

A Victorian Shipbuilder
in Bristol
Michael Gorely

Heritage in the forest
**Daisy Horsley
and Emily Aaron**

What's Your Story?
John Simpson Wedge

HMS Warrior in focus
**Judith Carrie and
Katherine Webber**

Interactive sensory objects
Dr Kate Allen

Tower of London
Foreshore Finds
Kathleen McIlvenna

Mammoths on the Move
**Laura Bennison and
Fiona O'Sullivan**

Age Collective
Laura Phillips

Art in the Park
Lisa Williamson

Pop Up Theatre Royal
Tess Forbes-McMurchie

Talking Objects
National: Tullie House
Anna Smalley

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the voice for
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Case Studies

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What is GEM?

GEM champions excellence in heritage learning to improve the education, health and well-being of the general public.

GEM believes that involvement with our rich and diverse heritage is an enriching and transformational experience that provides distinctive opportunities for learning. We aim to make that learning accessible, relevant and enjoyable for all. GEM works with its members and collaboratively with other learning organisations across the UK and internationally to:

- champion excellence in heritage learning and participation enabling people to be inspired by, value and enjoy their and other's heritage;
- advocate the power of heritage learning in transforming people's lives to sector organisations, national agencies, funders and government;
- influence sector organisations to deliver excellent learning and participation for their visitors;
- promote and explain the benefits of learning through heritage which is inclusive, sustainable and respectful of communities;
- develop creative partnerships with other organisations to share effective practice in heritage learning and participation;
- research and pioneer innovation in heritage learning and participation;
- inspire and support the work of heritage learning practitioners;
- provide opportunities for practitioners to develop their practice through networking, mentoring and learning together.

Editorial

Welcome to Volume 13 of Case Studies and an inspiring set of articles highlighting a range of excellent projects colleagues have been involved in across the UK. Many of them reveal how important working in partnership is in order to achieve our aim of reaching and engaging new audiences with local heritage and collections. Exciting projects have emerged through working with health professionals, artists, university researchers and archives, as well as teachers in schools and fellow heritage organisations. Several articles also illustrate the impact of funded projects with a national reach and multiple museum partners.

The Heritage Schools Programme, led by English Heritage, provided the impetus for the projects in Bristol and Manchester in our first two articles, which aimed to engage schoolchildren with their local heritage and place it within the context of national events. Through visits to local sites and organisations, the children accessed a variety of sources such as oral testimony and maps and in Bristol experienced costumed interpretation.

Arts Council England's Museums and Schools Programme has funded a literacy-focused project *What's Your Story?* in Norfolk including the creation of valuable resources that will enable schools to continue to engage with the wonderful collections of a local, small museum, long after the project funding ends.

This edition also illustrates continuing efforts to reach groups and audiences who may not find it as easy to access

our collections and sites such as deaf children (*A Victorian Shipbuilder in Bristol*), disadvantaged young people (*HMS Warrior in focus*), adults with learning disabilities (*Interactive sensory objects*) and sick children in hospital (*Mammoths on the Move*). *Age Collective* describes efforts to explore how museums can better cater for the diversity of older people in their localities in partnership with other organisations. The Tower of London's *Foreshore Finds* project demonstrates one way, through the involvement of volunteers in the storage and documentation of finds.

Two projects, *Art in the Park* and *Talking Objects National* describe the value, in terms of levels of engagement, enthusiasm and confidence, of enabling children and young people to respond in creative ways to objects and the local environment. Meanwhile *Pop Up Theatre Royal* outlines a project aimed at introducing children and community groups to live theatre and the heritage of the Theatre Royal in Glasgow through performance, audience participation and follow-on workshops.

We hope you enjoy reading this edition of Case Studies and please consider sharing your own work by submitting an article for our next issue. The deadline is 11 March 2015.

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A Victorian Shipbuilder in Bristol
Michael Gorely
English Heritage



A Victorian Shipbuilder in Bristol

Summary

The project was the main focus of a whole school heritage week at Elmfield School for Deaf Children. It began with the discovery of a bag of tools, a newspaper and a letter belonging to nineteenth-century shipwright William Morgan. Next a signing actor playing the part of William Morgan told the children a little of his life and work building the SS Great Britain. The children were then taken to the SS Great Britain and explored the ship. This was followed up with a visit to the Bristol Record Office to look at original nineteenth-century maps of Bristol docks. During the week the children also worked with an artist to explore the maps in greater detail and with a real shipwright with whom

they built and tested their own sailing boats. The project finished with an exhibition displayed at Bristol Record Office.

Background

The project was part of the Heritage Schools Programme in Bristol. The aims of the programme include engaging children with the heritage of their local area, increasing opportunities for learning outside the classroom and helping children relate local heritage to the national story.

Challenge

Many of the children at the school live outside the city of Bristol, so the emphasis of this project was to engage the children in a significant aspect of the city's heritage.

Approach

The project attempted to connect a human story with the bigger story of Victorian ambition and transport in Bristol.

Intended outcomes

- An understanding of the significance of the SS Great Britain in Bristol's history.
- An opportunity to use primary historical sources to increase historical understanding.
- To make links between history and geography.
- To establish links with a range of heritage providers.

Intended outputs

- An exhibition of work inspired by the week's activities.

Obstacles and issues

The major issue was, of course, making sure that the needs of the children, all of whom were profoundly deaf and

who use British Sign Language as their primary form of communication, were met. A signing actor was used, each provider who worked with the children had interpreters and hand-held games consoles with a signed video tour were available for the children on the SS Great Britain.

The children researched William Morgan on the 1851 census using ancestry.co.uk, although it was not particularly user friendly for the children.

Actual outcomes

- Engagement with parents and carers.
- High degree of motivation in the children.

Lessons learned

- Using a real person as the focus for the enquiry was very motivational for the children.
- Being able to follow up the initial finding of the bag with meeting William Morgan and then immediately going to the SS Great Britain was very powerful.
- Cross-curricular opportunities for art, literacy, science and design and technology were exploited very well.

Next steps

The Heritage Schools Programme will provide direct support to 24 schools in Bristol during 2014 and share learning and resources with the wider heritage schools network.

Michael Gorely

Local heritage education manager,
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Heritage in the forest

Summary
Teachers at Bowker Vale Primary School in Blackley, Manchester planned and carried out a scheme of work based on the history and heritage of Blackley Forest.

Supported by English Heritage as part of the Heritage Schools Project, students were encouraged to investigate why Blackley Forest was replanted in commemoration of the suffering of local people during the second world war, and in celebration of Queen Elizabeth II's coronation in 1953. They worked with local heritage partners, examined archive photography, second world war bombing maps and newspaper reports, oral testimony and council records.

Background
The national curriculum for history has provided a fantastic opportunity for schools to use their local area to study the past and thus allow students to develop greater understanding of, and sense of pride in where they come from. The Heritage Schools Programme, introduced by English Heritage in April 2012, supports this. Schools are helped to develop schemes of work using local heritage resources and the built historic environment, so that the children can find out about and appreciate their local history and heritage, in the context of national historical events. Bowker Vale Primary School, which serves a large

and diverse community, is one of 18 schools in Manchester taking part.

Challenge

- Identify a local building or place with significance for the students, an interesting history, and relevance to the school's curriculum and national historical events.
- Provide teachers with knowledge and understanding of the history of the site and understanding of how this fits into "the bigger historical picture".
- Develop their confidence to deliver local history topics in the classroom.
- Facilitate and co-ordinate the involvement of local heritage providers in the project.
- Inspire and enthuse children with the history of their local area.

Approach

A number of continuing professional development sessions were organised in order to train teachers in skills needed in a local study, such as oral history, and using archive maps and plans. Resources including maps, archive photos, newspaper articles and presentations were provided for the lead teacher to develop her knowledge and understanding of the site and its history. Contact was made with local archive services, the local council and heritage partner. They helped provide the necessary time, resources and information to make the project a success.



Intended outcomes

- Develop the local history skills, knowledge, understanding and confidence of teachers.
- Use local history in order to inspire, enthuse and instil pride in children about their area and create links with the local community.
- Highlight links between local history and the national picture.
- Highlight opportunities for local history to be used to enrich a school's existing history curriculum and to further develop skills in other areas of the curriculum.

Intended outputs

- Scheme of work with accompanying resources and activities to ensure sustainability.
- Local heritage display showcasing children's history, literacy and art work.
- Commemoration event to remember the suffering of local armed forces representatives in past and present conflicts. Students to take part, plant trees and place a memorial bench as a lasting legacy.

Obstacles and issues

It proved difficult to contact and co-ordinate the involvement of many groups all with busy schedules and



different priorities. The oral history element proved problematic as many of the older people approached were reluctant to speak on tape or to children, or had not lived in the area during the period. Finally, carrying out this project with students aged eleven meant that the pressures of educational assessments were looming! The teacher had to devote enough time to literacy and numeracy to meet her statutory obligations, as well as the local heritage project.

Actual outcomes

Pre and post project student evaluations indicate that the children enjoyed their investigation of Blackley Forest and that their knowledge of local history and heritage improved. They developed a sense of pride in the people of their area who had persevered during times of suffering and hardship.

Feedback from the school indicates that the project had been a success:

"We are very proud of the children. The bench and trees look fantastic and help make the project even more meaningful and sustainable."

Emily Aaron, Bowker Vale Primary.

"What a wonderful way for the children

to put history into a real life context."

Rachel Jacques, headteacher, Bowker Vale Primary.

Lasting relationships were made and strengthened between the school and local heritage partners, Manchester Archives and Council representatives and local armed forces groups. Dot Keller of Friends of Blackley Forest stated, "I thought the commemoration event was wonderful. It has been suggested we hold another anniversary event next year on Armistice Day."

Actual outputs

The scheme of work is now firmly established in the curriculum for eleven year olds.

The commemoration ceremony held on Armistice Day 2013 was a poignant event, well received by all those involved. Dave Barlow of Manchester City Council stated, "The project, the commemoration event and its legacy is a credit to the school and to the Heritage Schools Project."

The school received positive publicity from the project including articles in a local newspaper and on websites of local heritage partners and Manchester City Council.

Lessons learned

The identified heritage project must be interesting and engaging for the students but must also be readily incorporated into existing schemes of work, or relevant to the school curriculum. It must be sustainable if it is to be a viable part of the school curriculum. This means that teachers must be equipped with the knowledge, skills and confidence to deliver the lessons in the future and that lasting partnerships must be established between the school and local heritage partners.

Next steps

- The lead teacher on this project has produced an additional scheme of work which she is now leading with other year groups across the school.
- The lead teacher intends to organise a "coronation tea party" oral history event to encourage people in the community to share their memories.
- The commemoration event will be repeated on or around Armistice Day each year and the children will take care of the memorial bench and trees.
- Additional local heritage projects are now being planned, with the support of the Heritage Schools Programme, so that local heritage is incorporated across the school year-groups.

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What's Your Story?

Designing literacy resources to support *Stories from the Sea* at the Tolhouse

Summary

Time & Tide Museum is working with Royal Museums Greenwich on *Stories from the Sea*, a literacy-focused, primary schools project which is part of Arts Council England's Department for Education funded Museums & Schools programme. *What's Your Story?* was created to encourage teachers to visit our sister museum, the Tolhouse.

Background

Great Yarmouth is an area of low cultural engagement, with high numbers of children from low-income families. Levels of attainment in English are below average and there are many children with English as an additional language. Time & Tide Museum is working with thirteen local primary schools to develop teacher resources and education events with a specific literacy focus.

Challenge

The Tolhouse is a small museum located in an atmospheric former gaol. It has limited facilities (no toilets on-site, low staffing and limited interpretation) but fantastic collections. We wanted teachers to be able to access the museum and use it to support their literacy and creative writing work.

Approach

We designed and trialled a new resource which led teachers through the process of using objects to inspire creative writing, along with suggested activities and follow up work for back in school. It also contained information on the logistics of visiting the Tolhouse gaol and the museum's collections.



Intended outcomes

- Support teachers raising attainment in literacy.
- Make inspiring objects more accessible to schools.
- Increase school visits to the Tolhouse gaol.

Intended outputs

Produce a resource pack enabling teachers to lead creative writing workshops using the Tolhouse gaol's collections.



Obstacles and issues

There were two main difficulties encountered during the project; firstly the layout and small size of the Tolhouse meant that groups of 60 were too large to use the space effectively and there was not enough material to support a self-led visit of more than 90 minutes. Consequently we focused on working with local schools within walking distance of the museum that could bring a single class of children at a time to use the site.

The second difficulty was teacher confidence. Several of the teachers felt uncomfortable leading creative writing workshops in the museum as they felt they lacked the skills to focus on creative writing, especially poetry, and knowledge to work with museum collections. To overcome this we ran

training sessions on-site. In one case the entire teaching staff from a local school came for twilight training sessions so that any teacher could bring their class or would feel confident supporting a colleague's visit.

Actual outcomes

What's Your Story? supported teachers raising attainment through inspiring collections and was seen by teachers as a very positive addition to our schools programme: "Really impressed with the vocabulary that the children produced in their writing; thanks for the inspiration!" Local primary school teacher.

School visits to the Tolhouse have seen an increase of 60% over the last year thanks to schools coming to use

the new resources. Many of the teachers had never visited the site before their training and were amazed by the quality of collections available.

Actual outputs

Produced a resource pack enabling teachers to lead creative writing workshops using the Tolhouse gaol's collections. Supported by on-site teacher training led by museum staff to fully use the activities within the pack. The pack was expanded to include more activities with a poetry focus.

Lessons learned

- High quality teacher training was vital for helping teachers to make the most of the new resources.
- Realising the limitations to teacher-led visits enabled us to better focus our resources to support teachers who could make the most use of them.
- When teachers feel supported by their local museums in one aspect or subject, they are more likely to seek their assistance with other curriculum subjects.

Next steps

Stories from the Sea continues until March 2015. The resources from *What's Your Story?* are available to all schools. We are leading workshops for other museum educators to show how the resources can support any museum or collection. We are continuing to offer free teacher training for all schools interested in visiting the site.

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Stories from the Sea:
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HMS Warrior in focus

Summary
Strong Voices is a national project aiming to connect disadvantaged young people with world class arts and culture. Artswork is the bridge organisation delivering *Strong Voices* in the South East of England. They are working in Portsmouth; a city with a rich naval heritage but also high indices of deprivation. The project with HMS Warrior is one of a range of initiatives to connect local teenagers with that heritage.

Background
HMS Warrior, launched in 1860, was the pride of Queen Victoria's fleet. Powered by steam and sail, she was the largest, fastest and most powerful ship of her day. Warrior was, in her time, the ultimate deterrent. The ship now serves as a floating museum and iconic local landmark. HMS Warrior has a part time learning officer, Katherine, whose main focus is primary school groups. Enable Ability is a local charity supporting young people with learning difficulties. The young people meet fortnightly for a social programme.

Challenge
To engage teenagers in a heritage setting whilst developing their photographic skills.

Approach
A professional photographer was engaged and she and Katherine worked together with the young people, both on board Warrior and at regular youth club sessions. A sound artist also worked with the group to produce an accompanying soundscape.



Intended outcomes

- Embed Arts Award delivery in both organisations.
- Establish sustainable partnerships,
- Engagement and skills acquisition for young people.
- In-depth work to be seen as valuable by heritage organisations.

Intended outputs

- Arts Award training for HMS Warrior, and Enable Ability staff.
- Explore Arts Award for young people.
- A newspaper booklet of photos and weekend exhibition.

Obstacles and issues

- Enable Ability staff were initially reluctant to engage in a prolonged photography project with a heritage venue as they believed that the young people would get bored. Some of the support staff clowned around during sessions, as they felt this would ensure the young people would have fun. It was the young people who asked for this behaviour to stop.
- On Warrior, primary schools and families with young children are seen as the target audience. There was no expectation that teenagers with learning difficulties would produce work of interest to the wider public.

Actual outcomes

- The quality of the pictures taken by the young people really impressed all those who saw them; HMS Warrior extended the exhibition from the original two days to four weeks. The young people have now been commissioned to produce a series of postcards to sell in the museum shop.
- The project had such a beneficial impact on one young person that the charity recorded the changes in a case study.
- Warrior has since delivered summer workshops aimed at this audience to which the young people have returned independently.
- Films shot by the young people are to be shown on the Guildhall's Big



Screen and at Portsmouth Film Festival.

- There have been requests from Warrior staff and from museum visitors to purchase copies of the images.

Actual outputs

- Fourteen young people achieved Explore Arts Award. Warrior's learning team, Enable Ability and both artists were trained as Arts Award advisers.
- Arts Award embedded into two further projects on Warrior.
- Young people all had a newspaper of prints as well as copies of their own work. Two made short films.

Lessons learned
Cross-sector knowledge

- The care agency was unaware that museums have staff who can facilitate and support visits.
- Warrior assumed that charities would have no funds.

- Time needs to be spent engaging support workers as well as young people.

Quality is vital

- Using professional artists has meant the young people have gained transferable skills.
- The effort involved in ensuring that the young people's work is accredited is far outweighed by the benefit to young people.

The project challenged assumptions about the competencies of those with learning difficulties. Whilst individuals have undoubtedly benefited, the project has raised the profile of the museum, both as a destination and as a partner for collaborative projects.

Next steps
HMS Warrior will be working with volunteers from the group to produce images for commercial postcards of the ship. The project will encompass

Bronze Arts Award and it is hoped this will form the nucleus of a youth forum for Warrior. Future projects on Warrior will have Arts Award built in where possible. The artist is seeking to extend her practice to those with profound learning difficulties.

Enable Ability are seeking to establish an ongoing relationship with the museum using their core funding.

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Interactive sensory objects

For and by people with learning disabilities

Summary

Our aim is to create multisensory interactive artworks that respond to equivalent objects in museum collections, developed through art and electronics-based workshops by people with learning disabilities in collaboration with an interdisciplinary research team.

Background

This is a research project, funded from 2012-15 by the Arts and Humanities Research Council. The grant is held by the University of Reading and the University of East London in collaboration with organisations representing people with learning disabilities, and museums and heritage sites.

Challenge

"Hands-on exhibits bring a space to life, giving a greater understanding and meaning to cultural heritage. This is especially important for people with learning disabilities." Lord Rix, President of the Royal Mencap Society.

The experience of handling artworks enormously enhances our understanding of cultural heritage, especially so for people with learning

disabilities. However, materials made accessible to people with learning disabilities as substitutes for the originals are often chosen by curators rather than determined by the user-group. Many materials are deemed by curators too delicate to be handled by the user group and in some heritage sites access to objects is limited because of the nature of the site's environment.

Approach

This project brings together artists, technologists, experts in multimedia advocacy and people with learning disabilities as co-researchers in the design of interactive multisensory objects that replicate or respond to objects of cultural significance. Through multi-sensory art and electronics workshops, people with learning disabilities are co-researchers in exploring how the different senses could be utilised to augment existing artefacts or create new ones.

The project explores collections at the British Museum, the Museum of English Rural Life (MERL) at the University of Reading, and the heritage site of Speke Hall as the basis for developing the objects, and stages workshops and public events in those locations.

Intended outcomes

- Engage people with learning disabilities as co-researchers in the design of interactive multisensory objects which replicate or respond to museum collections.
- Explore what improvements to access and engagement can be achieved for people with learning disabilities, through the use of multisensory object interfaces.
- Explore to what extent learning from this research can influence interactive provision for the general public.

Intended outputs

A collection of interactive multisensory object interfaces created by the co-researchers with learning disabilities in response to museum collections, tested and showcased at three events at each of the project's three main sites.



Multimedia websites created by the co-researchers with learning disabilities documenting their workshop experiences.

A cookbook of tried and tested ideas for sensory expeditions and workshop activities to support other museums to develop multisensory workshops and materials for their collections.

Obstacles and issues

- The main difficulty has been to create workshop tools and activities that encourage our co-researchers to state their thoughts and ideas during the design process.
- To promote the maximum opportunity for our group to be engaged and have access to electronics and be able to make choices.
- To allow personal view points of collections through sensory engagement.
- To make these objects robust enough to be used by the public.
- To know how best to share ideas with other sites.
- To articulate how the project's workshop activities align with museums' educational aims.

Actual outcomes

The project has been very successful in co-research with people with learning disabilities in the workshop activities. Participants have been highly engaged and feedback has been very positive.

Feedback from Speke Hall and MERL has been enthusiastic. The project has influenced how the sites present their collections, encouraging use of sensory materials and hand held objects that can travel with the visitor to give an individual experience.

We hope our research will challenge museums and heritage sites to become more sensory in their displays and promote wider, alternative versions of collections and their accessibility.

Actual outputs

Workshop tools to make working with electronics and interactive technologies more accessible, called *littleBits go LARGE*.



Custom devices to enhance a museum visit with multisensory experiences, such as an easy to use "sound box" that can be carried around and plays sounds at an appropriate part of the collection.

A series of webpages created by the co-researchers with learning disabilities documenting their experiences.

A cookbook of sensory activities is being developed to encourage and support other groups to take up the activities.

In June 2014 an event showcasing our co-researchers' sensory objects at MERL and a seminar at the University of Reading

Lessons learned

The importance of including our co-researchers in the research process, and how this can be encouraged by developing workshop tools to promote empowerment.

To design and simplify in order for our group to actively participate in design process.

How to present the work we have done to the heritage sector in a way that it would be taken seriously to inform policy and decisions of museum design.

Next steps

Our funding continues to April 2015. We plan to apply for further funding to produce some of the prototypes developed by the group including our sound boxes, *littleBits go LARGE* and the cookbook. We will continue to highlight interactive sensory objects developed by our co-researchers' sensory response to the collections at the British Museum in 2015.



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Tower of London Foreshore Finds

Summary
Working with the Museum of London’s archaeological archive, Royal Armouries wanted to revisit, repackage and store a collection of foreshore finds, explore its history and increase its public accessibility.

Background
Royal Armouries has collections originating from the Office of Ordnance stores based in and around the Tower of London. In 1986 evidence of the ordnance’s workshops was uncovered during a dig on the foreshore. Nearly 30 years later it was considered that this material could be of value to those interested in the historic tower foreshore, its archaeology and conservation.

Challenge
The foreshore finds material is not typical of the Royal Armouries collections and Royal Armouries staff at the Tower of London lacked the specialist archaeological expertise so sought advice on storing such objects to safeguard them and facilitate accessibility to a wider audience.

Approach
Royal Armouries approached the Museum of London’s archaeological archive for practical advice regarding storage and quickly realised the archive had strong relationships with volunteers who had experience and interest in the Thames foreshore. Volunteers were recruited from the archive’s pool of contacts and the project commenced in two phases with four volunteers. The first pilot phase was six weeks and the second phase was twelve weeks.



- Intended outcomes**
- Promote and share the collection with interested parties.
 - Generate wider knowledge and understanding of the collection and the history of the ordnance.
- Intended outputs**
- Improve the care, storage and documentation of the foreshore finds.
 - One workshop on history of ordnance and a tour of the White Tower for the volunteers.

Obstacles and issues
Working with the archaeological archive removed the challenge of recruiting volunteers with the required experience. However, I worried about not offering adequate skills development in exchange.

Time and space was limited. The venue used for the volunteer sessions had to be changed part way through and working conditions could be crowded.

- Actual outcomes**
- The foreshore finds collection is far more accessible and with good long term storage provision.
 - A useful and productive partnership with the Museum of London has been developed, providing a gateway to audiences interested in the collection and archive.
 - The volunteers were able to further their knowledge and understanding of Royal Armouries, an area of history they had not encountered before. They also met their own objectives which included working with this type of collection and broadening their knowledge of archaeological archival work.



- Actual outputs**
- Over 700 objects have been repacked, documented and photographed.
 - One workshop with a handling session on history of ordnance and a tour of the White Tower was provided to the volunteers.
 - I wrote one blog for Royal Armouries and one of the volunteers blogged about the project every week. Through this blog we were able to reach out to the wider archaeological community and make discoveries within the collection; one object previously listed as a medieval jetton was actually a Roman coin!
 - Although I had been worried about developing the volunteers’ skills, the project did offer a new, meaningful learning experience and volunteers gained new knowledge. For example, by the end of the project they were able to identify parts of standard issue weaponry.
 - Through this project we realised that the photographic archive of the

excavation could be extremely important in demonstrating the extent of the erosion to the Thames foreshore. This will be investigated further.

- Lessons learned**
- Talking to and working with the archaeological archive meant that not only were we able to improve the storage for this collection practically, but it also gave us access to people (volunteers) and processes that enabled us to view our collection in a different light.
 - Sharing skills with the volunteers was a pleasure. All involved had valuable skills that benefited the project and each other.
 - A clearly defined and succinct project helped us and the volunteers manage limited time and space, especially as it was difficult to predict the amount of time needed for the desired outputs.



- Next steps**
- Documentation and images will be added to our collections database to increase access to that information.
 - We are looking at digitising the photographs of the dig to make them available to a wider public.
 - We want to maintain the relationships this project has cultivated, possibly offering workshops and presentations to organisations like the Thames Discovery Programme and the archaeological archive to increase the awareness of our collections, the history of the Tower foreshore and the Office of Ordnance.

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Volunteer blog on the project:
<http://mooseandhobbes.wordpress.com/tag/royal-armouries>

Mammoths on the Move



Summary
Mammoths on the Move aimed to explore the impact of handling museum objects for young people’s physical and emotional health within children’s hospital wards and to recreate elements of the National Museum of Scotland experience for those who couldn’t visit.

Background
The project began with skills swap sessions between museum learning assistants and play specialists at the hospital. The museum’s community engagement team shadowed play specialists on the hospital wards and in turn the play specialists attended part of the under-fives programme at the museum.

Challenge
Sick Kids Friends Foundation run an arts programme aimed at enriching the environment in the Royal Hospital for Sick Children. The challenge was to

bring the museum experience into the hospital, so bedbound children and children who would not normally access the arts wouldn’t miss out culturally.

Approach
Mammoths of the Ice Age at the National Museum of Scotland was chosen as the theme for activities. National Museums Scotland (NMS) provided mammoth visuals that began to appear on walls around the hospital including “mammoth myths”, height charts and footprints to raise curiosity.

The artist and writer in residence at the hospital offered drop-in activity sessions in the hospital’s public area, including mammoth mask making and cave art. They explored children’s questions about mammoths in a creative way through stories and illustrations.

Together we created a portable learning resource on the theme of ice-age animals that met the hospital’s requirements. The resource needed quick, engaging activities for use with children who were waiting to go in for surgery or bed bound. It needed to work for a range of ages, contain a lot of tactile objects for children with communication problems and also pass hospital infection control.

NMS’ community engagement team met with hospital play specialists to consult on the learning resource. There was also a session on how to deliver object handling sessions. Hospital staff organised for long-term patients on day release to visit the mammoth exhibition.

- Intended outcomes**
- Skills sharing and building relationships between hospital and museum, as near neighbours in the city.
 - Recreate part of the museum experience for patients at the hospital.
 - Increase visits to the museum from families using the hospital.

- Intended outputs**
- A learning resource for the hospital containing real objects.
 - Creative work by children exploring mammoths to be displayed at both institutions.

Obstacles and issues
It was important to tread carefully when building relationships within the hospital so as not to seem like the museum was adding tasks to the workload of the hospital’s play specialists. They have a very demanding role including medical care, delivery of activities on the ward and psychological support for families. This relationship needed to be brokered gently by the artists in residence project



manager and the NMS staff, so that the play specialists were on board with the project and could see the benefits. This will be easier going forward, now they have seen the impact of the project.

Part-time working at both ends also meant it took longer to deliver on some tasks than we planned for.

Actual outcomes
The learning resource continues to be used in the wards of the hospital and has proved to have a positive impact on individual recovery.

“Being able to hold a real mammoth tooth is not something you get to do every day and especially not if you’re a long term patient.”

While families expressed a desire to visit the museum exhibition, we were not able to measure this.

- Actual outputs**
- A themed and branded learning resource for ongoing use within the hospital, including real and replica objects on the theme of ice age animals including books, craft activities for different age groups, factual information and toys.
 - Staff skills exchange sessions.
 - A colourful corridor display on mammoths, “a mini museum” in a busy section of the hospital.
 - Blog posts written by hospital staff sharing the young people’s work and sharing of their work on both institutions’ websites.

Lessons learned
We need to be more realistic about the length of time certain processes within our mutual institutions take. Change can be slow and we needed a longer lead-in time to the start of the project.

There needs to be more evidence of the project within NMS, both in a physical display and online.

We need a better system for evaluating the project and the impact on those involved. It would be great if museum staff could spend more time in the hospital observing the learning resource in use.



Next steps
Phase two of the project is starting in autumn 2014. We aim to involve long-term patients and hospital staff more closely on the content of the learning resource. A second learning resource for the hospital will focus on an area of the museum’s permanent collections, so there are no time limitations created by the short-term nature of temporary exhibitions. We aim to expand upon the object handling training given to the play specialists and work more closely with them on the delivery of the resource to evaluate it effectively.

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Age Collective

Summary
Age Collective is a UK-wide, cross-sector movement exploring how museums and galleries can better work with and for the older people in their communities.

Background
Led by the British Museum working in partnership with National Museums Northern Ireland, Glasgow Life (Glasgow Museums) and Manchester Museum, *Age Collective* 2012-13 was supported by the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation.

Approach
Work to date includes five seminars and a conference aimed at drawing together a cross-sector audience to discuss the work of museums and older people. 191 participants from 171 organisations took part, ranging from older people's organisations, museums, health and social care, to research institutions. Open-space techniques enabled participants to set their own seminar agendas.

- Intended outcomes**

 - Listen to the voices of older adults: explore the needs of diverse communities of older people and the varied provision for meeting these needs across the UK.
 - Share good practice: develop ideas to support museums across the UK to better cater for the older people within their localities, in partnership with other organisations.
 - Develop inter-disciplinary partnerships: encourage social care, health and advice providers for older people to view museums as potentially valuable partners.
 - Research: improve the work that we do; formulate new ways of collaborating with other sectors and disciplines to locate new areas for collaborative research.
- Intended outputs**

Formulate a shared action plan: create a cross-sector network to drive change, with the aim of increasing opportunities and well-being for the diverse communities of older people in different parts of the UK.

Obstacles and issues

Age Collective's seminars and conference were extremely popular and feedback from the evaluation was good, but there were some key issues that continue to help evolve the programme.

There is a disconnect between what museums want to achieve through programmes with and for older people, and the networks they need to work with. Health and social care providers in particular do not view museums as valid partners in their work.



Age Collective did not manage to include the voice of older people as much as it would have liked, although it did engage with and has an on-going relationship with many older people's organisations. Individual partners also had their own ways of consulting with older audiences and feeding their opinions into the process.

Actual outcomes
The outcomes that were achieved or part achieved (and continue to be worked upon) were that *Age Collective* enabled sharing of good practice (and we've been asked for a lot more of this). The seminars and conferences were opportunities for developing inter-disciplinary partnerships and sharing examples of where partnerships were pushing best practice.

Ideas are being formulated from *Age Collective* regarding research proposals focused on museums and older people working in partnership with research institutions.

Actual outputs
We have just revised the Manifesto for Age Friendly Museums after launching the original version at the conference and then wanting to respond to delegate input. The manifesto superseded the idea of creating an action plan, although *Age Collective* has developed its own action plan for its future work.

Lessons learned

- There was a greater interest than expected and as well as an opportunity to discuss how museums might engage older people most effectively, there was a desire for case



- studies, support with best practice and continuing professional development (CPD).
- There is a need for museums to counter the negative perceptions of older people and ageing that prevail in the press.
 - Museums must recognise the great diversity of this "group" and one of the strengths of museums is their diversity of collections which have "something for everyone".
 - There is a need for research into what the demographic impact of our ageing society will be for the museum sector.
 - Open-space techniques can work really effectively with large and small numbers of people and groups really appreciate the democratic principles and opportunities to speak.

- Next steps**
- A plan for an "age-friendly museums day" in collaboration with Age UK and Silver Sunday.
 - Plans are being developed to devise a series of CPD sessions on the subject of older audiences.

Laura Phillips
Head of community partnerships,
British Museum

Further information
Age Collective's "age of creativity" website:
www.ageofcreativity.co.uk/users/299
Manifesto for Age Friendly Museums:
www.ageofcreativity.co.uk/items/694

Art in the Park

Creative learning outdoors

Summary

Art in the Park was an arts project held at Aston Hall Museum in collaboration with willow craft artist Paul Simmons. It was aimed at engaging pupils aged five to eleven with the outdoor environment via a creative and hands-on approach.

Background

The project was delivered during autumn 2013 with pupils collecting leaves, conkers and using willow to make sculptures for Aston Hall's outdoor areas. The children learnt about land art before the visit and made small scale sculptures at school in preparation for their day with the artist. By creating public art at Aston Hall with natural, found materials it was hoped that the children would learn new skills, gain respect for a local landmark, enjoy getting hands-on with nature and have increased confidence in their own abilities.



Challenge

Aston is one of the most deprived areas of Birmingham and many local pupils are at risk of social exclusion from the museum sector. An important factor for Art in the Park was to actively involve children from the local community with the hope that they would want to spend more recreational time with their families at Aston Hall and its park. Many local children live in multi-storey flats or terraced housing with little or no gardens. Teachers at neighbouring schools felt their pupils spent very little time outdoors out of school and it was hoped this project would help to overcome this.

Approach

Schools within walking distance of Aston Hall were targeted to involve children from the local community. Within two weeks we had four schools signed up with an additional school from further across Birmingham joining via word of mouth.



Intended outcomes

- Give children an immersive experience working with nature.
- Create sculptures for public display at Aston Hall.
- Pupils gain a sense of pride for their local community.
- Pupils have increased confidence in their artistic abilities.

Intended outputs

- Introductory outreach session for all participating groups to familiarise them with the project and the theme of land art.
- Full day visit to Aston Hall for each group, working with the artist to create their sculptures.
- Follow-up school assembly to finalise the project and present the children with a framed image of their art work, showcasing what they had achieved to the rest of their school.

Obstacles and issues

The project carried a high cost due to materials and artist fees. Consequently we needed to charge schools £300 per group. This did result in one school withdrawing from the project. However, as this project was delivered outdoors we were able to have up to 45 children per group, which lowered the cost per pupil overall for the schools and parents.

Actual outcomes

- Art in the Park received a high level of interest and helped to raise the



profile of Aston Hall as a site for arts based projects.

- Many of the participating children returned during October half term with their families. This subsequently helped local parents discover that Aston Hall is an inclusive site for all.
- Teachers were surprised at how happy and inquisitive the pupils were when working with nature and the outdoor environment. As a result one of the schools has gone on to sign up as a forest school to further enhance their pupils' outdoor experiences.

Actual outputs

- We worked with four schools and a total of 200 children aged five to eleven.
- By delivering school assemblies at the participating schools, we connected with 1,371 pupils and 68 teachers.
- The final sculptures were viewed by 1,014 visitors to Aston Hall during October half term.
- Participating school Manor Park Primary, which has the closest



proximity to Aston Hall, booked additional outreach workshops for their five to seven year old pupils themed around Art in the Park. These were delivered to 174 pupils and attended by 59 parents, further adding to the engagement of local families.

Lessons learned

Running the project during autumn was hugely successful as the children thrived when collecting fallen leaves, conkers and other materials. The children learnt things about nature that they had no prior knowledge of and this resulted in the project becoming cross-curricular. Despite occasional rainfall the teachers and I agree that autumn was the best time for this project to run.

The project included 20 minutes inside the museum to look at the architecture of Aston Hall, which inspired the final sculptures. I settled on this limited time to make the most of the period spent outdoors, but in the future I would



include a one-hour tour as the children were eager to explore and learn more about the hall's history.

Next steps

All of the participating schools have requested to take part in the project again, with further schools wanting to join as a result of recommendations. We are eager to repeat this project but due to the high costs it is very much dependent on budgets and funding. We are exploring alternative grants that will allow us to deliver Art in the Park again and hopefully lower the costs for schools too.

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Pop Up Theatre Royal

Summary
Pop Up Theatre Royal was designed to educate school pupils and the local community about the theatre's heritage and encourage them to visit the re-developed theatre.

Background
As part of the wider Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) supported *Theatre Royal Heritage* project, Scottish Opera produced and delivered *Pop Up Theatre Royal*; a free, 30-minute performance, which toured to class groups aged ten to eleven years old and community groups across Glasgow. The performance was delivered in the HLF funded Community Trailer; a converted HGV trailer with an interior to reflect the experience of visiting the Theatre



Royal. For schools, a follow-on workshop was provided along with an activity pack for teachers.

- Challenge**
- Engage a wide audience base in an entertaining and educational way (including curriculum for excellence aims and outcomes).
 - Cover a vast and varied history within a short performance.
 - Convey to the audience the experience of visiting the Theatre Royal within the Community Trailer.

Approach
The project was managed and delivered by Scottish Opera's heritage engagement and education teams who also developed the accompanying educational materials. Scottish Opera's technical team converted the Community Trailer.

- Intended outcomes**
- Educate pupils on the history of the Theatre Royal Glasgow.
 - Provide support materials for teachers and follow-on workshops to pupils based upon the aims and outcomes for the curriculum for excellence.
 - Connect pupils to what happens in the theatre through performance based follow-on workshops.
 - Encourage visits to the Theatre Royal and establish both the theatre building and its heritage as an educational resource.
 - Provide an entertaining account of the heritage of the Theatre Royal Glasgow to local community groups.

- Intended outputs**
- The *Pop Up Theatre Royal* performance piece.
 - An accompanying activity pack for teachers.
 - Follow-on workshop for school visits.

Obstacles and issues
One of the main difficulties experienced with our first tour was booking the visits and providing the support materials to the head teachers. The performance included elements of audience participation, with materials to support and prepare the pupils for this provided to schools in advance of the visit. It became apparent that the class teachers, who attended the performances and workshops, had not always been given the support materials by senior staff. This meant they were unable to prepare for the elements of audience participation in the performance, and in some cases were also unable to participate in the workshops. This was highlighted in



evaluation forms. For the second tour, class teachers were contacted directly, which resolved these issues.

Actual outcomes
The project was well supported by the sites that played host to the community visits, including Maryhill Burgh Halls. In addition to the success of the schools' tour, we also found the *Pop Up Theatre Royal* performance and Community Trailer worked well with elderly audiences, acting as a reminiscence event to prompt the sharing of their memories of the theatre.

Actual outputs
Through 52 performances over two tours, the performance was delivered to 1,240 audience members, engaging them in the heritage of the Theatre Royal Glasgow. The design of the schools' activity pack allows it to be used separately from the *Pop Up Theatre Royal* performance, acting as an educational resource that can be utilised by teachers in the classroom setting and adapted to complement pupil performances in school.



In conjunction with the cast and musicians of the *Pop Up Theatre Royal* performance, a question and answer session was also delivered at the end of each school's performance, allowing pupils to ask questions about performing on stage, career advice for the expressive arts industry and further information about the Theatre Royal's history.

- Lessons learned**
- Contact class teachers directly to organise school visits instead of head teachers, to ensure key information about the project and supporting resources is passed on to those who will prepare the pupils for their participation.
 - Due to the logistics of transporting the Community Trailer, it was important to recce sites fully to ensure ease of access and parking, and for the hosting schools and community venues to understand the restrictions of audience sizes.
 - The project was provided to schools and communities free of charge.

However, some schools cancelled last minute, creating an issue of finding an alternative audience and site to park the trailer. Luckily we were able to utilise existing contacts to cover the audiences for these performances. It would be helpful to develop a method to secure the school's booking and avoid similar situations.

Next steps
The Community Trailer will be used for future Scottish Opera education and outreach performances, activities and workshops.

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Talking Objects National: Tullie House

Summary

The *Talking Objects National* programme aims to inspire young people to creatively engage with museum objects and collections and forge closer links with cultural and heritage sites in their area.

As part of the project, a group of young people explored an object from our collection and its history, before producing a creative response to it.

This could take any form, from art and craft to drama, dance and music.

Background

The *Talking Objects* programme was created by the British Museum in 2008 and is funded by the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation. As one of the

British Museum's six national partners, Tullie House tested the programme in August 2012.

Challenge

Young people are typically a hard to reach audience in museums. It was hoped that *Talking Objects* could test an object engagement methodology that would suit their needs.

Approach

The project ran over four afternoons across a week and the participants came from a local school, Richard Rose Morton Academy. The seven pupils were students aged 14 to 16 who were "gifted and talented" in humanities. We chose one item from our collection to focus on, a statue of three Celtic Gods known affectionately as "the Three Hoodies", Genii Cucullati.

Obstacles and issues

Before the main four-day project, we intended to hold two taster sessions with the group. For the first one, we went to Richard Rose to deliver the session and the young people seemed really interested in the project. A group of seven was recruited. The second taster session where the group was supposed to visit the museum was scheduled a week before the project in the summer holidays. However, we had to cancel it as the majority of the young people were on holiday or couldn't attend. This made it very difficult to predict whether they would actually turn up for the main project,

and having to hold the project in the summer holidays in general was logistically difficult.

Actual outcomes

By the end of the week, the young people involved were relaxed and comfortable in the museum environment. They had really embraced the chosen object and come up with an entirely new theory as to its origin which surprised even our curator! The deputy head of the school was incredibly proud of the young people's final creative response. She felt that the group would never have worked so hard on something like this at school as they would be worried what their peers would say – at Tullie, she said, they felt comfortable enough to relax and be themselves.

Actual outputs

The group produced a fantastic mixed media creative response, made up of an original musical composition, a drama piece and artwork. The debate session was well attended and all were highly impressed with their work. Head of collections and programming Andrew MacKay stated, "It sets a bit of a precedent on how we might go about interpreting our collections in future. In other words, a tall act to follow!"

Lessons learned

We learnt to trust in the enthusiasm and innovative ideas of young people – their fresh look at our collection was invaluable and reinforced to us how powerful objects and their stories can be. It was also of great use to see how creative arts can be an excellent way into history. The group felt more

comfortable expressing their opinions through artwork and drama rather than just talking in front of an audience. Logistically, working in the holidays was tricky – we will think more carefully about when to run projects to suit young people.

Next steps

The original *Talking Objects* project at Tullie inspired another project, also funded by the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation via the British Museum. We took the original format and condensed it, and worked with three different groups – the museum's children's club the Tullie Time Travellers (aged 7-14), Tullie's youth group Yak Yak (aged 14-19) and the Carlisle Time Travellers, a group of adults with learning disabilities. The methodology worked really well in a shorter format, with groups spending an hour examining their chosen objects and a further two hours producing their creative responses. Each group was filmed whilst they worked and a short film was created from the footage, which will be shown in our reception area.

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See the British Museum's *Talking Objects* website for all of the short films produced by the British Museum and their partner organisations:

www.britishmuseum.org/channel/object_stories/talking_objects.aspx

www.peopleandplace.org.uk/talking-objects



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Index

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- | | |
|---|---|
| 3 A Victorian Shipbuilder in Bristol Michael Gorely | 14 Mammoths on the Move Laura Bennison and Fiona O'Sullivan |
| 4 Heritage in the forest Daisy Horsley and Emily Aaron | 16 Age Collective Laura Phillips |
| 6 What's Your Story? John Simpson Wedge | 18 Art in the Park Lisa Williamson |
| 8 HMS Warrior in focus Judith Carrie and Katherine Webber | 20 Pop Up Theatre Royal Tess Forbes-McMurchie |
| 10 Interactive sensory objects Dr Kate Allen | 22 Talking Objects National: Tullie House Anna Smalley |
| 12 Tower of London Foreshore Finds Kathleen McIlvenna | |