



WHEELS WITHIN WHEELS

Who will provide guidance, funding and advice to Museums in the future?

**Resource ~ SWMLAC ~ HUBS ~ MOD ~ SW Fed ~ County, Borough & District Councils ~
County Museum Services ~ DMA & other Associations ~ Individual Museums**

How do these organisations relate to each other? Are there too many?

MDOs, RDA, DCMS, CONVER, NHLF, DMAC, LSC, CHENTO

What do all they all mean and do? Which should we take interest in and why?

What is the geographical area of the "South West"? How and where do HUBs fit in to all this?
Why should all HUBs be of interest to Museums (large or small). What's in it for us ?

How long will HUBs last? How many HUBs are there ? Which Museums make up the HUB. On
what basis have they been selected? Will they provide direct funding? How much? Is there a time
scale for implementation?

With the introduction of HUBs the already complicated Political and Funding structures available to
Museums have become a mine-field to all but the best informed and even they are struggling to
come to terms with HUBs, particularly as Resource themselves can shed little light on the funding
and administration of the new projects.

Just three HUBs, out of a possible nine, will be selected as pilot projects or "Pathfinders". The
South-West HUB partners have now been selected and are ~ Bristol Museum & Art Gallery, Exe-
ter Royal Albert Memorial Museum, Plymouth Museum & Art Gallery, The Royal Cornwall Museum
in Truro and The Russell Cotes Museum in Bournemouth. An announcement is expected by the
end of January revealing the three successful bidders who will become the operational Pathfinder
HUBs and receive funding.

After a meeting with the DMA to discuss issues relating to HUBs Victoria Pirie and Clive Fisher
have agreed to get down to basics and talk us through the complex relationships of the many
different bodies, the acronyms and the future of SWMLAC and HUBs.

**THE MEETING WILL BE HELD ON MARCH 21ST AT SHERBORNE
THE TIMES AND VENUE TO BE ANNOUNCED.**



FORTY YEARS ON At the Priest's House

On the 31st July 1962, the Priest's House Museum in Wimborne Minster opened its doors to the public for the first time, the moving spirit behind this venture was Hilda Coles. At her death in 1987 it was revealed that she had left her house, all her collections and an endowment to enable a charitable trust to be set up to provide the town of Wimborne Minster and the surrounding villages of East Dorset with a museum.

This year the museum celebrated its fortieth anniversary and it was felt that the opportunity should be taken both to commemorate and honour its founder Miss Hilda Coles. A tribute to Hilda in the form of a sundial was installed in the museum's beautiful garden, a special 'Let's Celebrate' exhibition was set up and a Ruby Anniversary garden party took place.

In addition the Hilda Coles Award was created in the form of a bursary to enable a person from Dorset to develop their career in museum studies. There was considerable interest in this and the choice was very difficult, finally it was decided to make the award to

Charlotte Ranger who is presently studying for a Master's degree in Museum Management at Bournemouth University. She will spend the next year working with the Curator in the museum gaining valuable experience in the day to day management of the museum. Charlotte is a Dorset girl born and raised in the country and in fact lives in East Dorset and it is felt that this award more than anything else would have met with Hilda's unqualified approval.

It was Hilda's foresight and generosity which created a museum which in her words should be 'A live museum, a centre of education and culture, continually changing its displays and appealing to children as well as adults'. Surely the creation of this award proves that this aim is still being vigorously pursued.

A book by Brenda Flint has been commissioned by the museum telling the story of Hilda Coles and the Priest's House Museum and is available from the museum at the price of £3.95.

For further information please contact

The Curator
Emma Ayling
01202 882533

Major lottery funding for Somerset's first Community Heritage Access Centre

People in South Somerset will have a greater opportunity to discover and understand their region's unique heritage after an announcement by the Heritage Lottery Fund today (July 5) to fund a specially designed Community Heritage Access Centre in Yeovil.

The Heritage Lottery Fund has awarded a grant of £214,500 to the South Somerset Museums and Heritage Service to create a centre, which aims to house important collections from a number of local museums, providing storage and conservation as well as workshop facilities and on-site curatorial advice.

The innovative project will be based at the Council's existing Lufton Depot in Yeovil and will create numerous heritage benefits for the region. Collections currently in substandard and inappropriate conditions will be suitably stored and documented and at the same time the movement of these collections will create much needed space in the local museums for more effective storage and increased display and exhibition areas.

The cramped conditions within many of the community museums prevent public access to the majority of artefacts and the development of links between the different museums. The new Community Heritage Access Centre will enable both intellectual and physical access to the collections and allow for the sharing of information through exhibition, outreach projects and an online Internet catalogue. A Documentation Officer will catalogue the records and help provide interpretation of the combined regional collections, while a research room and workshop will provide facilities for the training of museum staff, other professionals and volunteers in packing, display and conservation techniques.

Nerys Watts, Heritage Lottery Fund's Manager for South West England said:

"This is an innovative project which brings a number of benefits to the region. Not only does it solve the storage problems faced by many of the small local museums but the centre also creates a forum for sharing and cataloguing information on South Somerset's heritage, which can be interpreted to a much wider audience. It makes great sense for local museums to work together in this way and I am sure will be considered by other community museums in different areas."

For more information on the project contact Marion Barnes, Museums and Heritage Services Manager, South Somerset District Council tel: 01935 424774.

NOTES

The Heritage Lottery Fund enables communities to celebrate, look after and learn more about our diverse heritage. From our great museums and historic buildings to local parks and beauty spots or recording and celebrating traditions, customs and history, Heritage Lottery Fund grants open up our nation's heritage for everyone to enjoy. It has made nearly 9,000 grants worth £2billion to projects across the UK including over 490 grants totalling over £140million in South West England.

Further information

For further information, contact Katy Hunter, Owen Roffe or Mark Ludmon, Heritage Lottery Fund Press Office, on 020 7591 6047 / 6000. Text phone 020 7591 6255 www.hlf.org.uk

WEYMOUTH MUSEUM

All our best wishes to Rodney who has returned to work after an operation and period of convalescence.

A new exhibition "Come into our Garden" will be opening at the Weymouth Museum on 24th March 2003, at the Weymouth Museum. The exhibition celebrates 125 Years of local gardening by the Broadway, Upwey & District Horticultural Society, giving an insight into the history and development of gardening through the ages.

The Museum is also organising a series of talks in 2003;

- 10th Feb Crested China ~ leader David Riches
- 17th Feb Magic Lanterns ~ Talk & Demonstration, Colin Isacs
- 24th Feb Mrs Chitty's Diary ~ explained by Jean Sutton
- 3rd Mar Under the Sea ~ leader Ed Cummings
- 10th Mar Fans ~ shown by Anne Riches
- 17th Mar Conservation of our Textiles (TBC)

Enquiries Contact: Rodney or Hazel on 01305 777 622

DORSET MUSEUMS ADVISORY SERVICE & DMA LIBRARY

The Dorset Museums Service and Dorset Museums Association have an extensive library of Museum related books listed below. The Library is held at the Dorset Record Office in Dorchester, in the County Museums Advisor's Office.

Some of the books are available on loan, to members of the DMA, and others can be used in the Record Office **by appointment only**.

Those books available for borrowing will be loaned out for two weeks periods only and the borrower will be responsible for collecting and returning the books. A fine will be payable if the book is not returned by the specified date or if a book is damaged.

For further enquiries please contact Janet Bell on
01305 228 931 / 01305 250 550
Or e-mail: j.bell@dorset-cc.gov.uk.



Corfe Castle

In its 114th year the Corfe Castle Town Trust has witnessed its second Golden Jubilee and the historic building its third. Throughout June as part of the Purbeck Aware promotion the Town Hall and Archives were open to the public on three afternoons each week. Several of our visitors were able to identify a relative living at the time of the 1791

Census and one was a descendant of a Tolpuddle Martyr.

The Museum, which is now open throughout the year, is unchanged and continues to attract a steady stream of visitors. The Trustees achieved Registration during the year and are now seeking a volunteer Curator to manage the collection. (Contact Ken Wollaston 01929 480974)

Tolpuddle Martyrs Museum

The Tolpuddle Martyrs Museum has had an exceptional year. In the eight months from March through October we have had a record number of 31,355 visitors through the Museum. This excludes the annual Tolpuddle Rally Day where an estimated 7,000 people attended. The Rally was an unmitigated success and we were fortunate that the weather held for us. The speakers were well received and the bands and choirs had people of all ages joining in. The previous evening saw a standing ovation for some 200 children belonging to the company Theatretrain performing 'From a Spark to a Flame' the musical story of the Tolpuddle Martyrs. This play had had its debut in London a few months previously.

Beaminster Museum

Every two years Beaminster Museum pulls out all the stops and produces a "Living Exhibition". This years we presented "Beaminster Ablaze - the trials and tribulations of the 17th Century". By means of a small lottery grant from "Activities for all" we were able to afford the services of a professional designer and buy or hire extra materials to give that extra polish.

The success of the exhibition contributed to us having a record number of visitors for the year -still only 2600, which just shows how small Beaminster is!

Beaminster Museum put on 6 temporary exhibitions during this year to augment our permanent collection.

Some statistics shows the importance of these extra exhibitions:

We had 80% of our visitors during the 30% of the opening time when there were temporary exhibitions - or in other words, we had 10 fold the visitors numbers on those days when there was an extra exhibition compared to those days without a special attraction.

We open next Easter with the DMAs touring exhibition "Dorset's Burning" - a history of firefighting in Dorset to 1950s.

Poole Museums Service News

1st **April 2002** was the beginning of a new era for the Museums, admission charges were swept away. This meant that everyone visiting the Museums could enter without paying, previously only residents of Poole could do this except in July and August. The result has been an increase in visitors to the end of October of over 27,000 or an increase of 110%. This has not been without a cost as the Museum has forfeited £ 15,000 of admission income to increase these numbers, £ 15,000 it could and would have used elsewhere.

The Local History Centre in the Town Cellars continues to grow both in the information it has available and in the numbers of those using it. The Centre has made use of grant money from SWMLAC and a project to digitise 30,000 photographic images of Poole has been completed. This will enable original material to be preserved but at the same time made available to the growing numbers of users of the Centre.



The Museum is working with the Libraries in Poole doing research for Resource. The two organisations are working together on "Inspiring Learning". This is a nation wide project to look at and develop the learning potential of museums and galleries in this country. This is proving a challenge and a learning experience for everyone involved. Resource intends to publish the results of this countrywide project during 2003.

September found Scaplen's Court Museum participating in Poole's prestigious Food Festival. A trusted restaurant owner approached the Museum to put on a series of events using the Museum kitchen. Lunches were arranged per Mrs Beeton style and Ladies were "invited" to attend lunches overseen by the legendary Mrs Beeton (a member of Staff). The lunches were for Ladies only, but were not totally exclusive as can be seen in the picture.

SHAFTESBURY ABBEY & GARDENS

Under the direction of our Archaeological Advisers, Julian Richards and Sue Lobb, a small working group has been set up to develop an Archaeological policy for Shaftesbury Abbey. So little is known about any archaeology work and finds within Shaftesbury and none of this information has been co-ordinated into one place within the town. As a historical site and a museum the Directors of Shaftesbury Abbey have agreed that further knowledge of the Abbey precinct, and its relationship with the town, are a vital part of our commitment to research and the interpretation of the site for the benefit of the community.

We have been successful with an application for a grant of £4,000 from the "Awards for All" scheme from Lottery Grants for Local Groups. This money will go towards three new projects: replacing the now out of date cabinet housing our interactive touch screen display and making it easier to use and purchasing a display system and graphic panel for temporary exhibitions. Thirdly, to bring the period to life, we are covering the costs of a murder mystery play to be held in the Abbey grounds. In these ways we hope to encourage the participation of visitors and enable them to experience the life and times of the local heritage of Shaftesbury Abbey.

With the Disability Discrimination Act coming into affect we have been focussed to think about ways in which we can improve our services to everyone. This has started the Abbey on a very exciting period, developing new ideas and new ways of thinking on how we can interpret our museum and site. With the help of a volunteer with experience of disability from NORDDIS, the project to re-house our interactive display system should be the first of its kind we have undertaken that will benefit from this new way of thinking.

We are holding a St Edward's Candlelight Supper on February 22nd at the Shaftesbury Arts Centre so look out for more details in the local press. We open for the new season on the 1st April when we will have our new temporary exhibition programme up and running.

Do contact us at the Abbey if you have any further questions.

Yours sincerely

ERICA ANDER
Assistant to the Chairwoman

The Dorset Museums Assessment Centre

DMAC offer the full range of Cultural Heritage NVQs.

Inclusive prices are -
£970 each for levels 3 to 5 £670 for level 2.

Single units can be arranged including G3 for AMA

Advice is available on financial assistance. Contact Alisdair Murray Tel: 01305 787243.
DMAC is a consortium of the Nothe Fort and Weymouth College.

DMA ~ Any other business?

Next Issue

The issue will be:

Spring 2002 Issue ~

Copy deadline ~ Fri 12 April Publication ~ Fri 19 April 2002

Pictures and photographs gratefully received and will be returned.

Please send text and photographs on disc where possible 1.4mb PC Format / CD or Zip

Or E-Mail ~ royalsignalsmuseum@army.mod.uk

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