

## **MUSEUMS COMMITTEE**

**12 SEPTEMBER 2016**

Present: Councillors Poole (Chair), Dowling (Vice-Chair), Bacon, Howard, Sinden, Edwards, Patmore, Webb (as the duly appointed substitute for Councillor Street)

Museum Association Representatives: Mrs Barrett, Mr Dudman, Mrs Purdey, Mr Peak and Mr Palfrey-Martin

### **54. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Street.

### **55. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillors made no declarations of interest at this meeting.

### **56. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 27 JUNE 2016**

**RESOLVED** – that the minutes of the meeting held on 27 June 2016 be approved and signed by the Chair as a true record subject to the deletion item 49, the paragraph referring to Mr Dudman's reference to Geoffrey Malins, Photographer, which was incorrect.

### **57. NOTIFICATION OF ADDITIONAL URGENT ITEMS**

None.

### **58. CURATOR'S REPORT**

Cathy Walling, Museum Curator, presented a report to provide an update on issues arising from previous meetings and confirmation of Curator's actions.

1. The museum was successful in an application to the Arts Council England Museum Resilience Fund and has been awarded £85,000 for a project 'Finding our Place 2', to be delivered between 1 October 2016 and 31 March 2018.
2. The post for the Learning Officer is being advertised and recruitment process to replace the Archivist has started. Catherine Harvey will continue as Keeper of Art and World Cultures with responsibility for the exhibition programme.

Steve Peak said the Museum Association were keen the Archivist post continues for two days a week. The Curator confirmed this was still the case and that the Keep will supply training if required.

3. Repair works to the stonework at John's Place have been scheduled. The programme of works will commence at the end of September and take 6 weeks. The

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Contractors DCB have been appointed to undertake the work. Works will include repairs to the mortar and window and door surrounds on the south and west facing elevations. No weddings have been booked within this period.

**RESOLVED - that the Committee accepts the report and are satisfied with the comments in the report.**

### 59. WORLD WAR I PROJECT UPDATE

Cathy Walling, Museum Curator, presented a report to update members on the progress of the Hastings Lottery Funded WWI Centenary Project 'Hastings Remembers: Local Stories of the First World War'.

The five year project is half way through. Events in 2016 have included the screening of the 'Battle of Somme'; an exhibition entitled 'Stage, Screen and Trench', and the Young Curators group have looked at conscription, recruitment and conscientious objectors. There has also been a presentation to the Family History Group.

The volunteers are continuing to research names on the war memorial; family stories and links with Hastings' twin towns. Staff continue to regularly post local WWI stories on Social Media.

A further update on the project will be provided at the Museum Association AGM in December.

The Curator advised that a request has been received to support a commemorative plaque for Claude Nunney, VC, who was born in Bexhill Road. In addition, Claude Nunney will be honoured with a commemorative Victoria Cross paving stone in September 2018 as part of a nationwide Government WWI initiative. Mr Silk, researcher, has asked the museum to hold a civic event to unveil a plaque in July 2017. Members discussed the cost and resources involved in supporting one or both events combined and agreed that Hastings VC holders should be honoured. The Curator will contact ESCC to confirm details of the scheme funding for the event in 2018.

Councillor Edwards expressed his concern that the numbering of the buildings in Bexhill Road had since changed. The Curator advised him that commemorative plaques were often not fixed to the original building.

Members expressed the importance of Blue Plaques in the town and raised their concern that the budget for this was no longer provided.

**RESOLVED – that the Committee accepts the report and are satisfied with the comments in the report.**

### 60. MUSEUM ATTENDANCE FIGURES

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Cathy Walling, Museum Curator, presented a report to inform members of figures for attendances, educational activities and use of the Museum's website for the first quarter of 2016-17. Figures for April to July 2015 were submitted for comparison.

It was noted that the attendance figures for Hastings Museum and Art Gallery had increased by 919 for Quarter 1 when compared with the previous year.

Numbers of pupils in organised groups had increased by 358.

Participants in non-education provider sessions reached 218.

At the time of the meeting, the number of followers on Facebook had increased to 1,081 and Twitter to 1,152.

The number of weddings and civil ceremonies had reached 7, the same as quarter 1 last year.

The website figures were no longer required as a performance indicator.

Councillor Edwards asked who decides the cost of the weddings and where the income goes. The Curator advised him that the fee of £500 was set annually by Council. This money goes back to the museum.

Mrs Barrett enquired about the progress of Weddings and Civil Ceremonies taking place at the Town Hall. The Curator said that two people had cancelled their booking at the museum and re-booked with the Town Hall. Members discussed the benefits of the museum as a wedding venue.

The Curator advised that the Wedding Fayre had been very successful with 600 people attending, including exhibitors.

**RESOLVED - that the Committee accepts the report and are satisfied with the comments in the report.**

### 61. MUSEUM EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Cathy Walling, Museum Curator, presented a report to inform Members of forthcoming events and educational activities taking place at the Hastings Museum and Art Gallery during October to December 2016, for Quarter 2, 2016-17. These included:-

#### **Exhibitions**

17 September to 8 January: 'A Taste of Honeysett'. The cartoons of Martin Honeysett, part of Hastings & 1066 Country Cartoon Festival.

17 September to 8 January: 1066 -themed cartoons from Hastings & 1066 Country Cartoon Festival participants.

Continues: The Story of Hastings in 66 Objects'.

Continues: Changing contemporary exhibits in showcase 'What Hastings Means to Me'.

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### Events

12 October: University of Brighton Heritage Forum on theme of 1066

13 October: 'Sidney Little: Not just a Concrete King.' Talk by Andre Palfrey-Martin.

25 October: Family Activity Day

29 October: Sussex Record Society Book Launch

5 November: Hastings Remembers, Local Stories of WWI event with Young Curators

11, 18, 25 November: Local History talks with Edward Preston

20 November: Museum Association excursion to Turner, Margate.

17 and 24 November: Arts Connect Art Walks for adults with learning disabilities and access issues

26 November: Cartoon Christmas Card workshop, part of Cartoon Festival.

1, 8 & 15 December: Arts Connect Art Walks for adults with learning disabilities and access issues

2, 9 December: Local History talks with Edward Preston

4 December: Museum Association AGM

**RESOLVED - that the Committee accepts the report and are satisfied with the comments in the report.**

### 62. MUSEUM ACQUISITIONS

Cathy Walling, Museum Curator, presented a report informing members of thirteen items acquired by the Museum in the last quarter and the names of donors. The items included: -

1. Painting of the Stade in 1949 by Sydney Maiden

Donor: Brassey Fund.

This item was purchased through the Brassey Fund.

2. Set of 9 miniature postcards of Hastings by Judges.

Donor: Bourne Hall Museum

3. Four copy photographs of Hollington; Copy of booklet on Royal Mail in WW2.

Donor: Mrs S. Novis

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4. Documents relating to University School Hastings, including school reports for William Brown Tucker, 1894-5.

Donor: Mrs H. Self

5. Postcard of Hastings 1958

Donor: Mrs A. Mann

6. Card index of JM Baines research notes, folders of place name research, copy photographs used in 'Unseen Hastings and St Leonards'.

Donor: F. Crouch

7. Theatre programmes and tickets from White Rock Pavilion, St Mary-in-the-Castle from 1970s to 2003.

Donor: Mrs S. Hayward

8. Two wooden road surfacing blocks from King's Road; Brochure for Millars, Karri and Jorrah, manufacturers of blocks.

Donor: Mr J. Green

9. Photograph album of Ethel Tucknott, local WAAF and policewoman.

Donor: Mr R.J. Kind

10. Book of Centenary of Hastings & St Leonards Gas Company

Donor: Mrs L. Wilkins

11. WW2 newspapers, Spencer Tracey film poster

Donor: Mrs L. Allum

12. Teaspoon from Lyons Teashop, 15 Wellington Place, Hastings

Donor: Mr D. Dine

Councillor Sinden asked if there were any proposals for the hoard of coins. The Curator advised him that the coins had been put on display between a year and 18 months ago and were now in storage.

Mrs Barrett referred to the acquisition of two wooden road surfacing blocks and queried the condition of one in the High Street Councillor Poole said they would make enquiries to find out who the owner was and if it could be repaired.

Mr Palfrey-Martin commented on the interesting bygone photos of Battle Road donated by Mrs Novis and he encouraged everyone to donate similar photos.

In response to a question, the Curator said they had six boxes of documents celebrating 1966, containing council documents, meeting documents and minted medallions.

**RESOLVED - that the Committee accepts the report and are satisfied with the comments in the report.**

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**63. ADDITIONAL URGENT ITEMS (IF ANY)**

None.

(The Chair declared the meeting closed at. 3.24 pm)