

**MUSEUMS COMMITTEE  
15 SEPTEMBER 2008**

Present: Councillors Armstrong, Cartwright, Charlesworth, Finch (in the Chair), Martin, Soan and Webb.

Museum Association Representatives: Mr Adams, Mrs Barrett, Mr Peak, Mrs Purdey and Miss Reed.

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs Cornish and Kevin Boorman.

It was announced that the Museum Curator, Victoria Williams, would be leaving her post. The Committee thanked Victoria for all her help and wished her well in her new role.

**12. MINUTES**

Museum Curator Victoria Williams explained that she had circulated the incorrect data for the Visitor Questionnaires item on the last agenda. The correct version has now been sent around to members of the Committee.

**RESOLVED** – that the minutes of the meeting held on 9 June 2008 be approved and signed by the Chair as a true record.

**13. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The following councillors declared an interest in the minutes as indicated:

<u>Councillor</u>	<u>Minute</u>	<u>Interest</u>
Cartwright	15) Museum Events (only if certain exhibit was discussed)	Prejudicial – knows the mother of one of the exhibitors
Martin	15) Museum Events	Personal – member of the East Sussex art group

**14. MUSEUM ATTENDANCE AND WEBSITE FIGURES**

The Museum Curator, Victoria Williams, presented a report to inform the Committee of the Museum attendance and website figures.

Attendances at the main Museum and Art Gallery were still holding up well after the reopening last year and were the highest for this quarter since they were first reported as performance indicators in 2001.

**MUSEUMS COMMITTEE  
15 SEPTEMBER 2008**

Visitors to the Old Town Hall had been slowly increasing since a drop in 2005.

The rise in website hits was impressive and had more than trebled since first recorded in 2004.

Educational visits were slightly lower than comparable periods in earlier years. The Museum had been concentrating on outreach and family activities.

Hastings Museum and Art Gallery attendance from April 2008 to June 2008: 8353

- School visits: 962
- Website hits: 21,598

**RESOLVED that the report be noted.**

**15. MUSEUM EVENTS**

Victoria Williams, Museum Curator, presented a report to inform members of forthcoming exhibitions including:

- Re-hang of the Long Gallery – A display of historic pictures showing the interior of local buildings including shops, theatres and churches.
- The Roger Woods Design Archive – An exhibition featuring the textile designs of local designer Roger Woods.
- Bedouin Jewellery – A small exhibition of Bedouin jewellery from Saudi Arabia.
- Turner and Bonington – A large scale touring exhibition focusing on early 19<sup>th</sup> Century works by JMW Turner and Richard Parkes Bonington comparing images of the coast on the English and French sides of the Channel.

Forthcoming educational activities included:

- Discover... Family activity workshops – On the first Saturday of every month (except January) family groups will be invited to enjoy a range of activities led by artists and Museum staff.
- Teachers' Inset Day – Focussing on Science and Maths in connection with the European Baskets exhibition.

Councillor Webb asked that the History of the Old Town Hall exhibition, celebrating its 50 years as a Museum be an agenda item for the next meeting.

**MUSEUMS COMMITTEE  
15 SEPTEMBER 2008**

**RESOLVED that the report be noted.**

**16. LOANS**

Victoria Williams, Museum Curator, presented a report to update Members on loans from the Museum collection.

The Dulwich Picture Gallery was borrowing the Museum's portrait of Signor de Rossi by Walter Sickert of 1901 for an exhibition entitled 'Sickert in Venice' which would run from 4<sup>th</sup> March to 31<sup>st</sup> May 2009. The loan was subject to satisfactory insurance, transportation, security and environmental arrangements.

The second item on loan was the Hawaiian feathered cloak. This had been loaned to the Musee du Quai Branly in France. It went on loan at the end of June 2008, was transported well but a week into the exhibition the mount became detached from the wall and the cloak was discovered lying at the base of the display case. Victoria and a conservator visited the French Museum to examine the cloak and found no permanent damage, only creasing. When the cloak returns to the UK, it would be sent to a conservator. All costs incurred would be covered by the Musee du Quai Branly.

**RESOLVED that the report be noted.**

**17. COMMEMORATIVE PLAQUES**

The Museum Curator, Victoria Williams, presented the above report to provide an update on progress regarding the mounting of commemorative plaques.

A meeting of the selection panel consisting of Councillors Charlesworth, Finch, Webb and Mrs Purdey met on the 4<sup>th</sup> September 2008 to discuss the suggestions for Blue Plaques received from members of the public.

Ten nominations were received:

- Sidney Little (Civil Engineer)
- Henry Ward (Architect)
- Elizabeth Blackwell (Doctor)

**MUSEUMS COMMITTEE  
15 SEPTEMBER 2008**

- Captain Sir John Kincaid (Soldier and author)
- Malcolm Saville (Author)
- Edward Lear (author and artist)
- Jo Martin (Lifeboat Coxswain)
- Joseph Kay (Architect)
- Lady Juana Smith (commemorated in Ladysmith, South Africa)
- Belgian World War 1 refugees

It was decided to commemorate Sidney Little and Joseph Kay in 2009 – 2010, and Henry Ward and Edward Lear in 2010-2011.

**RESOLVED that the report be noted.**

**18. MUSEUM ACQUISITIONS**

Victoria Williams, Museum Curator, presented a report listing the recent acquisitions, which included:

- Two Minton tile teapot stands
- Six baker's paper bags from Beck's Bakery
- Collection of needlework samples made by Hannah and Charlotte White 1891 – 93
- 'A Voyage in the Sunbeam' adapted for schools, 1890
- Ten old souvenir edition newspapers

As requested by the Committee the Museum purchased a selection of Horntye cricket memorabilia at Knight's auction in Leicester on 19<sup>th</sup> July 2008.

**RESOLVED that the report be noted and the Chairman sign Certificates of thanks to the donors**

**19. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC**

**RESOLVED - that the public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the items of business listed below because it is likely that, if members of the public were present, there would be disclosure to them of 'exempt' information as defined in the paragraphs of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972**

<b><u>Minute No.</u></b>	<b><u>Subject Matter</u></b>	<b><u>Paragraph No.</u></b>
20(E)	Offer to purchase	Paragraph 4

**MUSEUMS COMMITTEE  
15 SEPTEMBER 2008**

**20(E). OFFER TO PURCHASE**

Victoria Williams, Museum Curator, presented a report updating Members on developments regarding an offer to purchase.

**RESOLVED that Cabinet be recommended to approve the acquisition.**

(The Chair declared the meeting closed at 4.00 pm)