

**MUSEUMS COMMITTEE  
25 FEBRUARY 2013**

Present: Councillors Hodges, Howard, Rogers and Westley (in the Chair).

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

**23. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Charlesworth, Corello, Sinden and Ms Cornish.

**24. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillors made no declarations of interest at this meeting.

**25. MINUTES**

**RESOLVED** – that the minutes of the meeting held on 3 December 2012 be approved and signed by the Chair as a true record.

**26. 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.

The Fishmarket painting by J.M.W. Turner is on display at Petworth House until the 'Turner's Sussex' exhibition closes on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2013.

It was noted that Hastings Museum will undergo an assessment of the store; paintings and various items, as part of the Conservation project for South East Museums. Twenty paintings will be assessed.

The consultation on the Museum's Access and Learning policy has been completed. The results will be available at the next committee meeting in June.

The development of the Hastings Heritage Trails have progressed and should be available in the Spring.

A number of reproductions have been granted permission, as noted in the report.

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

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**27. UPDATE ON OLD TOWN HALL GROUP**

Cathy Walling, Museum Curator, presented a report to update members on the progress of the operational review of the Old Town Hall Museum. Interested parties attended the final group meeting in January 2013 to receive an update on the latest developments.

The corporate target for the Museums Service for the 2013-14 municipal year is:

- Provide an exhibition and education programme for visitors to our Museums; and
- Develop proposals for their long-term sustainability in light of financial constraints.

In order to meet the budget for 2013-14, savings will be achieved by reducing staffing hours and from the closure of the Old Town Hall Museum. The museum will close on Mondays throughout the year and on Tuesdays through to Thursdays from November to March. It will remain open on Fridays for school and other group visits.

Steve Peak asked if provision could be made for a book stand at the Old Town Hall Museum to display history books and asked if the windows could be cleaned. The Curator noted his requests. He also recommended the Tourist Information Centre should be located at the Old Town Hall Museum in order to improve finances.

The Committee considered the sale of parking tickets from the Old Town Hall Museum to improve footfall. It was noted that on street parking will be under the remit of East Sussex County Council from 1<sup>st</sup> April. Virginia Gilbert stated that she would consult Richard Homewood on this matter.

**RESOLVED - that**

- 1) the Committee thank the group for their work on the Old Town Hall; and**
- 2) that the Committee accepts the report and are satisfied with the comments in the report.**

**28. MUSEUM ATTENDANCE FIGURES**

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 third quarter of 2012-13. Figures for October to December 2011 were submitted for comparison.

The Curator advised that there had been a general drop in visitor numbers to museums and that website visits had increased. It was noted that 19 wedding and civil ceremonies had been booked so far for 2013 compared to a total of 30 during 2012.

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Mrs Barrett commented that school visits had reduced because of the amount of paperwork involved and checks required to arrange an educational visit. Schools preferred to use the loan boxes instead.

Councillor Rogers asked if there was a comparable figure compared to last year for the ceremonies. The Curator said the figure for this year was ongoing and that she would report this item to the next meeting

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

**29. MUSEUM EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES**

Cathy Walling, Museum Curator, presented a report to inform Members of forthcoming events and educational activities at the Museum for Quarter 1, 2013-14.

These included: -

**Exhibitions**

Until 2014: Women Artists from 1850-1950  
A collection display of paintings, drawings and prints.

Until 14 April: The Nature of Things - Animals in Art.  
A collection display of paintings, ceramics, prints and objects.

20 April - 7 July: Brooke and Badham - Observing Hastings  
Sketches and watercolours by W.H. Brooke and E. Leslie Badham. Including a display of work by students from Sussex Coast College who have been involved in the 'Brooke, Badham and Beyond' project.

The Curator confirmed that 4 new works from the Brooke and Badham Exhibition of the 1920's would be on display.

2 March - 20 April: Display of work by students from St Leonards Academy.

27 April - 23 June: The Grave's a Fine and Private Place - Exploring local history in Hastings Cemetery. The work of a project to record extant memorials and research people and topics found.

**Events**

Every Wednesday: Local Studies Room open.

Every Thursday in term-time: Play and Learn in partnership with Hastings and St Leonards Children's centre, In2Play and Hastings Children's Library.

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10 March: Lecture on 'Animals in Art: Interpretations and Meanings' by Dr Graham Whitham.

15-24 March: Inventions and Discoveries for National Science and Engineering Week. Students from UCH will lead a range of hands-on activities.

30 March - 14 April: Easter Egg Hunt. At both Museums.

27 April: An Introduction to Drypoint Printmaking with Fiona Pienkowska.

11 May: Miniature Maps; Family drop-in workshop with Ed Boxall

17 May: Museum Late; Museums At Night 2013.

1 June: 'Brooke and Badham: Then and Now'. Illustrated talk by Alison Hawkins.

15-16 June: Museums on the Air with Brede Radio Society.

21 June: Local History talk by Edward Preston

22 June: Walk and Shoot: photographic workshop with Sharon Haward

28 June: Local History talk by Edward Preston.

Steve Peak added that the Hastings Miniature Railway will be celebrating its 65<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. He asked if a display could be put in the Cabinet at the Old Town Hall Museum. The curator said she would look into this.

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

**30. PROPOSALS FOR CENTENARY COMMEMORATION OF WORLD WAR 1**

Cathy Walling, Museum Curator, presented a report to inform Members of the plans for the centenary commemoration in 2014 of the outbreak of World War 1.

The Curator said arrangements were in progress nationally for holding a series of exhibitions and partnership projects organised by the Imperial War Museum. She advised that plans locally were on going and will be clearer in June 2013 in terms of what form the arrangements will take.

Members added their ideas to the proposals, these included:-

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Mr Peak recommended using the Hastings Pictorial Advertiser as a source of useful information.

Councillor Howard asked if there was historical material from conscientious objectors and trade unions to produce an alternative point of view. The Curator confirmed material will be available in this area.

Mr Palfrey-Martin suggested there should be coverage on those who were taken prisoner of war and include the contribution of the Red Cross.

Mr Peak suggested running an exhibition on the effects of WWI to include the development of Council Houses.

Mr Adams said the rest of Europe was involved in the war and should be recognised nationally.

Councillor Rogers commented that this was not a celebration of war, the celebration was at the end of the war. The Committee echoed her comment.

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

**31. MUSEUM ACQUISITIONS**

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

1. Watercolour of Whitehouse Farm, Ore. Donor: Estate of Miss Winifred Pattenden.
2. Four watercolours of Hastings by E. Leslie Badham. Donor: The Brassey Fund
3. Ward Lock Guide Book to Hastings and St Leonards, 1920s. Donor: Mr G Goddard
4. Drawing of proposed long sea outfall pipeline, 1960s. Donor: Tavistock Museum
5. Scrapbook re Alexandra Cricket Club. Donor: Mr M. Dyson
6. 33 postcards of Hastings and St Leonards. Donor: Mr B Reynolds
7. Commemorative dish made by Rye Pottery for 150th anniversary of Hastings and St Leonards Building and Investment Company Ltd. Donor: Mr M Irwin

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8. Title page from 1874 Hastings and St Leonards Observer. Donor: Mr L Smith
9. Collection of papers relating to Cecilia Tourle, Civil Defence Training Instructor. Donor: Mr Levett
10. Boxes of archaeological material from Old St Helen's Church. Donor: Sussex Heritage Trust
11. Enamelled advertising sign for Brooke's Mineral Waters, Hastings. Donor: Mr Cruttenden

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

(The Chair declared the meeting closed at 3.20pm)