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GEM champions
excellence in
heritage learning

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Case Studies

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What is GEM?

Editorial

GEM champions excellence in heritage learning to improve the education, health and wellbeing 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.

"Make contact with other organisations to share best practice – there's no need to completely re-invent wheels" (Lucy-Ann Pickering, page 17).

The above quote is why you should at some point, stop what you're doing and read volume 19 of *GEM Case Studies*. My reasons for this are twofold. Firstly, as museum educators, or those striving to be one, we are always looking to be the best at we do. Secondly, we all know how much time can escape us and re-inventing wheels can be unnecessarily time consuming.

The likelihood is that someone, somewhere, has or is doing something similar to the project, programme or product that you're working on. Improve your own professional practice by avoiding the time-consuming re-invention of wheels and instead, reflect on the lessons learned and best practice of others. If you have already reached out or collaborated with those who have been there before, then you will understand the value of this.

We at GEM want to do just that. For our current *Learning and Sharing Centre* project, our collaborative work with five partners is coming together as we develop courses that are built upon best practice to support the needs of those in the museum, heritage and cultural sector involved in education.

All our courses are based on previous research and experience to provide great training and encourage best professional practice. These courses include our new foundation course (*Effective engagement*), our

intermediate courses (*Health and wellbeing, Heritage interpretation, Working with artists in heritage settings, Essentials of leadership, and Fundraising and income generation*) and our advanced workshop (*Managing museum educators and their activities*).

I am excited that GEM's redeveloped website will truly be a place that provides a voice for heritage learning, and a rich online resource that shares experiences, skills and knowledge. It will encourage networking, and will be a digital signpost to CPD training, mapped to GEM's core competencies.

This year's GEM conference *Facing the Future, Forging Ahead* will focus on building core resilience in the museum, heritage and cultural learning sectors. The conference will share best practice on areas such as building and strengthening successful partnerships, diversifying funding, developing individual and team resilience against change and developing sustainable learning models.

I hope you enjoy reading Case Studies, and that it helps you to reflect on your own best professional practice. Perhaps you would like to inspire others in the next edition with a case study?

Jessica Robertson, editor

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Organic experiences: Horsley organ restoration project
David Walmsley
Horsley Organ Restoration Group



Organic experiences

Horsley organ restoration project

Summary

Horsley Organ Restoration Group secured a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund to restore the historic organ in its church in Northumberland. A significant proportion of the £200,000 grant was devoted to an education programme.

Background

The organ has a fascinating history – moved between three different churches, including its recent rescue and relocation to Horsley with the help of the army from nearby Otterburn ATE camp. At the end of 2015, it was removed again to Rosyth for restoration and returned in August 2016 after which the education and outreach programme was rolled out.

Challenge

Two clear challenges were:

- Engaging schools from a widely dispersed area. (Redesdale is a remote upland area of west Northumberland.)
- Making the organ a focus for an inspiring curriculum-relevant education programme.

Approach

The approach involved:

- Factoring travel costs for schools to make two visits to the church – at the start of the education programme and

- to attend the final celebratory concert.
- Devising a cross-curricular programme to support learning in music, literacy, art and STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics subjects). This will begin with a visit to the church where children will take part in a carousel activities including pulling stops,

- pressing pedals and playing keys on the organ.
- Follow-up workshops in schools led by specialists to extend learning.

This was sold to headteachers at a joint termly planning meeting when, at the end, one headteacher stated, "There's enough here for a half-term topic."





Intended outcomes

- To understand the technology behind how an organ creates sound.
- To appreciate the wide range of music this magnificent instrument can create.
- To use the organ as a focus for a cross-curricular topic that includes learning in history, art, music, literacy and STEM subjects.

Intended outputs

The intention was to involve up to six local first schools in a half-term project.

Through carousel church-based activities children:

- learn how an organ creates sound;
- make links to how other musical instruments make music;
- identify architectural elements on the design of the organ's case;
- record surface decoration around the church similar to that on the front organ pipes.

These activities prepare teachers and children for:

- science of sound workshops;
- stencilling workshops;
- literacy activities;
- music workshops. In these, children also learned the lyrics and suggested their own actions to accompany the commissioned song, *Stops, Pipes, Pedals and Keys*, which not only explains how an organ works but details its fascinating history in three churches and its recent restoration.



Obstacles and issues

- Local reorganisation of some schools' leadership caused some early communication problems.
- Long-term illness of one teacher and maternity leave of another led to glitches with handover arrangements.

Actual outcomes

- Teachers in six local schools became more aware of the educational potential of an organ for cross-curricular learning, as well as the legacy resources they can use and the volunteer support they can call upon.
- A published cross-curricular case study to help other churches or owners of historic organs engage schools and the community.
- The specially-commissioned model organ proved a real hit. *"Children were engrossed in the science of sound workshops. The pace and variety of interactive activities really stimulated their interest and significantly helped their learning."*

Actual outputs

- 106 children took part in the education programme, each visiting the church with teachers, teaching assistants and accompanying parents.

- Teachers developed their own literacy programmes based on the commissioned book, designed for use on interactive whiteboards.
- Every child produced their own stencils to decorate mini organ pipes. These were used to create a combined art installation in the church.
- All schools came together to perform *Stops, Pipes, Pedals and Keys* as part of a final concert celebrating the culmination of the education programme.
- One school later asked to perform the song at a regional musical festival.
- Two schools devoted a half-term to a music topic, extending learning opportunities into other areas.

Lessons learned

- Meet teachers in school to explain the cross-curricular opportunities.
- Avoid overly prescriptive programming to give teachers the flexibility to bring in workshop leaders at key points in their planning.
- Maintain regular contact with teachers and provide reminders at key points in the project (short, simple lists of things to remember).
- Provide training and mentoring for volunteers so they feel confident and competent working with children.



Next steps

- Project funding continues for another year when volunteers will develop their learning offer to welcome visits beyond 2018.
- Outreach activities will be extended to engage other youth and adult groups.

David Walmsley
 Heritage activities co-ordinator,
 Horsley Organ Restoration Group

Further information

www.horsleypipeorgan.org
 A free CD includes aspects of the education programme.

Contact:
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Albums to share

Summary

The Almonry has a hidden collection of photographs which rarely see the light of day, but when used in exhibitions they often provoke lively comment and interest. The aim was for these resources to be viewed and enjoyed by a wider audience, especially by those who are unable to visit the museum in person.

Background

We set out to make a collection of themed albums of nostalgic photos for sharing on a one-to-one basis, initially for people living with dementia.

I approached the Alzheimer's Society, who host a *Dementia Café* in Evesham.

In the meantime, Evesham is seeking to become a dementia-friendly town, so this project fits in with the more widespread initiative.

Challenge

To increase engagement of hard to reach local people with the Almonry collection.

Approach

I worked with the café co-ordinator to set up focus groups to discuss how the albums should be presented and suitable themes. The groups consisted of people living with dementia, carers and café volunteers, as well as the co-ordinator.



Intended outcomes

- To produce albums that are not designed to challenge memory, which may be deteriorating and puts people under stress, but to give pleasure and stimulate conversation.
- To increase the reach of our resources into the community.

Intended outputs

- To produce 30 themed albums, in collections of three, for long and short-term free loan to community groups.
- If funding allowed, to further develop our Reminiscence Loan Boxes to complement the albums.

Obstacles and issues

- Initially funding was very limited, because of our very tight budget, but a £1,000 grant from the Museums and Heritage Show enabled us to achieve a more sophisticated presentation.
- Developmental technical learning points. These were only temporary and were dealt with as they occurred.
- Consistent volunteer support.

Actual outcomes

- We have reached a larger section of the community than anticipated. Other groups have come forward to access the albums – a sheltered accommodation organisation, the local hospital and the Stroke Association.
- There were unexpected outcomes for the consultations: suggestions



included a magnifying glass for those with visual impairment and, most importantly, an opportunity for people to add their own memories or information about the photos. This built on the co-production aspect of the project, enabling people to contribute as authors.

Actual outputs

- Twelve albums completed so far, four more are in the pipeline.
- Loan box themes increased and contents augmented. We have been working with the multi-denominational "tea service" organisation in the local church.

They host weekly afternoon tea and reflective sessions for those living with dementia and their carers. Each session is on a different theme. We provide a box containing items for display and a handling collection.

Lessons learned

- From a small idea a much larger impact is possible.

- That dementia touches everyone's lives – we have received so much support and encouragement for the project. Dementia can open doors, not close them.
- Where we were struggling to find sufficient photos or artefacts, it is our intended audience themselves who have helped us out. This has changed their role from a passive one to an active one and given them ownership and an opportunity for co-production.

Next steps

- Albums based on the decades have been suggested by users. The Almonry does not have sufficient photos to complete those. We plan to invite people to loan photos for us to reproduce and include.
- Reminiscence boxes to represent each decade from 1930s to 1970s were also suggested by one of the groups. We have committed items to this handling collection and are now supplementing them with replica items, or others donated by local people for that purpose.

- We aim to offer this case study to small museums via the Association for Independent Museums and local contacts.
- A hospital trust in a neighbouring county has expressed an interest in the albums.

Adele Webb
Almonry Museum

Further information

almonry2@gmail.com, 01386 446944
<http://advisor.museumsandheritage.com/mh-advisor-video-almonry-museum-in-evesham-showcases-new-photo-albums-to-dementia-cafe-members/>

Sixth form study days

Summary

Over the last 18 months the Ashmolean Museum has been developing study days for sixth form students, aged 16 to 18 years old, on an expanding range of subjects e.g. classical civilisations, art & design, history of art and Chaucer's world.

Background

As the Ashmolean Museum is part of the University of Oxford, we aim to provide access to world-class collections and give students a taste of university style teaching through a combination of lectures and gallery based workshops. This is a key aspect of our role as a university museum.



Challenge

Our aim was to support classroom teaching of the curriculum, as well as giving a wider context to challenge students to think beyond their studies in school.

Study days offer a practical way of reaching large numbers of students and providing a wide choice of workshops, which would not be possible if we were working with individual schools.

Approach

I consulted local teachers about what content they would find most useful and what time of year would work best. I then worked with university departments and museum curators to devise a targeted programme for each day.

Intended outcomes

- To give access to the collections and teach using objects, with object handling where possible.
- To give students access to Oxford University academic staff and museum curators.
- To extend and enrich students' learning beyond the curriculum.

Intended outputs

- Students**
- widen their experience and knowledge of the subject;
 - experience a taste of Oxford University;
 - see the relevance of museum objects and collections to their studies and subjects, and incorporate objects and inspiration from museum collections into their own work.

Teachers

- are supported in their subject delivery in schools;
- are encouraged to use museum objects in their teaching.

Museum and university staff

- Share their knowledge and experience with school age students.

Obstacles and issues

- Some key university departments were not able to give staff time to be involved.
- Subject content has to be carefully balanced to cover key curriculum areas but also give students a wider context.

- Some university academic talks were not pitched appropriately for the interests or knowledge level of students.
- Many teachers are only allowed one visit per class per year which makes running school trips very challenging.

Actual outcomes

- Students and teachers have given very positive feedback across a range of different days and subject areas.
- Students have attended repeated days on a variety of subjects.
- Local University Widening Participation Schools have responded by sending students on a regular basis. Some of these students have now been recruited to the Ashmolean's new young people's panel, so are now developing a long-term and on-going relationship with the museum.
- The profile of the museum's education offer has been raised with colleagues within the museum and university departments.
- Museum curators and academics have fed back that they have enjoyed and benefited from working with the students.
- Relationships with teachers locally and further afield have been developed and deepened through their involvement with the study days. This has led to new requests for study days, e.g. a recent study day for classics civilisations with 14 to 15-year-old students from a Herefordshire school.
- We have developed new partnerships within the city. A new Chaucer's world day will also incorporate the Bodleian Library and the Story Museum, Oxford.
- Through a fruitful partnership with Articulation, an organisation that promotes public speaking about art, local students have been given opportunities to deliver talks at study days. This has been a very positive experience for the speakers and also the students attending.

Actual outputs

- New online resources were developed for schools to support



study days, and provide information about and access to the collections.

- Regular annual programme of study days now established with new subject days being added.

Lessons learned

- Plan a long time in advance (six months minimum).
- Brief all staff involved in advance about the curriculum and likely level of knowledge of students.
- Build a relationship with local (and other) teachers and involve them in planning or feeding back on the proposed content of the day.
- Advertise well in advance.
- Be prepared for students attending in small groups without a teacher or as individuals.
- Review safeguarding arrangements for all seminar (non-gallery) based sessions.
- We have modified the programme each time as a result of evaluation and feedback.
- Leave time for students to explore the museum over lunchtime.
- Where possible arrange for other subject based opportunities for students (e.g. visiting the classics department during lunchtime).
- Send email reminders to everyone

involved before the day and a "thank you" afterwards and share feedback with everyone involved.

Next steps

- Continue to work with local (and other) teachers to develop new study days and adapt existing ones.
- Persist in attempts to involve university departments.
- Continue to develop new relationships with a range of individuals; artists, professionals, institutions, and colleagues to expand the offer.

Clare Cory
Education officer: secondary & young people, Ashmolean Museum

Further information

Details of upcoming days:
www.ashmolean.org/education/ks3/

Learning resources:
www.ashmolean.org/education/resources/

Contact
clare.cory@ashmus.ox.ac.uk

Heritage for children from birth to five years old



Summary

Culture for Kids was founded in 2015 in partnership with Pelton Community Centre and seeks to gain new knowledge and experience of communicating world heritage and culture with children. It uses crafts and activities that complement the preferred learning styles of this age range: play, role play, discovery, art and sensory.

Background

This initiative aims to gain insight into cultural heritage interactions of children from birth to five years old.

Pelton Community Centre is popular within the local community. It is the perfect place for children to be noisy and messy as they do not impact on museums or heritage sites' current audiences or interfere with displays or delicate physical fabric.

Challenge

- It is difficult to communicate heritage to young children, or for them to retain this information.
- Further community involvement with heritage.

Approach

Weekly heritage workshops were designed using crafts and activities to reflect the culture or heritage being explored: for example, paper plate castanets during the exploring Spain session. The craft activities were also designed to complement the preferred learning styles of young children: for example, by re-creating Dali's *Persistence of Memory* in playdoh.

This initiative was responsive to the needs of both children and adults, and working reflectively was used throughout.

Intended outcomes

- Explore barriers to cultural heritage for children and their parents.
- Explore heritage communication for children.
- Document activities on website, blog and social media and further engage parents.
- Engage local people with their local and world cultures.
- Analyse demographic and behavioural data.
- Match workshops with preferred learning styles.

Intended outputs

- Pioneer a weekly heritage group for children.
- Establish a framework of activities, art and crafts, which are suitable for communicating heritage based on the abilities and interest of the group.
- A publication.
- Resource notes available online.

Obstacles and issues

- Generally, attendees were from outside the area with an interest in cultural learning.
- Researching and developing weekly sessions, complementing the learning needs of young children, was particularly time consuming.
- Developing eye-catching interpretation which parents could relay to children was difficult.
- Exploring barriers to cultural learning, gathering demographic and behavioural information proved

difficult during workshops. However, developing a questionnaire on Survey Monkey was more fruitful.

Actual outcomes

- Website, blog and facebook showcase activities.
- Resource notes are available on the blog.
- The children's creations acted like souvenirs and prolonged the learning process.
- After the initial "free taster sessions", a "loyalty scheme" was developed in the form of a "world traveller passport".
- Persistently increasing visitor numbers.
- Initial research has shown 100% of parents agree heritage and culture is "very important" for children. 100% indicate heritage and culture is portrayed "very well" during the sessions. 100% of parents state the children remember the culture explored beyond the session. 80% reported "very much so" for the question, "Do the things the children make, remind them of the culture it represents?"

Actual outputs

- Clear structure about how workshops fit with the UK early years foundation stage (EYFS) framework for out-of-home providers.
- Clear structure about how workshops fit with the Department of Education's guidance on *Promoting British Values* as part of social, moral, spiritual and cultural development in nurseries and schools.
- A sponsored community art project, a collaborative mosaic made by the children celebrating Roman Heritage at Chester-Le-Street, resulted in a large display in Pelton Community Centre and explorer packs containing shatterproof magnifying glass, binoculars, clipboard and pencil for each child who took part.

Lessons learned

- Theories of constructivist learning assert turning passive learners into active learners enhances the learning interaction and facilitates knowledge retention. This is the aim when

- engaging young children with craft activities. Allowing them to create their own "version" of artefacts and evidence associated with the culture explored during the sessions. Further, this engages with souvenir theory. For the owner, a souvenir represents an object or artefact which records their experience.
- Adopting learning strategies with the activities is crucial but we need to be mindful that different children have different preferred methods of learning. Therefore, variety in sessions is paramount: for example, those who were not interested in crafts could learn with role play.
- The world traveller passports were extremely popular and stamped each week with the part of the world we explored.
- Exploring means of communication showed games were the most popular option for the older children.
- Crafts resulting in fancy dress items, such as Roman armour, proved most popular amongst children and adults.
- Having clearly defined research methods is paramount.

Next steps

Using what we have learned about early years learning styles, their capabilities in different crafts and what was successfully communicated to the children, the future of Culture for Kids involves tailored workshop in nurseries and providing larger workshops.

Donna Mitchenson
 Founder, Culture for Kids

Further information

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www.facebook.com/cultureforkids/

https://cultureforkidsblog.wordpress.com/





Esperance: Sessions designed with schools

Summary

The aim of this programme was to engage primary and secondary school students with the collection, stories and development at Windermere Jetty Museum of Boats, Steam and Stories.

Background

Lakeland Arts comprises of four cultural venues in Cumbria. We are building Windermere Jetty Museum, a world class visitor attraction with a nationally significant collection of historic boats related to the lake. This is currently the largest Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) capital project in North West England.

The name for this programme was inspired by *Esperance*, the steam yacht in the collection that inspired Captain Flint's houseboat in Arthur Ransome's *Swallows & Amazons*.

Challenge

Whilst the museum is under construction, the learning team has been busy building links with local communities and providing access to this amazing collection.

Approach

To provide context to the *Esperance* programme and the museum, each class visited the site, despite the challenges presented by a live construction site. Most of the activities were delivered in the schools.



Intended outcomes

- Pupils engage with the collection and the exciting developments on site.
- Lakeland Arts builds significant partnerships with local schools.
- Programme enables us to trial activities that will form part of the formal learning programme at Windermere Jetty Museum.

Intended outputs

- Lakeland Arts wanted to ensure that each project produced a tangible outcome, which would be specific to Windermere Jetty. This included:
- A short film documenting the construction and conservation work taking place on site;
 - the creation of a working model of *Esperance*;
 - an artwork inspired by the architecture of the new building and products that can be sold in the museum's shop.

Obstacles and issues

- *Esperance* was planned a year in advance of delivery, which involved keeping schools and other partners well informed throughout.
- Two of the projects related directly to specific points in the building programme. When construction was delayed, for reasons out of our control, the projects no longer aligned with the schools' timetables and were not delivered.
- Each group had a site visit, to put the project into context. For health and safety reasons, these visits were



meticulously planned, with larger groups proving more of a challenge to accommodate.

Actual outcomes

- 519 pupils and students engaged with the collection, using objects to explore the themes of the museum. These groups tested activities for the formal learning programme and learnt new skills, for example, how to use camera equipment and a Raspberry Pi. New partnerships were created, with a high percentage of non-user schools taking part.
- Students recognised that they experienced opportunities that they couldn't get in the classroom.
- Teachers want to engage with Lakeland Arts in the future.

Actual outputs

- The students working on this programme produced items which will go on display at the museum:
- A film showing the development on site;

- a working model of *Esperance*;
- artwork that explores the architecture of the site;
- computer games, inspired by the collection and location, hosted on Raspberry Pi;
- products that can be sold in the museum's shop.

Images, comments, questionnaires and the actual outputs of each project were collected as evaluation. Feedback has been extremely positive:

- "I definitely want to come to the museum with my next year 10 class to do this project again" design and technology teacher.
- "This project has given my students the opportunity to work with professionals and see what jobs are available to them" media studies teacher.
- "We just couldn't have run this sort of project without your expert help. The students have benefited greatly" primary school headteacher.

Lessons learned

The team learned that working alongside the changing timetable of a major building project means that moving timescales cannot always be accommodated by the school. In hindsight, we would avoid creating projects that have a direct link to specific points in the construction programme. This would ensure that we could deliver all proposed activities.

Evaluation has shown that giving students a brief to work on, with Lakeland Arts posing as their client, works well for secondary school students. Feedback from teachers shows that the students responded well to this method. We now have excellent feedback from staff and students that they are excited about our science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) linked activities.

Next steps

Each project has provided the opportunity to test activities that have been woven into the development of the formal learning programme for Windermere Jetty, for primary and secondary schools. There were successful projects that will be delivered on opening, and elements of other projects that will be adapted.

The learning team will build on this programme of activity in the future.

Helen Parr
Learning & interpretation officer,
Lakeland Arts

Further information

<http://esperanceproject.windermerejetty.org/>
www.windermerejetty.org

Contact:
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Commemorating the Battle of the Somme

Summary

To commemorate the Battle of the Somme, Barnsley Museums' learning service (MLS) created a public artwork to be displayed in front of Barnsley Town Hall for the 141 day centenary. The artwork had over 300 panels including images and names of Barnsley men tragically killed on the first day of the battle.

Artists Neil Musson and Jono Retallick were commissioned to create the concept, including individual pieces by over 300 participating children. 275 of the children gained Discover Arts Award and their artwork was seen by thousands of people.



Background

Experience Barnsley Museum is a social history museum and archive centre within Barnsley Town Hall. It attracts 90,000 visitors each year, with thousands more people visiting Barnsley Town Hall itself.

Challenge

To commemorate the contribution of Barnsley men accessibly for the whole community. How could we engage local young people? How could we present such an emotive topic? How could we manage public expectations?

Approach

We collaborated with schools, artists and the community. We asked the community to provide stories, photographs and names for the artwork. Primary schools were invited to a free full-day visit, involving a hands-on first world war workshop exploring local stories using documents, artefacts and costume and creating a clay commemorative medal to be displayed as part of the finished artwork. Pupils' designs represented something special to them. This installation would be the focus of a civic commemoration on 1 July 2016, remaining in place until Remembrance Sunday.



Intended outcomes

- Strengthen relationships with local schools.
- Raise awareness of Barnsley's MLS to new schools.
- Reach new audiences and increase visitors.
- Engage local people with the impact of the Battle of the Somme and first world war in Barnsley.
- Commemorate the Battle of the Somme engagingly, appropriately and sensitively.

Intended outputs

- Development of a first world war workshop for 5 to 11 year olds.
- A commemorative public art installation.
- A commemoration involving community, British Legion, schools, councillors, local history societies and the public.
- Arts Awards for participating children.



Obstacles and issues

Barnsley Town Hall is a high-profile site with sensitivity around its use. Unexpected ground conditions threatened to jeopardise the installation. All 330 medals were numbered, photographed and catalogued and put online alongside the professional artwork. This was time consuming, but key to being accessible for all.

The project involved intensive research, relying on huge volunteer support.

Three of the schools had local celebrations clashing with the project celebration, therefore some children were not able to attend the public event.

Actual outcomes

- Our relationship with ten local schools was strengthened, we've seen repeat visits from many.
- Significant media coverage raised awareness of Barnsley Museums.
- Thousands of local people engaged with the impact of the Battle of the Somme and first world war in Barnsley.
- The archives centre saw an increase in visitors wanting to explore their family history.

Actual outputs

- The project engaged 12 classes from 10 local primary schools.
- 275 pupils achieved their Discover Arts Award, receiving a special edition certificate in partnership with the Imperial War Museum.

- The artwork was on display from 1 July 2016 to Remembrance Sunday 2016.
- The estimated "advertising value equivalent" for the entire project was £90,990 as the project gained extensive local and regional media coverage in the press and on television.
- External funding of £18,000 from Arts Council England, £7,035 from Local Ward Alliances and £3,000 from Heritage Schools.
- Increased visits in archives and family history sessions.

Lessons learned

As the MLS does not have local authority core funding, we had to consider the costs of such a large-scale project. Some of our costs were absorbed as the project grew and generated interest. As the project was mostly externally funded, we gave participating schools an "invoice" to show them the real costs of their involvement in a free project. We hope that this will help schools understand the value of the MLS's work.

Next steps

The Somme Commemoration Artwork has won the Civic Trust Public Art Award for the Pro-Tem category in 2017. The artwork is currently in storage, but negotiations are taking place to have it installed permanently in a local park.

The hands-on first world war sessions will be offered to schools as a core offer from the MLS team.



Jemma Conway
Learning manager,
Barnsley Museums

Kevin Wallace
Arts and events officer,
Barnsley Museums

Victoria Dawes
Project support officer,
Barnsley Museums

Further information

A collection of web pages, including cataloguing of the schools' artwork, can be found on the right-hand menu at the following link;

www.barnsley-museums.com/commemoration-of-the-somme

More information on the Civic Trust Award: www.civictrustawards.org.uk/news/2017-winners-civic-trust-awards-pro-tem-awards-aabc-conservation-awards

To contact those involved in the project email: learning@barnsley.gov.uk

The Royal Mint Experience



Summary

An 18-month project to research, plan, develop and deliver a new learning programme for schools, and to design and resource a new learning space to be built within the Royal Mint Experience, a brand new visitor attraction on the site of the Royal Mint.

Background

The Royal Mint Museum is an independent charity based within the confines of the Royal Mint factory site in South Wales, the place where circulating coin for the United Kingdom and many other countries is produced. The museum's collection is a reflection of the 1,000-year history

of this organisation and the evolution of coins and numismatic development, including coins, medals, seals and artwork.

Challenge

The Royal Mint site is restricted access meaning that previously it has only been able to engage with its audiences in small numbers on-site, and has primarily focused on outreach in physical and digital form.

Approach

The building of the Royal Mint Experience, which opened in May 2016, gave the museum the opportunity to display its objects, tell its story and engage consistently with schools on-site for the first time, through the creation of an exhibition and new learning programme.

Intended outcomes

A learning programme that reflects the Royal Mint Museum's collection and the past, present and future of the Royal Mint. To engage with previously inaccessible groups on-site, and to help raise the Royal Mint Museum's profile locally, increase awareness with local schools, and prompt engagement with the museum by the general public.

Intended outputs

- A learning programme for schools.
- A learning space that met Clore Duffield guidelines for new learning spaces.
- A schools marketing programme.
- A family trail to be used by families and schools.

Obstacles and issues

- It was a challenge to keep control of



the design of the learning space once the specification had been handed over to architects and project managers with different priorities. Some items were missed in the transfer process, therefore no audio or blinds were initially installed in the space. There was also no control over the flooring because it had to match with the café and entrance area.

- Due to budgetary and physical space constraints, an additional lunch space for school groups was removed from the plans, leading to logistical issues in how the school day and learning space would function. There is some outside space but this is open to the elements and cannot be used in wet or cold weather.
- It was challenging to gain enough feedback from teachers in the early research stages of the project to inform the development of the learning programme. We had a circa 10% return rate on surveys sent to every primary school in South Wales and were able to recruit six volunteer schools for trials.
- The final challenge was to balance the expectations of teachers with the priorities of the Royal Mint Museum and the priorities of the Royal Mint.

Actual outcomes

- The intended outcomes were met although the programme is more skewed in favour of the present activities of the Royal Mint. This was driven by the expectations of teachers highlighted in the research phase. The museum has also seen an increase in engagement from the general public through enquiries.

Actual outputs

- The Royal Mint Experience primary schools programme consisting of two 90-minute workshops for ages 7 to 11, one about fakes and forgeries and one about coin design.
- A family trail also used by pupils.
- A 100 sq m learning space that meets Clore Duffield Foundation guidelines, that is adaptable for multiple uses.
- A marketing programme for schools in South Wales including a bus deal with a local company.
- Recruitment and training of a new learning officer to deliver the programme.

Lessons learned

- It is important to prioritise the research phase of a project and make contact with other organisations to share best practice – there's no need to completely re-invent wheels.



- If there had been more time, to increase the response and input from teachers at the initial stages by using multiple approaches rather than purely digital.
- To stick to your guns, check and re-check that any space or equipment specifications have been accurately transferred.
- To prioritise the functional aspects of any programme and work to make compromises on logistics before building work goes ahead.
- To think at least six months ahead in terms of resources either for furniture or equipment.

Next steps

The priority for 2017-18 is to research and develop a programme for secondary schools, and to establish a quarterly lecture programme for the general public.

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Mapping and meeting the needs of the workforce

Summary

GEM's ACE-funded project, the *Learning & Sharing Centre (LSC)* from October 2016 to March 2018 includes creating new continuing professional development (CPD) programmes, networking and sharing events, and developing the GEM website to meet the needs of a rapidly changing workforce.

To refine our understanding of current needs, GEM held five area mapping workshops across England in February and March 2017.

Background

GEM has an excellent reputation for providing high-quality training and networking in museum learning. To provide the best possible CPD, GEM frequently conducts research into the sector's training provision and needs. The five mapping workshops were part of this ongoing process.

The LSC is part of GEM's long-term plan to continue to be a core resilient CPD provider and promote best practice in museum learning.

Challenge

The huge variety in the workforce meant that establishing an overall map of CPD was difficult. GEM met this challenge with a strong history of understanding these developments and the aim to refine our view further.

Approach

For the workshops, GEM divided the country into five areas, holding the events in central locations (London, Leicester, Leeds, Exeter and Newcastle). Participants identified training needs and areas of duplication and gave feedback on some of the planned LSC online content.

For the LSC, GEM is partnering with the South Western Federation of Museums & Art Galleries, Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums, Engage, Association for Heritage Interpretation, and the National Alliance for Museums, Health and Wellbeing to deliver courses and sharing events to support the workforce at different levels. We are also collaborating with the Association of Independent Museums.



Intended outcomes

Mapping workshops and the LSC:

- Refined understanding of the training needs and provision across England.
- Greater co-ordination and collaboration between cultural organisations.
- GEM's relationships in the sector strengthened.
- Providing CPD to support museum educators.

Intended outputs

Mapping workshops:

- A map of England's current training provision, identifying any duplication and key needs and gaps in each area.
- Feedback on the draft framework for the new digital signpost to training opportunities and online resources.
- A case study published by GEM.

LSC:

- Foundation course: *Effective Engagement*. A self-study course over four months with site visits, and a peer support group included.

- Intermediate courses: *Health and wellbeing*, *Heritage interpretation*, *Working with artists in heritage settings*, *Essentials of leadership* and *Fundraising and income generation*. Day-long workshops with preparatory and consolidating activities provided.
- Advanced workshop: *Managing museum educators and their activities*.
- Redeveloped GEM website, including a digital signpost to training opportunities and online advocacy materials exploring the benefits of museum learning for different audiences.
- Nine sharing events across England.
- Final sharing conference and special edition of *Case Studies*.
- Business model for a more sustainable GEM.

Obstacles and issues

Participants found it difficult to attend as they had very full schedules, so attendance was small overall. It is, however, important to note that these groups consisted of sector leaders, including museum development officers, Bridge organisations, museum federations and major museum services, meaning their perspectives were well-informed and widely relevant.

Actual outcomes

- GEM's understanding of the training needs and provision across England has been refined.

- Feedback forms indicated that participants universally gained greater knowledge of the LSC. Many participants offered further contact, strengthening GEM's relationships in the sector.
- Participants did network, but ongoing communication and collaboration may not have been achieved. A longer session with more work on partnership was requested.
- The LSC is developing and running its programme this year.

Actual outputs

All intended workshop outputs were produced and the LSC outputs are being delivered throughout the project.

Lessons learned

- Variation occurs both between and within areas, so be aware of these complexities when moving forward.
- Key CPD themes across the country were mentoring, volunteering, advocacy, partnerships with schools and other cultural organisations, forming a coherent overall network, and establishing clarity of goals and levels.
- GEM is viewed as an excellent facilitator, creating opportunities for communication and sharing, which was encouraged as a focus of GEM's work.
- Invite participants far in advance to avoid scheduling conflicts (possibly allow more open invitations

in future).

- Do not underestimate the amount of time needed to network and establish future communication.

Next steps

GEM will apply this understanding of training and CPD needs and duplication to our future programming, ensuring we do not "reinvent wheels" and do meet the key needs. We will also incorporate participants' feedback into our website redevelopment.

Upcoming courses and events will be run into March 2018, but then integrated into GEM's core programming, continuing beyond the length of the LSC project.

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Improving participation and experience with SEND school groups



Summary

The Horniman Museum wanted to improve our formal learning offer for school groups with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). They were identified as a target audience for development (they were a group who visited the museum in smaller numbers than other schools) and it was recognised that the museum could improve accessibility and enhance the visitor experience. It was also an area in which we felt we could improve our professional practice.

Background

The Horniman offers 39 different taught object-handling sessions for schools, from early years to higher education. Sessions were tailored for SEND schools but a distinctive offer did not exist, nor did pre-visit resources or a dedicated webpage providing information for SEND schools. Visits from SEND schools did occur annually, but were a small proportion of the potential audience.

Challenge

Creating a bespoke, accessible offer for special schools, which met the needs of the audience (and encouraged them to visit us more), utilised our handling collection and linked to the wider collections of the museum. In addition to improving facilitator confidence, knowledge and skills at adaptive and differentiated facilitation.

Approach

Baseline evaluation was undertaken by interviewing teachers who visited the museum to ascertain the needs of the audience and barriers to visiting, as well as the kinds of sessions and resources they would utilise.

The Horniman Museum took part in a 2016 project working with several partners. Peoplescape Theatre worked with the Horniman, Cutty Sark and National Maritime Museum to

co-create a multi-sensory, interactive theatre performance, with special schools local to each museum, inspired by the organisations' collections. The result, *Tom's Ship of Stories*, was then performed for special schools at each museum. The legacy of the project was training and the co-creation of a session, which would form part of the formal schools' offer. This became a sensory session called *A Musical Adventure*.

Project staff made connections within the sector, attended sensory storytelling training and meetings of the SEND network, and visited the British Museum and the Museum of London to observe sessions, which helped to inform our professional practice. Building strong relationships with local SEND schools enabled staff to visit Watergate School to observe lessons and ways of working with a diverse range of pupils.



Intended outcomes

Improve the accessibility of the schools' programme, collections and museum for SEND schools and increase the number of visits from these schools.

Intended outputs

- Creation of multi-sensory taught sessions, accessible pre-visit preparation resources and improved accessibility onsite.
- Improvement of staff confidence and skills.
- Creation of a bank of resources and ideas for planning multi-sensory, accessible sessions.

Obstacles and issues

We initially encountered problems getting evaluation responses, especially ones detailed enough to generate usable information.

Developing and delivering the sessions was an entirely new way of working, it was professionally challenging as it was out of staff's

"comfort zone" and there was a lack of confidence around how to successfully structure a session, what makes an engaging sensory experience and how best to deliver these.

Balancing the use of the handling collection with other multi-sensory elements was also a consideration.

When schools visited we had difficulties accommodating some groups within our regular school day schedule: space, venue restrictions, lunch timing and lack of onsite parking.

Actual outcomes

Five performances of *Tom's Ship of Stories* took place at the Horniman for classes from SEND schools. Since introducing two SEND sessions there has been a 48% increase in the number of participants (323 in 2015 and 479 in 2016). We received positive and constructive feedback from schools regarding sessions, pre-visit resources and their visit.

Actual outputs

Two new sensory sessions were developed: *A Musical Journey* and *Ancient Egyptian Mummification*, including new session resources, including an ocean drum, tissue paper butterflies, linen bandages, beeswax.

A dedicated webpage was created with a social story orientation resource, and skill-sharing with other professionals in the sector took place. Makaton signing and Widgit symbol flashcards were introduced to sessions.

Lessons learned

- Effective session design: key elements to include, and how to present sensory resources in a range of ways/formats.
- What makes an engaging sensory experience.
- How best to use space and set up a room to improve accessibility, for example, plain tablecloths on object tables rather than patterned, cushions available for those who choose to sit on the floor.
- Key questions to ask pre-visit, for example, sensory sensitivities, access requirements, use of Makaton.
- Tools to support communication, for example, Makaton signing and Widgit symbols.
- Most importantly, we're just at the start and need to do more!

Next steps

- Expansion of offer, next session developed will be a science session linked to our aquarium.
- Embed the use of Makaton and Widgit symbol communication cards.
- Enhance pre-visit resources by creating a bespoke day schedule using Widgit symbols, which will be emailed to teachers in advance.

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First-time foray into freelance consultancy

Summary

The aim was to research, develop and provide museum learning session resources, website resources and staff training for an Anglo-Saxons event for 7 to 11 year-old school pupils, and run a pilot with a local school.

Background

Funding became available to develop educational sessions for 7 to 11 year-olds linking new and existing museum collections to local Anglo-Saxon landmarks.

Challenge

Expanding the scope of the museum's learning offer in line with the national curriculum and increasing school visit numbers while maximising limited staff availability.

Approach

Creating a range of flexible sessions, adaptable for stand-alone, self-led mini sessions, or museum staff delivery.

Intended outcomes

- Highlight particular museum collections and their local and wider context.
- Increase school visits.

Intended outputs

- Four Anglo-Saxons schools' sessions: Treasure Trail, Kingship, Trade, and Curatorship.

- A self-led mini-session.
- Session notes and resources.
- Teachers' notes and preparatory materials.
- Website information.
- Staff training.
- Pilot day with local school.

Obstacles and issues

- I am used to working to a template of a four-part carousel day of museum-led sessions for up to 120 children per day. For this project, I had to adjust to a more complex timetable with limited staffing, which entirely altered my planned approach to creating these sessions.
- The museum project lead and I both worked part-time on this, often with non-concurrent hours – thank goodness for email.
- Online images for resources were not print quality. I had to hand-draw the game board to complete the project on time and of the quality I wanted.
- The available pilot school children were not studying the subject. This absence of any background knowledge made the pilot day much harder.
- Timetabling: the pilot day demonstrated that activity lengths needed adjustment and teachers needed clearer guidance.

Actual outcomes

All intended outcomes were met; school visits have not yet begun.

Actual outputs

Successfully delivered, on time and on budget, resources and teachers/staff

notes for a sustainable, national curriculum-based schools visit day about Anglo-Saxons for up to 60 children at a time:

- Kingship session: "Game of Crowns" staff-led interactive storytelling session to show how the many kingdoms of the early Anglo-Saxon era became one "England". Resources: leader notes and scripts for staff and self-led groups, 35 plastic crowns, 5 durable fabric maps 90 x 60 cm.
- Treasure trail session: self-led gallery trail asking questions stimulating gallery exploration and thinking in pairs about similarities and differences between daily life then and now. Resources: teaching notes, 20 laminated trails.
- Save the curator session: part-led themed sorting activities (objects, facts and documents) combined with a game about museum roles and responsibilities. Resources: teaching notes, Anglo-Saxon/non-Anglo-Saxon objects and images, simplified "original" documents, true/false statements, curator character props.
- Trade session: a split session including a craft activity to make a disc brooch and a "snakes and ladders" game demonstrating the perils of international commerce in 800BC. Resources: card and pins (enough for the pilot), stamps and ink, a hand-drawn giant "snakes and ladders" board printed on durable fabric 1m x 1m.
- Scripts for introduction and conclusion of the day.

- Website content.
- Mini session for self-led groups: includes a "pick 'n' mix" of elements from the full day.
- Digital copies of everything sent to the museum for future editing and reprinting if necessary.

Lessons learned

- Next time I will request partial advance payment to cover the cost of most session resources. This rookie freelancing mistake meant I outlaid about 30% of the total fee, before receiving payment myself.
- Even simple self-led sessions need enormous amounts of crystal clear instructions; the ways in which written instructions can be misunderstood are seemingly boundless.
- My original idea for the trading game, although educationally sound, was a card game which took ages to create and then proved too complex for the session time available during the pilot. The museum still holds this as a useful resource for smaller group use; I learnt to trust my instincts and keep it simple!
- Evaluation from teachers at the pilot was largely positive, particularly about the Game of Crowns led session and the gallery trail; they also reported needing more background information on Anglo-Saxons for their group leaders. This is now provided in the website pre-visit resources, the main introduction on the day and the Kingship session. Timetabling issues have also been ironed out. After all, that's what pilots are for!

Next steps

On completion of the necessary minor adjustments arising from the pilot, I have handed the completed project back to the museum, who will continue to run it as part of their formal schools learning offer.

Rachel Duffield

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