



Norfolk Museums & Archaeology Service
Curator Report
2008-9



Norfolk Museums & Archaeology Service

Curator Report

2008-9

Contents

1 INTRODUCTION

The Norwich Curators in 2008-9
Meet the Curators

2 WORKING WITH THE PUBLIC

Communicating with audiences
Exhibitions
Events
Interpreting and understanding the historic and natural environment
Education and outreach

3 IMPROVING THE COLLECTIONS AND DISPLAYS

Acquisitions
Collection Management Issues
Developing our museums
Using the collections
Money acquired

4 IMPROVING ACCESS TO COLLECTIONS

Developing access to knowledge and information
Responding to equality and disability issues

5 INVESTING IN THE SECTOR

Partnerships
Supporting the sector
Staff development
Volunteers and placements

6 APPENDIX

Communicating through publications and other media

1 INTRODUCTION

The Norwich Curators in 2008-09

This third annual report of the Norwich Curators has been compiled to outline the range of activities undertaken by the team throughout the year. Staff have been involved in a series of exhibitions, displays, events and new projects. This work has been undertaken in conjunction with programmes of less visible but essential collections management duties, involving work on stores, acquisitions and rationalisation of collections.

Some new initiatives this year have included an event to celebrate the contribution of volunteers to the work of our museums and the re-introduction of a programme of regular weekly gallery talks at Norwich Castle.

The section has continued to benefit from the contribution of Renaissance, both in terms of staff provision and by providing curators with the opportunity to undertake a wider range of activities and engage with some more ambitious projects. Staff have actively supported the new Renaissance SHARE scheme, by providing training and support to other independent museums across the region.

The year has seen numerous enforced staff changes. Some long-serving staff have taken retirement, of whom Norma Watt, of the Art Department, was the longest serving. Others retiring were Pippa Thorne and Lynda Wix, both of Carrow House. The team also saw the departure of our Geologist Nigel Larkin, who is undergoing a change of direction in his career, and Nicholas Thornton, who left to take up the position of Head of Modern & Contemporary Art at the National Museum of Wales, Cardiff. Penny Sexton, Assistant Curator of Art at Exeter Gallery, took up a temporary secondment to cover for Giorgia Bottinelli's absence on maternity leave. Giorgia has returned to work part time as Curator of Art, job sharing with Norma Watt. Harriet Godwin has now taken up the post of Curator of Art (Modern & Contemporary). Caroline Fisher joined the Art Department as part-time Exhibitions Assistant. Amy Bracey worked as a Project Assistant for the new *Arts of Living and Treasure and Trade and the Exotic Decorative Art Galleries*. Cath Fletcher has been appointed Access Curator and Lisa Little, Curatorial Assistant at Carrow House.

It must be emphasised that the work of the Curators is not achieved without the active participation of other individuals and teams. In particular, activities relating to exhibitions, education and events have meant regular close

working with the Display, Conservation, Learning and Collections Management Departments and with the Registrar. Projects involving education and outreach rely on close working with Learning and the Interpreters.

John Davies

Chief Curator

And Keeper of Archaeology

October 2009

Meet the Curators

Staff based at Norwich Castle Study Centre, Shirehall

Chief Curator and Keeper of Archaeology

Dr John Davies FSA 493630
John.davies@norfolk.gov.uk

Curatorial Assistant

Lorenza Peachey 493659
Lorenza.peachey@norfolk.gov.uk

Access Curator

Catherine Fletcher 493640
Catherine.fletcher@norfolk.gov.uk

Archaeology

Dr Tim Pestell FSA 493658
Tim.pestell@norfolk.gov.uk

Alan West (part time) 493631
Alan.west@norfolk.gov.uk

Fine Art

Dr Andrew Moore FSA
Keeper and Senior Curator 493633
Andrew.moore@norfolk.gov.uk

Norma Watt (*retired August 2009*)

Dr Giorgia Bottinelli 493664
Giorgia.bottinelli@norfolk.gov.uk

Penny Sexton
(*maternity cover for Giorgia Bottinelli*)

Harriet Godwin 493664
Harriet.godwin@norfolk.gov.uk

Decorative Art

Dr Francesca Vanke 493634
Francesca.vanke@norfolk.gov.uk

Amy Bracey Assistant Curator
(*left April 2009*)

Natural History

Dr Tony Irwin 493642
Tony.Irwin@norfolk.gov.uk

Nigel Larkin Geology Curator
(*left August 2009*)

Dr David Waterhouse
Assistant Curator 495883
David.waterhouse@norfolk.gov.uk

Social History

Staff based in the Norwich Museums

Regimental Museum

Kate Thaxton 493650
Kate.thaxton@norfolk.gov.uk

Strangers Hall

Helen Renton 767138
Helen.renton@norfolk.gov.uk

Cathy Terry 667856
Cathy.terry@norfolk.gov.uk

Bridewell

Hannah Maddox 614018
Hannah.Maddox@norfolk.gov.uk

John Renton 615975
John.renton@norfolk.gov.uk

Carrow House

Ruth Battersby Tooke 223873
Ruth.battersbytooke@norfolk.gov.uk

Senior Access Curator

Ruth Burwood 223873
Ruth.burwood@norfolk.gov.uk

Curatorial Assistant

Lisa Little 223873
Lisa.little@norfolk.gov.uk

2 WORKING WITH THE PUBLIC

Communicating with audiences

Communication is perhaps the most important aspect of the curator's role.

Curators transmit knowledge of the collections and their context to a wide range of audiences and in a variety of ways.

The Bridewell:

The Bridewell has continued to develop its audiences widely over this period focussing upon a few key areas such as families and older learners. The team at the museum developed a range of successful events programmes to cater for these groups such as the ever popular school holiday events programme and the Curator's Choice Talks.

The Bridewell has also continued to work with The ASSIST Trust, in supporting and encouraging young people with learning disabilities to live more independently. Throughout the year, the team welcomed the young people to a variety of events, such as the regular Art Club, consultation sessions and our end of season party!

A period of public consultation began in the summer holidays and continued up until the October half term, with staff speaking with our visitors about what they liked about the museum and what they would like to see in future. This consultation period was a brilliant opportunity to speak with our users about our planned redevelopment project and really gave us an idea of how to move forward.

Following on from this in January, the team took a recreated 1950s living room set to the BBC History Fair at The Forum, to explain to people about the aims of our redevelopment project. Visitors were able to share their views informally or take a seat in our impromptu TV studio, to be filmed by the crew from BBC Voices. The film has now been produced and excerpts from it are forming an important part in our next round of public consultation. The data from all our various programmes will form part of a wider consultation and engagement exercise that will span the whole redevelopment project.

The Bridewell also continued to support The Norwich ARCH Group, that collects and digitises local photographs and interviews local people. All of the material gathered is then placed on the www.remembernorfolk.org website. Thanks go to Jan Bensley who assisted Hannah Maddox so enthusiastically. Good luck to all the members of the group who are now going it alone! The group also helped run an



Members of the ASSIST Trust working on an art project.

Hannah Maddox and colleagues at the Treasured Market event.





Students work on their Bridewell designs.

enormously popular event at the end of our open season called Treasured Market. This family based craft activity took inspiration from Norwich market and was a sell out success. Thanks to all of those involved.

The Bridewell also undertook an innovative new project, consulting with students from Hellesdon High School. Throughout the year, Hannah Maddox and Colly Mudie worked with up to 20 young people, considering the museum's proposed redevelopment. The project was developed in partnership with academics from The University of Leeds and UEA and funded by AHRC .

Activities included learning more about the city on an open top bus, visiting other museums and attractions such as Inspire Hands on Science Centre and Time and Tide and reviewing the museum's displays.

In the autumn, the students had the chance to work with Architecture students from The University of Sheffield, turning their ideas into 3D models and sharing their thoughts on film. The results can now be found on YouTube - 'Redesigning the Bridewell Museum - Ryan and Daniel's Journey' - <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Kp4R9pJRMRE>

The project was seen to be so successful that Hannah, Colly and the students went to a conference at the new City Museum in Leeds in November 08 to talk about their project to academics and practitioners from all over the world.

The project will continue to engage young people by setting up a Youth Forum, with the aim of involving young people throughout the project.

Strangers Hall:

In June The Galpin Society visited Strangers' Hall to view the musical instrument collection. The society, which held its AGM in Norwich, promotes research into the history, construction, development and use of musical instruments. Members were eager to see several rare and important instruments including the tenor cornet thought to have been purchased for the Norwich Waits in 1608, the bass recorder made by Peter Bressan in the 1720s, and Sarah Glover's glass harmonicon. Delegates were also able to help with the identification of some of the more unusual objects in the collection, including one instrument dating from the early 1800s which was revealed to be a walking stick which doubled up as a flute.

Helen and John Renton show musical instruments to members of the Galpin Society.



Exhibitions

Major exhibitions have been featured throughout the year at Norwich Castle, in the Norwich Union and Bernard Matthews (the 'T') Galleries, with works from the permanent collection being featured in other galleries. Staff continue to work towards the future exhibition programme, which currently extends to 2012.

At Norwich Castle

Norfolk Sky and Sea: Watercolours from the permanent collection

Colman Watercolour Gallery

5 April 2008-2009

This exhibition showed the fascination that Norfolk has held for artists, through the work of watercolourists over two centuries. The flat, uninterrupted horizons beneath a vast expanse of sky, the clarity of the light, spectacular sunrises and sunsets and the North Sea pounding the coast seem to have proved irresistible.

The People's Choice

100 Paintings from Norwich Castle's Collection

Norwich Castle Museum & Art Gallery

26 April -31 August 2008

This highly successful event combined an exhibition showcasing sixty paintings from Norwich Castle's collection - all chosen by people living in Norfolk - and a gallery trail selected by forty local and national personalities.

Sixty Local community groups and individuals made their choice from the Castle's reserve collections, providing an opportunity to enjoy works which had not been on public view for some time. In total over 300 people were involved in the selection of paintings.

A touchscreen computer enabled people to choose their favourite picture in the exhibition. 1500 people voted and it was fascinating to find that the same top five paintings were selected by both adults and children (although in a different order).

Norfolk Painters 2008: Tidman, Kiki, Gunn

Norwich Castle Museum & Art Gallery

13 September 2008 - 4 January 2009

Three shows were held over four months providing a great opportunity to see works on a grand scale by some of Norfolk's finest artists.

Norwich Castle Open Art Show

Timothy Gurney Gallery

18 October - 23 November

A submissions show, comprising work by artists living in, or inspired by, Norfolk. This was shown alongside the *Norfolk Painters* show, together serving to showcase the huge range of creative talent in Norfolk today.

Henry Moore Barbara Hepworth Ben Nicholson: A Gentle Nest of Artists in the 1930s

Norwich Castle Museum & Art Gallery

31 January - 19 April

This exhibition represented an original way of viewing the impact of the locality upon our cultural history, in this case the impact of iron stone pebbles and flint stones on the beach at Happisburgh upon three of the most important modernists in the history of 20th Century British art. The exhibition subsequently toured to the Graves Art Gallery, Sheffield.

Events

The curator team have actively participated in and created events throughout the year, both as initiatives at individual museums and in connection with wider themed activities.

The First NMAS Volunteer Conference

A new event was held on 3rd November 2008 at Norwich Castle. The team developed the idea of an event to celebrate the work and contribution of volunteers to NMAS. Volunteers were invited from across the different county sites in order to share experiences and to learn about the many varied aspects of our museum work. A series of training workshops were provided for the volunteers during the afternoon session.

Norwich Castle Study Centre:

Norwich Castle Study Centre continued to run a range of events using the stored collections during this period. Free over-55 sessions included sessions looking at the illuminated manuscripts, ethnographic collections and the identification and interpretation of archaeological finds. Other workshops delivered in association with the Henry Moore exhibition included sculpture, drawing and collage making.

As part of the People's Choice exhibition events programme, staff led tours of the art stores and galleries, discussing aspects of work carried out 'behind-the-scenes', as well as introducing them to collections in store.

Archaeology metal detector evening

An open evening was held for Norfolk's metal-detectorists in the Castle, in January 2009. This event provided the first opportunity for members of all five metal-detecting clubs in Norfolk to come together for the first time with independent detectorists, to wander around the archaeology galleries, hear a range of talks and witness the first Norfolk 'Find of the Year' competition. Nearly a hundred detectorists attended and the response was overwhelmingly positive.

'Land of the Iceni: Current Work on the Iron Age in Northern East Anglia' conference

A major conference entitled '*Land of the Iceni: Current Work on the Iron Age in Northern East Anglia*' was held in Norwich on 17th May. Ten national experts were brought together to review recent work and ideas about the Iron Age in the region. This attracted a capacity audience and important new views and interpretations were presented, which effect the wider interpretation of Iron Age Britain.

Judges decide on 'Find of the Year' object.





Visitors to Strangers Hall at Heritage Open Days.

The Bridewell:

The Bridewell ran a hugely successful events programme last year, aimed at developing our audiences. See above. Thanks to all our team who helped deliver a season packed full of various activities.

Strangers Hall:

Strangers' Hall Summer Revels: garden-based event with early music by Minstrel's Gallery, and dance with Norwich Early Dance Group; cream teas and traditional garden games took place in July

- Heritage Open Days (HODs) 2008 : nearly 400 people visited Strangers' Hall during the Friday and Saturday of HODS in September
- A Traditional Christmas with Father Christmas
Strangers' Hall was traditionally decorated for Christmas and offered tours with a Christmas past theme, cracker-making, seasonal refreshments, early music by Minstrel's Gallery. Father Christmas was in residence in 'Santa's workshop' for three Saturdays before Christmas to provide younger visitors with a memorable experience.

Art Department:

Each exhibition (see *above*) was launched with a highly successful opening event, attracting maximum audiences.

Opening guest speakers were:

The Lord Mayor and the biographer
Richard Holmes (The People's Choice);
Colin Self (Bruer Tidman);
Lynda Morris (John Kiki);
Nicola Johnson (Susan Gunn);
Anita Feldman (Moore Hepworth Nicholson).

The official opening of the new decorative arts galleries on 30 March, was attended by over 200 people, with **Zandra Rhodes** as guest of honour.

Interpreting and understanding the historic and natural environment.

Norfolk Museums and Archaeology Service has always played an important role in the understanding of the historic and natural environment. The general public of Norfolk have long made use of the 'open door policy' and identification services, which have provided vast quantities of information for county records. The museums have also provided a major source of expertise, which has been integral in interpreting the material and species found in the county.

Identification services are undertaken in the disciplines of Natural History and Archaeology. This year the team have streamlined the procedure for identifications at Shirehall and a new procedures guide and colour coded system for tracking objects has been introduced.

Although the curatorial team do not have a field function these days, support has been given to important field research projects being undertaken in Norfolk by partner organisations, which have relevance to, and provide fuller context for, our collections:

- Liaison and support was given to the national Ancient Human Occupation of Britain Project, run by the British Museum and Natural History Museum; notably involving their internationally important excavations at the coastal site of Happisburgh.
- Regular support and advice was provided to the Caistor Roman Town project, run by Nottingham University. Their fieldwork has included geophysical survey and excavation and the site of the nearby Roman town.

Education and outreach

The staff actively work towards education outcomes. Learning is a key theme in all activities undertaken within the section.

Norwich Castle Study Centre:

The Study Centre continued to host a range of events for local learning groups of different ages. The annual induction tours for NUCA students included an introduction to the Study Centre collections and handling session, and City College students received talks and activities on the use of collections for study and research. The Study Centre also continued to work with local adult learners, by repeating the annual series of U3A Artefacts sessions. This has proved extremely popular again, and is supported by both NMAS

curatorial and Interpreter staff, as well as freelancers and volunteers.

Senior Access Curator Ruth Burwood delivered many talks throughout the year, off-site around the region, on subjects such as 'The History of Museums', 'The samplers of Lorina Bulwer' and 'Access to museum collections in store'.

Art Department:

The Learning Department and the Interpreters are developing ongoing activities and programmes to accompany the new decorative arts galleries. Two new members of the learning team, Anna Green and Colleen Cameron have joined the Service to work closely with the art curators in developing a programme of events and public engagement with the art collections over the period 2008-12, for *The Great British Art Debate*.

The Bridewell:

The Bridewell has continued to offer support within the local community by offering talks, reminiscence sessions and objects for loan to various community events.

Most notably, The Bridewell has been instrumental in developing a project that works with carer's in the community. Hannah Maddox has been working alongside Ruth Burwood, NMAS Access Officer and Fiona Littlewood, Community Librarian, to develop a series of Carers' Cafes, for people who care for people with dementia at home, based at Hellesdon Library. The sessions offer information, support, a chance to meet and talk with other carers, books on caring and dementia, massage sessions as well as our increasingly popular loans boxes, packed full of nostalgic objects, books, CDs and DVDs and images, for one to one reminiscence back home. The project has been a great success so far, attracting much interest locally and from as far a field as Westminster!

Strangers Hall:

Schools

- Support was provided to the Learning team for the delivery of 'Tudors' sessions and the planning of all other schools events at Strangers.
- Support was given for various access groups, led by interpreters, the Learning team and the adult learning sector.

Individual staff talks/tours

Lunchtime talks at Norwich Castle:

In 2007-08 the Curatorial team introduced a regular series of lunchtime gallery talks at Norwich Castle. A full rolling programme ensures that every Tuesday there will be a talk provided by a specialist member of staff between 12.30 and 1.00pm.

Talks given by Archaeology Department staff to the public:

Tim Pestell gave the following talks:

- Lunchtime talk in Cambridge on 'Life in Anglo-Saxon England'.
- Dec 08 'Bawsey and Productive Sites in East Anglia' Oxford University Department of Archaeology Medieval seminar.
- 12th February 'The Lost Village of Eccles' Scratby and California Local Residents Club.
- 26th March 'Collecting Archaeology at Norwich Castle' The Norfolk Club Antiques Circle.
- 'Life in Anglo-Saxon England', Cambridge.

Alan West gave the following talk:

- Contribution to the 'Flint Day School' held at Norwich Castle.

John Davies completed the following talks:

- 21st April 'The Land of Boudica' to Binham Local History Group.
- 22nd April 'Some Recent Acquisitions from Roman Norfolk'. Gallery talk at Norwich Castle.
- 24th April 'Prehistoric and Roman Wymondham' to Wymondham Heritage Society.
- 9th May 'Introduction to Museum Archaeology' for Norwich 'A level' archaeology group.
- 10th May 'Roman Norfolk'. Full day school at University of East Anglia.
- 17th May 'Setting the Scene' for Iron Age conference in Norwich, 'Land of the Iceni: Current work on the Iron Age in northern East Anglia'.
- 20th May 'Land of the Iceni' for Friends of the Ancient House, Thetford Museum.
- 27th May 'Roman East Anglia' at University of East Anglia.
- 16th July 'Roman Norfolk' for Sprowston History Society, Norwich.
- 5th August 'Recent archaeological discoveries in Norfolk' Gallery Talk at Norwich Castle
- 17th August 'Early Prehistoric Norfolk' for Discovery Tours, Norwich.
- 17th August 'Early Prehistoric Norfolk' for Discovery

Tours, Norwich.

- 24th August 'Iron Age and Roman Norfolk' for Discovery Tours, Norwich.
- 2nd September 'New thoughts on the Iron Age collections' Gallery Talk at Norwich Castle.
- 7th November 'Roman Norfolk', at 'Time and Tide', Great Yarmouth.
- 11th November 'Iron Age collections in the Boudica Gallery', Norwich Castle Gallery Talk.
- 12th November 'The Roman Town at Caistor St Edmund', to the Friends of Thetford Museum.
- 21st January Interview on Radio Norfolk concerning archaeological and other museum acquisitions.
- 28th February 'Land of the Iceni - Recent Work on Iron Age Norfolk', to Norwich Castle Archaeology Weekend event.
- 16th March 'The Land of Boudica', to The Creakes History Society.
- 6th April Interview to KTSF Television (of California USA) concerning the Boudica story and ancient Norfolk.

For **National Archaeology Week**, staff led booked tours of the Archaeology Department at the Shirehall on the 14th and 15th July.

Talks by Strangers Hall staff:

- Cathy Terry gave talks to Time & Tide, Mid Norfolk Spinners Weavers & Dyers & Curators Choice at Norwich Castle on Norwich Textiles and the Norwich Silk Industry.
- Cathy Terry also delivered a lecture (part of a study visit) to the Helmar Festivalen textiles seminar on imported Norwich stuffs, in Sternkjer, Norway.

3 IMPROVING THE COLLECTIONS AND DISPLAYS

Acquisitions

Acquiring new material to enhance existing museum displays is an integral aspect of the curatorial role. It also reflects the NMAS mission statement to *'hold our common heritage in trust and make it available to the widest possible audience'*.

Acquisition is not an exercise in gathering more material that will fill storerooms, but a dynamic expression of the county's rich heritage within the museum, while being preserved to the highest possible standards for future generations to enjoy.

Art Department:

FINE ART ACQUISITIONS

- Jean Baptiste van Loo (1684-1745), *Horatio, 1st Baron Walpole of Wolterton, as Envoy and Minister-Plenipotentiary at The Hague 1739*, oil on canvas
- Jean-Etienne Liotard (1702-1789), *Sir Everard Fawkener dressed in Turkish Costume c. 1736-42*, pencil and red chalk
- John Wootton and Jonathan Richardson, *Sir Robert Walpole, 1st Earl of Orford, as Ranger of Richmond Park*, oil on canvas

Items in lieu of tax from HM Government

- Colin Moss (1914-2005)
Stove 1956, oil on canvas
Nude with raised knees 1961, watercolour
Near Chantry 1952, watercolour and bodycolour
Presented by Mrs Pat Moss

- Colin Moss (1914-2005)
Cleaning the Drains 1958, black chalk
Presented by Michael and Chloe Veale
 - Thomas Lound (1802-1861)
South-east view of the City of Norwich, 1st December 1846, watercolour
Presented by Christopher Pluck and Elizabeth Smith
 - Pierre-Jean David d'Angers (1788-1856)
Bust of Amelia Opie 1836, marble
Purchased for £12,000 with grants from the MLA/V&A Purchase Grant Fund, The Art Fund and the Friends of the Norwich Museums
 - Alice B. Woodward (1885-1937)
Design for fete programme c. 1928, watercolour
 - Robert Bagge Scott (1849-1925)
Boerin awaiting her man, the Groote Kerk, Dordt, oil on panel
- Unknown artist



Wind on the Heath by John Kiki.

- Miniature of Sophia Anne Goddard (1775-1801)
Cornelis Ploos van Amstel (1726-1798) after Jan de Bray
Portrait of Salomon de Bray, engraving
Presented by Mrs A. S. Hankinson

- Neal French

Portrait Head of Charles Clarke MP 2006, bronze
Presented by the Norfolk Contemporary Art Society

- Colin Moss (1914-2005)

The Entombment 1985, charcoal

Presented by Dr Philip Kelleway and Mrs Elisabeth Kelleway

- Karsten Bott

Chewing Gums 2007, mixed media

Commissioned from the artist with a grant from Arts
Council England, East

- John Kiki

Wind on the Heath March 2008

Acrylic on canvas 203 x 199cm

Gift of the artist

- Susan Gunn

Dark Matter I 2007

Encaustic, wax, pigment & gesso on canvas & aluminium
183 x 183 x 3.5cm

Gift of the artist

DECORATIVE ART ACQUISITIONS:

- Group of eleven green wine glasses decorated by William Absolon of Yarmouth with a coronet and the inscription 'Joy & Health to Cornwallis where ever he goes', c1792
Purchased for £5376.36 with grant aid from the V&A/MLA Purchase Grant Fund, the Art Fund and the Friends of Norwich Museums

- Silver-gilt Dress Hook, found in Swainsthorpe, Norfolk, 16th century

Purchased for £150 via the Treasure Finds Scheme from the Department of Culture, Media and Sport

- Group of three Studio Pots, comprising a stoneware vase with incised Tree of Life motif by Bernard Leach, a stoneware bottle vase with brushwork decoration by Shoji Hamada and a white stoneware asymmetric salad bowl by Lucie Rie and Hans Coper for Heals, all 1950s

Purchased for £4000 with grant aid from the V&A/MLA Purchase Grant Fund, the Art Fund and the Friends of Norwich Museums. The Friends' contribution is given in memory of Francis Cheetham

Conservation of collections

Fine Art

25 watercolours and drawings mounted by Levetons

Following works on paper conserved by Museum

Conservation Services:

12 watercolours from album by Charles Catton (2001.347)*

Drawing by Jan de Beer (1922.135.864)

Drawing by Jean-Etienne Liotard (2008.247.4)
Chalk drawing of Cyril Flower by Frederick Sandys (1951.45)
(* paid for with grant from Friends of Norwich Museums)

Decorative Art

All objects for inclusion in *The Arts of Living and Treasure, Trade and the Exotic* galleries were conserved as part of the gallery programme

Documentation programmes

Photography of 200 watercolours and drawings was achieved with grant of £2,500 from the Friends of the Norwich Museums.

All objects for inclusion in *The Arts of Living and Treasure, Trade and the Exotic* galleries were documented and photographed as part of the gallery programme.

There has also been a rolling programme of photographing and locating the decorative arts collections and updating the Modes records regularly. As a result the decorative arts collections are now almost entirely illustrated 'on line'.

Archaeology:

Norwich Castle remains committed to attempting to acquire the best and most significant archaeological finds so that they can be preserved for the enjoyment and study of future generations. To this end, we have had a number of successful fundraising applications and recent acquisitions include an Anglo-Saxon bowl mount with an unusual helmeted human head, an Iron Age drinking horn terminal and a Viking strap-end decorated in the 'Borre' knotwork style that had very unusually been converted into a brooch. We continue to build up good relationships with members of the public and have had a number of generous donations in the last six months, including various important examples of Palaeolithic flintwork, Bronze Age axes and a fourth Arabic Dirham coin from Barton Bendish. We have also been helped in our fundraising by kind donations and promises of financial assistance from several people who wish to remain anonymous.

The list of acquisitions since 1st January 2008 is:

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------|
| • 3 Anglo-Saxon sceatta coins | Outwell and Upwell |
| • Silver religious pendant | Runhall |
| • Seal matrix | Feltwell |
| • Seal matrix | Congham |
| • Anglo-Saxon cemetery assemblage | Snetterton |
| • Silver religious medallion | Runhall |
| • Silver-gilt finger ring | Emneth |
| • Anglo-Saxon sword pommel cap | Mileham |
| • Iron Age torc dorsal muff | Hevingham |

Iron Age drinking horn terminal.





Birthday cards dating from the 1950s.

- Torc terminal
- Gold posy ring
- Silver hawking vervel and bell
- Roman vessel mount
- Iron Age lynchpin hoard
- Seal matrix
- Anglo-Saxon pinhead
- Seal matrix

Bawsey
 Shipdham
 Emneth
 Cawston
 Carleton Rode
 Horningtoft
 Fring
 Diss

**Strangers Hall:
 Norwich Textiles**

- Major purchase of collection of seven Norwich-woven 18th century garments, to illustrate the story of Norwich exports to the continent in the eighteenth century. (Purchase made with successful application to V& A purchase fund matched by the Costume and Textiles Association for Norfolk Museums.
- A collection of almost 700 birthday cards dating from 1952 to 2001. The donor had kept every card she had been sent until she reached her 50th birthday.
- Another notable accession was a time capsule found during building works at the site of the Jenny Lind Hospital. The glass jar sealed with a cork stopper contained an engraved brass plaque commemorating the rebuilding of the Jenny Lind Infirmary in 1898. The jar also contained a copy of the Eastern Daily Press dated December 13th 1898, a copy of The Norwich and Eastern Counties ABC Railway Guide dated December 1898 and a black edged mourning envelope containing four coins - half a crown, a shilling, a sixpence and a penny, all dated 1898.

Collections management issues

Care and maintenance of collections is an important element of daily curatorial work.

'Woolly Bears and Polar Bears' - a pest management programme to safeguard the collections

This programme was established and undertaken alongside other curatorial projects. Norwich Castle's rich and important collections need to be preserved for future generations. Many items are made of organic materials, such as skin, fur and feather, which are attractive to pests, such as *Woolly Bears*. In the past the collections have been protected with toxic chemicals. Today this is no longer deemed safe and so other methods must be used.

As part of a pest management programme, very low temperatures have been used to kill off pests and their eggs. Specimens were frozen in a giant freezer, which was situated in the Bird Gallery at Norwich Castle. Thereafter,

regular cleaning, monitoring and effective sealing of cases and cabinets have been implemented to safeguard against re-infestation.

Developing our museums

The Arts of Living and Treasure, Trade and the Exotic

Two new permanent galleries, *The Arts of Living and Treasure, Trade and the Exotic* opened in January 2009, displaying around 600 objects from the decorative arts and costume and textile collections. The scope of the galleries ranges in date from 1400 to the present day, and includes both British and non-European decorative arts objects, incorporating both stylistic, aesthetic and social factors in order to display the objects in their fullest historical contexts.



The Arts of Living Gallery - 15th Century Gallery.

The Keep

The Archaeology Department have been involved in a re-design and plans for a re-display of Norwich Castle Keep. Work has been planned for new prison story displays in the Keep basement and displays of medieval objects are being prepared for the main floor. Additional funding to improve the interpretation is being sought through an EU Interreg application.

Anglo-Saxon and Viking Gallery

Work has continued to display new items that have been acquired in recent years, including a number of generous donations. A new display of recently acquired finds has been installed in the 'Recent Finds' case, showcasing this important aspect of our work.



The Treasure, Trade and the Exotic Gallery.

Boudica Gallery

A programme of improvements to the Norwich Castle Boudica Gallery was completed. The Roman section was re-designed and constructed, through the employment of Ian Drake Designs, while cases in the Iron Age section were re-designed by the NMAS Display Department. Newly acquired exhibits have been added to the displays throughout. A major feature of the re-display has been the addition of a case dedicated to Bronze Age gold and a re-display of the Snettisham Treasure

The Bridewell:

The Bridewell heard in September 08 that its application to The Heritage Lottery Fund had been successful. With £1.4m funding in place, from HLF, Norwich City Council, Norfolk County Council and The Friends of Norwich Museums, the team now has the enormous task of improving access into and within the building, consulting local people, designing new displays and improving our visitor facilities.



Design concept drawing of how the new Bridewell entrance could look.

The museum closed its doors on November 1st and following a presentation of the 'Bridewell's Best Bits', the staff toasted the future success of the museum.

Strangers Hall:

- A housekeeping team was trained and a regular housekeeping regime implemented (HR & Alice Forkes with conservation support).
- Additional material for interpretation folders throughout the museum was created by CT & HR.
- Craft activities and trails were developed with members of the interpreter team (CT).
- An evaluation exercise was carried out, co-ordinated by Amanda Burke, Jenny Caynes and Cathy Terry, to gauge the success of the new displays to inform current and future visitor experience.

Using the collections

Art Department:

The opening of the new Decorative Arts galleries has enabled hundreds more decorative arts objects from the collections to be put out on display.

In addition, public talks by the curator both on and off site, and visits by groups to the Shirehall, aimed to increase public access to and awareness of the collections.

Money Raised

Staff have achieved significant successes in raising funds for individual collections-based projects and partnership exhibition projects.

FOR EXHIBITIONS

Art Department:

As ever the East Anglia Art Fund have been a major support for the public art programme, funding the entire autumn series of four exhibitions, *Norfolk Painters*. Their support indirectly enriched the collections as two artists, John Kiki and Susan Gunn, presented work to the Museum as an expression of gratitude. In addition EAAF provided £20,000 towards the *Moore Hepworth Nicholson* show, and the Henry Moore Foundation provided a matching sum (£20,000).

FOR ACQUISITIONS

Strangers Hall:

V&A Purchase Grant Fund: £4500 for 18th century woven Norwich textiles

Friends of the Norwich Museums: £4500 for 18th century woven Norwich textiles

Art Department:

Decorative Arts Acquisitions:

Wine glasses by Absolon:

£2500 V&A/MLA Purchase Grant Fund

£1516 The Art Fund

£680 The Friends of Norwich Museums

Three Studio Pots:

£2000 V&A/MLA Purchase Grant Fund

£1000 The Art Fund

£1000 The Friends of Norwich Museums

Acquisition of Pierre-Jean David d'Angers bust

Art Fund £3000

V&A £6000

Friends £3000

Total £12,000

Archaeology

The department continues to work hard at fundraising for both the acquisition of new objects and the development of more general strategic goals. The highlight of the last six months has been the news that Norwich Castle won one of only 13 grants (from 95 entries across the UK) for a Heritage Lottery Funded scheme called Collecting Cultures. This was widely reported at the time of its announcement in the local and national press and media. The award of £200,000, in a five-year project, aims to help the successful museums develop their collections through new displays, acquisitions, educational programmes, staff development and outreach activities. A key element of the bid is to help maintain and develop a relationship with our audiences.

FOR OTHER PURPOSES**For conservation**

Collections: £5,000 from the Friends of the Norwich Museums for conservation of works on paper and photography.

4 IMPROVING ACCESS TO COLLECTIONS

Developing access to knowledge and information

Art Department:

The new decorative arts galleries and the improving documentation of the decorative arts collections have greatly increased public access to the collections. Now that the fine and decorative art collections are on line we are experiencing much heavier number of enquiries, ranging from information and photographic requests to receiving individual research and group visits.

Norwich Castle Study Centre:

The Study Centre continued to receive a high number of enquiries and visitors during this period, and was acknowledged in its successful approach through two publications concerned access to stored museum collections. Access Curator, Ruth Burwood, produced an audit of access facilities in Norwich, and developed an audience development plan to focus work further.

Access to Collections Online

The continuing programme of documentation of collections and making them available online is a core duty of curators. In this way, knowledge and information about our collections now reach many thousands of people each month.

The following statistics (representing part of the year only) outline the heavy and growing use for this service provision.

(Please note that figures could not be provided for the months from August 2008 to March 2009 due to a 'cyber attack', which has left those figures unreliable).

(Statistics taken from the NMAS website)

Month	Visits	Unique visitors	Page views	Hits
May 08	53,740	42,243	171,875	214,537
June	66,025	55,504	199,553	249,527
July	–	–	–	–
August	–	–	–	–
September	–	–	–	–
October	–	–	–	–
November	–	–	–	–
December	–	–	–	–
January 09	–	–	–	–
February	–	–	–	–
March	–	–	–	–
April	47,240	38,838	182,354	227,080

Responding to equality and disability issues

Strangers Hall:

- A successful small works bid raised by Jenny Caynes enabled the research and production of a DVD of Strangers' Hall, taking the form of a special tour designed as a virtual tour, in order to improve access for visitors with disabilities.

Art Department:

The new decorative arts galleries were developed in full consultation with the disability access group from an early stage.

A particular success for the temporary exhibition programme was the introduction of Braille labels and touch sensitive drawings for visitors to *Moore Hepworth Nicholson*.



Study work using the 18th century pattern book.

5 INVESTING IN THE SECTOR

Partnerships

Staff are involved in facilitating key partnerships, on behalf of NMAS, which include the Tate, the British Museum, Norwich University College of Art and the University of East Anglia.

The **Art Department** developed partnership working through the temporary exhibition programme (please see above). It was open house for Norfolk artists at Norwich Castle during the autumn 2008 when we hosted a programme of five shows in collaboration with East Anglia Art Fund. The focus was on the remarkable strength of painting in the region today. The series Norfolk Painters 2008 presented three successive solo selling exhibitions by three of the most important artists living and working in Norfolk. In addition we hosted the second Norwich Castle Open Art Show, open to all artists who live or work in Norfolk. This programme was almost entirely funded through the East Anglia Art Fund (see money acquired above).

Norwich's **Archaeology** collections have also been used to support recent displays in other museums. Following the acquisition of a collection of early Anglo-Saxon coins by the Fitzwilliam Museum, a travelling exhibition of highlights from this group was displayed first in the Fitzwilliam, and then by Norwich Castle, under the banner 'Anglo-Saxon Art in the Round'. A number of important Anglo-Saxon pieces were loaned to the Fitzwilliam for this, and the exhibition has now moved on to Ipswich Museum for the third and final leg of its tour.

Strangers Hall:

Norwich School of Art and Design

- Staff worked with NRO/ Camberwell College MA conservation to devise a treatment plan for conservation, housing and storage of the 18th century pattern books. Work was carried out by Rachel Greenwood, MA student.
- Norwich textiles project : NMAS with Norwich University of College of the Arts. CT is working with weaver Sue Foster to weave samples of reproduction 18th century Norwich fabrics.

Supporting the sector

Tim Pestell continues to serve on the following regional committees: Bury St Edmunds Cathedral Fabric Advisory Committee and the Norfolk & Norwich Archaeological Society. He has been appointed by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport to the national *Treasure Valuation Committee*.

Tim Pestell and Alan West both undertake the role of *Curatorial Advisor* for local independent museums in Norfolk:

- The 100th Bomb Group Memorial Museum at Thorpe Abbots (TP).
- The Norwich Aviation Museum (AW).

Strangers Hall:

Cathy Terry organised and ran a study day to evaluate the Norwich Textiles Pattern books drawing upon the expertise of Sue Kerry, Chair of the Textiles Society.

Natural History:

The Natural History Department organised, advertised and delivered a series of practical curatorial and conservation workshops at the Shirehall this year. These were offered to museum professionals in the East of England as a priority, but participants came from as far afield as Australia. Courses were usually limited to twelve participants and some workshops were repeated due to demand. External specialists delivered some of the content, and funding was assisted by Renaissance East. We also organised a Day School on the subject of 'Flint' which attracted a large number of both specialist and non-specialist curators and volunteers.

The workshop Subjects included: *Herbarium Care; The Cleaning of Taxidermy Specimens; Curating and Conserving Fluid-Preserved Specimens (a four-day course); and The Moulding and Casting of Natural History Specimens.*

Norwich Castle Study Centre:

In January 2009, Access Curator Ruth Burwood spoke at the Museum Association's seminar 'Collections as a public resources'. The Access Curator also led a training session and delivered a presentation at a regional SHARE event entitled, 'All for Show'. Ruth Burwood is currently Curatorial Adviser for Diss Museum and represents NMAS on the SHARE Costume and Textile Specialist Network.

Loans out

Norwich loans out

A selection of Anglo-Saxon objects were loaned to Ipswich Museum, including a number of recent acquisitions that were displayed for the first time. Loans for another temporary exhibition were also made, with Norwich Castle again supplying objects to Sutton Hoo, for this year's summer exhibition, which is on the theme of 'feasting'. Loans include a particularly fine Iron Age drinking horn terminal, which has made its first appearance in public.

Specific loans:

- To The Lynn Museum, for the Invaders and Settlers display.

Torc from south-west Norfolk.

- To the Discovery Centre Winchester, for the exhibition *King Alfred: Wealth, Wisdom and Welfare.*

8 items of the Anglo-Saxon and Viking period.

- To the National Trust, Sutton Hoo, for the exhibition *Life and Death of a Kingdom: East Anglia 500-869 AD.*

26 items of the Anglo-Saxon period.

- To The Ancient House Museum, Thetford, for the *Thetford Treasure Roman Rediscovered* exhibition.
Roman and Iron Age artefacts.

- To the Archive Centre Norwich, for the exhibition commemorating the 400th anniversary of the founding of Norwich Library.

3 Anglo-Saxon coins.

- To The Fitzwilliam Museum Cambridge and Colchester Castle Museum, for the *Anglo-Saxon Art in the Round* exhibition.

Staff Development

Strangers Hall:

- Provided regular training for interpreters (CT) and occasional training events for museum volunteer groups (CT, HR and NO).
- Membership of Cos & Tex subject specialisms group (CT).
- Provided support to UEA heritage students for dissertation/projects (CT).

Art Department:

- Andrew Moore was elected a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries.

Volunteers and placements:

All sections have benefited from the contribution of volunteers.

First Volunteer Conference:

Please see the 'Events' section above.

Art Department:

There is a new volunteer starting in the decorative arts department, Tessa Gandy.

Archaeology:

Tow University interns, Louise Hall and Will Taylor, attended the Department during the year.

Regular weekly volunteer Matthew Sillence.

Regular volunteer 'Research Associates' were Faye Kalloniatis and Peter Robins.

Natural History:

The Natural History Department benefits from the contribution of 10 regular weekly volunteers, who attend the Department principally on Wednesdays.

Strangers Hall:

Staff work with volunteers involved:

- Managing the Norwich Textiles research group
- Working with and training Strangers' Hall stewards, stitchers & gardening teams to enhance the visitors' experience
- Contributing to the NMAS volunteers day
- Refinement of procedures for recruitment and training, including a questionnaire/evaluation exercise

6 APPENDIX

Communicating through publications

Archaeology:

John Davies, 'Roman coins', in *Artefacts and Society in Roman and Medieval Winchester: Small Finds from the Suburbs and Defences, 1971-1986*, Winchester Museums Service, 2008, 123-137.

John Davies, 'Anglo-Gallic coins, Jettons, Tokens and Coin Weights', in *Artefacts and Society in Roman and Medieval Winchester: Small Finds from the Suburbs and Defences, 1971-1986*, Winchester Museums Service, 2008, 283-284.

Tim Pestell, 'St Benet's Abbey Guide', *Norfolk Archaeological Trust* (2008).

(Remained the local best seller in Jarrolds for 6 weeks).

Natural History:

'Marine Isotope Stage 7-6 transition age for beach sediments at Morston, north Norfolk, UK: implications for Pleistocene chronology, stratigraphy and Tectonics'. P. G. Hoare, S. J. Gale, R. A. J. Robinson, E. R. Connell, N. R. Larkin. *Journal of Quaternary Science*, Volume 24, Issue 4, Pages 311-316, May 2009.

'The glacial erratic collection at Norwich Castle Museum'. Hoare, P.G., Larkin, N.R. (2008). *Bulletin of the Geological Society of Norfolk*, 58, 37-61.

Communicating through other media

Archaeology:

- **John Davies** 8th May 'Who was Boudica?'. Interview for Radio Norfolk.
- **John Davies** 22nd May Interview about Norwich Castle for Norwich HEART video, 'Twelve Great and Good Buildings of Norwich'.
- **Alan West** Interview with Francis Pryor for forthcoming Radio 4 series on 'Doggerland'.

Natural History:

Nigel Larkin appeared on 'Fossil Detectives' with the West Runton Elephant (BBC4 in July and repeated on BBC1 in October).

Repeat of the 'Coast' program in October.

Communicating through press & Magazines

Natural History:

North Norfolk News Thursday 11th June: article highlighting the geological and archaeological significance

of the North Norfolk Coast and advertising the 'Prehistoric Roadshow' event at Sea Palling.

EDP Thursday 11th June: article highlighting the geological and archaeological significance of the North Norfolk Coast and advertising the 'Prehistoric Roadshow' event at Sea Palling.

North Norfolk News: Thursday 18th June: report on the finds brought in during the 'Prehistoric Roadshow' event at Sea Palling.

North Norfolk Radio: a 10-minute live discussion about the geological and archaeological significance of the North Norfolk Coast (especially the Lower Paleolithic sites at Happisburgh) and advertising the 'Prehistoric Roadshow' event at Sea Palling.

Art Department:

Francesca Vanke had a short article published in *Glass News* about Norwich Castle's glass collection and the acquisition of the new Absolon wine glasses, which are unique as far as is known.

Strangers Hall:

Ian Collins wrote a major article on the new displays at December 2008.

