support Mill Street Day Care Centre.

1.5 Value Exchange – We look forward to reporting on this post our volunteers return in April.

2. OPERATIONAL

2.1 Deep Clean- A four day deep clean of the site took place from 4th- 9th March, in readiness for our reopening. A lot of construction detritus remained so it was great to bring the Museum up to a high standard of cleanliness.

2.2 Internal way finding signage- This was installed w/c 8th March. We are still waiting on final permissions from the Shires in order to install our external signage (having previously secured all relevant permissions from Wiltshire Council).

2.3 Fire inspection sign off - We had a visit from a Fire and Wiltshire Council Officer on 16th March and we have now received our completion certificate.

3. COLLECTIONS

3.1 Accreditation- We have received notice that our Arts Council accreditation assessment may be delayed further. Currently we have not been given a date, only that it will take place in 2022. We will continue to hold Provisional Accreditation status for the time being.

3.1.2 Nikki has been working with staff from The Civic to reorder the store and complete final box checks. This will ensure that MODES (our collection database) is up to date. It will raise any anomalies and create a backlog list to deal with them in readiness for our accreditation assessment.

Thank you to Imi, Ollie, Ellen and Chloe from The Civic and Christina from Active for their ongoing help.



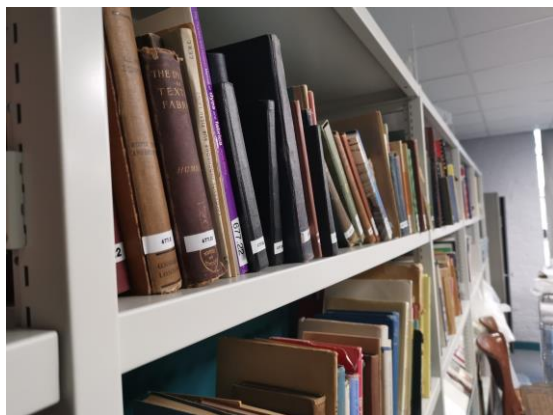
3.2 Expansion work- Objects continue to be removed from the store to be put on display. We have installed another gallery wall upstairs, including the Friends' commissioned Henry de Bohun portrait. Another thank you to Cllr. Bridges, who installed our 2 long case clocks, one on each floor, which are to remain on display.

3.4 Conservation- Following our Just Giving campaign, we have taken our two flapper dresses to a textile conservator (Textile Conservation Limited) in Bristol. A full proposal has been offered for the restoration of the dresses; Andrea is working on obtaining further grant funding for this. We hope that at least one will be able to be displayed this year in our new costume case.

3.5 Enquiries- We continue to answer public enquires. They have varied from family history research, building names and addresses, copies of booklets within our collection, and history relating to Clarks mill for a building development (synserahomes.co.uk/houses-for-sale-trowbridge).

3.6 Object Donations- We have been working through new donations, some of which will not be accessioned but will become part of our handling collection for the Learning programme.

3.7 Research Library- This has mostly been unpacked now. We are hoping that with our volunteer's imminent return we will be able to finish organising the books currently in the library, and start transferring those from our collection to the library so that they will be accessible. Having an ex- librarian as a volunteer has been very helpful for us (Thank you Christine!).



3.8 DEACCESSIONING – (AGENDA ITEM 7) As an accredited museum there is a formal process we must follow for deaccessioning museum items (removing them from our collection) and the first stage of this is for the Museum's governing body to approve the decision to deaccession specific objects. We will therefore be seeking approval from the committee for the de-accessioning of the following items (*if you would like more information about the objects below, please contact Nikki Ritson **in advance** of the committee meeting*). It is important to note that rationalising a Museum collection is an important part of managing it correctly; it reduces space used for storing duplicate or very generic items that no longer fit into our Collection Development Policy and makes way for new items that can be used to foster engagement with this community's stories.

RECOMMENDATION That Trowbridge Museum proceeds with deaccessioning the following objects that are Generic historical items, are not directly relevant to Trowbridge or the woollen cloth industry (no longer fitting into our collection policy), are damaged or are duplicates. (See 3.8.1)

3.8.1 We have decided to deaccession the following:

1977.369 Plate severely broken during transport.
1991.683 Aplin jar severely broken during transport.
2002.33 & 1996.186 Ushers trays, these are duplicates.
2008.75 Legal book, a duplicate and severely damaged object with mould and damp (prior to accessioning).
1996.104 Generic book cover. Rest of book not present.
2008.130 Hattersley loom part. Loom deaccessioned before expansion.
1989.93 Material grid basket. No evidence of being used in Trowbridge. Rubber badly deteriorating.
M305 Bratton jug from Morrison collection. Severely broken.
1982.345 Pub sign hanger – Large & heavy, actual pub sign not present.
1978.232 Houlton photo – damaged and we have smaller, identical version else ware in the collection.
1990.683 Wooden park swing boat. Used at Bratton Sunday school, the object is not complete or from Trowbridge.

We are also deaccessioning some objects on the grounds that they are a Hazard. These do not need to be approved by committee, however if you would like to know more, please do contact Nikki.

4. EXHIBITIONS

4.1 Graphic panels- These were installed on 9th and 10th March (barring a few additional panels that Beaufort Bespoke will return to complete). We think they have transformed the site, which now looks like a Museum!



4.2 Further mannequins have been purchased for the West of England cloth case. This case is upstairs and explores West of England cloth in the twentieth century. Our cases are currently a work in progress but we have some finished exhibitions now, just in need of their object labels.

4.3 Work continues on 'Illuminating the overlooked', our first Temporary Exhibition in our new Temporary Exhibition gallery! Hannah and Nikki met on site with Jennifer Hamblin and Katryn Saqui, the exhibition curators from Court Street Gallery. Both showed some examples of their work for the exhibition.

4.4 Fairy Tale Book - David and Nikki produced the final illustrations for our Fairy Tale book, which explores the role spinning and weaving has played within fairytale and folklore throughout the ages. This is a collaboration between the Museum and a number of local artists, who produced the rest of the story illustrations.

5. LEARNING & OUTREACH

Due to the museum project, lockdown and COVID restrictions we have not run any school workshops this quarter but have put on a couple of Lifelong Learning activities.

5.1 School Workshops & Lifelong Learning – The BUPA residential home at Shockerwick took one of our digital tablets loaded with Christmas-themed resources so that they could lead some festive memory sessions. David has been putting together some loans boxes that local primary schools are borrowing. These include Cultural Diversity, Woollen Industry and Local History. Each loans box includes handling objects, images, exemplars plus a digital tablet loaded with various resources such as images, short video clips and information sheets. We are currently taking lots of bookings for online lessons from local schools.

5.1.2 David gave an online talk on the local Woollen Industry to the Wiltshire Guild of Spinners and Weavers. Another talk for the Bathford Society, planned for January, has been rearranged for April.

5.2 Not In A Pub Quiz – 2020's online version of our monthly quiz drew to a close in December and the 2021 series restarted in February. The quiz attracts both local and distant teams with players competing in Sheffield, Staffordshire, USA and Kosovo. The quiz will continue online until restrictions allow it to return to Leykers. For 2021 we have invited teams and players to make a voluntary donation to the Museum via Ticketsource.

5.3 Audio-visual equipment for the Education Hub- David has conducted research into suitable audio-visual equipment for the Education Hub. We have decided on a system that will include a fixed TV screen (for films, lectures, etc.) and a mobile interactive whiteboard for schools, workshops, demonstration, etc.). This will give us lots of usability, enable us to update some of the activities we offer schools and facilitate remote access of talks, lectures and other Museum events and workshops. This equipment together with window blinds forms part of an Area Board application that will be considered in April.

5.3.1 Blinds - We have realised that blackout blinds are needed for the new Learning Hub, the room gets very hot and evening sun can make it very difficult to use. David arranged for two blinds suppliers to assess the windows and send in quotes. (This will be part of our Area Board application.)

6. MARKETING, EVENTS AND SOCIAL MEDIA

6.1 Website- The new website design and sitemap has been approved. The team are currently working to refresh their respective areas of copy and layout on the site. Brightside have begun to build the new site and we anticipate this will launch in April.

6.2 Social Media- Festive Friday FB posts- From the end of November and all through December, Andrea & Tessa produced a series of weekly 'Festive Friday' videos for our Facebook page, of simple craft activities for our followers to try.

6.2.2 Social Media Marketing- Our December pop-up shop social media promotion was a success, with 561 people engaging with these posts. This converted into just under 400 people visiting the pop up shop across the 5 dates.

6.3 Print Marketing- In the build up to the museum reopening, we have planned a 2 month marketing strategy, which will include flyers, posters, and banners advertising the reopening date as part of our 'Your Heritage, Your Museum' campaign. These will be distributed across Wiltshire and Somerset.

6.4 A new museum map/ guide is in the design stage with Brightside. We are producing an updated children's mouse hunt and activity sheet for our younger visitors.

6.5 Activities Brochure- Our first 2021 events guide will launch with the museum reopening and will cover May-September.

6.6 Publications- The museum reopening has been advertised in The Bath and Wiltshire Parent November/December edition, and a 'what's on' feature has been written for the upcoming March/April magazine. Visit Wiltshire will be including an advert for the Museum throughout 2021 in their map and guide publications.

7. TOURISM AND EVENTS

Engagement figures this quarter (Dec, Jan, Feb): Schools (digitally): 0, Other Groups: 30, Website: 1,457, Digital (FB, Twitter and Insta post engagement): 7286

7.1 Museum Launch- Our community launch date is set for 22nd May. Due to social distancing restrictions, we are preparing for visitors to book slots and for capacity to be reduced. An 'official' launch will be held following this depending on COVID-19 guidelines. This is expected to be in September, with a bid for HRH The Princess Royal to attend and do the honours.

7.2 Trowbridge Heritage Festival – Trowbridge Heritage Festival is planned to take place from 21st – 31st October 2021. This was postponed from last October and we are hoping to pick up where we left off with the plans. We will share these in more detail with the Committee next quarter.

8. PARTNERSHIP WORKING

8.1 Trowbridge Town Hall- HL and NR have had several meetings with David Lockwood (TH Director) to discuss a community play project that they are leading on but would like the Museum to be involved in. The premise of the play is to explore the development of the town through the lens of the growth and decline of

Bowyers, the famous local meat production company. A BID has been submitted to the Arts Council that the Museum has fed into in (with regards to running workshops for attendees to explore our Bowyers collection).

8.2 Thriving Communities – David and Hannah took part in two Thriving Communities meetings. The group started in December with a plan to apply for grant money for social prescribing but match funding was problematic so it is looking into aspects of partnership working and a cultural strategy, and will continue to meet on a regular basis.

8.3 Social Prescribing- An outcome pertaining from the above Thriving Communities meetings is that we will now be working with Nicola Humpage, Trowbridge Primary Care Network Community Connector. As part of her work with GP surgeries, Nicola can ‘prescribe’, social or support activities that may help someone struggling with aspects of their mental health. We have made Nicola aware of the activities that we run that we feel really fit the bill for S.P, and made her aware that our volunteer programme has long been involved in welcoming those struggling with anxiety, low confidence, loneliness or long term health problems; but it will now do so in more of an official capacity.

9. RETAIL AND INCOME GENERATION

9.1 Christmas shop sales- After buying and pricing new stock, setting up the till and getting the museum ‘pop up’ shop ready for trading we ran five ‘pop up’ shops on Thursdays and Saturdays in the run up to Christmas. We took a total of £919.00 and welcomed lots of locals who can’t wait for the museum to reopen! Preparations continue for the opening of the shop ‘proper’ at the end of May.



9.2 New Ashton and Court Mills publication by Ken Rogers- This new publication published by the Friends of Trowbridge Museum was released in the last half of December (selling price £15.00), it was promoted on Facebook and sold well during the last pop-up shop sessions.

9.3 Crowdfunder Campaign- AB set up and administered the museum's first ever Crowdfunder campaign to raise money for the restoration of two 1920's flapper dresses from our collection. The campaign ran for four weeks during December, and Crowdfunder waived their usual commission fee during this time to support arts and cultural enterprises. We received £330 of donations, a great start.

9.4 Grant updates- AB has completed the case study reports for the ‘Small Grant Big Improvement’ grant of £1000 to create an online digital index for our library, and the ‘Recovery Grant’ (£4865) we were awarded to buy tour guide equipment and tablets for our Learning and Outreach work. The remaining balance due to us of £1487 was paid in to the TTC bank account in February.

The digital index is now live, available for anyone to search and view via our website. Visitors will be able make an appointment to use the library when we have opened.

9.4.2 At the end of February AB resubmitted a revised grant application to the Area Board for our Museum Learning and Library Community Access project (for £4970 which is 50% cost of the project). At the request of the Area Board Chairman our application has been deferred for consideration until April.

9.4.3 AB has also prepared a grant application to AIM's Pilgrim's Trust, Remedial Conservation Grant fund, for the remaining cost of the conservation work needed to restore two 1920's flapper dresses for future display (after the £330 raised via Crowdfunding).

9.5 Coffee Machine- In February we took delivery of two simple Felco filter coffee machines from the local company Dusty Ape Coffee. Once open we will be able to sell good quality filter coffee to visitors and anyone who hires our meeting room facilities.

9.6 Weaving project & products progress- Together with our volunteer Tim, Andrea has made some prototype products from the woven cloth produced using the small rigid heddle looms. There are table runners, placemats, bookmarks and spectacle cases, these will be sold in the shop with a label attached 'Made at Trowbridge Museum'.



10. Q3 ACCOUNTS (AGENDA ITEM 8)

The Q3 accounts for Cultural Services are shown below (APPENDIX A).

SUMMARY FIGURES			
Museum Qtr 3 (April '20 - Dec '20)	Actual	Budget	Variance
Gross Expenditure	£130,912	£127,240	-£3,672
Income	£11,090	£13,909	-£2,819
Net	£119,822	£113,331	-£6,491
SUMMARY FIGURES			
Museum Project Qtr 3 (April '20 - Dec '20)	Actual	Budget	Variance
Gross Expenditure	£244,803	£0	-£244,803
Income	£218,117	£0	£218,117
Net	£26,686	£0	-£26,686
SUMMARY FIGURES			
Grants Cultural Qtr 3 (April '20 - Dec '20)	Actual	Budget	Variance
Gross Expenditure	£18,044	£17,250	-£794
Income	£0	£0	£0
Net	£18,044	£17,250	-£794
Total	£164,552	£130,581	-£33,971