

Norfolk Museums & Archaeology Service

# Countywide Curator Report 2012-2013





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*Norfolk Museums & Archaeology Service (NMAS) is a multi-award winning service comprising ten museums and a study centre. NMAS is a partnership between Norfolk County Council and Norfolk's District Councils funded through council tax, earned income and grants. The service gratefully acknowledges this support.*



*As one of only 16 Major Partner Museums in England, NMAS also receives substantial investment from Arts Council England which supports, among other things, the activity described in this report.*



Supported by  
**ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND**

## FOREWORD

Outstanding collections, many of them Designated of national importance, deserve outstanding curators. We are fortunate at Norfolk Museums & Archaeology Service in being blessed with both. The breadth and depth of the collections in our care is reflected in our expert curatorial team, working across a range of disciplines. These include Archaeology, Fine and Decorative Art, Costume and Textile, Natural History, Social History, the collections of the Royal Norfolk Regimental Museum, as well as curators who provide support to individual sites across the county.

As well as being experts in their fields I can testify to their ability to communicate their passion and knowledge for their subjects: since taking up my post as Head of Service in June 2013 I have benefited from their eloquent introductions to the collections which make this museums service so special.

This report captures some of that spirit of enquiry and enthusiasm in the diversity and quality of the activity recorded. Whether it is presenting research on Norwich Castle's Norman Keep to international partners or delivering a *Fossil Roadshow* in Cromer, our curators are practised at communicating with many different audiences, engaging people whatever their level of knowledge.

The report also captures that spirit of teamwork which is vital in ensuring a large county-wide service like NMAS makes the most of its resources. Collaborations across departments including conservation, collections management, design and technical and learning ensure the collections are managed and displayed as efficiently and effectively as possible. This ethos extends to our external partnerships, local, regional, national and international, without which we couldn't achieve a fraction of the activity covered in this report.

In a time of severe constraints on budgets, NMAS is well-placed to maintain its momentum as a dynamic and widely-respected service, focused on bringing its collections to as wide an audience as possible. This report is a great reminder that the Service is fortunate in possessing a team with many strengths – in expertise, in energy and in enterprise.

**Steve Miller**

Head of Norfolk Museums & Archaeology Service

*December 2013*

## INTRODUCTION

The first NMAS Curator Report was produced in 2007 in order to outline the range of numerous and diverse projects that were being undertaken by curatorial staff based in Norwich. Since then, this has grown to become an annual report and now, for the second time, it includes the work of the full countywide team, covering the Eastern and Western Areas, as well as Norwich. The work of the Collections Management, Design & Technical and Conservation Departments, all of whom provide countywide support, is also integrated into this report.

The year 2012-13 once again saw a diverse range of important involvements. In Norwich, there was the culmination of the major **Bridewell Museum** project, together with work towards the relocation of the **Royal Norfolk Regimental Museum** in the heart of Norwich Castle. Exciting programmes of displays and exhibitions have been developed at all sites, east, west and central. The ***Shine A Light* superstores project** has begun at Gressenhall. In the east, Time and Tide launched its ***Stories from the Sea* project**, in partnership with Royal Museums Greenwich. The year also saw the start of NMAS's **Teaching Museum** initiative, with trainees working alongside curators across the county museums.

Collections care and management remains at the heart of the curatorial role and scholarship is also fundamental, which was promoted through the international ***Norman Connections Castles Conference*** and symposium held at Norwich Castle in May 2012.

The work presented in this report has involved colleagues in all other sections of NMAS. Education, outreach and events involve close working with other teams, including the Learning team. Daily partnership working is integral to all aspects of the curatorial role.

We gratefully acknowledge the support provided by our funders, whose contribution has enabled the range of work outlined in this report. Our core funders are **Norfolk County Council** and **Norfolk's District Councils**, together with the national Renaissance funding stream, which is now delivered in partnership with the **Arts Council England**, since NMAS' successful bid to become a Major Partner Museum in January 2012. Other trusts, foundations and other organisations have supported individual projects. Together, this funding is vital in enabling us to make the most of our wonderful collections for the benefit of our visitors.

**Dr John Davies** FSA  
Chief Curator and Keeper of Archaeology

## THE CURATORS' ROLE

The Curators of Norfolk Museums & Archaeology Service seek to inform and inspire our visiting public about the collections that we hold in trust. We care for those collections and record and develop information about them. We aim to use that knowledge in order to communicate a fuller understanding of the collections to the widest possible audience. We seek to actively engage with our visitors through displays, exhibitions, new acquisitions, inspirational learning programmes, events, talks, publications, the media and through new thinking, in order to achieve life enrichment for our visitors and users.

## 1 EXCELLENCE: IMPROVING THE COLLECTIONS AND DISPLAYS

A core part of the role of the curatorial staff is to plan, develop and implement new displays. They also work to refresh existing displays. In these ways we seek to inspire and inform our visiting public about the county collections. The curator role also involves the provision of public access to the collections, records and information, as well as developing the holdings through controlled acquisition. The Conservation team serve to care for the collections that we hold in trust.

### Norwich: Improving the displays

#### IN FOCUS

##### The Bridewell Museum: An acclaimed redevelopment

*“ The excellence of its collections and imaginative design has created a museum that brings the history of Norwich and its people to life in a way that its residents should be very proud of. ”* – Review in the *Museums Journal*, March 2013

We were thrilled to re-open the Bridewell Museum on 3 July 2012 following a major £1.5m redevelopment funded by Heritage Lottery Fund, Norwich City Council, Norfolk County Council, Arts Council England and various charitable trusts and foundations. The museum was officially opened by the great grandson of Ethel George, a well known local woman who features within our new displays. All of our opening events were well attended and the public seemed thrilled with the new look museum.

And this success continued, as we welcomed many thousands of visitors through the doors. So much so, we were excited to break our visitor target of 15,000 in the first nine months of opening.

Here is what some of our first visitors had to say:

*“ Marvellous. Can't wait for return visit. ”*

*“ What a transformation. It's great. ”*

*“ Fantastic job – well done. All Norwich under one roof! ”*

*“ Great to see our local history come alive. ”*

*“ You've brought life to the museum. Fabulous job. ”*

*“ So many things we didn't know. And we have lived here 40+ years. Excellent. ”*

Since then, work has been continuing on improving the displays, finalising behind the scenes work and delivering a variety of events for a wide range of museum visitors.

The re-development was a service-wide effort with input from staff across a number of departments: the following examples show the kinds of in-house expertise the project was able to draw from.



### **Specialist support for the Bridewell Project**

#### **Design and Technical Department**

While designing the galleries the department generated 478 drawings and created, from design to print, over 600 graphics. All of the cases used throughout the displays were recycled, with the exception of just one. A major strength which has been developed in the department, particularly during capital funded projects of this scale, is having the facility to deal directly with museum objects, whether it be going into the stores to measure up or designing complicated mounts. Over the years, the department has invested a great deal of time appointing specialist approved contractors. This provision proved invaluable during the installation phase of the project.

#### **Collections Management Department**

Throughout the project MODES (**M**useum **O**bject **D**ata **E**ntry **S**ystem – the collections data base employed by NMAS) was used to centrally store project-related information so that it was easily accessible to all project team members.

This was the first time that MODES has been used as a project management tool. With an initial object list in excess of 6,000 items, it had to support all team members. It was felt by all members of the project team that this was such a highly effective way of storing and accessing valuable information that we have created a new project application within MODES which can support the planning and delivery of all projects around NMAS in the future.

This newly-developed project file has been developed to support the ongoing temporary exhibition programme. Using MODES in a creative and strategic manner to manage information from loaned-in collections and exhibitions ensures that we can manage the process effectively.

## Strangers' Hall

Cathy Terry, Senior Curator of Social History, and Helen Renton, Curator of Social History, were members of the Bridewell project team preparing for opening of new displays in July 2013. Cathy was lead for the *Second City* gallery showcasing the civic collections and the leading role textiles played in the city's development, as well as the *Caleys* and *Norwich Textiles* displays. Helen contributed displays including *Parson Woodford* and *Valentine's Eve* in 'Shopping and Trading', *The River*, and the *Living in Norwich* displays, including *Norwich at War* and the 'AV' programmes.

Curatorial work included object research and selection, liaising with display conservation and learning teams, text writing, touch screen authorship, writing and editing AV presentations, preparation of interactives, working with display contractors and staff training.

The process has allowed a more holistic approach to the display of the social history holdings, giving the opportunity to put on show reserve collections drawn from Strangers' Hall, Costume and Textiles and the former St Peter Hungate display, as well as the Bridewell itself. Bethan Holdridge, Curatorial Assistant, contributed to the practical display process leading up to opening and since then to the maintenance of displays and housekeeping regime.

Cathy and Helen have continued to support the project after opening, working on outstanding interpretation including Philippa Miller/ Spitfire Cottage and work on the Jacquard loom/ pattern books.

A grant application to the Worshipful Company of Weavers for the development of a programme for training weavers to use the newly restored Jacquard loom, together with planning demonstrations, events, schools sessions, interpretive video and handling kit was successful. The grant of £5000 was matched by £5000 from the Costume and Textiles Association.

## Norwich Castle Museum: The Keep

The first phase of re-display and interpretation work in the Keep has continued, with preparation for an opening of this stage in December 2013. Wider objectives of this project have been:

- to pilot the recreating of interpretation techniques in order to assess their impact to inform future display planning
- to begin to deliver a better 'castle' experience for visitors
- to draw more visitors to the balcony area with a richer display experience, which is well signed and enticing from the Keep main floor



Norwich project staff with Norman Connection partners and French speakers

- to deliver the next phase of our British Museum partnership, enabling us to launch high quality object displays
- to explain the Castle's Norman history, in the context of our partner sites within the *Norman Connections* project.

*Norman Connections* is a project linking Norman castles in south-east England and Normandy, France. The project is co-funded by the EU Interreg IVA France (Channel) – England programme. This collaboration project has enabled the initial phase of work in the Keep.

This phase of re-display work will focus on the following areas:

- **The Bigod Arch**, involving the use of reconstruction, and interpretation of the main Norman entrance to the building, enhanced through the creative use of lighting techniques
- **The chapel**, including the recreation of the original chapel
- **Object displays in the chapel area**, using medieval material borrowed from the British Museum, alongside NMAS collections
- **An orientation display for the Norman castle**, situated on the main floor.

### **Norwich Castle Museum: The Royal Norfolk Regimental Museum – *Soldiers' Stories***

**The Royal Norfolk Regimental Museum** opened at its new location in the heart of Norwich Castle in October 2013. The displays tell the story of the Regiment from its origins in 1685, up until the days of National Service. Themes of travel, exploration, Empire and the daily routines of soldiers are explored along with First and Second World War narratives and personal accounts. The new displays are physically accessible to our visitors (previously they were displayed in a space with limited upper level access) and will be seen by a wider audience, as part of the overall visit at Norwich Castle. The curator, Kate Thaxton has worked with the NMAS Display Team to re-present the collections.

Two new digital touch screen presentations enhance interpretation; the interactive Timeline details the 350 year history of the Norfolk Regiment putting it into context with World events, and a touch screen catalogue allows visitors to find out more information on objects displayed.

### **Norwich Castle Museum: The Colman Art Galleries Project**

A refurbishment of the Colman Art Galleries was completed under the direction of Giorgia Bottinelli, Curator of Historic Art. They opened on 28 April 2012, increasing the numbers of works on display and improving aesthetics and wall texts. This work was featured in the *Eastern Daily Press*, *Norwich Magazine* and *Country Life*.

*The Colman Art Galleries*



## Norwich Castle Museum Curators: Contributions across the service

### Archaeology Department

Staff worked on displays funded through the EU Interreg IVA France (Channel) - England programme, the HLF *Collecting Cultures* programme and ACE, bringing medieval exhibits and new interpretations to the main floor and balcony level of Norwich Castle Keep. The displays were officially opened in December 2013.

### Art Department

Members of the team have been involved with a range of redisplay projects.

- Francesca Vanke, Keeper of Art, supervised a small volunteered display of WW1 commemorative medals in the Fitch Room
- Harriet Loffler, Curator of Modern & Contemporary Art, undertook a re-display of the Timothy Gurney Gallery entitled *'Drawn from the Collection'*
- Giorgia Bottinelli oversaw a new display in the Colman Project Space: *'Gerard Stamp: Conquest'* and a new exhibition in Cotman Watercolour Gallery: *'John Sell Cotman: A Picturesque Tour of Norfolk and Normandy'*.

### Costume and Textile Department

Staff undertook the second rotation of artefacts in the decorative arts gallery. The *About My Person* display in the Norwich Castle Rotunda was de-installed in preparation for the new Royal Norfolk Regimental Museum displays.

### Natural History Department

A Geological Map of the Cromer Area graphic panel was completed with the aid of Prof Jane Hart (University of Southampton). Jon Maxwell, Head of Display, and Kate Lee were the designers on the project, and David Waterhouse, Curator of Natural History, wrote the text and produced the graphics.

Replica rhinoceros horns were commissioned and fitted to the black rhinoceros (*Diceros bicornis*) on display in the Natural History Gallery, so that the originals could be stored more securely, following an attempted theft in January 2012. Conservation work was also carried out on other parts of the damaged 'trophy head' before being put back on display in March 2013.

*Curator of Natural History, Dr David Waterhouse, working on the damaged black rhinoceros head prior to it going back on display at Norwich Castle Museum and Art Gallery. © Archant 2012.*



Work continued on the **Curious Collections** permanent exhibition at Time and Tide Museum, Great Yarmouth. More collections were added, including Natural History, Social History, Ethnography, and Archaeology (involving David Waterhouse, Tony Irwin, Senior Curator of Natural History, Molly Carter, Teaching Museum Trainee with Jo O'Donoghue, Curator, Great Yarmouth Museums).

*Part of the 'Curious Collections' display at Time and Tide Museum, Great Yarmouth where Natural History objects come together with North American Ethnography, Egyptology and Social History (to name but a few).*



## Western Area: Improving the displays

### Ancient House Museum, Thetford

Some minor improvements / maintenance projects have been undertaken at Ancient House – the NMAS Display department have made some improvements to the fossil display and the screens for playing the animations in the Ancient Householders display upstairs have been replaced.

We were delighted that during this year the Ancient House Museum achieved full Accreditation from the Arts Council England and continues to be recognised as an Accredited Museum. The Accreditation Scheme sets nationally agreed standards for UK museums.

To qualify, museums must meet standards on how they are managed, for the services they offer and on how they care for collections. Applying for Accreditation required staff to complete a detailed application form using the new standards and supplying evidence about management, access, services and collections care.



### Lynn Museum

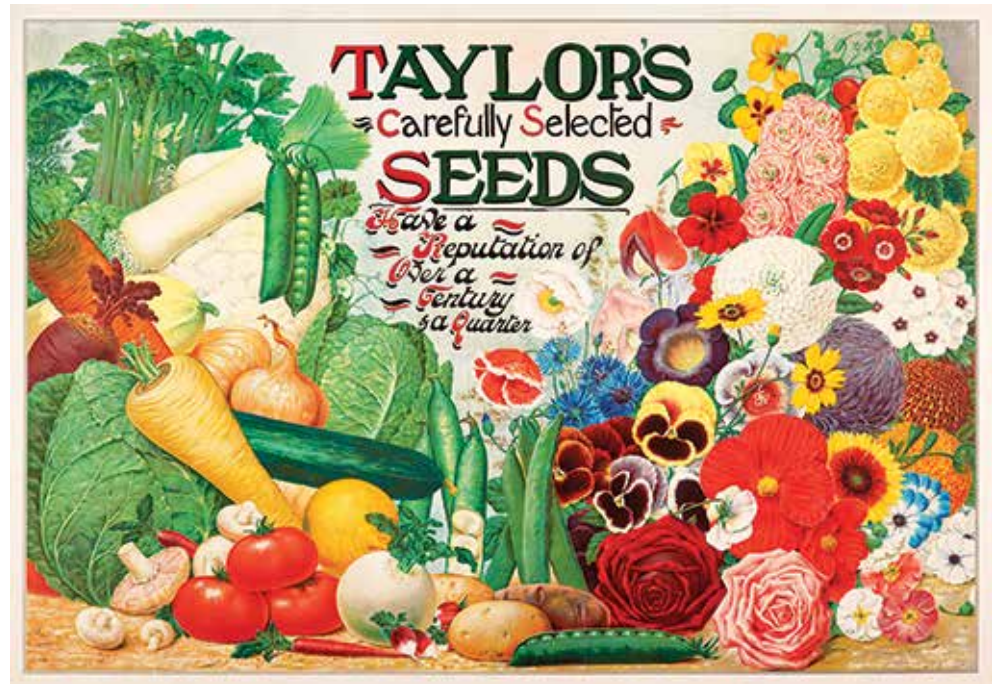
Alterations to the front of the Lynn Museum took place over the winter and have resulted in an improved glazed automatic door offering better security and access. The new configuration with new flooring, lighting and a little additional space also provides greater flexibility for visiting groups and enhanced retail opportunities. The Norfolk County Council Building Maintenance Fund also funded a programme of redecoration throughout the reception area. The site remained open throughout the works.

Planning work has started for additional material to be added to the displays at the Lynn Museum.

The large "Lumiwall" lightbox which formed a key part of the Seahenge display at Lynn Museum was fitted with an energy-efficient LED lighting system in 2012. This followed maintenance issues with the previous fluorescent tube based system.

A new high specification display case has been purchased for the reception area to provide temporary displays of collection highlights and recent acquisitions.

Following an assessment of the Lynn Museum's Accreditation return, the Accreditation panel appointed by Arts Council on 11 October 2012, agreed to maintain the status of: Full Accreditation (accreditation number 740).



## Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse



It has been a very busy year for Gressenhall's curatorial staff in terms of improving the displays. Work continued to make small-scale improvements for visitors, such as new information panels, and better labelling and signage for galleries and interactives. Small but essential improvements such as these are now highlighted and resolved by the Curatorial Assistant working closely with Front of House staff.

*New 1930's Seed Merchant's display at Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse*

Work was completed on the recreated 1930s Seed Merchant's shop in time for the museum to reopen in March 2013. The new gallery has been extremely well received with a sometimes beautiful and often intriguing range of original shop stock on display for visitors of all ages to explore. The new display has a very special history, being recreated from the contents of a local seed merchants shop with the assistance and support of the family who ran the business for over 100 years. The displays were also developed with Monument Fellow Bridget Yates, and the opening marked the culmination of a significant amount of research and collections work on the part of Bridget, volunteers and curatorial staff.

The traditional farming displays in St Nicholas' barn down on the farm, and the small dairy also received attention in terms of refreshing the décor and improving the displays. Collections

were added to, received conservation care if needed, and the interpretation refreshed. The results have meant an increase in the time that visitors spend in these familiar spaces.

## Eastern Area: Improving the displays

### Time and Tide Museum

The galleries focusing on Roman Britain now look at two large aspects of life in the period, the Roman military and a domestic Roman Villa. The Roman glass objects from this particular collection include some stunning examples and having already captivated some of the staff here at Time and Tide, we can only hope that visitors will feel the same way.

### A Curious Collection Display

We worked with our colleagues in Natural History to put together a new display that pays homage to Great Yarmouth's first known museum. Museum Boulteranium opened in the market place in 1778, showcasing the personal collections of local business man Daniel Boulter. In keeping with the times, the museum was a 'cabinet of curiosities', and included an eclectic mix of objects taking in natural history, antiquities and ethnography. And don't forget to look up, as the display extends beyond the confines of the cases!

### Painting changes

In addition to the big gallery changes going on, new paintings which are now on display in the museum include a beautiful cleaned and restored painting in the Romans gallery of the willows at Burgh Castle as well as a new fish auction painting on the quayside by George Vincent of the Norwich School.



*Newly restored paintings*

## IN FOCUS

### Time and Tide Museum: Welcome complaints!

Jo O'Donoghue, Great Yarmouth Museums Curator, explains why she was delighted to receive some complaints about the new displays...

*“ When I became curator of Great Yarmouth Museums a little over two years ago I was asked in my interview about the planned gallery changes at Time and Tide. I said that I was most looking forward to working on the Early Years galleries to accommodate more of our stored collections and to take account of new research in the archaeological field on early settlements in Norfolk. Although this process of change is not yet finished one of our Front of House staff did pass on a few complaints to me from visitors about this new gallery recently that made my week and which made me smile.*

*As part of the re-development we carried out some evaluation of the CCTV and mapping exercises with the FOH team about how visitors used the ‘corridor’ gallery to inform why we should or should not change the gallery. We aimed to ensure that visitors would linger and take more time to adsorb the objects and spaces. This evaluation informed the design of the gallery, for example suggesting that we build the new walls for the ‘Roman Villa’ with the specific aim of slowing visitors down and encouraging them to look at the objects.*

*In order to tell you why these complaints made my week, I must also tell you a small further bit of context about the galleries. We now have PIR light sensors which turn the lights off after 20 minutes if they don’t detect movement. There are two sensors in the Early Years galleries: one at the beginning of the gallery and one at the end.*

*The complaints were about the lights going off far too soon in the gallery. Visitors were being submerged into blackness halfway through the gallery and having to go back and wave their hands around to get light so they could continue to look through the new spaces which was rather amusing on gallery CCTV. Of course this problem was easily addressed but it did provide evidence that we had achieved one of the key aims of the project and the hard work, during the pre-evaluation stage, had been worth it.”*



## Cromer Museum

In May 2012 three new paintings went on display at the Museum. Two from Norwich included a **Henry Ninham view of Cromer Church** dating from the first half of the 19th Century. Alongside we have one of our newest acquisitions, a painting of the **West Beach** by **J. Miller Marshall**. It is the third in the collection by this notable painter. It was donated to the museum by a woman living in Australia. Miller Marshall was a prolific painter of East Anglian scenes who, in the early 1890s, decided to move to Australia to prospect for gold. Whilst there, he continued to paint and do some art teaching. An Australian novel that was published (and banned) in the 1930s, *'Age of Consent'* by Norman Lindsey, features a fictional artist, Bradly Mudgett. In the book Mudgett has an improper relationship with his 15-year-old model. Many believe this character to be based on J. Miller Marshall.

In August 2012 two cases in the Poppyland Gallery were redisplayed. This was partly to refresh displays and rotate collections, promoting access to objects which have been in storage for some time, but it was also to meet conservation needs as some of the photographs, postcards and books needed to be taken off display. The new displays showcase our rich collections of Poppyland china, with examples of both the Jarrolds and Rounce & Wortley patterns, along with examples of souvenirs including playing cards, jewellery and Poppyland perfume.

## Loans

**NMAS has supported loans to national and international museums and galleries. They are an opportunity for our wonderful collections to be seen by wider audiences and to raise the profile of NMAS at home and abroad. They also serve to highlight the importance and significance of our collections. Internal loans between our museums also enrich displays and exhibitions and widen access to the collections.**

### Eastern Area: Loans

#### Cromer Museum

**Oct 2012:** The Medals of Walter 'Primo' Allen were lent to the Henry Blogg museum at Cromer along with a pair of salt and pepper grinders salvaged by Jack Davies from the Monte Nevoso. These formed part of an exhibition commemorating the Monte Nevosa rescue.

**Jan 2013:** A number of Olive Edis pictures were lent to the *Masterpieces: Art and East Anglia* exhibition at the Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts in September 2013. The Curator completed text for some Edis pictures that will be displayed at the Sainsbury Centre later in the year.

### Time and Tide Museum

**Jan 2013:** The Maggie Hambling Painting 'Big Sea' was lent to the *Masterpieces: Art and East Anglia* exhibition at the Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts. The painting has come off display and been sent to Conservation for assessment ahead of going on loan later in the year.

**April 2012:** The giant Cromer Crab from the Sailors' home collection was returned to where it was caught and has now found a home in the displays at Cromer Museum.

**June 2012:** Loans of royal memorabilia and coronation ephemera were taken in to the museum from the public for the temporary exhibition about the Jubilee at Time and Tide museum, including personal photographs and seamstress offcuts of ermine from the royal 1953 coronation robes.

**Sept 2012:** The art piece 'Lost' by Alison Atkins, consisting of two bronze life-size swill baskets, was loaned to Time and Tide museum for display by Great Yarmouth Borough Council.

**Oct 2012:** Loan of the James Paget portrait to the James Paget Hospital in Gorleston for display in the hospital. The painting was sent away for significant conservation work prior to the loan going ahead.

**Oct 2012:** Loan of the WW2 bomb to the Norfolk & Suffolk Aviation Museum for display from the Great Yarmouth stored Collections.

*Workhouse dolls at  
Gressenhall Farm and  
Workhouse*

### Western Area: Loans



#### Lynn Museum

The Doll's House of 27 King Street from the Lynn collections was safely returned to the museum stores following display at the XXSmall exhibition at the Gemeentemuseum, the Hague, Netherlands.

## Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse

We supported a small number of loans over the year, including a workhouse doll and wooden bowl which was lent to Ancient House Museum, Thetford for their exhibition, *Hard Times*. Another of our very special workhouse dolls was lent to the Florence Nightingale Museum for their exhibition about poverty and the workhouse. The exhibition was extremely well received, attracting attention in the national press, and an extension in the dates due to popular demand. The dolls are two of a set of three which were made by inmates in Thursford Workhouse in 1900, and are unique in terms of workhouse collections in the UK.

## Norwich: Loans

### Norwich Castle Museum Curators

#### Archaeology Department

Loans to several exhibitions:

- *Lindisfarne Gospels*, Durham (1 July - 30 Sept) Hockwold mounts and L Plaque
- *Merovingian Queens*, Frankfurt (3.11.12 – 28.2.13) Balthild seal matrix
- *Credo*, Paderborn (26.7.13 – 3.11.13) Balthild matrix; Binham bracteate I; Woden mounts; Spong Man; Caistor 'Fenrir' urn; Costessey gilt mount
- *Vikings!*, Peterborough Museum (2.6.12 – 7.10.12) various items
- *Allure of Gold*, Goldsmiths, London (31.5.12 – 28.7.12) various items.

#### Art Department

Francesca Vanke lent a selection of 18th and 19th century ceramics to an exhibition of work by Ivan Seal at the Contemporary Art Society, London; lent items from civic regalia to Goldsmiths Hall *Gold: Power and Allure* exhibition in summer 2012; lent 18th century George Wickes silver tureen to *Houghton Revisited* exhibition at Houghton Hall and to touring exhibition about the work of George Wickes at the Bard Center in New York, and the Victoria and Albert Museum.

Hannah Higham, Curator of Modern & Contemporary Art, arranged loans of an Ivan Seal painting and drawing to the Contemporary Art Society show.

#### Natural History

An emperor penguin egg (*Aptenodytes forsteri*) was loaned to the **National Trust** through Chris Calnan (National Trust East of England Regional Office, Westley, Suffolk) for a temporary case on the Antarctic at Wimpole Hall, Cambridgeshire (David Waterhouse).

## Strangers' Hall

There are over 25,000 objects in the Strangers' Hall domestic life collection. Every one of the NMAS museums has some objects from Strangers' Hall on display. In the last year we supported two major exhibitions at other sites with Helen Renton carrying out the selecting, photographing and documentation of loaned items. Over 50 toys from our collection were included in the *Art + Play* exhibition at Great Yarmouth's Time and Tide, including a pull-along whirligig toy made by the Keeper of Yarmouth light ship in about 1890. Loans from our collections also supported the *Fifties Fest* at the Castle.

## Acquisitions

**A responsible programme of acquisition to enhance existing museum collections and displays is an integral part of the curatorial role. Acquisition is a way of ensuring the preservation of important parts of the county's heritage to the highest possible standards for future generations to appreciate and enjoy.**

**Curators have been very successful in securing external funding for acquisitions, increasingly supported through the generosity of donors.**

## Eastern Area: Acquisitions

### Cromer Museum

**Sept 2012:** An Olive Edis diascope (with an autochrome) was donated from a Mr. Campbell from Scotland. This is one of a number of Olive Edis donations that have arrived at the museum, reflecting the Museum's growing status as the natural home for objects relating to her and her work. An NMAS case study has been created for the Edis project, reflecting the importance of this collection.

**March 2013:** With help from the Friends of Cromer Museum three more Olive Edis Autochromes were purchased from Keys Auctions in Aylsham. Whilst not amongst her finest work they are still a worthy addition to the collection. There were two black and white glass plate negatives which were probably the work of her assistant and friend Cyril Nunn.

**Sept 2012:** An atmospheric painting by Bertha Fowle of the Narrows in Cromer (an area demolished in the 1960s) was purchased by the Friends of Cromer Museum for £35.

**Nov 2012:** The Friends purchased a painting from auction of Cromer East Beach dated 1829 by a painter Caroline Gray. It

shows many features of interest around the gangway and on the beach. There are a number of pre-photographic images of Cromer from this period that reflect the beginnings of Cromer's growth as a seaside resort.

Other acquisitions were: a collection of memorabilia relating to Peddler's Pack, a fondly remembered shop in Jetty Street; a bible that was found in the Church Tower in Cromer after the 1942 bombings – it had been in a building opposite when that was destroyed and was later discovered to have been thrown up into the air, landing across the road in the tower; a collection of Neolithic handaxes found between Kelling and Weybourne and some guide books and ephemera associated with the now-demolished Metropole Hotel in Tucker Street. A number of pieces of the much sought after Poppyware have been donated to the museum.

A huge collection of memorabilia (over 500 items) was given to the museum in March 2012. It covers many areas of social life in Cromer across 60 years including culture and sport.

## Time and Tide Museum

**July 2012:** six etchings by the local artist Nick Ward were donated into the collections. The etchings form part of a series of works about the Breydon Bridge construction and Great Yarmouth that were donated to the museum several years ago and have this year formed part of a mini exhibition in one of the galleries.

**Aug 2012:** eight pieces of trench art from WW1 have been acquired by the museum for redisplay in the World Wars gallery to commemorate the anniversary the following year.

**Aug 2012:** An Edward Andrews violin, marked as the 20th violin made by him was donated to the museum collections by a relative, supporting the existing collections of local musical instrument-making tools and violas.

**Sept 2012:** Other acquisitions were: a large collection from a 20th century pharmacy which will form the main part of a new display in the Row gallery at Time and Tide museum showing the changes in health and medicine, a painting of Fishermans Hospital, diaries of Great Yarmouth and stamp books.

## Western Area: Acquisitions

### Ancient House Museum, Thetford

A fascinating album of Thetford newspaper cuttings (THEHM : 2013.2) relating to events in the town between 1897 to 1914 was

donated to the Museum. It had been put together by W.J. Chalk of Thetford, a local photographer, whose images of local street characters are already in the collections, and were featured in the recent *Hard Times* exhibition.

The newspaper cuttings mention several of the characters from the photographs and also a wealth of useful information on events in the town's history such as the epidemics caused by insanitary conditions and a lack of a proper sewerage system, inmates of the Workhouse, court sessions, visit to town by Harry Bensley (the Man in the Iron Mask) and suffragettes, death of Charles Burrell, elections, Titanic, West End massage raids, flying machines, accidents, poachers, gypsies, Jack the Ripper, the slum woman, Rush the murderer, and Boer War volunteers. The album was donated by a relative of Mr Chalk.

### Lynn Museum



The Friends of the Museum funded the acquisition of a 16th century silver gilt dress hook found by a metal detectorist at Bawsey and classified as Treasure under the Treasures Act.

16th century dress hook

Another unusual accession (KILLM : 2013.1) made by the Lynn Museum in February 2013

was a fibre glass horse's head used as a prop in the Goldcrest film *'Revolution'* (1985). The film was made largely in King's Lynn and starred Al Pacino, Nastassja Kinski, and Donald Sutherland. It was set during the American War of Independence with King's Lynn taking the part of 18th century New York. The horse's head was part of a statue of King George III which is torn down by a mob in the film. The film bombed at the box office but is fondly remembered in Lynn where most of the population appear to have been extras.

### Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse

We received 10 donations over the year. These acquisitions were identified as objects that would enhance existing collections and displays, or that would fill a gap in the collections.

## IN FOCUS

### Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse: Using acquisitions to inspire public engagement

Ruth Burwood, Curator at Gressenhall, describes how two intriguing objects donated to the collections were used in new events for visitors.

#### Example 1: Freddie Beckerton's suitcases

*“ Frederick worked as a hawker from the 1940s - 1960s. He cycled around the villages around Swaffham on a red tricycle selling tinned food, clothes, chocolate, haberdashery etc. from his bike. He also sometimes travelled on the bus to Fakenham to sell goods using the suitcases that have been donated. He bought items to sell from Savages in Norwich. The donor, his daughter, said that he never owned his own shop, and wouldn't have been allowed to as he claimed benefits and lived in a council house. The neighbours would often knock on his door for tins of food on a Sunday night when the shops were shut. He didn't like this as he was religious. His daughter didn't have photos of him, and said the bike was not around any longer. She described Frederick as “registered blind, a thin man, pigeon-chested, with curvature of the spine”. Her mother was 17 in 1953 when they married. He was 45, and born in 1908. The suitcases were found in the attic after he died.*



*Freddie Beckerton's family donate suitcases*

*Using Freddie's suitcases, we were able to develop a school holiday event around shops and shopping in rural Norfolk. We also received coverage in the local papers, and were included in a special piece on BBC Radio Norfolk.”*

#### Example 2: Pip Weldon's ATS uniform

*“ Owner Phyllis Edna Childs nee Welden was known as 'Pip' b. 16.10.1915 in Sco Ruston, Norfolk d. 8.7.2012. St. Mary's care home, Crostwick, Norfolk. She volunteered with ATS in 1939 with her friend Amy. 'Pip' was stationed near London. She was demobbed in 1946, for which she got a certificate of merit.*

*We used Pip's uniform and associated paperwork for a special event for Museum Pass Holders to demonstrate the work of curators. Staff and trainees demonstrated accessioning, cataloguing, labelling, photographing and packing. Over 800 members of the public attended the event.”*

A hoard of Iron Age fittings including two terrets and a bucket mount in the shape of a bull's head. Found in Shipdham and acquired with funding through the HLF Collecting Cultures scheme, with financial assistance from the Friends of Norwich Museums

## Norwich: Acquisitions



### Norwich Castle Museum Curators

#### Archaeology Department

Numerous additions to the collection were made through the *Collecting Cultures* project. A major extra item purchased was the silver hawking verve (ring) of Henry Frederick, prince of Wales (d.1612)

#### Art Department

- Set of four rare 16th century Norwich made stained glass roundels, installed in Castle Keep in May 2012
- 'Flight Take-off' sculpture by Geoffrey Mann as a result of winning Art Fund Collect competition, May 2012
- Eastern Pavilions Print Portfolio (12 prints various artists)
- Mark Edwards, *River Bungay* lightbox and photograph, with support from Art Fund, V&A Purchase Grant Fund and NCAS
- Stella Vine – gift from artist through Art Fund (confirmed May 2013)
- Frances Kearney – forthcoming work to be acquired from new series – commissioned.



A gold solidus of the emperor Arcadius (395-408). Nearly twenty years on, this single coin was found in Deopham, on the same site as a hoard of 23 gold coins recovered in 1993. Acquired with funding through the HLF Collecting Cultures scheme, with financial assistance from the Friends of Norwich Museums



A mid-eleventh-century lead bulla or seal of Ioannes Protospatharios of the Chrysotriklinon, Kritres (judge) of the Velon and Thesmographos, found in Thetford. Acquired with funding through the HLF Collecting Cultures scheme, with financial assistance from the Friends of Norwich Museums

### **Costume and Textile Department**

Olympic opening ceremony costume purchased by our friends organisation, the Costume & Textiles Association.

### **Natural History Department**

- Collection of microfungi from the late Mike Woolner (former colleague in the Display Department)
- A collection of 13 ammonite fossils from the Chalk deposits of Norfolk were retrospectively accessioned as they were returned to the collection after being borrowed some years ago by Prof. Jim Kennedy, University of Oxford.

### **Bridewell Museum**

- A large collection of material illustrating many aspects of factory life at Rowntree Mackintosh Ltd, Chapelfield, Norwich
- Documents and teaching aids relating to A.W. Nobbs, lecturer in the footwear department, Norwich City College.

### **Research**

**The outstanding collections across our sites continue to be the focus of visits by university students, specialists and members of the public. Staff continue to support requests by researchers to study the NMAS collections. Staff also continue to provide specialist knowledge and expertise to visiting students through discussion and mentoring.**

**In addition to supporting external researchers, curators also continue to undertake research themselves into the collections. Research may be stimulated through the need to inform an exhibition or for a publication.**

### IN FOCUS

#### ***Norwich Castle: Norman Connections Castles Conference – An international partnership***

Norwich Castle hosted an international conference on the conservation, interpretation and display of Anglo-Norman castles as part of the *Norman Connections* project (see pg. 11). The two-day event, 17-18 May 2012, offered a rare opportunity to hear and question French and English authorities on the subject.

The event was organised by John Davies, Keeper of Archaeology, and Angela Riley, Project Officer, through *Norman Connections* – a project linking Norman castles in south-east England and Normandy, France. The project is co-funded by the EU Interreg IVA France (Channel) – England programme, so, in the essence of cross border collaboration, specialists from both sides of the channel were invited to speak:

Steven Ashley, *Norfolk Historic Environment Service*

Peter Berridge, *Formally Colchester & Ipswich Museum Service*

Pierre Bouet, *Université de Caen*

Nicola Coulthard, *Conseil Général du Calvados*

John Crook, *Independent Architectural Historian*

Richard Eales, *University of Kent*

François Fichet de Clairfontaine, *Direction Régionale des Affaires Culturelles de Basse-Normandie*

Bénédicte Guillot, *Institut National de Recherche Archéologiques Préventives*

Roland Harris, *Independent Buildings Archaeologist*

Sandy Heslop, *University of East Anglia*

Edward Impey, *English Heritage*

Charlotte Lapiche, *Château Guillaume-le-Conquérant (Falaise)*

Jean-Marie Levesque, *Musée de Normandie (Caen)*

Robert Liddiard, *University of East Anglia*

Jean Mesqui, *Architectural Historian*

Marc Morris, *Freelance Historian and Broadcaster*

Elizabeth Popescu, *Oxford Archaeology East*

Presentations were given in both languages, therefore, simultaneous translation



*Conference delegates listening to the keynote address by Professor David Bates in the Castle Keep*

was provided. Despite some initial technical difficulties and minor glitches, it was a triumphant first for Norfolk Museums & Archaeology Service. The idea of holding an archaeology conference themed around Norman castles came after the success of the 2010 Iron Age Conference. The programme evolved to include experts from other disciplines, including architectural historians, finds specialists and landscape and medieval historians. It presented the results of recent analysis and research and was very positively reviewed by the Castle Studies Group.

The conference started by introducing all *Norman Connections* partnership castles. Later sessions covered: the evolution of Anglo-Norman castles; architecture and archaeology of Norman monuments; excavations under development in Normandy; Romanesque architecture and artefacts and the Bayeux Tapestry. It featured many key sites on both sides of the channel, including The White Tower in London and the Exchequer Hall at Caen.

Delegates were treated to a keynote lecture by UEA Professor David Bates in the Keep, and an evening reception concluded the first day of the conference and officially launched the EU project.

*“ Two intensive days of stimulating research findings, analysis and discussion. Such refreshing exchanges should be more regular. ”*

**Castle Studies Group Newsletter**

The conference attracted over 100 delegates each day, including *Norman Connections* partners, university students and lecturers, Castle Studies Group members, English Heritage staff, members of local history and archaeology societies and Museum Pass holders. The reception was also attended by Norfolk County Council Cabinet and Norwich Area Museums Committee members, an Eastern Daily Press reporter and staff in the Economic Development team.

A publication of conference papers with some additional contributions, including new findings on the structure of Norwich Keep, is expected in Spring 2014.

## Strangers' Hall

Cathy Terry is supporting ongoing research by Dr Michael Nix, former Head of Research for Glasgow Museums, on the 18th century Norwich pattern book collection, which resulted in the delivery by both Cathy and Dr Nix, of presentations to the Textiles Society New Research initiatives symposium in March 2013.

Cathy is a member of the AHRC-funded research network led by the Medieval and Early Modern Studies University of Canterbury investigating peoples' experience of household life in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and considering how we might use this information to enhance our experience of visiting historic properties in the twenty-first century.

Cathy is also carrying out research into use of textiles in 12th century Castles and the development of replica textiles for the Castle Keep pilot redisplay project.

Research visits to view the Strangers' Hall playing card collection by Paul Bostock and Ken Lodge has recently been published in the *Journal of the International Playing Card Society*.

### The Royal Norfolk Regimental Museum

Research has been carried out by the curator and volunteer team as part of the re-display project. For example: further research was required into the history of the Norfolk Regiment to include in the digital Timeline display. One volunteer has done extensive research, using battalion war diaries and personal accounts documenting the movements of the 8th Battalion, Norfolk Regiment. This will be included in the Timeline.

One of the key aims of the project was to improve and update the information available to visitors about the collections. Visitors will be able to access a version of MODES, the collections database, within the gallery. The touch screen catalogue will contain detailed information about objects within the cases. This has meant that further research was required into the objects, and where possible this research has drawn on testimonies from servicemen either through interviews, or drawing on descriptions in various archives such as letters. This work will benefit visitors to the displays, and also will greatly improve the level of detail on our documentation database.

### Norwich Castle Museum Curators

#### Archaeology Department

The major area of research was associated with Norman Connections and the Keep Project (see above). This was focused on the Castles conference and symposium.

Tim Pestell, Senior Curator of Archaeology completed three publications:

- In **2013**: 'Imports or Immigrants? Reassessing Scandinavian Metalwork in Late Anglo-Saxon East Anglia' in D Bates and R Liddiard (eds), *East Anglia in the North Sea World* (Woodbridge), pp. 230-55.
- In **2012**: 'Paganism in Early Anglo-Saxon East Anglia' in T.A. Heslop, E. Mellings and M. Thøfner (eds), *Art, Faith and Place in East Anglia: from Prehistory to the Present* (Woodbridge), pp. 66-87.
- [With A Marsden] 'Three Repoussé Foils' in M Biddle (ed) *The Winchester Mint: and Coins and Related Finds from the Excavations of 1961-71* Winchester Studies 8 (Oxford), pp. 653-7.

## Art Department

- Department staff have been involved in extensive research for the exhibitions programme
- Giorgia Bottinelli has been Supporting Sarah Moulden (PhD candidate at UEA), who is continuing to research the work of John Sell Cotman
- Francesca Vanke undertook research for *The Wonder of Birds* exhibition (due May 2014)
- Heather Guthrie, Exhibitions Officer, is preparing for a Manet loan show, for 2015
- Hannah Higham undertook research for the *Shortcuts & Digressions* and *Curiosity*, exhibitions; also on artists Ivon Hitchens (for loan) and on Graham Sutherland (following enquiry)
- Harriet Loffler did substantial research on Juliette Blightman for a Contemporary Art Society commission proposal
- Giorgia Bottinelli undertook research for a new publication on the Norwich School of Artists, to be published in summer 2013.

## Costume and Textile Department

Staff have facilitated research for a number of different groups:

- Jane Cole and husband, descendants of donor of Norwich-made emerald green wedding dress 05/09/2012
- Author research
- Ecclesiastical groups
- Australian quilters group
- Local artist drawing collections
- NUA art school students scarf project research visits
- WEA, U3A, UEA, SCVA
- Kentwell Hall re-enactors

## Natural History Department

- Rachel Bynoe (a PhD research student from the **University of Southampton**) took samples from the West Runton Mammoth for finite element analyses (David Waterhouse)
- Anne Nix (PhD research student from the **University of East Anglia**) has been researching natural history collecting in East Anglia from 1700 to 1850, using material from the Department of Natural History's archives and library, as well as interviewing Natural History staff (Tony Irwin and David Waterhouse)
- Lucy Flower (PhD research student from **Royal Holloway, University of London**) had a canid (dog family) jaw from the geology collections x-rayed, in order to find out if it was a very early domesticated dog, or a wolf (David Waterhouse)
- Working with Faye Kalloniatis (Archaeology, Egyptology Research Associate) to help identify geological materials used in Ancient Egyptian scarab carvings (David Waterhouse with geology volunteer Martin Stolworthy)
- David Waterhouse and Tony Irwin identified several snake and lizard skins in the Bridewell Museum social history collections, relating to the shoe making industry in Norwich

- David Waterhouse made the Margaret Fountain diaries available to Dr Julia Peck (Senior Lecturer in Photography from the **University of Roehampton**)
- Information about the 'Ted Ellis, Norfolk Room' dioramas from Natural History archives given to Prof. David Matless (Professor of Cultural Geography at the **University of Nottingham**), in order to help with a chapter in a book about the Norfolk Broads (David Waterhouse)
- Dr Clive Wilkins-Jones (Honorary Research Fellow at the **University of East Anglia**), carried out research into the microscopy minute-books housed within natural history archive (David Waterhouse)
- Dr Katherine Scott (Research Fellow, **University of Oxford**), was researching the tooth wear-pattern of woolly mammoth molars from the Lynford faunal remains collection (David Waterhouse and Molly Carter)
- Jenny Gladstone (Treasurer of the **Norfolk Geodiversity Partnership**) was researching fossil sponges from the Cretaceous of Norfolk and erratic rocks from Norfolk, using the NMAS geology collections (David Waterhouse and Molly Carter)
- Stuart Paston (**Norfolk and Norwich Naturalists Society**) has been coming in regularly to help with the identification of flies in the Natural History collections (Tony Irwin)
- Colin and Trish Lucas have been using the beetle collections to aid their research into the beetle fauna of Suffolk (Tony Irwin).

## Eastern Area: Research

### Cromer Museum

**Nov 2012:** Oral history interview: Alice and Peter Stibbons, Chairman of the Friends of Cromer Museum, filmed an oral history interview with a Mrs Duffield born in Cromer in 1919. Her grandfather was Dr Dent, whose reminiscences we have in the collection, and her grandmother played a part in preventing the building of homes and shops on North Lodge Park. Mrs Duffield grew up in London but was sent to recuperate in Cromer when she had whooping cough, aged 9. In the recording she recalls the train journey she made from London Liverpool Street to Cromer High train station and describes many local shops and notable figures including Alfred Collison Savin. Other oral history interviews were carried out by the Curator and volunteer Tony Rogers.

### Time and Tide Museum

**June 2012:** Oral history interviews with members of the public and volunteers for the new summer Jubilee display recording their memories of what they were doing in Great Yarmouth in 1953.

## Western Area: Research

### Ancient House Museum, Thetford

The Museum continues to offer support for research enquiries.

### Lynn Museum

The Museum continues to support research enquiries by members of the public, including Edward Edwards, local engineering works, Savages, family history and work on a biography of local artist, Walter Dexter.

### Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse

Volunteers carried out in-depth research on local nurserymen in support of the new temporary exhibition that opened in March 2013. Curatorial staff and volunteers continued to assist with enquires and research into the collections and archives. Subjects ranged from 1953 floods, to images of female agricultural workers.

## Caring for the Collections: The Conservation Department

**Collections care is one of the fundamental responsibilities of the Conservation Department. The work embraces collections in storage as well as on display and during transit. The team ensures appropriate methods of handling, packing and environmental monitoring. The work is broad and varied, and encompasses preventive and remedial conservation support to ensure our collections are accessible, displayable and well cared for.**

**The team is fortunate to be able to work across the service at all NMAS sites, working with curatorial colleagues to plan and deliver new displays, improve conditions for stored collections and develop strategies which will increase our knowledge of the collections we hold and their long-term use in a variety of different ways.**

**This past year has been yet another challenging and busy time, presenting new opportunities for growth in experience and skills, contact with a range of other heritage organisations and continued interaction with the public.**

### Display and Exhibition Projects

2012 saw the culmination of two years of intensive work for the **Bridewell Museum** Redevelopment Project. Conservation staff worked with the Design & Technical Team to install and mount over 1,000 objects completed for the opening in June. Many

unique experiences gained during this project will better inform capital projects in the future. Also, April 2012 saw the completion of the **Colman Galleries** re-hang project, for which every painting was assessed for condition and conservation treatment.

Continuing straight on from this, the Team moved onto work for the new **Regimental Display** on the Castle Museum rotunda balcony with over 230 objects assessed and approximately 100 conserved to be displayed in August 2013. This project has been a catalyst for further research work into the arms and armour collections held by NMAS, with advice from the Royal Armouries.

The **Castle Keep Display Project** has been developing this past year and progress is continuing on the selection and conservation of objects to be displayed with loans from the British Museum on the Keep balcony. As part of the redevelopment project, the *Norman Connections* project saw the assessment and / or re-mounting and display of about 50 Cotman watercolours in the art galleries. This allowed our team to collaborate once again with our paper conservation colleagues at the Norfolk Record Office.

Continuing in Norwich, the conservation and mounting of eight costumes on mannequins for a rotating display in the **Arts of Living Gallery**, Norwich Castle was undertaken in September and enabled yet more of our costume and textile collections to be accessible to the visitor. A temporary textile conservation post was further funded to facilitate this specialist work.

Outside of Norwich, the Conservation Dept have been working with our Eastern Area curatorial colleagues on the re-display of the Early Years Gallery at **Time and Tide Museum, Great Yarmouth**. This gallery has been improved with many more collections on display including archaeology, ethnography and natural history collections. The project has been staggered to minimise closure of the gallery and disruption to the visitor. In the Western Area, approximately 30 objects were prepared for display at Gressenhall in the new **Seed Merchants Shop** display.

Once again, **temporary exhibitions** have included a great variety of themes and collections across the service as well as from external organisations. The Department has supported the preparation and installation of **13 temporary exhibitions** across the county. From photographs by Cecil Beaton to 19th century Japanese samurai armour, conservators at NMAS are fortunate to work on challenges presented by a multitude of different materials. Loaned exhibitions have encouraged collaboration with organisations and regular partners such as the British Museum, Victoria & Albert Museum, The Tate, and Kettles Yard as well as individual artists.



*Conservation of a 1890s fairy doll for the "Magic Worlds" Exhibition*



*Conservator assessing object for display with curatorial colleagues*

The **NMAS loans programme** has been particularly busy during 2012-13. As part of this, Conservators routinely assess, advise on and prepare objects for out-going loans as well as condition check in-coming loans for display. A particular highlight this year has been the preparation of the Burne-Jones tapestry for loan to the Pushkin State Museum, Moscow.

### **Preventative Conservation and Collections Care**

Whilst exhibition and display work is always a major focus for the Conservation Team, preventive conservation and collections care work continues throughout the year, often behind the scenes. This includes caring for collections in storage, on display, during study and in transit through appropriate methods of handling, packing, storage, environmental monitoring and control. The team works with on-site staff to improve conditions for the collections and thus increase their access.

Annual programmes of **conservation housekeeping and deep cleaning** at Strangers Hall Museum, Gressenhall Farm & Workhouse, Ancient House Museum Thetford, and Cromer Museum were undertaken, working with staff, volunteers and students. These programmes of work provide training opportunities in basic collections care delivered by the Team.

At **Yarmouth Library**, collections stored in the basement have been identified as at risk from flooding. The entire archival collection had already been removed during the previous year. This year, with further conservation support, the remaining fine art collection has been audited, packed and removed to alternative storage.

At **Norwich Castle Study Centre**, conservators continue to work on refining the long-term storage facility, this past year concentrating on collections of costume & textile accessories.



Following the identification of collections care and access needs at the Gressenhall Superstores in 2011, a successful bid for funding from the Esmée Fairbairn Collections Fund enabled a major new project to begin in 2013. This exciting new project, *Shine A Light*, to create improved physical and virtual access to the collections, has involved considerable planning and advisory in-put from the Conservation Team. In addition, conservators have been working on the stored collections alongside the SAL team each week and providing hands-on training.

As part of this process and at other sites, some collections have been identified for **rationalisation**. Fundamental questions on the significance and use of our collections have been contributing to the decisions of the Rationalisation Committee. In turn, it has informed the Conservation process and helped us place treatment decisions in context.

Across the service, conservation has supported collections care work to improve the library archive at Gressenhall, stores at Aikmans Yard, Kings Lynn and the re-organisation of the fine art stores at Norwich Castle.

Upgrading and standardising systems of **environmental monitoring** in order to better care for the collections in storage and display have continued this year and monitoring equipment at the Gressenhall and Norwich Castle Museums have been upgraded or newly installed. This telemetric system of sensors and receivers linked to the NMAS network, now enables data from seven sites to be seen in real time from the Conservation laboratory in Norwich.

**Integrated pest management (IPM)** continues across NMAS to combat the damage which can result from undetected insect activity. IPM programmes involve all staff and Conservation have been working with colleagues and volunteers to maintain

monitoring and deal with incidents. The large freezer at Gressenhall Superstore I and smaller freezers at Shirehall have been invaluable in eradicating pests in collections.

### **Sharing Conservation**

The Conservation Team are committed to promoting care of collections not only within NMAS, but also across the wider museum community. **Training** provided by conservation staff continues for the wider regional museums network through SHARE. Included during 2012 – 13 was the provision of two training workshops, advisory visits and facilitating four East Anglian Conservators Forum (EACF) days where conservation colleagues were able to exchange and share experiences and ideas. At one of the EACF days, hosted at Norwich Castle, the focus was on textile conservation and featured the partnership conservation project with the British Museum on an Egyptian Burial Shroud in NMAS collections.

Training for new staff, volunteers and students including sessions on introduction to conservation, handling & packing, labelling & marking objects, making book support cushions have been delivered at various venues across the county. The department has also opened its doors to the laboratory for several group visits. These tours have proved popular insights into the behind-the-scenes work of the Department. Training sessions have also been especially targeted for the Teaching Museum Trainees who began in January 2013, as part of their induction to museum work.

As well as delivering training and outreach work, staff in the Conservation Team have continued to develop and update their professional knowledge. Through attendance at conferences, workshops and seminars such as Hazards in Collections, Conservation of Arms & Armour, Use of Cyclododecane, Mounting of artworks on paper etc, skills and knowledge can be shared within the department. Our working approach continues to adapt and evolve with the changing needs of the service, as well as with the development of new techniques and research in the conservation field.

## 2 COMMUNICATION WITH AUDIENCES

NMAS is committed to ensuring that its collections are accessed as widely as possible. Curators communicate knowledge of the collections and their context to a wide range of audiences and in a variety of ways. These include talks, events, dealing with enquiries and also publication. Staff are also often approached by TV and radio to share their expertise.

Curators play a vital role in ensuring that NMAS is an outward-looking service which constantly strives to engage the public through imaginative use of the assets which make the service unique – its remarkable collections.

### Exhibitions

NMAS is involved in a varied programme of temporary exhibitions, which offer audiences a wide range of experiences. Many of these exhibition are produced 'in-house', drawing on the rich collections and knowledge of the staff.

### Norwich: Exhibitions

#### Norwich Castle

##### *Queen Elizabeth II by Cecil Beaton*

*7 July – 30 September 2012*

This national touring exhibition organised by the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, featured portraits of Her Majesty by photographer Cecil Beaton (1904-1980) to celebrate The Queen's Diamond Jubilee.

Highlights of the V&A's collection of Beaton's royal photography showed The Queen in her roles as princess, monarch and mother and included photographs seen for the first time.

As a distinguished photographer, designer and avid diarist, Beaton's royal portraits were among the most widely published photographs of the 20th century. The exhibition explored Beaton's long relationship with Queen Elizabeth II, who was a teenage princess when she first sat for Beaton in 1942.

Ranging from wartime photographs of Princess Elizabeth with her family, to tender images of The Queen with her own young children and official portraits, the exhibition conveyed the magnitude of her role as Britain's monarch.

Sample visitor comments:

*“ This exhibition is a wonderful draw to visit the museum. I saw it at the V&A and it is just as enjoyable (if not more so) here. ”*

“ *Saw it at the V&A in April, and it is better staged and presented here!* ”

“ *Waited a long time to visit, well worth the wait. Beautifully done and enjoyable.* ”

Total admissions to Norwich Castle over this period = 33,426



*Cecil Beaton, Princess Elizabeth, Buckingham Palace, March 1945*  
© Victoria and Albert Museum, London



*Cecil Beaton, Queen Elizabeth II, Buckingham Palace, 2 June 1953*  
© Victoria and Albert Museum, London

Francesca Vanke, Keeper of Art, put together an associated display in the Rotunda of commemorative ceramics and other objects to accompany the exhibition.

### ***Cedric Morris and Christopher Wood: A Forgotten Friendship*** *20 October – 31 December 2012*

Guest curated by Nathaniel Hepburn and project curated by Harriet Loffler, Curator of Modern & Contemporary Art.

This exhibition was the first devoted to the British artists Cedric Morris (1889-1982) and Christopher Wood (1901-30), focussing on their friendship and the many artistic links between them.

Their friendship had a marked effect on their two careers. Morris was a Welsh baronet, who lived to be 93, whilst Wood's life was cut tragically short by his suicide at the age of only 29. Both artists spent time in France just after the end of World War I, where they moved in exalted artistic circles which included Pablo Picasso, Jean Cocteau and Sergei Diaghilev. Morris and Wood were attracted to the sea and both painters spent time in Brittany and St. Ives, where their naïve style found expression in their many pictures of boats and harbours.

The exhibition celebrated a period of British art which is increasingly admired and collected. *Cedric Morris & Christopher Wood: A Forgotten Friendship* featured loans from public and private collections across the UK, and toured to the Mascalls Gallery in Kent and the Falmouth Art Gallery. A fully illustrated catalogue accompanied the exhibition.

***Vision and Reality: Norwich Castle Open Art Show 2012***

*30 October – 9 December 2012*

The *Norwich Castle Open Art Show*, the region's equivalent of the RA's Summer Exhibition, was presented in conjunction with *Cedric Morris and Christopher Wood: A Forgotten Friendship*. It took as its broad theme 'Vision & Reality', a phrase taken from the words of Cedric Morris who became one of the region's most influential artistic mentors through his role as founder of the East Anglian School of Painting and Drawing.

*The Open Art Show* presented the work of artists living in and inspired by East Anglia and gave them the opportunity to show and sell recent work. The exhibition included paintings, drawings and sculptures and provided a great opportunity to experience the best contemporary art from the region's vibrant visual arts community. Its prestigious reputation was reflected in the calibre of the selectors, all distinguished artists: John Wonnacott CBE, Humphrey Ocean and John Lessore.

*Norwich Castle Open Art Show 2012* was presented in partnership with the East Anglia Art Fund which aims to support the art programme at Norwich Castle and artists living and/or working in the region.



*Norwich Castle Museum & Art Gallery, Vision & Reality: Norwich Castle Open Art Show 2012*



*Christopher Wood, 'Fair at Neuilly', 1923 Towner, Eastbourne*



*Norwich Castle Museum & Art Gallery, Cedric Morris & Christopher Wood: A Forgotten Friendship*

## IN FOCUS

### Norwich Castle Museum & Art Gallery: *Magic Worlds* – a popular family-friendly exhibition

26 January – 14 April 2013

A national touring exhibition organised by the Museum of Childhood, London.

This fantastic exhibition – one of our most popular ever – offered visitors the chance to step into a magical world, leave reality behind and accept the fantastical. The exhibition explored the often dark fantasy realms of famous stories and fairy tales, and celebrated the amazing tricks and feats of magicians. Atmospherically presented, it brought the world of fairies and fabled creatures to life, presenting favourite characters from fiction, from Frodo Baggins to Snow White. Films and photography, beautiful story books and ceramics, toys and games, film props and merchandise steered a fascinating journey through magical worlds past and present.



*Storytelling at the Madhatter's Tea Party family event for 'Magic Worlds'*

Visitors of all ages embraced the exhibition which, coming at Easter holiday time, attracted record attendances, helping the Castle to achieve its highest ever annual number of visits – 182,984 – since records began.

The exhibition was accompanied by our most ambitious events programme to date. Puppet shows, costumed characters, and amazing art projects, drew glowing feedback and high attendances. Many of the events were free with museum entry, giving great 'added value' to the visitor experience.

Total admissions to Norwich Castle over this period = 51,593

### ***Battle of the Eyes presents: Planet of the Jackanapes***

12-27 May 2012

Commissioned by Norfolk & Norwich Festival in association with Norwich Castle and Museums at Night and curated by Harriet Loffler.

For the past two years NMAS has been collaborating on exciting contemporary art projects with the Norfolk and Norwich Festival.

*Planet of the Jackanapes* was a new departure for contemporary art at the Castle, presenting live action painting by artists Savage Pencil (aka Edwin Pouncey) and Eyeball (aka Chris Long). During the festival, the gallery became their studio and a public arena in which they passed the loaded paintbrush back and forth.

This first solo show included paintings from the ongoing '*The Predatory Life*' series, archival materials, live action painting, films and on-site sculpture.

### **Cotman and Crome: Seeing through Paintings**

1 December 2012-17 March 2013

Giorgia Bottinelli, Curator of Historic Arts, project-managed Hamilton Kerr Institute Conservator Rose Miller's exhibition.

This in-focus exhibition explored the variety of materials used by world-renowned Norwich School artists, John Sell Cotman (1782-1842) and John Crome (1768-1821), in their oil paintings. Research Curator Rose Miller started studying Cotman's paintings in 2007 and has since examined, photographed, x-rayed, sampled, or treated 75 oil paintings by Cotman and Crome in the collection.

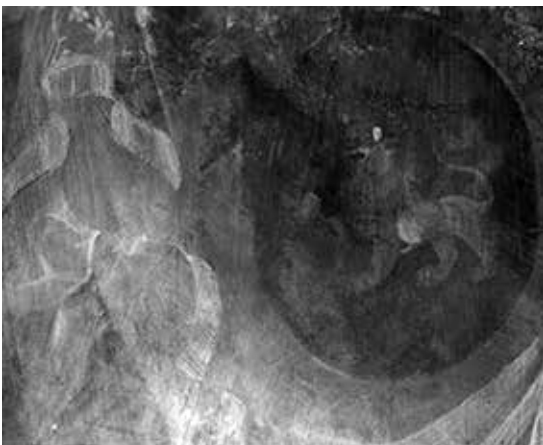
Seeing under the painting surface using x-rays and infrared imaging, revealed clues which help to construct a clearer image of how the artists composed their pictures and why they might have chosen certain painting techniques over others. X-rays and infrared images were displayed alongside the paintings, showcasing rarely seen works from Norwich Castle's collection. The juxtaposition of paintings and images demonstrates the extent to which Cotman and Crome enjoyed the picture-making process itself, manipulating the materials they painted on as well as the paint on the surface.

The display provided a treasure trove of exciting new information about Cotman and Crome's painting methods and techniques, revealing surprising materials such as cupboard doors and mattress ticking, long-forgotten sketches or different compositions behind the painting surfaces, and vibrant original brushwork previously hidden under discoloured varnish.

Featured in *Eastern Daily Press* and *Evening News*.

*Infrared image of John Crome's 'The Yare at Thorpe', showing heraldic figure of a lion under the present composition.*

© Rose Miller



## Eastern Area: Exhibitions

### Cromer Museum

In June 2012, to celebrate Queen Elizabeth's Diamond Jubilee, the museum hosted a **display of souvenirs and ephemera** showing how Cromer's residents have celebrated and commemorated the Royal family over the years. One of the most interesting items on display was a postcard which was sent to the Chairman of Cromer Urban District Council recommending that Cromer residents "abstain from excessive drinking and riotous behaviour" during the King's coronation celebrations in 1902.

In February 2013, a **photo presentation of the 1953 floods** in North Norfolk was placed in the geology gallery. This, combined with our online pieces about the floods, meant that the subject was well covered over the month.

Throughout the year Kate Banks, Museums Assistant, and the Curator were kept busy with work on various projects involving audio. Two **audio presentations** were created for Yarmouth Museums, one, *The Dickens Trail*, mixed Yarmouth history with quotes from Dickens. A second selection, edited down from hours of oral history, told the story of the 1953 floods in the words of eyewitnesses.

In response to evaluation of the existing Audio Guides, carried out by the front of house staff, new audio was created. Members of the public were asked their opinion of the newly installed audio guides. Two things they highlighted were the need to have more information on the Geology Gallery and more audio for children.

By spring 2013 many new audio selections had been recorded. The Curator edited a long interview with Professor Tony Stuart, talking about the West Runton Mammoth and the geology of the area. Kate Banks also wrote and performed many other pieces to create an audio programme specially for children.

A new display, created in house, displays models of two of the 19th century Colliers, the Ellis and the Studley that brought coal and other goods to Cromer up until the advent of the railways towards the end of the 19th century.

### Time and Tide Museum

#### *The Jubilee Display*

In June 2012 **The Jubilee display** in the museum used collections from the stores as well as objects loaned from the public with their own memories that tell their stories of where they were during royal celebrations. For the summer we had off-cuts



Jubilee display

of ermine and velvet from the Queen's coronation gown from 1953 donated by one of the relations of the seamstresses at the time. The event '*A Right Royal Reminisce*' which launched the exhibition was ably assisted by our wonderful volunteers recording the memories of visitors to add to our oral history archive as well as a costume handling event about 1950s accessories and attire.

## IN FOCUS

### **Time and Tide Museum: *You Are Here: The world in Great Yarmouth – using collections to explore community***

*31 March – 11 November 2012*

The summer exhibition at Time and Tide Museum told the story of Great Yarmouth's relationship with the rest of the world.

This story was revealed through the rich and diverse collections held at the museum and through the fascinating testimonies of recent settlers to the area.



It showcased the international influences that are so much a part of Great Yarmouth's history and that have helped shape the unique cultural identity of the town.

Throughout its history Great Yarmouth has always been a town with international links and today the borough is home to a diverse mixture of people who have moved here from around the globe.

As a maritime town Great Yarmouth has long been a destination for people who have come and gone with the boats and the seasons. Those returning from world-wide journeys brought back many exotic souvenirs, some of which are unique, not only in Great Yarmouth, but across the wider museums community.

Amongst the collections on display were objects that tell the stories of adventures and expeditions made by pioneering explorers, travellers and

missionaries. The objects they brought back, along with their journals and photographs, offer visitors fascinating glimpses into the exotic worlds they encountered.

Many people, from around the globe, have chosen to settle in the town since the mid twentieth century. Great Yarmouth is home to a well-established Italian community dating back to the late 1940s, the largest Greek Cypriot community outside of London, a sizable Chinese population and more recently established Portuguese, Polish and Lithuanian communities.

As part of this exhibition, members of our local communities shared their stories of coming to Great Yarmouth and their motivations for coming here; you could listen to their stories in the exhibition.

We also worked with children and their families at St Georges Primary School, situated in one of the town's most deprived wards, to tell the stories of their journeys to and lives in Great Yarmouth. Some of the children have moved to Great Yarmouth from just across the river in Gorleston, while others have come from other parts of the UK and countries like Portugal and Lithuania. Some of the families were involved in oral history interviews, and classes throughout the school made posters about their families. Their artwork was displayed in the exhibition on our digital screens and we continued to visit the school to collect more stories which were added to the exhibition throughout its run. Our partnership with the school continues through its involvement in our Museum Club (see pg. 114)

### **Art + Play Exhibition**

*1 Dec 2012 - 24 February 2013*

*Art + Play* was an exhibition of newly created artwork made specifically with pre-school children in mind. Before the artists created the work for this exhibition, they spent five days working in nurseries and pre-school settings, observing and working with children. The aim of this was to develop the artists' understanding of how very young children think, play, explore and create, and to give them inspiration for their final pieces of work.

The overall theme for the exhibition was 'the creative exploration of materials' and the artists' brief for the work included several potentially conflicting elements to it; the work needed to be interesting and relevant to pre-school children and have an interactive or multi-sensory element to it, without being a toy. It also needed to be a high quality piece of artwork that would still be robust enough to withstand interaction from this audience. As this exhibition is a touring exhibition which will travel around the country to several other museums and galleries,



the artists were asked to produce work that would be easy to dismantle and transport. As well as this, they also had to give serious consideration to the health and safety issues surrounding creating interactive artworks for this age group.

Once the artists had come up with an idea, they produced mock-ups and returned to the settings they had originally worked with to 'product test' these. Artists then used their findings and feedback from these sessions to create their final pieces of work, which you see here. As well as producing the artworks for this exhibition, artists were also asked to produce a 'box of delights' – a box containing a miniature piece of artwork relating to the work in the exhibition, along with ideas sheets and handling materials. These 'box of delights' were available to early years settings to borrow for free, for a week-long period.

### **Reception 'Highlights' Exhibition**

We have changed over this year the display cases in the reception area of Time and Tide as part of the rotating 'Collections Highlights' stores access. In this display we have taken the opportunity to present some of the objects in our collections that do not fit naturally elsewhere in the museum and hopefully act as a talking point for visitors to the museum. This year the displays have included beaded and embroidered bags, fishing accessories, a small section of our existing chemist collections and a Katherine Hamilton painting from our circus objects.

## **Western Area: Exhibitions**

### **Ancient House Museum, Thetford**

#### **World War Two Exhibition**

*25 June 2011 – 21 April 2012*

The last weeks of the World War Two exhibition saw volunteer Justine Duffy make further oral history recording of memories of the area in the Second World War. A transcript is now available to read at the Wise Archive website.

[www.wisearchive.co.uk/projects/thetford/252/](http://www.wisearchive.co.uk/projects/thetford/252/)

#### **Matthew Project Window Display**

April saw a display in the front window of a piece of art created by the *Matthew Project* and artist, Dan Morgan. The piece explores the layers of Thetford history below our feet. The group visited the museum as part of the project. The Matthew Project is a charity based in Norfolk and Suffolk working with adults, young people and communities affected by drugs and alcohol.

Here are some visitor comments on the display posted on 'Sort It' page on Facebook:

*“ Really lovely, simple exhibition in the window of The Ancient House explaining what is under our feet, from now right back to the Stone Age. Done by The Matthew Project and really worth a look. ”*

*“ Oh I shall go have a look – Ancient House are brilliant for partnership working :) That’s an amazing thing to do. So positive for a project like that to be associated with. The Matthew Project do an amazing job and to be showing the community things like this raises its profile in such a wonderful way :) ”*

### **Mapping the Town Exhibition**

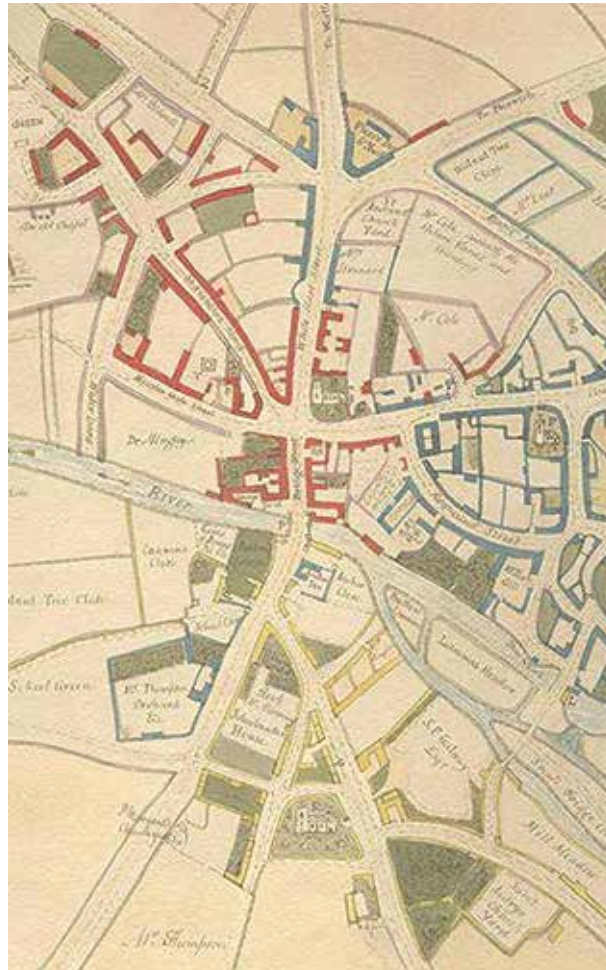
5 May 2012 – 12 January 2013

The *Mapping the Town* exhibition at the Ancient House looked at the story of the town as told through maps, objects and photographs. Highlights of the exhibition include two Victorian Theodolites on loan from Ordnance Survey, used to take accurate measurements by their teams of 19th century surveyors. Other objects include a selection of finds from the Brandon Road excavations from the 1960s and the more recent 2002 work. Also on display is the original hand drawn map of Thetford by Thomas Martin dating to the 1740s and a selection of printed maps from the last three centuries. The Museum’s ‘Stitch in Time’ group created four hand-stitched personal maps of the town and area under the themes of wildlife, pubs and inns, local treasures and a recreation of the Martin map. These new maps were coordinated by Museum Learning Assistant Karen-Emma White.

*Burrell Map of Thetford, 1807*

The exhibition was opened by Neil Ackroyd, Director of Data Collection from Ordnance Survey, and Cllr Barry Stone, Norfolk County Council’s Cabinet member with responsibility for museums. As well as looking at the exhibition, visitors could enjoy an edible map activity run by Teenage History Club and find out more about modern mapping techniques with surveyor Kevin Pollard from Ordnance Survey.

In connection with the display the Museum is offering items for sale including souvenir tea towels of the four hand-stitched personal maps of the town and area.



*The changing displays room at Ancient House, Thetford*



***Hard Times: Life for the poor in Thetford and the area 100 years ago***

*From 26 January 2013*

This exhibition looked at day-to-day life for the poorest members of society around 100 years ago. The exhibition focused on the living and working conditions in the town including the topics of sanitation, factory work, slum housing, and the workhouse. There were also references made to the work camps for unemployed people set up in Thetford Forest after the First World War.

The display served perhaps as an antidote to a nostalgic, rose-tinted view of the Edwardian era. It was researched and put together by Collections Officer Tim Thorpe, who gave a talk about the exhibition on 22 February.

A small album of photographs of 'Characters of Thetford' was highlighted in the display. Images from this unusual record of people going about their business in the town were enlarged for people to see.

Sound effects of music hall songs played and working life displays featured Burrell's Engineering Works, Fisons Fertilizers and the Tannery.

**Lynn Museum**

***Hard Times: Poverty in King's Lynn in the early 20th century***  
*31 March 2012 to 19 January 2013*

This exhibition, on show at the Lynn Museum, formed a pair with Thetford's *Hard Times* exhibition (see above) and covered similar territory for King's Lynn, exploring the challenges faced by poorer sections of Lynn's population in the Edwardian period, including unemployment, debt, slum housing, poor sanitation and disease. An A5 marketing flier was produced for this exhibition, with

copies issued to Lynn residents via the Citizen free newspaper. There has been excellent media coverage of the exhibition.

A small display of **Royal gifts** was created in the reception area at Lynn Museum to mark the Diamond Jubilee celebrations. The family event *Gifts Fit for a Queen* gave participants the chance to create their own royal gifts, inspired by the real thing.

### **Inspired Choice**

*29 January to 13 April 2013*

Also at the Lynn Museum *Inspired Choice* featured selections of paintings from the King's Lynn Museums collections, chosen by local groups including schools. It also comprised local community groups' artistic responses to paintings in the museum collections, with each group creating their own artistic work for display. The exhibition was opened by the Area Museums Chairman, Councillor Mrs Elizabeth Nockolds, with representatives from the participating community groups and schools in attendance. The opening was covered in the local press and on Radio Norfolk.



*'The Artist's Wife' by  
Walter Dexter, Inspired  
Choice Exhibition*

### **Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse**

Gressenhall hosted an exhibition about Norfolk schools throughout the open season of 2012. The content was developed in partnership with Norfolk Record Office and was supported with a range of museum collections not previously on display.

In March 2013 a new exhibition about four major Norfolk nursery business opened. The exhibition has been designed so that it can be loaned in small sections to local gardening business and attractions in the hope that it will promote the Gressenhall gardening collections and archives.

## Countywide support for exhibitions and displays

### Design and Technical Department

The department was involved in a number of temporary exhibitions across the county. At Norwich the Design and Technical team made major contributions to *Cecil Beaton*, *Cedric Morris* and the *Norwich Open Art Show*. In the autumn of 2012 the designers and technicians worked on the layout and installation for the very popular touring *Magic Worlds* exhibition.

Any touring temporary exhibitions that come to Norwich need to be reconfigured for our unique space, careful consideration needs to be given to the position of structures (due to fire escape routes) or even because a particular part of the exhibition requires an electrical socket. While delivering these exhibitions at Norwich the team has also provided display support countywide.

At Time and Tide the team did the 3D design, graphic design and technical installation for *Art + Play* (opened Dec 2012) and the *Alfred Wallis* Exhibition which opened at the end of March 2013. The department is also responsible for delivering high quality graphic design to support the exhibition programme including print for the marketing aspects.

### Norwich Castle Museum Collections Management

The Collections Management department worked very closely with the Art Department and the East Anglia Art Foundation to deliver the 2012 *Norwich Castle Open Art Show*. Almost 500 artists applied to have their work shown in the show at the Castle – as ever we used MODES to store the related information. We delivered a presentation in the Town Close Auditorium during a gruelling but fascinating two-day selection process to select from the hundreds of works submitted to a distinguished panel comprising John Wannacott, John Lessore and Humphrey Ocean, and supported the administration and delivery of a very successful show.

The team are at the formative stages of a project to deliver a new web-based collections search. We have been supporting the *Shine A Light* project at the superstores at Gressenhall, not only by assisting in the practical collections management programme of auditing the stored collections, but also working with the project team in developing an on-line application to tell the stories of the wonderful stored collections at Gressenhall. Watch this space!

## Norwich Castle Museum Curators

### Natural History Department

Staff provided support to countywide exhibitions:

- Development of an exhibition centred on finds relating to the **Ancient Human Occupation of Britain (AHOB)** project were initiated with the exhibition and display team at the **Natural History Museum, London** (David Waterhouse and John Davies)
- Taxidermy specimens and labels were supplied for the **Norfolk and Norwich Festival 2013** temporary exhibition entitled '*Planet of the Jackanapes*' (David Waterhouse)
- Norwich canaries (taxidermy), and a small display on F.E. and T.E. Gunn of St Giles, Norwich was put together for the re-displayed **Bridewell Museum, Norwich** (David Waterhouse)
- Geological specimens, images and information were provided for the *King's Lynn on the Map* exhibition at the **Lynn Museum** (David Waterhouse, Molly Carter and Sarah Cassell)



*Lynn Museum geology volunteer Mike Hurn and Curator of Natural History David Waterhouse, assess a fossilised woolly mammoth tusk before it goes on display as part of the 'King's Lynn on the Map' exhibition at the Lynn Museum (27 April 2013 – 25 January 2014).*

Preparation for a major temporary exhibition at Norwich Castle Museum & Art Gallery started in earnest. David Waterhouse is co-curating the exhibition along with lead curator for the project Dr Francesca Vanke (Keeper of Art & Curator of Decorative Art) with help from Ruth Battersby-Tooke (Curator of Costume and Textiles). The Exhibition is entitled the *The Wonder of Birds*, and is an ambitious project bringing together Natural History specimens, with fine art, sculpture, photography, social history and much more. The exhibition is due to open in May 2014, running through the summer until September 2014.

## Events

The events programme is an important part of the service's engagement with audiences. Events range from talks and activities inspired by a temporary exhibition to stand-alone activities that key into national campaigns.

The success of the events programme depends on collaboration across many different departments, including the Learning team, Visitor Services and Building Services.

## Eastern Area: Events

### Cromer Museum

#### IN FOCUS

##### Cromer Museum: *Museums at Night 2012* – A heritage partnership

2012 saw our most successful Museums at Night. The Museum teamed up with eight other heritage organisations in North Norfolk to form a cluster which received funding from Heritage Lottery Fund to deliver *Victorian Nights*, a weekend festival of free, Victorian-themed events for families. Events included guided walks, a Victorian train journey, circus acts, craft activities and film screenings.

This was combined with the Cromer Crab and Lobster festival. The day ended up being the busiest day of the year with visitor numbers over three times higher than the previous year. The museum opened from 4 – 9pm for an evening of Victorian entertainment. Visitors were greeted with a glass of wine and some delicious cakes and sandwiches from Dudley's, a local bakery. Rollo performed daring stunts of escapology and fire breathing in the museum forecourt which attracted quite a crowd! Peter Stibbons gave magic lantern shows throughout the evening, including slides which were originally shown by his great grandfather in Cromer over 130 years ago. Musicians from the North Norfolk railway joined Valentine in the cottage kitchen and got crowds singing along to Victorian music hall tunes.



Volunteer interpreter Sarah assisted visitors with some Victorian handling items which we borrowed from the Norwich Castle Study Centre and Tina Smith gave rag rug and cottage craft demonstrations. Volunteers Emma and Jenny ran an extremely busy découpage activity in which children (and some adults!) made scrap books and decorated keepsake boxes. Many of the visitors were dressed in Victorian costume, and feedback was overwhelmingly positive.

#### Cromer Mardles

Our Mardler group continues to grow and over the year have had sessions covering all aspects of Cromer history and town life. External speakers are sometimes invited to the group but it is often someone from Cromer, often a member of the group, who will give a talk on local families, wartime memories or whatever the group expresses an interest in. The Education Room is usually full as much as half an hour before the Mardle is set to begin. Tina

Smith, our learning support assistant, organizes the group with help from one of our keen volunteers Tony Rogers. One session was dedicated to Ghost stories to allow Kate Banks to do research for the Ghost Walks that she runs through the year. Another was an illustrated talk by Dr. Richard Hoggett from the Norfolk Historic Environment Service (NHES). The talk, entitled *War Time Norfolk From The Air*, came about through a Twitter conversation between the museum and the NHES. Another by Geoffrey Kidd, entitled *Some other Poppyland pictures and the stories behind them*, resulted in standing room only for the session.

### Other events

**May 2012:** The museum ran a sculpture workshop for Adult Learner's Week with Gilly Plumb (Adult Education Community Development). This was based on the murals by J Moray Smith on display in the museum. Fully booked with 11 attending on the day. Evaluations all positive, rating the event as good to excellent.

**May 2012:** The museum ran a family event for the local Crab and Lobster festival, working with Gilly Plumb, who provided a tutor to give gansey knitting demonstrations alongside some museum-led activities. 292 people attended the event.

The Museum had a busy summer season with lots of events including two *Victorian Days*, an *Iron Age Norfolk* guided walk and regular fossil handling sessions with volunteer Ina McCann. On the 1 August we held our ever popular *Stone Age Day* featuring John Lord making flint tools and Dave Waterhouse offering handling sessions. Alice ran a cave art activity which proved to be popular with both adults and children. 16 August saw the return of our *Mammoth Monsters* day with Rollo's dinosaur magic show, face painting and Tina Smith's mammoth making craft activity. Kate Banks also ran an extra Ghost Walk to meet demand as the July walks had been so popular.

The archaeologist Trevor Ashwin had another very successful season of walks. The museum organises the walks that cover many of the significant locations in the North of the county, from the Neolithic barrows to the religious sites around the village of Walsingham.

The Museum hosted some new events in October, all of which were heavily over subscribed. At the beginning of the month we ran a free portrait photography workshop in partnership with Adult Education. The Curator gave a talk about pioneering photographer Olive Edis, exploring her innovative techniques and showing some examples of her work not usually on display. In the afternoon an adult education tutor led a practical session including some basic Photoshop training for participants. This was repeated in Wells some weeks later.

Ian Groves ran the first two of three *Norfolk's Deserted Villages* workshops, exploring depopulated settlements, the reasons for their desertion, and how to spot where they once were. Feedback was very positive, including the following comments:

“ *Thank you for a marvellous day* ”

“ *Really enjoyable, interesting and informative day* ”

“ *Ian was very knowledgeable and passionate about his subject which captivated my interest and attention* ”



On Saturday 6 October we welcomed a *Fossil Road Show* to Cromer. In the morning Simon Parfitt and Professor Chris Stringer from the Natural History Museum, and Professor Tony Stuart from Durham University joined John Davies, Keeper of Archaeology, Tim Pestell, Senior Curator of Archaeology, and David Waterhouse, Curator of Natural History, at the Cliftonville Hotel for a series of free talks about Cromer forest-bed and its importance. In the afternoon the public were invited to bring their fossil finds to the museum to be recorded and identified. The event was a great success with visitors queuing to have their fossils looked at. A number of interesting specimens were brought in including part of a one million-year-old mammoth femur, two rare flint hand axes and an ammonite.

*Flyer produced by the Natural History Department, giving the schedule for the day at Cromer. The 'Fossil Roadshow' was a joint initiative between Norfolk Museums & Archaeology Service, the Natural History Museum London, the British Museum and English Heritage, in order to raise awareness of the internationally important geology exposures along the Norfolk Coast.*

The winter programme of talks for the Friends of Cromer Museum began with a talk by our chairman, Peter Stibbons, on Cromer in 1840. Peter used a number of sources from the early/mid nineteenth century to paint a picture of the town before the expansion of the post-1880 period. Most of the features we have come to associate with the town were present in 1840. A new jetty was in place, bathing huts were on the beach and the lighthouse (then coal-fired) was in use. The familiar sweep of paths and slopes from the town to the beach was beginning to take shape.

The museum's curator, Alistair Murphy, built on this theme in the second talk in our winter series when he spoke about the many men and women who have played a part in the history of the town. Some had national or international prominence such as Elizabeth, Empress of Austria-Hungary and the scientist Albert Einstein, while others are remembered for their local connections such as the photographers Herbert Mace and Olive Edis and Alfred Collison Savin, the most well known historian of Cromer.

In December 2012 we ran another free portrait photography workshop in partnership with Adult Education. The event was, again, heavily over subscribed and very well received. In November Tina Smith led one of her popular rag rug workshops for adult learners. 10 people spent the day looking at examples of traditional rugs from our collections and making a rag Christmas decoration to take home. Feedback from the event was overwhelmingly positive, as the following comments illustrate:

*“It was great fun, good for me to get out and meet like minded people.”*

*“I have gained confidence and a new skill.”*

Canadian writer James Hawkins gave a talk about the actor Anthony Holland at the museum. Anthony Holland ran a rep company in the 1950s at Cromer which featured a number of soon to be famous actors, including Norman Rossington, Kenneth Cope and Phyllida Law. The evening included a recorded video message, from Mr Holland, still working in his 90s in British Columbia.

## **Time and Tide Museum**

Over the year the three museums in Great Yarmouth had 7,044 visitors attend their event days.

### **Museums at Night 2012**

Museums at Night is the annual after-hours celebration of arts, culture and heritage when hundreds of museums, galleries, libraries, archives and heritage sites opened their doors for free in an extraordinary evening of events between 6pm-10pm. It was supported by Culture24, and took place on Friday 18 May 2012 at the three Great Yarmouth Museums, Time and Tide, the Tolhouse and the Elizabethan House with events and demonstrations which captured imaginations of both the young and old. The event is now in its fifth year in the town and has grown annually. This event saw over 2300 visits to the museums over the course of the four hours that evening. The majority of people who visited the event were local families from Great Yarmouth and the surrounding area who were taking the opportunity to visit their local museums and see the extraordinary array of events on offer.

It was Great Yarmouth Museums' largest combined event to date and certainly with the most variety! There were fire performers at Time and Tide that amazed the crowd with fire eating, swords and juggling.

Along with evocative story telling with illustrations and atmospheric shadow puppets, the 1950's shop in the recreated Yarmouth Row was open for business and the shopkeeper (dedicated volunteer Morris Jackman) was kept busy bringing the

past alive for the entire night (having surreptitious cups of tea smuggled in to him!)

Unique archive film footage *The Way We Were* about childhood from the 1920's to the 60's was shown in our impromptu cinema and our resident fisher girl was on hand in the galleries gutting herring and talking about Yarmouth's international fishing industry.

There were pirates in the Tolhouse and stories in the 13th century cells which encouraged visitors to discover the grisly past of this beautiful ancient building!

Henry VIII was roaming the corridors of the Elizabethan House for the night to the sounds of a lute being played, and Tudor poetry recited. Downstairs Victorian servants were on hand in the kitchen and scullery demonstrating some of the recipes and kitchen tasks of the time.

This was all topped by the launch of Great Yarmouth Museums guided tours that took visitors between the sites on heritage walks that were very popular throughout the night.

One visitor commented:

*“ Fabulous. I really enjoyed the tour and we've managed to get to see all three museums and seen history in a different light! I thought the stories in the spooky cells were a bit scary but we'll definitely be back. ”*

### **June Half Term week events 2012**

The half term saw a wonderful improvement in visitor figures to Great Yarmouth Museums in comparison to the same schools holiday last year. Over the three sites there has been an 80% increase in visitors based on a year on year comparison since 2011.

This year we had events at all three museums including seaside fun with our puppets and Punch & Judy early on in the week. A host of Tudor characters including Henry VIII livened up the Elizabethan House. Linking in to the current temporary exhibition Time and Tide hosted *Exploring Explorers* on the Friday which looked at the science behind exploring the world. It was a day of activities inspired by the explorers that have travelled the world and brought back objects, animals and inventions to Great Yarmouth. Visitors could see their stories in the *You are Here* exhibition and see the fabulous collections in hands-on sessions with the curator including objects like the giant blue whale's spine, puffer fish and great white shark's jaws to name a few specimens. In a unique new activity for the museum, visitors were encouraged to join in with our special science team of brainiacs to help build a new machine that could take food supplies (represented by an orange duck!) to the intrepid explorers stranded at the far reaches of the earth!

## Hands-Up Puppets!

In February 2013 the gloves came off but on the other hand the socks were very much on as we invited acclaimed and award winning puppet maker, Marcus Clarke of *'Hands-up Puppets!'* to the Museum to deliver workshops in the crazy, colourful and creative world of Sock Puppet Making! Marcus has worked on television puppet themed shows and travels worldwide delivering his unique take on this fun and interactive art form. Whilst Marcus brought along fur, eyeballs, glue guns and cardboard eyes (how could anyone resist working with this stuff?!) all we asked our visitors to do is to turn up with their own sock. Stripy, woolly or just plain were all welcome (but preferably not sweaty!) along with an idea for their very own sock-faced character!



## February 2013

Following a very successful week of February half-term events which attracted hoards of visitors, it was time to open the museum doors on our new monthly event programme entitled, *Hoard of History*.

Dr Tim Willey, a local wood carver and sculptor, was the invited expert on hand to demonstrate carving techniques and show visitors a selection of carved objects from the museum collection which included a carved coconut, scrimshaw, a decorative shield and walking sticks.

*“To learn how to carve, you need to learn your alphabet,”* said Dr Willey at the beginning of the workshop. *“If you can carve a letter, you will learn all the technique you need because the letter has to look accurate. Mistakes will be spotted in a badly rendered letter, far more than in the carving of something more organic.”*

With this in mind visitors were invited to try carving words which Dr Willey had copied and pencilled onto a chunky piece of oak (treated, pest free oak, of course!) from the inscribed text on the carved coconut.

Certainly, a cunning way in which to encourage us to look closely at the carved works in the museum collection whilst introducing us to an extraordinary art form.

## Western Area: Events

### Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse

Curatorial staff continued to support school holiday activities and events through delivering sessions, offering training and support to FOH staff, and providing collections for handling activities. One

of the largest events in the Gressenhall calendar is *Apple Day*, and was supported by curatorial staff again. The Curator ran a handling activity throughout the day in the farmhouse kitchen, whilst making a chutney on the range. Visitors enjoyed the opportunity to explore the intriguing range of kitchen utensils, as well as the 60-year-old preserves, and took the opportunity to reminisce about their memories of cooking on ranges, gathering the harvest, and making preserves.



Curator, Ruth Burwood  
at the Museum Pass  
Holders event

Curatorial staff were involved in the highly successful first Museum Pass Holders event. The theme was *'Behind the Scenes'* and curatorial staff recreated the 'Curator's office' in one of the event rooms of the museum. Here, they demonstrated the work of curators, explaining the processes of accessioning, cataloguing, labelling, photographing, packing and freezing. Visitors were fascinated by the processes and took the opportunity to ask lots of questions about the profession, training and collections in general. Younger visitors were encouraged to take part by making acid-free tissue 'wedges' that were used for safely packing the collections into boxes.

## Norwich: Events

### Norwich Castle Museum Curators

#### Archaeology Department

Staff organised a metal-detectorist event for the Heritage Lottery Fund's *Collecting Cultures* programme.

#### Art Department

The Colman Art Galleries at Norwich Castle display the Museum's world-famous collection of Norwich School paintings. The two galleries have been extensively refurbished to include more paintings as well as new displays, films about the Norwich School, two new touch-screen learning resources and contemporary art.

To celebrate this refurbishment, Norwich Castle hosted numerous events throughout 2012 and 2013 which proved extremely popular. Events included an introduction to the new displays by Curator of Historic Art Dr Giorgia Bottinelli, a walk and talk around Norwich exploring the best-loved haunts of the Norwich School artists by the Director of East Anglia Art Fund, Charlotte Crawley and an afternoon of music hosted by Chamber Orchestra Anglia inspired by Joseph Stannard's painting *'Thorpe Water Frolic'* in the Landscape and Nature Gallery. However, most successful of all, was a special film screening of Peter Hall's 1974 film *'Akenfield'*. The event started with an introduction by Ronald

Blythe and ended with a book signing. It was a complete sell-out and there was even a waiting list!

### **Events associated with exhibitions and the permanent collection/ new displays**

Each temporary exhibition at Norwich Castle Museum & Art Gallery is complemented by an imaginative series of events, including talks, workshops study days etc. A range of these events are summarised here, listed together with their attendance figures.

- Cecil Beaton and the Iconography of the House of Windsor (45)
- The Queen and I: A Right Royal Conversation (15)
- Royal Trend Setter? Sixty Years of Fashion from Norfolk Museums Archive and Collection (55)
- Commemoratives: Celebrating Royalty through Souvenirs (20)
- Be Dazzled! Norman Hartnell: Sixty Years of Glamour and Fashion (75)
- Marcus Adams: Photographer of Royal Children (30)
- Cedric Morris & Christopher Wood: A Forgotten Friendship (90)
- Christopher Wood: Self Portrait (65)
- Akenfield: A Special Film Screening (125)
- Out in the Open: Four Norwich Open Art Show artists talk about their work (50)
- Sea Views: Marine Paintings by Morris, Wood and Wallis (100)
- Drawing on Life: Cedric Morris (48)
- Nationalising the Norwich School (10)
- Lewis Carroll and Alice, Games and Magic (18)
- From the Romantic to the Macabre: Nineteenth Century Fairy Painting (30)
- Re-imagined: One Year On (11)
- Tea, Cake and Conversation (7)
- Family Writing Workshop (22)
- Conjuring up Magic Worlds for Children of All Ages (22)
- Here Be Dragons! Why are they so special? (23)
- The Changing Environment and the Norwich School (27)
- Creative Writing (18)
- The Tinder Box (102)
- Special Treasures from the Strangers' Hall Collection (29)
- Under Wraps (15)
- Walking the Wensum with the Norwich School Painters (21)

### **Costume and Textile Department**

Staff contributed to both *Skin* events at Norwich Castle involving young people devising and delivering activities designed to appeal to their age group.

The first *Skin* event was delivered as part of the Cultural Olympiad on 21/22 July. The theme of 'Skin' was chosen by the young people and inspired quirky and surprising events such as live tattooing! Staff from the department supplied items from the collections to provoke debate around the use of fur in fashion.

*Skin 2 – On the Street* was held in March 2013. The Costume and Textile department contributed by showing youth culture items from the collection. Ruth Battersby-Tooke gave her 'Street-style' talk in the Castle Auditorium and Curatorial Assistant, Lisa Little, ran stores tours all week to coincide with Norwich Fashion week.

Staff also contributed to the *Fifties Fest!* event at Norwich Castle on 15 September 2012.

### Natural History Department

*Curator of Natural History, Dr David Waterhouse, leading the behind the scenes tour of the natural history storerooms in Norwich Castle Museum and Art Gallery, during 'Museums at Night' May 2012.*

- Behind the scenes tours of the Natural History Department stores for **Museums at Night** event at Norwich Castle Museum and Art Gallery, May 2012 (David Waterhouse, Jane Burgon, Learning Officer). Eight tours were given to over 95 people.
- Tour and talks of the West Runton Mammoth for **Werkgroep Pleistocene Zoogdieren** – Pleistocene Mammal Working Group, the Netherlands (over 40 people present). Tony Irwin and David Waterhouse in conjunction with Prof Tony Stuart (**University of Durham**), Prof Adrian Lister (**Natural History Museum, London**) and Nigel Larkin.
- *Cromer Fossil Roadshow* day. Working with the **Natural History Museum, London** and the **British Museum** – technical talks in the morning (150 attendees), followed by fossil identification session in the afternoon which brought 186 people into the Museum at Cromer (David Waterhouse).
- **National Science and Engineering Week** (March 2013) was linked in with Norwich Castle Museum & Art Gallery's *Magic Worlds* exhibition. Members of the public used microscopes to see into the magical microscopic worlds of natural history objects, such as feathers and insects. The NMAS natural history collection was drawn on to help inspire families to create their own dragons whilst learning how certain characteristics can help species survive (David Waterhouse and Molly Carter).



## Strangers' Hall

Working with the learning team, a programme of family activities has been delivered at Strangers' Hall every school holiday.

Highlights have included:

- *A Victorian Household*: visitors found out how a Victorian home was cleaned and maintained with Agnes the housemaid during August. Other events included the *Out of Place Trail* during October and *All that Glitters* in February 2013
- In June the NGS Open Garden showcased the volunteer-maintained Strangers Hall garden, looking perfect with its lavender and roses
- As part of the celebrations for the Olympic torch passing through Norwich, a recital of a new work by the Britten Symphonia was held in the courtyard of Strangers' Hall in July
- Heritage Open Days events on 7 and 8 September at Strangers attracted full houses for booked tours and 430 free visits
- A Traditional Christmas event at Strangers' Hall included a Tudor Puppet show by the Fooles Puppet Theatre and Magic Lantern show by Peter Stibbons, and attracted 330 visitors.



*Out of Place Trail  
taking place in  
Norwich*

## Bridewell Museum

Over the past year, we have been trialling a variety of new events to attract and engage our visitors.

### Events throughout the year:

- In September, we attracted 1,124 visitors to our Heritage Open Days events
- In December, our 1950s *Christmas Day* event attracted 230 visitors
- In February, we hosted a programme of activities linked to Valentine's Eve, with a special evening opening and half term activities, with over 230 family visitors joining in with our Jack Valentine trail
- School holidays have also pulled in many visitors, with a range of family-focussed events: our Easter half term events attracted approx 350 children.

*Under Wraps event*

We are just beginning to develop our offer for adult learners. Early signs are good. Our first few *Under Wraps* costume and textile linked events are often fully booked and our new short talks called *Bridewell Bite Size* are proving very popular. In February, a 30 minute gallery talk on the Blitz attracted 66 adult visitors.



### **Weavers at Work! Loom demonstration events**

We were thrilled to hear in December that we had been successful in securing funding from The Worshipful Company of Weavers to support work with our newly restored Jacquard loom. The Company offered us £5,000 to enable us to work with local weavers to weave on the loom during opening hours, so that visitors can see it in action and talk to the weavers about this incredible machine and its vital role in the history of the city. Funding will also support study days and sponsored schools visits. Since then, the Costume and Textile Association have generously matched this grant with a further £5,000 to help us achieve our aims.



*Resident weavers Nick Wiseman Ellis and Sue Foster*

*The restored Jacquard loom*

## **Curator talks**

**Curators from across the service invest considerable time in writing and delivering talks aimed at a range of audiences. Feedback shows this opportunity to hear curators speak about their areas of expertise is particularly valued by our audiences.**

### **Norwich: Curator Talks**

#### **Strangers' Hall**

Cathy Terry, Senior Curator of Social History, was invited to present two lectures on the history of the Norwich Strangers in Norwich and Ghent at the EU-funded Shaping 24 project, delivered in Norwich by HEART as part of its heritage programme. The aim of this project was to facilitate heritage interpretation collaborations between the partner cities. Cathy's other talks are as follows:

- Introductory talk for C&TA annual Pamela Clabburn lecture
- Talks on Norwich textiles to NUA students and Norfolk & Suffolk Weavers, Spinners and Dyers

- Norwich Civic Collections for the Friends of Norwich Museums and for the Textile Society on the Norwich Textiles Project
- Strangers Hall staff provided welcome/ supports to a variety of tour groups e.g. historic building conservators, language schools, retirement get-together, Norwich Society breakfast event
- Meetings with youth engagement officers to plan events and projects at Strangers' Hall.

Bethan Holdridge, Curatorial Assistant, gave a talk on the Strangers' Hall Toy collection as part of the *Magic Worlds* series.

### The Royal Norfolk Regimental Museum

Curator Kate Thaxton gave a talk to the Norwich Museums volunteer conference at the end of March. This was a useful opportunity to update a loyal group of museum supporters on progress, and also to publically thank the Regimental Museum volunteers for all their hard work.

### Norwich Castle Museum – Collections Management

The Collections Documentation Officer gave a presentation to the Friends of Norwich Museums entitled *Welcome to the wonderful world of Collections Management*. To many of our stakeholders this world is a hidden one. The Friends were interested to hear how NMA manages information relating to our collections, what we do with it and were particularly interested to hear of the future developments which the department will be working on.

### Norwich Castle Museum Curators

#### Art Department

- Francesca Vanke gave talks at the Castle on the *History of Royal Commemoratives*, *Victorian Fairy Paintings* and *Norwich Stained Glass* (with 20+ attendees at each talk)
- Harriet Loffler spoke to NUA students about Ivan Seal and at the Ivan Seal exhibition opening at the Contemporary Art Society
- Anna Green, Learning Officer, gave a talk, *Yarmouth Quay: Port or Resort*.

#### Costume and Textile Department

- Costume and Textiles Association Talk, 14 September 2012, Ruth Battersby-Tooke
- Norwich University of the Arts, 26 October 2012, Ruth Battersby-Tooke

### Natural History Department

- Session with 10 **University of the 3rd Age** students on Norfolk Geology (David Waterhouse)
- Tour and talk in natural history galleries and stores at Norwich Castle Museum & Art Gallery to Norwich City Council's **Norwich Community Green Gym** members (David Waterhouse)
- Tour and talk of the West Runton Mammoth collection at Gressenhall 'Superstores' for the **Friends of Cromer Museum** (David Waterhouse, Molly Carter and Alistair Murphy).

## Western Area: Curator Talks

### Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse

The curator delivered a talk to over 50 National Trust volunteers at Oxburgh Hall in January 2013. The talk was on the History of Museums, which included a particular focus on museums in Norfolk. It was well received and formed part of their winter training programme.

### Ancient House Museum, Thetford

The joint Friends / Museum afternoon talks programme has been a success with full houses coming to hear about Savage's steam and fairground ride engineer, Norfolk's past through metal detector finds and *Experiences of Road Travel* in the 18th century.

### Lynn Museum

A programme of occasional illustrated talks took place at Lynn Museums on Wednesday afternoons. Talks have included *Fear of the Workhouse in the early 1900s King's Lynn* on 9 May, given by Collections Officer Tim Thorpe, *Norfolk Workhouses* by Steve Pope, the lead member of the Gressenhall Workhouse volunteer research team and *Highlights from the Museum Collections* by Curator, Oliver Bone.

Tim Thorpe gave nine illustrated lectures to 429 members of the public and local societies in Norfolk on local history subjects including *Fine art in the Lynn Museum collections*, *Savage's Engineers of Lynn*, *History of Dentistry*, *Zeppelin Raids over Norfolk and Suffolk*, *Hard Times in Thetford 100 years ago*, and *The King's Lynn's Workhouse*. Income of £180 was received for NMAS from the talks.

## Eastern Area: Curator Talks

### Cromer Museum

Staff delivered a full programme of talks during the year including:

- Olive Edis talk in museum, 15 adults
- Sheringham History Society, (Olive Edis), 44 Adults
- Parkinson Society, (A Cromer Gallery), 25 adults
- Talk to Hunstanton Civic Society, (Olive Edis), 50 adults
- Talk to the Cawston History Jetties, (Cromer Piers & Jetties), 40 adults
- British Legion, The Cottage, (Olive Edis), 25 adults
- Cromer Museum, Olive Edis workshop 15 adults
- Cromer Friends Talk, (A Cromer Gallery), 30 adults
- North Norfolk Ladies Group, (Olive Edis), 20 adults
- Wells Maltings photographic group, (Olive Edis), (in conjunction with Adult Education), 15 adults
- Trimmingham Poppyland Group, (A Cromer Gallery), 20 adults.

### Time and Tide Museum

- Outreach HCBC pensioners society, ( 65 adults )
- 3 talks for the Autumn and winter talks programme at Time and Tide on the collections and displays
- Talk for the Aldeburgh history society on Time and Tide, ( 42 adults).

## Adult outreach

**Not everyone finds it easy to visit museum sites for a variety of reasons, including age, disability and rural isolation. Outreach sessions, where collections and staff visit locations off-site, are one way of overcoming these barriers and broadening access.**

**Another form of outreach is to promote our collections and work to audiences through presentations, conferences and seminars.**

## Eastern Area: Adult outreach

### Cromer Museum

We supplied the loan of our Victorian handling collection to Wells Maltings for their Museums at Night event for adults on 19 May.

Throughout the Spring Term, we supported a new Family Learning course running at Holt Primary and called *The Pop-up Museum*. Adult Education's Family Learning team run a variety of courses in schools to encourage parents to learn alongside their children. This also provides an opportunity for parents to find out about other Adult Education courses that might help them develop new skills.

This new 10-week course was a joint project between Family Learning and NMAS, with the focus on parents and children developing a 'pop-up museum', or mini-exhibition, in the school. The theme for this pilot project was childhood and the course began with the parents and children handling a range of Victorian toys, children's clothes and school artefacts from the Cromer handling collections.

They went on to create replica toys and games, including marbles, cup and ball toys, a jack-in-the-box and even a toy castle! They researched and wrote text panels to accompany their exhibits and provide an historical context to the toys and childhood artefacts they'd created. This formed a small exhibition in the school entrance and provided a great opportunity for parents and children to celebrate what they had created together.

## **Norwich: Adult outreach**

### **Strangers' Hall**

Cathy Terry devised and piloted a new textiles tour of Strangers and the Bridewell and worked with Rod Stokes of Norwich Blue Badge Guides to formulate a trail that ran between the two museums.

### **The Royal Norfolk Regimental Museum**

For the coming year we plan to work with a group of servicemen from the Royal Anglians, and ex Royal Norfolk Regimental soldiers. We will be interviewing these groups, using certain key objects as a starting point to get first hand accounts about objects and to elicit more contextual information. This will then be used to populate our digital catalogue in the new display area.

### **Norwich Castle Museum – Design and Technical Department**

Various members of the Design and Technical team contributed to a project by City College students by taking the students around the galleries and talking to them about how they were produced. As a follow up to this we facilitated a session whereby we were judges to the students who gave a presentation of their work on 2 October 2012. We also gave a talk about the creation of the displays at the Bridewell Museum on 25 February 2013 to staff at the Ipswich Transport Museum.

## Norwich Castle Museum Curators

### Archaeology Department

Tim Pestell attended monthly meetings of two metal-detector clubs throughout year.

### Art Department

- Francesca Vanke gave workshops on decorative arts and on contemporary craft to U3A groups
- a joint talk with internationally known silversmith Rod Kelly at a contemporary silver event at Ickworth Hall
- a talk on international influences in decorative arts at Time and Tide Museum
- a joint introductory talk about *The Wonder of Birds* exhibition with Dave Waterhouse at a Biodiversity conference at UEA.

Hannah Higham / Harriet Loffler provided a report on behalf of the museum to Norfolk Contemporary Art Society and organised events for them within the museum, including Eastern Pavilions Portfolio talk and Private view.

Harriet Loffler and Hannah Higham have continued to work with NUA, in connection with MA in Curation students. Hannah Higham contributed to a session at a student exhibition.

### Costume and Textile Department

Staff brought a 1950s feel to the Royal Norfolk Show.

### Natural History Department

- Talk to the Wells-next-the-sea Local History Group – Norfolk Geology (David Waterhouse)
- Tony Irwin delivered a day-school at Holt Hall on the collection and identification of flies, in conjunction with the Norfolk and Norwich Naturalists Society.



*Curators Ruth Battersby-Tooke and Lisa Little bring the 1950s to the Royal Norfolk Show*

## Enquiries

Every day our museums receive enquiries from members of the public and organisations, including requests for the identification of objects. Responding to these enquiries in a timely and engaging way is an important part of the curators' role.

Research prompted by enquiries can also help enrich knowledge of the collections.

## Norwich: Enquiries

### Strangers' Hall

Strangers' Hall staff dealt with numerous enquiries related to the toy & games, food preparation and musical instrument collections, the Strangers of Norwich and Norwich textiles. They also responded to several requests to use the museum for photo shoots, mini-filming projects and as part of educational project work.

## IN FOCUS

### The Royal Norfolk Regimental Museum: From enquiry to publication – increasing access to knowledge

Enquiries to the Royal Norfolk Regimental Museum take many forms; from family history researchers looking for more information about a loved one who served with the Regiment, to academic researchers and journalists. We have a volunteer who works two days a week answering enquiries from members of the public, using archival documents and the RNRM library resources.

The curator responds to enquiries from academic researchers, and authors. For example last year, local journalist and author Steve Snelling has used the RNRM archive collections for research into his book '*A Proper Hell: Norfolk's Old Contemptibles*' which details the story of the 1st Battalion Norfolk Regiment between August and December 1914, and material for a book on the 7th Royal Norfolks in the Second World War, both to be published in 2014. Steve has also written two articles for *Britain at War* magazine, and six for the *Eastern Daily Press*, referencing RNRM archives.

*“ It is no exaggeration to say that many of the Eastern Daily Press articles which I have written and which have perpetuated the memory of so many former soldiers of the Royal Norfolk Regiment could not have been written without the generosity, support and expert guidance offered by the most enthusiastic team of archivists it has been my privilege to work alongside. ”*  
Steve Snelling, Journalist and author

## Norwich Castle Museum Curators

### Archaeology Department

Numerous archaeology enquiries; 246 were logged during the year by Tim Pestell.

### Art Department

Heather Guthrie responded to on-going enquiries regarding exhibition proposals which are taken to quarterly Norwich Museums Programming Committee meetings.

Hannah Higham responded to exhibition proposals regarding Graham Sutherland, Hubert Duprat and Colin Self.

Giorgia Bottinelli and Paris Agar, Exhibitions Co-ordinator, dealt with ongoing enquiries about the art collection and requests for identification of paintings.

### Natural History Department

From April 2012 to March 2013 the Natural History Department dealt with over 100 identification enquiries (as well as an increasing amount more via e-mail and the telephone). Around 160 individuals visited the natural history collections at the Castle Study centre (David Waterhouse, Tony Irwin and Molly Carter).

## Eastern Area: Enquiries

### Cromer Museum

The Cliftonville Hotel got in touch with the museum via Twitter to ask for our assistance with a history page for their new website. Alice provided them with some information about the history of the hotel and Alistair scanned a number of photographs of Edwardian Cromer for use on the website, which will in turn promote the museum.

13 enquiries on topics of: 1953 Flood Disaster leaflet, Empress Austria, The Bath House, Bertha Fowle Painting, Cedar Lodge - hotel that enquirer's grand parents stayed on their honeymoon successfully identified, Ditchell family, Poppyland china enquiry prompted by BBC Countryfile feature, Evacuees enquiry relating to Crossdale Street, artist Moray-Smith, Mural at Railway Station, Olive Edis, The wreck of the Ispolen.

During October we received 19 Enquiries plus three visits to the collections. Olive Edis attracted a number of enquiries, one from Ian Collins of the *Eastern Daily Press* who used some Edis photographs for the *Masterpieces* exhibition at the Sainsbury Centre for Visual Art which opened September 2013. The writer Paul Barnes (BBC) is also working on an article about her. Other subjects included the Pleasaunce at Overstrand. The BBC were

also in touch about Cromer Crabs for an episode of the cooking programme *The Hairy Bikers*. We also had correspondence relating to the Gerald Amis Band, a big band who played in the 1950s. An image from our collections was requested for use in a publication relating to Gansey knitting

In November there were 16 Enquiries (1836 storm, Poppyland story, Cromer Crab, Olive Edis, HH Tansley Photographs, 20c painting of East beach, Swafield Cross, Upton House.)

In March we heard from publisher Stephen Appleyard researching information for publication on the Cromer Crab. There were also enquiries relating to our Wells Gansey; the Grove, Cromer; an offer of Cromer Pictures; Cliff Lane Cottage and the Howes family.

### Time and Tide Museum

**Charles Harrison Oil painting enquiry.** Only oil painting by Harrison in the collections was sourced from the stored collections and brought out for a viewing for a family connected with the artist.

**Sanders knot enquiry and visit to the museum:** three generations of a family visited the archive to see knots donated by their grandfather at the turn of the last century. Comprehensive photography of the 70 pieces in the collection.

### Western Area: Enquiries

#### Ancient House Museum, Thetford

##### Japanese cultural exchange visit

In October the Museum was visited by a group from Japan keen to build cultural exchange with the Thetford area. Facilitated by Simon Kaner of the UEA School of Japanese studies, there are hopes for student exchange, internet resources and other forms of connections using the rich archaeological heritage of both areas, particularly flint and obsidian.

##### Visit from Satinder Sartaaaj

Satinder Sartaaaj visited the Ancient House with members of the Maharajah Duleep Singh Centenary trust and Cllr. Robert Kybird.

Dr. Satinder Sartaaaj (left in yellow) taught in the Music Department in Punjab University for 6 years. He has also written and recorded a number of best-selling albums of sufi music.

*Visit from Satinder Sartaaaj to the Ancient House*



### **Research into Princess Sophia Duleep Singh**

Also on the Duleep Singh connection, Ancient House staff have been assisting Anita Anand in her research into a new book about Sophia Duleep Singh, daughter of the Maharajah and a leading suffragette.

### **English Heritage interpretation at Thetford Warren Lodge**

The Museum was able to support English Heritage with images and research material for proposed new interpretation at the important medieval rabbit warrener's lodge between Thetford and Brandon.

### **Lynn Museum**

A full free identification and enquiry service was offered again at the Lynn Museum with support from colleagues from Gressenhall and Norwich.

### **Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse**

Curatorial staff and volunteers continued to assist with enquires and research into the collections and archives. Subjects ranged from 1953 floods, to information on Land Army Girls for a local history group. The curatorial team, along with research and collections volunteers, process around 20 enquiries per month. Around half of these concern the history of the workhouse and family history.

### **Social media**

**Staff are increasingly engaged with social media and work in conjunction with the new NMAS social media policy, designed to coordinate and develop the service's use of this important means of engaging audiences.**

**Staff are able to promote exhibitions, events and activities through this method. The increasing use of social media is also enabling curators to be proactive in appealing to the public for information about items in the collections.**

## Eastern Area: Social Media

### Cromer Museum

## IN FOCUS

### Cromer Museum: *Were you there?* Improving collections knowledge through community engagement

In April 2012 the museum uploaded a photograph to a Facebook group of former Southerland House School pupils to see if they could help identify any of the faces in it. The large school portrait was taken in 1954 and the museum had no record as to the identity of any of the students or teachers. The group has 166 members who use Facebook to share photos and memories of their time at the school and they are very keen to see the museum's small collection of SHS items. The group came to our attention following an enquiry we helped with last year and as its members live all over the country this is a useful way to promote access to our collections and tap in to their knowledge to enhance our documentation. This has led to some donations to the museum too.



*Cromer Primary School staff*

In October, Alice Mouncer posted an album of photographs which were recently donated to us by relatives of Miss K.D.L. Barrett, the head teacher at Cromer Primary School in the 1950s and 60s. The photos depict pupils and teachers at work and play; there are images of party games at the Parent Teacher Association Christmas do in 1951. People have been commenting on the photos, sharing memories of their school days and naming the people pictured, which has really enhanced our records.

This is part of a conversation between three former pupils reminiscing about the teachers pictured:

*“ The days of warm milk....yuk! I always thought Miss Barrett was very old, but she wore expensive looking clothes compared to the rest of the staff, she had crooked teeth. Yes - It put me off milk for life. At least we used to get days off in the winter when the outside loo's froze up. I think I liked being in Miss Larner's class the best, although she was very strict. Shirley had that picture of Ove Fundin\* inside her desk lid. My first teacher when we moved to Cromer in 1953 was Miss Wright, then I had Miss Larner for 2 years, strict but the one teacher I remember well, apart from Miss Barrett! Warm or frozen milk, there was never a happy medium: the crate used to be put in front of the fire in the classroom! ”*

\*Ove Fundin was a Swedish World Speedway Champion who was based in Norwich for a while.

In June an enquiry was made via the Cromer Museum Twitter account about the Preston family of Holt, which led to the sale of two reproduction photographs for a family history book due to be published in Australia. The Cliftonville Hotel also got in touch via Twitter to ask for our assistance with a history page on their new website.

In August a lady got in touch to say she remembers visiting her grandparents when they lived in one of the cottages which is now part of the museum. Apparently the water from the pump in the yard tasted delicious!

This is part of a comment she left on our page which describes the family home. *“ Many an hour was spent in the cottage, we were a very close knit family and the cottage was at the hub until the death of my granny who lived alone in the cottage for about ten years after the death of my grandad. My granny was brought up there by her aunt and uncle... They took in lodgers and when my grandad went to Cromer from Beccles or Bungay, he took up lodgings there, the rest as is said is history! The cottage always smelt of polish, my granny was a hard worker and kept her home very spick and span. The floor was red lino with rag rugs which were pegged by granny. ”*

We also posted a flier advertising bands playing at the West Runton Pavilion in 1979, including The Cure and Dave Lee Travis, which led to lots of people sharing their memories about gigs, both there and at the Royal Links Pavilion.

In January 2013, to mark the anniversary of the terrible 1953 floods, we compiled a short film using some of the dramatic photos from our collection and audio from Great Yarmouth and posted it on YouTube, Facebook and Twitter. The response to this and our other posts was really positive and triggered a lot of reminiscing and comments from all sorts of people near and far. A tweet from Cromer Museum was quoted on the Met Office's #Storify web-page - and the Met Office has a twitter following of 116,715! A good example of the positive, audience-reaching power of social-media.

By the end of March the video had been watched over 400 times. It has been re-tweeted by various organisations including the environment agency and the Institution of Civil Engineers.

## Time and Tide Museum

We were offered a new painting for the Great Yarmouth Museums collection from Dutch artist Bert Otto who contacted us through our Facebook page after having been inspired by a visit to the museum and a conversation with our social media champion George Mathieson on the Time and Tide Facebook pages.

Painting by Dutch artist Bert Otto



## **Norwich: Social Media**

### **Strangers' Hall**

Bethan Holdrige is the social media champion for Strangers' Hall, setting up facebook and twitter pages and building the museum's following. The uploading of stories, events info and tasters for activities is generating substantial interest as well as encouraging staff to think about the objects and the work they are doing with a view to sharing it with the wider world.

### **The Royal Norfolk Regimental Museum**

A Facebook residency, detailing a day 'behind the scenes putting a new display together' is planned for early summer. Project Officer Jenny Caynes will be giving NMAS Facebook followers an insight into the planning and preparation which has been going on to pull the new displays together.

### **Bridewell Museum**

Our most successful social media achievement this year, in fact any year, has been the Bridewell History Wall Project. The museum commissioned local photographer and digital media specialist Nick Stone to deliver a project to collect thousands of photographs from local people to form part of a 2m high and 10m long collage in our front entrance area. Nick was successful in attracting nearly 10,000 images through Flickr, Facebook and Twitter. The final result is the most stunning art work, which attracted many first-time visitors, as they popped in to see the final result.

Our work on Facebook and Twitter has continued on from this success. Hannah Henderson has increasingly taken on the work from Nick and we are continuing to build our audiences. So far on Facebook, we have attracted 1,227 'likes' and a recent post asking for help solving a puzzle attracted a reach of 727 users, with 87 engaged users. On Twitter we have amounted 2,480 tweets and have 1,405 followers.

### **Norwich Castle Museum – Design and Technical Department**

Digital media is becoming more important as an interpretation tool, for this reason the department has started to train staff in the use of digital media to meet this new expectation from our visitors.

## Norwich Castle Museum – Collections Management

Follow the work of the collections management team on twitter:  
[@NMASCollMan](#) (240 followers to date).

## Norwich Castle Museum Curators

### Archaeology Department

The *Norman Connections* project social media pages are run by Emma Reeve (museum trainee in Archaeology) and Angela Riley (Norman Connections Project Officer). The Facebook page currently has 89 'likes' and we have 124 followers on Twitter (including Marc Morris and Stonehenge!).

Norman Connections: [@NCNorwich Castle](#)

We took part in the annual [#askacurator](#) day on Twitter, as one of 622 museums in 37 countries who participated.

The Archaeology Department also has a blog which gives an insight into the day-to-day work of the team, created by Alan West (Curator of Archaeology).

### Art Department

Harriet Loffler worked on social media and Apps as part of *The Great British Art Debate* project.

Giorgia Bottinelli and Paris Agar created [@Castle\\_Art](#) Twitter feed at the end of January 2013, gaining 200+ followers by the end of March.

### Natural History Department

Molly Carter (Natural History 'Teaching Museum' trainee) launched the Natural History Department's Twitter and Facebook accounts. You can follow the Natural History department on Twitter at: [@NatHistNMAS](#), or on Facebook by searching: *Natural History NMAS*.

## Western Area: Social Media

### Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse

All members of the curatorial team regularly contribute to the Gressenhall Facebook, Twitter and blog. Once every three weeks, the Curator and Curatorial Assistant will take their turn at uploading content. Content is added to both the Facebook and Twitter accounts twice a day. During the closed season, content was uploaded once a day, and curatorial staff worked with others to develop 'themes' to the content, e.g. 'Movember', the A-Z of Gressenhall, Christmas Countdown and New for 2013. This level of

input has ensured that collections and displays feature very highly in the museum's presence on social media.

## Media highlights

The curatorial staff at NMAS include many with national and indeed international reputations in their field. They are often called on to share their knowledge by a range of programme makers and journalists. The following gives a flavour of this important element of the curators' role.

## Norwich: Media highlights

### IN FOCUS

#### Norwich Castle Museum Curators: *Britain's Secret Treasures* – National recognition for NMAS collections

Objects from our Natural History and Archaeology collections were featured in the ITV1 television series *Britain's Secret Treasures* (broadcast July 2012).

The 'Happisburgh Handaxe' – a c. 700,000-year-old flint tool from the North Norfolk coast, curated by NMAS department of Natural History – made it to number one in the top treasures. Tim Pestell (Senior Curator of Archaeology), David Waterhouse (Curator of Natural History), and Prof. Peter Robins (Archaeology Research Associate) were all involved in the broadcast.

Tim Pestell was also involved in the broadcast featuring the Balthild matrix, for the same television series.



*The 'Happisburgh Handaxe', a c. 700,000-year-old flint tool from the Norfolk coast and judged number one out of a shortlist of 50 objects of national importance in the ITV 1 television programme 'Britain's Secret Treasures'.*

## Norwich Castle Museum Curators

David Waterhouse talked about the West Runton Mammoth on **BBC *Look East*** in January 2013 because of the sad news that one of its discoverers – Mr Harold Hems passed away (at the age of 90).

Angela Riley, Tim Pestell and John Davies were interviewed for a programme about Norwich Castle, for **Radio Norfolk**. John Davies participated in a discussion on Radio Norfolk on the subject of Boudica and the Iron Age.

## Art Department

Francesca Vanke got national press coverage for winning the prestigious national competition **Art Fund Collect**.

She also achieved local press coverage for acquiring the glass roundels (see pg. 26).

*Queen Elizabeth II by Cecil Beaton* was already well covered by the national press however the **Eastern Daily Press** and **Norwich Evening News** picked up the show including local radio who interviewed Heather Guthrie and Charlotte Crawley at **Radio Norfolk** and at Norwich Castle. It was featured at the Royal Norfolk Show 2012 and as the lead story on the cover of **Your Norfolk** that summer.

*Magic Worlds* was a hugely successful show, covered by press in the lead up to the opening. The show benefitted from input from Tom Blofelt, creator of Bewilderwood and children's author who sponsored the show in kind and gave support through the events programme.

*Cedric Morris & Christopher Wood* achieved national media coverage.

Coverage of Mark Edwards acquisition was achieved in the *Art Fund Review*.

## Strangers' Hall

Cathy Terry gave a presentation on Norwich Strangers/economic migrants to **Future Radio**, a Norwich-based community radio station, for podcast to European local radio stations.

There was local press coverage of plans for Friends-funded additional opening days and for the chandelier restoration.

## Bridewell Museum

Our Valentine's Eve event attracted the support and interest of local tourism agency Visit Norwich. Our partnership work ensured that we received some fantastic media coverage in publications such as the *Evening News*, *Let's Talk Magazine* and *Readers Digest Magazine* (which has an amazing readership of 280,000).

*Press coverage for  
Bridewell Museum's  
Valentine's Eve events*



## Eastern Area: Media highlights

### Cromer Museum

On Friday 13 July *BBC Country File* came to the museum to film Alistair Murphy and Peter Stibbons talking about *Clement Scott and the Poppyland legend*. The sequences shot in the museum focused on local chemist and business man Daniel Davison and the perfume 'Poppyland Bouquet', which he sold in his shop in Jetty Street. The programme was aired in August 2012. It also featured one of our regular Mardlers, Jeanette Risebrow, recalling the day she was proposed to at The Marrams shelter on the West cliffs.

Following a story about a lion in Essex **BBC Look East** came to the museum in August to film a piece about Lisa the lioness who escaped from Cromer Zoo in 1984 and was shot dead by police.

Helen McDermott of **BBC Radio Norfolk** came to the first of our summer Victorian days with Punch and Judy, Victorian crafts and costumed characters. She recorded interviews with Rollo about his Punch and Judy show and the Curator regarding the Olive Edis collection.

In February the Curator promoted the Museum on **Radio Norfolk** with Stephen Bumphrey. One topic discussed was the new museum publication about the long gone Danish Pavilion, Overstrand, written by Claire Pettit, one of our Front of House staff. This magnificent building was transported from The Paris World Expo of 1900, and re-erected in Overstrand. It was owned and lived in by various eminent people, and ended its "life" as a motel and bar, before being demolished in 1991 to be replaced by a bungalow development.

The book was launched in mid February to coincide with our *Free in February* month and got good coverage in the **Eastern Daily Press**, **North Norfolk News**, and the local media.

In March, publication of an article in **The Lady Magazine** about Olive Edis, by Paul Barnes, featured the Curator, along with many images from the collection.

### Time and Tide Museum

The museum was featured in an **ITV Anglia** news story about the Time and Tide museum and the suspension bridge painting and the disaster.

We welcomed **BBC Coast** to the museum to film some of the WW1 collections about Zeppelin attacks on Great Yarmouth.

On radio, Time and Tide's collections featured on **BBC Radio 4** and **Radio 2** documentaries on Captain Manby and his legacy in Lifesaving and the *You are Here* exhibition.

**Radio Norfolk** visited the museum in January for the anniversary of the 1953 Floods and broadcast all morning with the curator talking about the history and an appeal for memories of the event.

Articles appeared in the *Eastern Daily Press* and press promoting the museums and the collections, especially the ethnographic and world cultures collections highlights from the summer exhibition.

## **Western Area: Media highlights**

### **Lynn Museum**

Two television film crews visited the Lynn Museum in 2012. **BBC4** have been filming in the Seahenge Gallery for a programme on wood, whilst ITV have filmed the Sedgeford Hoard for a series exploring Treasure finds. Both were charged filming fees under the terms of the standard NMAS Filming Agreement.

### **Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse**

We worked closely with local press to do an appeal for more information about local door-to-door salesman, Freddie Beckerton. (see page 25). This proved successful, and we were able to pass information and contacts on to his surviving family. We have good coverage in the local newspapers, and BBC Radio Norfolk included a special feature on the donation of his suitcases, recorded at Gressenhall.

National press coverage was received for the appearance of one of our workhouse dolls in an exhibition at the Florence Nightingale Museum in London.

### 3 RESILIENCE

Curators contribute to the resilience and sustainability of the museums service in a number of ways, particularly through collections management. A robust approach to this aspect of the service's work is essential in ensuring resilience in a demanding and changing climate. As well as being central to museum security, object location control, understanding the collections and ensuring their survival for posterity, strong collections management also contributes to the service's efficiency targets through an ongoing rationalisation programme. This ensures that collections are assessed on a regular basis and those not suitable for display or study needs are found alternative homes. In this way resources can be focused in the most appropriate areas, saving money on storage and other costs.

A strong programme of preventative conservation is also important for the long-term sustainability of the collections, and a cost-effective way of managing them to avoid the development of problems which would be expensive to put right. Alongside this, building improvements, such as installation of LED lighting and improved security systems, ensure collections are displayed and stored as safely and efficiently as possible.

Curators are also working with colleagues to ensure NMAS maximises its commercial potential – examples of creative ideas for income generation are featured below.

The benefits of Partnerships, which are also considered in this section, are another mechanism for ensuring resilience and developing opportunities for the future.

#### **Collections management and rationalisation**

Collections review and rationalisation are an important part of the process of managing collections; allowing resources to be spent on those collections which are core to the mission of NMAS, and bringing collections to a wider audience. The NMAS process is rigorous: rationalisation candidates are proposed by curators to an internal Rationalisation Committee formed of Collections Management and Conservation staff, before being submitted to the Joint Museums and Archaeology Committee (JMAC) at Norfolk County Council for formal approval.

#### **Collections Management Department: An overview**

Not every object proposed as a rationalisation candidate is accepted by the Rationalisation Committee and other avenues are always explored. A cast iron spandrel (roof support) from Norwich City Station, cast by Norwich iron founders Barnard Bishop & Barnard was deemed to be too significant to transfer out of the collections, however there is no foreseeable prospect of displaying

it within an NMAS museum. It has now been made publicly accessible through a five-year renewable loan to the William Marriott Museum at Holt Station where it is on display.

Reorganisation may offer an excellent and cost-effective alternative to disposal: the material from archaeological excavations, especially pottery sherds, occupies a sizeable percentage of the Gressenhall stores, and a reduction of over 7% was made simply through reorganising and reboxing into standard sized boxes.

The Collections Curator carried out a thorough review of objects formerly on display at the old Bridewell Museum and a number were approved for rationalisation in January 2013. Homes for some of these objects have already been found – the Museum of the Broads, Stalham, was pleased to accept the unique ‘water cycle’ (a homemade contraption consisting of a bicycle frame mounted on two floats) and a V-twin marine steam engine, while a water pump from Brancaster has found a new home at the Herefordshire Waterworks Museum which will restore it to working order. The former Norwich City Station dray (horse-drawn delivery vehicle) is in the process of being transferred to the North Norfolk Railway, where it will be restored to its old glory and used as part of freight handling demonstrations. The Railway also received three prams in varying states of repair, which it is busy restoring for use in its education sessions. A printing press, which had no particular relevance to Norfolk, has been transferred to the Reading University Typographical Collections.

Many of these objects were large and bulky items, so rehoming them has generated a considerable amount of space within our stores. This, plus new shelving and reorganisation at Gressenhall and the reopening of The Bridewell in July 2012, allowed us to reduce the number of objects held at our temporary stores in North Walsham. We were able to vacate two units, saving over £15,000 annually in rent and fees. One unit has been retained until January 2014 to create space for collections temporarily displaced from Gressenhall during the *Shine a Light* project, after which it will also be vacated.

An important innovation was achieved when the Archaeology Review & Rationalisation Strategy was completed and approved by JMAC. This provides pre-permission for members of the Archaeology Department to review and select for disposal certain archaeological material of limited research, scientific, cultural or display value provided that the guidance in the Strategy is followed. Examples of the types of material under consideration include brick and tile, building stone with no traces of human intervention, and unprovenanced material. All material selected for rationalisation must fit the categories laid down in the Strategy and must be selected by an independent expert and acknowledged specialist in their field. Their decision is then

reviewed by the NMAS Rationalisation Committee, after which any material destined for rationalisation will be fully recorded before final disposal. An annual notification of disposals will be made to JMAC every January.

## **Norwich: Collections management and rationalisation**

### **Strangers' Hall**

#### **Collections management and rationalisation**

The progression of plans for rationalisation by contributing to Social History policy development, support for *Shine a Light* project and improvements in collections storage at Strangers' Hall has been a priority task this year.

All staff are contributing to preparations for Strangers' Hall Accreditation application, including documentation and conservation plans, collections audit and salvage plans.

#### **Conservation**

Cathy Terry, Senior Curator of Social History, (with David Harvey, Conservation) worked with leading silk weaver Richard Humphries to restore/ re-commission the Jacquard loom to ensure that not only is it fit for purpose in terms of weaving, but that its conservation requirements are fully taken into consideration when operating it.

Bethan Holdridge, Curatorial Assistant, organised the annual deep clean, including a training event, and a three week top-to-bottom cleaning of all period room displays, with support from Sarah Norcross-Robinson, Conservator, Juliette Ovenden and a large volunteer team drawn from our 'pool'.

Bethan also introduced a 'housekeeping master folder'; taking images of all objects in room displays, marking locations and logging specific conservation requirements and condition notes.

She has organised the Integrated Pest Management programme for Strangers' Hall, ensuring that housekeeping and moth check programmes are maintained and training Lyn Temple to assist.

#### **Building improvements**

Strangers' Hall staff have worked closely with the Building Services supervisor and the City's Buildings Surveyor, to oversee a substantial programme of building-related and security work to ensure the Hall is fit for purpose. During the course of the year security and Vesta systems have been upgraded and repairs carried out to the small Coach House roof, Great Hall ceiling, wood-work of stair turret and guttering. The damp problem in the office and public toilets has also been addressed.

## The Royal Norfolk Regimental Museum

As part of the re-display project, all of the collections going on display were assessed by the NMAS in-house Conservation Team, along with specialist freelance support on textile conservation. Where required, bespoke mounts were designed for objects, ensuring their long term stability.

A new location for stored items has been identified and re-assessing and moving the collections are a key element of post-project work for late 2013.

## Bridewell Museum

John Renton, Collections Curator, has been a member of the *Shine a Light* project team working on social history collections stored at Superstore 1 at Gressenhall. The team have been preparing an inventory of the collections, upgrading documentation, and raising standards of collections care. The project incorporates a selective and considered programme of rationalisation.

## Norwich Castle Museum Curators

### Art Department

Francesca Vanke, Keeper of Art, continued supervision of a volunteer on updating locations for silver collections in store.

Hannah Higham, Curator of Modern & Contemporary Art, worked with Marjolijn Dijkman and Caroline Wright – two artists keen to make new artwork from de-accessioned collections.

Giorgia Bottinelli, Curator of Historic Art, and Paris Agar, Exhibitions Co-ordinator, started an art store project with Conservation and Display, reorganising the painting stores and updating database locations. One store has been completed entirely and a second store started.

### Costume and Textile Department

Duplicate objects for rationalisation were identified, and by compacting the collections and standardising box sizes, I was able to save the equivalent of 50 standard dress boxes on our racking. This has allowed for additional space to accommodate the Norwich Textiles pattern book collection which came back from the Archive centre and could no longer be stored at the newly re-developed Bridewell.

### Natural History Department

Fourteen large cases of birds were handed over to **Hampshire Museums Service**, following research into their provenance, which demonstrated that they had been made in Hampshire (Tony Irwin). Several fluid-preserved marine specimens from SW England

were given to **Plymouth City Museum and Art Gallery**. In return they gave us fluid-preserved marine specimens from East Anglia. Neither of us reduced the size of our collections, but we have made them more relevant (Tony Irwin and David Waterhouse).

## IN FOCUS

### Archaeology rationalisation: Improving storage at Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse to save resources

The Superstores at Gressenhall form a large part of NMAS's storage facility for archaeological material. As part of the county-wide rationalisation programme, the Department of Archaeology has set an ambitious target of a 10-15% reduction in its overall storage volume.

To achieve this reduction with the minimum need to de-accession or dispose of objects and archives, a small team, led by Alan West, Curator of Archaeology, and overseen by Jamie Everitt, Collections Development Manager, has been working at Gressenhall between November 2012 and April 2013.



*Staff re-packing Archaeology collections at The Superstore, Gressenhall*

The team, including Natasha Harlow and Rebecca Bradshaw, with assistance from Vicky Singleton (on IFA work placement), concentrated on the large excavation archive from the Castle Mall dig, and the human skeletal remains from Burgh Castle Anglo-Saxon cemetery and the medieval graveyard of St Margaret Fyebriggate on Magdalen Street, Norwich.

In many cases, half-full boxes were combined and repacked to create space on the pallets and roller-racking. At the same time, labelling and barcoding were updated and non-standard and damaged boxes were replaced. Documentation and location data were also recorded to be added to MODES catalogue records.

This resulted in 609 boxes being removed from the shelving and pallets, without the loss of a single artefact from the collections. This represents an amazing 6.5% of the target figure. It is hoped to continue the project later in the year with repacking of cremation urns from the Spong Hill Anglo-Saxon cemetery.

This is part of a wider rationalisation of collections stored at Gressenhall – see below for details – which will not only save space, but will significantly increase public access to collections.

## Income generation

The shop manager has worked with local weaver and textiles artist, Sue Foster, to establish NMAS's first collection-based products in the Heritage Collection range, now available for sale in the shop.

## Western Area: Collections management and rationalisation

### Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse

In the middle of August 2012 the decision was taken to relocate outside collections to more covered areas, rationalise and document them properly. These collections are being formally put through the rationalisation process or found new storage locations.

With the assistance of the Collections Development Assistant, the curatorial staff at Gressenhall have been able to move forward with the disposal and dispersal of a number of collections identified for rationalisation. So far, a total of 45 large objects have been processed.

During the year, a documentation plan for the Gressenhall Collections was developed by the curatorial team. Collections volunteers have continued to audit the small object store, which was also reorganised. Security and access procedures were improved by reducing access to keys to stores and collections and introducing a signing-out system.

Volunteers and staff have continued to work towards improving documentation of the collections by updating locations, adding photographs to MODES, and improving the information recorded in records. A project to scan in all the accession registers was completed, and the backlog of accessioning from 2012 was cleared. A new IPM system was created and implemented, and the system for accessing the freezer was improved.

*The Superstores at the start of the Shine a Light project*

The single biggest collections management project undertaken by curatorial staff this year was to plan, create and lead the *Shine a Light* project. The **Esmée Fairbairn Collections Fund** is supporting this major project to reorganise, catalogue, rationalise and compact several thousand museum objects stored in the Superstores. Some of the collections have not been accessed for around 15 years, and a significant amount of assessment will be necessary. The Gressenhall Curator leads the *Shine*



a *Light* project team based in the superstore. The team comprises the Project Officer and two Teaching Museum trainees, supported by the NMAS conservation and collections management team, as well as several Norwich-based curators.

## **Lynn Museum**

Work continues on preventative conservation, using the conservation management plan, assisted by Debbie Forkes from the Conservation Department and Samantha Johns, Documentation Officer.

The Lynn Museum has improved security with additional alarms in place and a staff focus on invigilation and security checks.

Planning work has started on moving the contents of ceramics, costume and textiles stores to the main museum store.

## **Eastern Area: Collections management and rationalisation**

### **Cromer Museum**

#### **Collections management and rationalisation**

Alice Mouncer spent time in 2012 creating MODES records for the recently acquired collection of photos and ephemera belonging to Miss K.D.L. Barrett, head teacher at Cromer Primary School in the 1950s and 60s. Alice uploaded an album of the photographs to the museum's Facebook page which has created a lot of interest and people have been able to name many of the pupils pictured which has helped a great deal with documentation (see page 72). The collection includes a number of Victorian and Edwardian photographs of the Barrett family but we were unsure of the exact dates. Staff at Norfolk Records Office were able to provide us with a copy of the 1911 census record for the Barrett family which includes their dates of birth and will enable us to date the family photographs much more accurately.

Many photographs and objects have been documented both by the Curator and volunteer Norman Ascough. A collection of photographs taken in 2000 of the various shops in Cromer has been scanned and documented as well as hundreds of photographs from a private collection covering Cromer during the war and into the 1980s.

#### **Conservation**

##### *Regular housekeeping and Integrated Pest Management (IPM)*

Kate Banks has been responsible this year for regularly vacuuming the museum throughout and for monitoring quarterly IPM checks.

##### *Axe Head Display*

In April 2012, Sarah Norcross-Robinson and Kate Banks

mechanically removed the sticky fixers from the axe heads but the objects were not de-greased. MODES records were edited and updated accordingly. Photos were taken of more powdery, green vivid patches on objects CCRMU: 1983.1.3 and CCRMU: 1984.1.4

### *Annual Deep Clean*

Slightly later than planned (due to snow!) the annual deep clean took place on January 28th 2013. The clean was well attended by relief staff and valued volunteers. Each room (and both stairs) was topped and tailed, floors, ceilings and walls vacuumed and window sills and skirting boards wiped down. Geology gallery cases were opened and any cobwebs got rid of. The cottage kitchen and bedroom were vacuumed, surfaces wiped down and textiles brushed/cleaned using the museum vac. The bed was re-made, using a new linen sheet (prop item). The shop floor mat was lifted and floor dried out. The education room was also cleaned.

### *Future Conservation 'Action' Dates*

Prior to the deep clean, Sarah Norcross-Robinson visited Cromer to 'walk through' the museum and give advice on any conservation issues. There is damage on the Moray Smith mural CRRMU: 2010.27 and Sarah is set to come to Cromer on 8 July 2013 to work on it. Sarah will also study the damage on the Miller Marshall frame and possibly take it to the lab for repair. Sarah and Kate will also look at the Museum picture fittings on display, ahead of the Conservation Cleaning Day we have planned on 5 August 2013. This will take place in the education room and be supervised by Sarah. Visiting public will be welcome to watch/ask questions etc.

### **Building improvements**

The lighting in the public sections of the museum have been mostly replaced with cheaper systems that both use less power and switch off when the galleries are empty.

### **Time and Tide Museum**

#### **Collections management and rationalisation**

Rationalisation of the bike store



*Before the rationalisation*



*After the rationalisation*

### **Building improvements**

New alarms were fitted around Time and Tide on all high profile collections and those deemed more at risk, like unglazed paintings. The Great Yarmouth Museums assessment of all the collections on display at the three museums was also completed with Sam Johns.

### **Income generation**

In October 2012 we redesigned our guidebook for Time and Tide Museum to showcase our new gallery displays and took the opportunity to photograph the collections and reinvigorate the commercial aspects of the museum offer.

## **Elizabethan House Museum**

### **Conservation**

Working with conservator Julie Crick, scaffolders and the Display team, the paintings which adorn the main staircase were removed, de-framed and cleaned as they had become susceptible to mould growing on the inside of the glass. It was an opportunity to see



behind these famous Norwich School paintings and have a rare glimpse of the artists' signatures and attributions on the back of the frames, like the Alfred Stannard example pictured here.

### **Building improvements**

Elizabethan House has been a hive of activity, with new CCTV and fire systems also being fitted.

### **Income generation**

Major works have also included the complete refurbishment of the shop and the new entrance to the museum. The project was initially suggested by the Visitor Services team, who noticed that the layout of the reception area created a bottleneck for visitors and many walked past the gift shop not even realising it was there. One of the original doors to the house has been re-used, and now opens onto a new reception and shop area. A new desk has been installed and the layout of the gift shop has been completely redesigned. The new layout will improve the visitor experience and have a positive effect on retail income.

## Partnerships

Partnerships provide advantages of scale and can help the organisation progress at a time of financial pressures. Joint working arrangements are often required to fulfil funding applications and other commitments. In essence, partnerships allow us to do more than we could do alone.

### Eastern Area: Partnerships

#### Cromer Museum

Partnership working was undertaken during July and August 2012 with the Extended Schools Coordinator at **Cromer Academy** to deliver summer school activities. We ran activities in the first and last weeks of the summer holidays. One was themed around creating an exhibition of fossils from the handling collection. The other was themed around creating a play based on two murals by J Moray Smith, on display in the museum.

In January liaison was undertaken with Brenda Seymour, **Arts Officer at North Norfolk District Council**, towards an Archive Cinema Event. We also organised visits to Gressenhall to see the West Runton Mammoth remains, liaising with David Waterhouse at the Castle and Ruth Burwood at Gressenhall. A Cromer Friends group were the first to take up this offer in April.

In March the Curator talked to the **Cromer Chamber of Trade** about what Cromer Museum has to offer in terms of drawing visitors into the town for the benefit of all businesses.

Other partnership work included writing a letter of support for the **Belfry Arts Project**; a meeting towards the creation of an Eastern Area Collections Plan with Display, Conservation and Fiona Ford, NMAS Registrar, in Shirehall and continued liaison with **East Runton History Society**.

#### Time and Tide Museum

##### ***Stories from the Sea project***

In September 2012 Time and Tide Museum launched its partnership with **Royal Museums Greenwich** on the Arts Council England-funded *Stories from the Sea* project. This project will support teachers to raise attainment in writing by inspiring the young writers of tomorrow to explore our local and national maritime past through world-class museum collections, intriguing stories and unforgettable characters.

During the project we aim to work with 4,500 students from up to 100 local schools. We will develop new events for key stage 1 and

key stage 2 students with maritime heritage themes. The first of these was a *Pirates!* event at Time and Tide which we piloted in the spring term 2013.

We will be working with a writer-in-residence to offer a programme of CPD for teachers to support them to develop students' writing. We will also develop an online toolkit to support this work and create opportunities to publish students' work, including two high-profile events at the National Maritime Museum in London.

This project has been designed to complement the English Heritage-run *Heritage Schools* project which is also piloting in Great Yarmouth. We plan to recruit some of the same schools working on this initiative to form a core group of schools to help us develop and pilot *Stories from the Sea* activities, which will then roll out to the other schools. This will enable us to maximise the benefits of both projects to local schools.

This is a great opportunity to develop our relationships with schools and increase both our capacity and the number of schools visits to Great Yarmouth Museums. The project will also provide great opportunities to strengthen links with our national museum partners, sharing skills, knowledge collections and archives.

## Western Area: Partnerships

### Lynn Museum

NMAS supported colleagues from the **Borough Council** with the development of a proposal and funding bid for a major project aimed at improving access to the Town Hall. NMAS has been assisting with the consultation stage for this project, which included the establishment of an inclusive Consultative Forum. NMAS also helped organise a family open day in the Town Hall on the afternoon of Saturday 21 July 2012.

NMAS continues to provide curatorial advice, support and an enquiry service for those Borough collections currently held in the Town Hall including fine art and Civic Regalia. This role continues to form part of the recently confirmed Service Level Agreement for 2012-13. NMAS staff recently supported an extensive programme of revaluation for Town Hall collections.

The **Museum Friends** continued to offer a varied programme for members including lunchtime talks, trips and an annual lecture. The Friends continued to support a long-term conservation programme for parts of the fine art collections and recently provided funds to support the latest stage of this project. The Friends kindly paid for two oil paintings to be conserved, repaired, cleaned and reframed.

## IN FOCUS

### Lynn Museum: Fens Museum Partnership – Co-production in action

King's Lynn Museums continue to lead the Fens Museum Partnership. The development and delivery of the HLF-funded partnership project *Fenland Lives and Land* is now underway, with £358,000 awarded to the project over the next three years. Stuart Hall was appointed to the post of full time Project Officer and Ruth Farnan appointed to the part-time post of Support Worker. Both staff are based in the NMAS offices at 46 Queen Street.



*Fenland Lives and Land* aims to explore the complex relationship between Fenland people and their landscape. The project is giving local communities the chance to get involved in co-producing a range of exhibitions and also supporting capacity building and skills development in partner museums. The project aims to facilitate the development of sustainable relationships with local community organisations through a "cluster" delivery model. The project involves the development of five exhibitions exploring a range of landscape themes and using a variety of different media. The choice of exhibition themes has been informed by consultation with existing and potential community partners and the wider public. The exhibitions will tour museum partners and community venues and will be supported by programmes of formal and informal learning, delivered both on-site and as outreach.

The current membership of the Fens Museum Partnership comprises:

- The Cambridge County Folk Museum
- Cambridgeshire County Council Museums Development Officer
- Chatteris Museum
- Downham Market Heritage Society
- Ely Museum
- The Farmland Museum, Denny Abbey
- The Great Fen Project
- Lynn Museum
- March & District Museum
- St Neots Museum
- The Norris Museum, St Ives
- Octavia Hill Birthplace Trust, Wisbech
- Peterborough Museum & Art Gallery
- Prickwillow Museum
- Ramsey Rural life Museum
- Thorney Heritage Centre
- Whittlesey Museum
- Wisbech & Fenland Museum

## Norwich: Partnerships

### Strangers' Hall

Cathy Terry (working with Hannah Henderson, Curator of Social History) made successful applications to the **Worshipful Company of Weavers** and to the **Costume and Textiles Association**, each for £5,000 to support the training of local weavers to use the Jacquard loom and demonstration of a working loom to the public.

Cathy is working with Dr Chris King (University of Nottingham) and Dr Anthony Masinton (University of York) on a digital reconstruction of the parlour at Strangers' Hall, combining evidence from the building itself, documentary sources and objects in the collection.

### The Royal Norfolk Regimental Museum

Funding partners for the *Soldiers' Stories* project are: HLF, DCMS Wolfson, The Community Covenant, RNRM Trustees, and ACE.

### Norwich Castle Museum Curators

#### Archaeology Department

The main focus of the Archaeology Department for this year in terms of partnerships has been the *Norman Connections* project (see pg. 10).

Joint project activities include a bilingual website promoting our shared Norman heritage and the display of partner sites and collections, as well as computer reconstructions and virtual tours of the partner castles.

Norwich project activities have also established and reinforced relations with **English Heritage**, the **British Museum** and the **Castle Studies Group**.

#### Art Department

Francesca Vanke's work continued to build on the Museum's relationships with national museums, including **National Gallery**, **Tate**, **British Museum**, **Victoria and Albert Museum**, **Natural History Museum** and **Wallace Collection**, by giving seminar papers and obtaining loans for the future *The Wonder of Birds* exhibition. Building on the Museum's relationship with The **Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts**, Francesca advised on loans for their *Masterpieces* exhibition (Sept 2013) and by contributing essays on Norwich Castle's decorative arts collections for the catalogue.

Giorgia Bottinelli has made an important contribution to the major Anglo-French *Norman Connections* partnership (see pg. 10), curating two associated exhibitions:

- *John Sell Cotman: A Picturesque Tour of Norfolk and Normandy* (30 March 2013 – 16 March 2014)
- *Gerard Stamp: Conquest* (30 March – 29 September 2013)

Heather Guthrie, Exhibitions Officer, has been working with the following partners:

- Project proposal discussed with **Ashmolean Museum**, Oxford for an exhibition for spring 2015 concerning loan of their recent acquisition *Portrait of Mademoiselle Claus*, by Edouard Manet
- Initial interest noted with the **National Gallery**, London for possible loan of Rembrandt's *Self-Portrait, 1669* during a proposed national tour for 2016.

Hannah Higham has been liaising with:

- Arts Council Collection
- Contemporary Art Society
- Eastern Pavilions Network
- All the *Great British Art Debate* (GBAD) partners
- Hayward Touring, Southbank Centre
- History Rising (supported by the Mondrian Fund)
- Mascalls Gallery
- Norfolk Contemporary Art Society
- Norfolk and Norwich Festival
- Norwich University of the Arts
- Sculpture for Norwich
- Tate – final leg of *GBAD* show *Family Matters*
- University of East Anglia

### **Natural History Department**

- Tony Irwin, Senior Curator of Natural History, sits on the Council and the Research Committee of the **Norfolk and Norwich Naturalists Society**
- Tony Irwin is a member of the Advisory Panel of the **Norfolk Biological Information Service**
- Tony Irwin is also a Committee Member and the Treasurer of the **Natural Sciences Collections Association**
- David Waterhouse, Curator of Natural History, is General Secretary and Newsletter Editor for the **Geological Society of Norfolk**
- David Waterhouse is a steering group member of **Norfolk Geodiversity Partnership**

This year, the Natural History Department has worked with the following institutions: the **British Museum**, **Cambridge University**, **Easton College**, **English Heritage**, **Great Yarmouth College**, the **National Trust**, the **Natural History Museum**, London, **Norfolk Geodiversity Partnership**, **Norwich City Council**, **Royal Holloway University of London**, **University of Durham**, **University of East Anglia**, the **University of Nottingham**, **University of Oxford**, **University of Roehampton**, the **University of Southampton**, **Werkgroep Pleistocene Zoogdieren** (Pleistocene Mammal Working Group, the Netherlands).

## **4 LEADERSHIP AND WORKFORCE – INVESTING IN THE SECTOR**

**This year saw the start of a major new initiative for NMAS in the form of the Teaching Museum programme, the first of its kind in the country, which will see the service taking a leadership role in broadening access to the museum profession.**

**The old adage ‘By teaching we learn’ informs the Teaching Museum programme and the Service’s approach to workforce development in general. The Teaching Museum is enabling existing staff to develop new skills as they take on the role of supervisors and mentors to the first cohort of eight paid trainees. A number of staff also act as Museum Mentors to smaller, independent museums in Norfolk which provides an opportunity to reflect on and share best practice across all aspects of museum work.**

**SHARE Museums East, the region’s well-established and very successful museum development programme, is led by NMAS and continues to deliver a wealth of opportunities to museums across the region – from one-day training courses through to intensive cohort projects which focus on specific issues such as museum governance. Many NMAS staff benefit from SHARE through attending and delivering courses and through membership of the various networks which SHARE fosters.**

**SHARE Museums East has an inclusive ethos, drawing on the freely given expertise and resources of the sector to provide cost-effective development opportunities. Voluntary and paid staff alike are welcome to access its resources. As a result the museum sector in the East of England is highly networked, self-sustaining and increasingly confident in its delivery to the public.**

### **Volunteers**

**Volunteering in NMAS can take many forms, from the student on work placement to formal research conducted by our Research Associates, to enthusiasts and specialists who bring valuable experience to our museums. The relationship is mutually beneficial and the Service is able to deliver more because of the volunteers’ contribution, while providing the community with a rich resource of volunteering opportunities.**

## Eastern Area: Volunteers

### Time and Tide Museum

#### Freelancers and Education

Freelancers who assist the education team at Great Yarmouth were invited to a development and training session at the Time and Tide Museum. The aim of the session was to celebrate a successful year of schools' delivery and also to reflect on the service provided.

Participants were each asked to appraise specific sessions and discussions followed about how to further develop the workshops. The freelancers were invited to try out 'wronging exercises' and build 'quirky' character traits.

The training day allowed everybody to evaluate and reflect on current practice and will ensure continued excellent feedback in terms of numbers and quality this coming year. It was also great fun and enjoyed by all!



*The Tudor gown*

#### The Stitches Group

##### *Creating Costumes*

The talented members from Time and Tide's 'Stitchers in Time' sewing group have this year created a sumptuous Tudor gown, elegantly modelled in the photograph by one of our volunteers, Anne Watling. The outfit, which will be used during school and family events at Great Yarmouth Museums, consists of an underskirt, overskirt with boned bodice, beaded inner and slashed outer sleeves and is topped by a decorated Spanish style hood. The Stitchers rose to the considerable challenges this garment raised with great skill and lots of humour and are proud to show off their latest creation.

The Tudor outfit is the latest garment in a series of costumes produced by the Stitchers which includes an Edwardian bathing outfit, for use at Cromer museum, and several Victorian working garments. In addition to sewing costumes, the Stitchers have also carried out running repairs to bring previously un-loved costumes back into service and they are continuing to create hand-crafted items which are selling in the museums' shops.

##### *The Jubilee Banner*

To celebrate the Queen's Coronation in 1953, pupils from the Priory School in Great Yarmouth produced a banner made up of twenty felt panels, each sewn and embellished to reflect life in the town at the time of the coronation. All the panels, which have been individually embroidered and 'signed' by their makers, depict a variety of colourful scenes including hockey and netball players, skaters, divers, river and beach scenes as well as the Priory School's and the town's coats of arms. Following repair by the Stitches the



*Coronation banner*



Victorian dress

banner has been donated to Time and Tide and was part of the museum's Diamond Jubilee exhibition.

### *Corset Making Workshop*

The Stitchers recently enjoyed a MasterClass in corset-making. On nearing completion of their latest project, the Stitchers realised that their Victorian evening dress needed to be supported by appropriate undergarments. Rather than simply requesting that a corset, associated

petticoats, crinolines and bustles be purchased, these intrepid and adventurous needlewomen expressed a wish to learn how to sew such garments for themselves. As the sewing group at Strangers' Hall often come across similar challenges, the invitation to add to their sewing skills was extended and Ian Chipperfield, a staymaker and costumier, was booked to teach a workshop at the Time and Tide.

The day proved to be full, busy and very productive. The eleven attendees were taught complicated construction techniques including boning, use of the rigid steels, busk insertion and eyeletting, and all were given the opportunity to make their own samples to be used for future reference. The sewers also had the opportunity to put their skills into practice by constructing a full size complete corset to be worn with the Victorian dress and other items of replica period clothing.

The afternoon ended with a demonstration of how to dress a Victorian lady, modelled by Ian's accomplice Penny, which illustrated the development of the corset and the relationship of the corset to the outer clothing.

Feedback comments were very positive with all of the attendees saying that they had learnt new skills and were both inspired and encouraged by the workshop. In addition, the volunteers said that their learning would enhance the sewing work they did within NMAS. We look forward to the creation of further splendid and elegant garments to add to our handling and replica costume collections.

### **Awards**

Morris Jackman, a volunteer for Eastern Area Museums Service, was presented with an award by Great Yarmouth Community Trust in recognition of his inspiring and tireless voluntary work in the borough. Morris volunteers primarily with NMAS but also with the Lydia Eva & Mincarolo Trust and the Norfolk & Suffolk Aviation Museum.

Morris, a retired custodian of the Maritime Museum, is over 70 years old but continues his links with the museum service and the town's maritime history by regularly helping out at all three NMAS sites in Great Yarmouth. He was nominated by the Time and Tide team for his enthusiasm, technical expertise, positive attitude, his readiness to turn his hand to new skills and very importantly, his unfailing cheerfulness.



*Volunteer Morris working on one of our events teaching knot making*

The award was presented to Morris at a well attended ceremony at the Masonic Lodge in Great Yarmouth, by the deputy mayor Barry Coleman. Councillor Coleman was interested to hear of Morris' most recent role as a 'Rat Catcher' for the museum – fortunately this is a costumed medieval character and not a modern day vermin control officer!

## IN FOCUS

### Great Yarmouth Museums: A volunteer's perspective

*“When I was asked to write about a typical day in a life of a curatorial volunteer, my immediate reaction was there really is no such thing as a “typical day” at Time and Tide. Although I have my long-term project working on cataloguing archive history files, almost every Friday has seen me stepping into the Curator's office not knowing what other excitements the day ahead would bring.*

*Will I be delving into the archives to answer one of the many public enquiries? Or composing text for a graphic panel for one of the temporary exhibitions? Or taking a trip to the freezing cold seafront to “rescue” a fragment of wood from the old Yarmouth Jetty? Or maybe researching the history of one of the many exhibits? And all the while being wonderfully distracted by the many, many fascinating photographs, books and articles that make up the archives ...*

*One of my most memorable days was spent scanning into the computer a diary written by F Dack, which is part of the 'You Are Here' exhibition. The diary recounts a voyage to the South Seas that took place in the 1890s and is full of exotic photographs portraying long-dead aboriginal tribes. I remember wondering if their descendants had any idea that to some of us in Great Yarmouth, their ancestors held so much fascination.*

*Having such an interest in all things artistic, local and historic, 'Seaview' is the exhibition that struck so many chords within me. Some of the paintings were truly haunting and unforgettable. That such brilliance was inspired by the landmarks of Yarmouth in the early 1800s makes me incredibly proud and happy to be part of a team bringing these wonderful exhibits to today's generation.”*

**Karen Wiltshire**, Time and Tide volunteer

## Training

We aim to develop our volunteers through training. One example is our volunteer Karen who was given training on MODES, and packing and handling of collections. Our volunteers, Peter and Richard, have been working on a new archive project with the paper art collections, and have been trained in basic documentation. On average 12 boxes of the works on paper collection is methodically catalogued per month.

## Cromer Museum

In July we welcomed three students from Reepham High, North Walsham High and the Prince's Trust for work experience placements and a volunteer who worked with us last summer returned for another week. They carried out various tasks including preparations for a new Poppyland china display, helping with Seaside Holidays schools sessions, reorganising the library, and producing some new trails.

Based on the success of the Stitchers group at Great Yarmouth Museums, we have recruited a group of volunteers who meet every other week, initially to make a patchwork quilt for the Victorian cottage bedroom. The first meeting was held on 17 September and we were pleasantly surprised by the turn out of 20+ volunteers who signed up to be part of the project.

Numbers have remained strong, and new members have joined the group, including two young volunteers both of whom are looking to develop a career in museums. Following the successful completion of the Victorian quilt, we offered a free costume-making workshop in partnership with Adult Education in the spring to develop the group's skills. This has enabled the group to make Victorian costumes for some of our school events. They have also recently made some lovely bags which contain free family learning resources to enhance the visitor experience. A number of the group have also chosen to help with some collections-based work on every other Monday including working on the backlog newspaper cuttings.

Other volunteer projects include: scanning our collection of 35mm slides, mostly taken by former NMAS staff member, Martin Warren, in the 1980s; documentation of a large set of photographs that were taken as a millennium project to document the shops and businesses in Cromer by local artist Fran Weatherhead; documentation of George Baker's sister's very large newspaper cuttings collection; updating our newspaper scrapbook; dealing with enquiries and working through our Removals book to ensure that there are no outstanding loans.

## Western Area: Volunteers

### Ancient House Museum, Thetford

The Museum and its visitors continue to benefit from the generous support of the team of volunteers who assist with formal and informal learning events. The collections volunteers remain busy with the scanning of the print collection.

The Friends of the Museum contribute financially to the educational work of the museum and also to the print project and as ever we are grateful for their support. New volunteer Chris Samuels has started on a documentation project looking at display objects.

### Lynn Museum

Mike Bolton, Rebecca Wright, and Rebecca Rees have generously given time to support work in the Lynn Museum over the year.

### Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse

The numbers of volunteers at Gressenhall have remained at around 130 this year. The Gressenhall Curator is also the Volunteer Co-ordinator for this site, and is responsible for recruitment and induction of new volunteers, as well as maintaining good communication and team working across the site. This year the curatorial team has recruited several new volunteers, including an MA Museum Studies student. The collections volunteers benefitted from some bespoke training by conservation staff – a need that was identified through the documentation plan – and included developing/refreshing skills in packing and handling, and labelling and marking. All the volunteers attended, and greatly enjoyed the practical session provided. As a result we are seeing improved standards in collections management.

## Norwich: Volunteers

### Strangers' Hall

- Cathy Terry, Bethan Holdrige and Lyn Temple: training of Strangers' Hall stewards/ volunteers in deep clean, conservation housekeeping and providing update for 2013 opening season
- Cathy is working with Strangers' Hall garden team who maintain the garden and plan the annual planting schemes
- Bethan is training Lyn Temple for the housekeeping team
- Cathy Terry worked with Dr Michael Nix, former director of research, Glasgow museums, on interpretation of 18th century pattern books.

## The Royal Norfolk Regimental Museum

The Museum is a great example of how volunteers can enhance an organisation. It has a loyal band of 12 volunteers, some of whom have been associated with the museum since it opened in 1990.

The support of the volunteers has meant the day-to-day work of research enquiries has continued since the museum closed, and new research into topics covered in the new displays has been going on.

## Bridewell Museum

Over the past year, Hannah Henderson has worked with Norwich Museums Volunteer Coordinator, Rachel Trevor, to recruit a small team of volunteers into our new volunteer programme. We now have a team of eight regular volunteers who welcome our visitors, assist with events and are also signing up for regular conservation cleaning activities! It is wonderful to have local people sharing our passion for the city and passing on this love of our history to our visitors.

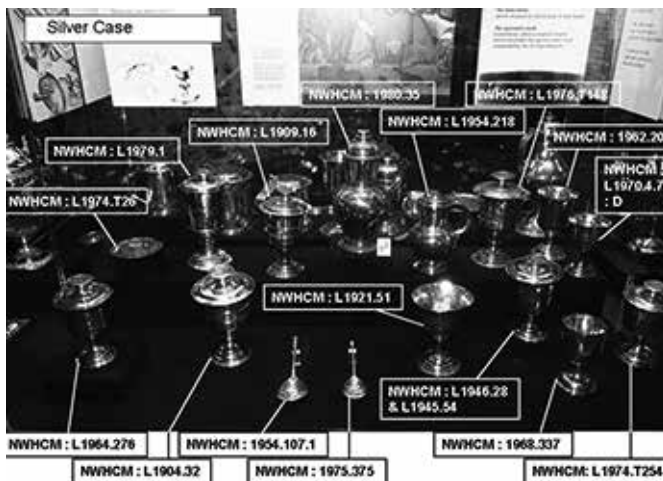
## Norwich Castle Museum – Collections Management

The Collections management department have benefitted in the time and resources of volunteers and interns from the University of East Anglia. We hosted an intern from the MA Museology School SCVA. This student was trained in many aspects of good collections management practice and completed a project that resulted in a successful audit of all collections on display at the castle. Over 2,000 MODES records were updated and display areas photographed and digitally annotated. The completion of this project supports really effective collections management on a number of levels – security, curatorial, location control and collections review.

*All displays in the castle have been fully audited*

The work of another volunteer supported the administration of the exhibitions project application and has worked with members

of the Archaeology Department to fully catalogue a hoard of Iron Age coins – records were created, where necessary, completed and updated and high quality images taken. It is projects such as this that provide enhanced digital resources that can bring wider benefits to curatorial and collections management processes and support audience development.



## Norwich Castle Museum Curators

### Archaeology Department

The Department has continued to benefit from the assistance of a regular group of volunteers. Lizzie Stewart from UEA initially worked in the team as part of her BA course but has continued to support the department. Natasha Harlow continues to undertake a range of activities, principally in relation to the Roman collections.

### Art Department

Francesca is working with two regular long-term volunteers; informally advising one who is working towards the AMA. Harriet Loffler also worked with Caitlin, another Art volunteer. Giorgia Bottinelli supervises two volunteers, one of whom has been digitising our collection of works on paper.

### Natural History Department

- The Natural History volunteer team has been steadily working through the collections, cataloguing and re-housing geological, botanical and entomological material
- Sharon Davies (Geological Society of Norfolk committee member) has been helping with administration of reports in response to geological/palaeontological identification enquiries.

## Research Associates

**In order to support and complement ongoing research and scholarship on the collections by our specialist staff, the curatorial team have created the honorary position of Research Associate. Each Research Associate is engaged to undertake a specific programme of research into the NMAS collections. The position is for a finite duration (normally three years) and for a specific piece of collections-related work.**

The current Research Associates are:

- **Dr Harriet Foster:** studying ancient glass
- **Faye Kalloniatis:** studying the Ancient Egyptian collection
- **Nigel Larkin:** studying geology and palaeontology
- **Norma Watt:** studying Cotman and the Norwich School.

A newly appointed Research Associate is:

**Dr Peter Hoare** (Associate member of the Ancient Human Occupation of Britain project), who was made a Research Associate of the Curatorial Department. Dr Hoare has been a volunteer in the Department of Natural History at Norwich Castle Museum since 2004. During that period he's made an outstanding contribution to the work of the Department and to the Identification Service. Peter has studied and catalogued the Museum's glacial erratic collection at Gressenhall and identified new material brought in by members of the public. As well as scanning and documenting the

'Hallam Ashley photograph archive' (Hallam Ashley FRPS [9 July 1900–24 October 1987] played a particularly important part in the provision of early photographs of geological and archaeological sites, especially those in East Anglia), Dr Hoare also travelled to Northern Ireland in order to visit Hallam Ashley's two daughters.

Very sadly, we have received the retirement of **Professor Peter Robins**, who has volunteered in the Archaeology Department since 1991 and was the very first Research Associate to be appointed. Peter specialised in prehistoric flint artefacts and his huge contribution to NMAS over these years has been enormous. Peter and Nell have finally retired to Australia and we wish them every happiness there with their family.

## Supporting the sector

Since 2009 SHARE Museums East has been delivering training and development opportunities to the sector in the East of England. NMAS curators, Conservation and Display staff, continue to make an important contribution to the SHARE programme's extensive training calendar and other development opportunities. Staff also make a significant contribution to the development of the sector in the East of England through the role of museum mentor.

## Norwich: Supporting the sector

### Norwich Castle Museum – Collections Management

The Norfolk Museums Development Officer (MDO), along with Museum Mentors drawn from NMAS staff, has supported independent museums across the county in gaining Museum Accreditation from Arts Council England. Five museums from the independent sector – Bishop Bonner's Cottage Museum, Diss Museum, Mundesley Maritime Museum, the Museum of the Broads, the RAF Air Defence Radar Museum and Wymondham Heritage Museum – all achieved Full Accreditation during the year, with others in the application process at year end.

In addition the MDO has supported museums to develop their own projects, including a successful application by the 100th Bomb Group Memorial Museum to the Heritage Lottery Fund for £10,000 for *Stories of the Bloody Hundredth*, a project to create an introductory film to the museum based around local residents' memories of the Thorpe Abbots airbase during the Second World War.

The MDO has concentrated primarily on supporting Museums Norfolk ([www.museumsnorfolk.org.uk](http://www.museumsnorfolk.org.uk)), the county support group for the independent museums sector. Museums Norfolk

was formerly known as the Museums in Norfolk Group and restructured in early 2011. During the course of the year the MDO helped the group create, revise and begin to implement its business plan, coordinated the rebranding from MING including an updated website, and supported the delivery of two networking and training events which were both attended by over 30 delegates.

## Norwich Castle Museum Curators

### Art Department

Harriet Loffler, Curator of Modern & Contemporary Art, worked on the SHARE Innovators scheme to develop a project idea with Caroline Wright.

### Costume and Textile Department

We offered training sessions at various locations within our textile SHARE network, from Norwich to Southend.

### Natural History Department

- Tony Irwin, Senior Curator of Natural History, worked with David Pinniger to deliver a SHARE museum pest identification course at the **Cambridge University**
- SHARE Natural History network meetings at the **National Horseracing Museum**, Newmarket – discussing issues relating to natural history collections within the region and share experiences and solutions (David Waterhouse)
- David Waterhouse, Curator of Natural History, attended training session at **University Museum of Zoology, Cambridge**, entitled 'I found this at the side of the road' – osteology preparation theory session
- Tour of the new Darwin Centre facilities at the **Natural History Museum, London** (David Waterhouse).

## IN FOCUS

### Museum Mentors: Supporting smaller independent museums in Norfolk

Museum Mentors, formerly known as Curatorial Advisers, have an important role to play in supporting smaller museums. Currently 12 members of NMAS staff are museum mentors. Ruth Burwood, Adult Learning Officer for Norwich Museums and Museum Mentor for Diss Museum, talks about the pleasures and opportunities of the role.

*“ NMAS Museum Mentors support smaller, independent museums across Norfolk and provide advice on all aspects of museum work. It is a purely voluntary role, but can be just as valuable an experience for the mentor as for the museum.*

*I've been a Museum Mentor for Diss museum for five years. Like many of us, I started my museum career 16 years ago working in small museums. I think that experience—the one where the curator does everything from change the toilet seat to publish research—still serves as a great reminder to me of the differing daily tasks of museum workers. So having experienced life in small museums, I was keen to offer some support and help if possible. I was also considering doing my AMA, and thought becoming a museum mentor could be a good opportunity for professional development.*

*Over the years, the most significant part of my role as mentor has been to work on the Accreditation returns with the museum. When working in a large museum or museum service, you sometimes find that writing plans and policies are taken care of for you; we have managers to do the strategic planning, HR advisors to draw up contracts, conservators to think about salvage planning etc. Through working with Diss on their Accreditation documents, I not only learnt a lot about the standards themselves, but I also developed new skills. For example, I worked with the Trustees on writing a Forward Plan, and am currently helping to create a performance management structure for the staff there. If I had not been a museum mentor, I probably wouldn't have had the opportunity to learn about these aspects of museum work in such detail.*

*In addition to helping with accreditation returns, I have helped the museum access support through SHARE regarding running a museum shop, as well as training. Other areas of advice have included fixing environmental monitoring equipment, accessing funding, and whether or not to keep the front door open! ”*

## **Strangers' Hall**

Cathy Terry, Senior Curator of Social History, provided mentor support to Swaffham Museum, advising on outstanding matters from their Accreditation application.

## **Eastern Area: Supporting the sector**

### **Time and Tide Museum**

There was continued support for the Maritime Heritage East network and Subject Specialist Network, including the delivery of the MHE project website training for four museums.

Mentoring was provided as part of the Arts Council England MA programme for the Museum of the Broads.

As part of her role as the secretary of the Maritime Curator Group, the curator organised the Maritime Curators Group two-day

meeting at the National Maritime Museum Greenwich and study trips to the Cutty Sark and archives, for 120 delegates.

## Western Area: Supporting the sector

### Ancient House Museum, Thetford

The Curator continued to offer curatorial advice as Museum Mentor to the Charles Burrell Museum and to Mildenhall Museum, where he assisted with interviewing for an Activities Manager for their HLF redevelopment project.

### Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse

The curatorial team have continued to support the sector by providing a Museum Mentor service (Curator) and through supervising and working with a *Skills for the Future* trainee, working with collections.

## Teaching Museum and workforce development

In 2012 NMAS launched a new initiative to become the country's first Teaching Museum, based on the model of the teaching hospital. The overarching aim of the teaching museum is to support the development of a highly skilled and flexible workforce that can meet the future needs of museums in a changing world. As a teaching organisation, NMAS will take a leadership role in the vocational training of new recruits and support for the professional development of existing museum staff.

It will seek to address challenges around entry routes to the sector and support for continuing professional development.

In January 2013 the initial group of eight paid trainees joined the staff of NMAS working in a range of roles across the county, a number of them alongside curators. Through supervising and working with the trainees, existing staff are developing their own skills and experience. The ethos of the Teaching Museum is to ensure that, through a whole-service approach to workforce development, more opportunities for professional development for all staff will be created.



*Induction day January 2013 first cohort of Teaching Museum trainees*

## Norwich: Teaching Museum and workforce development

### Norwich Castle Museum Curators

#### Archaeology Department

The department has hosted trainee **Emma Reeve**. Emma's main role has been to support the Keep development project at Norwich Castle. She has undertaken original research into aspects of the early medieval period. She has also played an active role within the department and also contributed more widely to the work of the Study Centre at Shirehall.

#### Natural History Department

- David Waterhouse was involved in the Teaching Museum 'briefing days' – talking to potential trainees about the Natural History traineeship to potential candidates
- **Molly Carter** is working in the Natural History Department for 12 months (from January 2013 to January 2014) as a Natural History trainee curator (supervised by David Waterhouse). Molly has already proven herself to be a capable scientific communicator through the many events she's contributed to from January 2013 to April 2013. Some of the projects that she's been involved with already include: documentation and specimen conservation work for *The Wonder of Birds* exhibition; condition checking in the Natural History library, increasing access to Natural history collections (through supervision of visitors as well as Social Media), help with identification enquiries, and event planning and presentation
- David Waterhouse led a session on taxidermy and making 'study skins' for the Norwich Learning Assistants.

### Norwich Castle Museum – Collections Management



We have attended training sessions run by the MODES Users Association (MUA) to further develop our skills in MODES Administration, to learn about the next iteration of MODES Complete and in MODES Xupdate and Xmerge processes. This latter training session has given us the skills to write complex commands to perform global updates and manipulate the data held in MODES. Of the 3 million objects cared for by NMAS over half a million of them have MODES records – we are working with all NMAS staff to ensure that we create rich digital content which we can repurpose in multiple ways on the ever increasing variety of digital platforms.



Team members have attended The Museums and Heritage Show at Earls Court, The Collections Trust Open Culture annual conference at the Kia Oval and Culture Geek conference at the Barbican. The landscape for cultural marketing is rapidly changing. Internet and the digital revolution have shifted the expectation of our audience. They want to be included – be part of the experience,

be a partner in the conversation – we need to respond to these changes. It is only with making the connections at conferences such as these that we can develop our digital offer.

## Norwich Castle Museum – Digital Services

Jordan Bacon is the Teaching Museum trainee for digital services, tasked with developing digital services across NMAS. He is supporting all departments in this role, including co-ordination of social media and developing our social media strategy, and working with collections management and curators looking at on-line access to collections.

## Strangers' Hall

Cathy Terry is the supervisor of Social History trainee, **Lynn Tye**. She participated in the recruitment of ACE-funded trainees. As supervisor, she undertook preparatory planning and mentoring training, planned a detailed programme of work and liaised with Social History colleagues to arrange the detail of this.

Cathy, Helen and Bethan have been involved in day-to-day supervision of Lynn, who is primarily involved in storage improvements to food preparation, cooking and serving equipment collections.

## Bridewell Museum

Lynn Tye, our new Museum Trainee, has been a very welcome addition to the team. Her work has so far included updating the locations for our 1,700 displayed objects, creating a salvage plan for use in emergencies, supporting our volunteers and assisting with events planning.

## Eastern Area: Teaching Museum and workforce development

### Time and Tide Museum

We have been very pleased to welcome **Mandie Thrippleton** to the team as our new Teaching Museum trainee. Mandie has been getting involved in supporting all aspects of learning delivery as well as working on some elements of the redisplay projects at Time and Tide.

### Visitor Services Training

On 25 June the Great Yarmouth Visitor Services team completed their 'World Host' training. This was supported by the London 2012 Olympics and affords the Great Yarmouth visitor service team 'World Host Status'. The programme is designed to enhance the teams existing customer service skills and behaviour by providing

the fundamentals of service professionalism. The training also increases awareness about visitors and customers from other cultures, increases awareness and sensitivity towards customers with disabilities. 'Having purpose', 'Welcoming people', and the core values of customer service have been included in the sessions that the team have attended – the training has also provided personalised key commitments for the team which we will be able to review over the coming season. We hope to build on this training and develop our own in-house plan to support VS staff in continuing to deliver the possible visitor experience.

## Western Area: Teaching Museum and workforce development

### IN FOCUS

#### Ancient House Museum, Thetford and Lynn Museum: Teaching Museum Trainee

Sarah Cassell started in January 2013 as a Teaching Museum trainee for the Western Area, in the post of Curatorial Assistant. Here she talks to Ancient House Curator, Oliver Bone, about her first three months in post, her motivations for applying for the scheme and what she hopes to achieve.

**OB: Why did you apply for the traineeship?**

**SC:** I taught History of Art and Art at a secondary school in Norwich for 26 years and I was an Assistant Headteacher for 11 years, so I felt ready for a career change.



I really enjoyed volunteering with the Learning Team in Norwich museums last year, whilst I followed an MA History of Art course at UEA. Staff members were welcoming and the experience inspired me to apply. The pilot scheme offers a unique opportunity for people of different ages and backgrounds to gain training and experience of a proper job in the museum sector.

**OB: What was the special appeal of the post based at Lynn Museum and Ancient House Thetford?**

**SC:** Well, the post of Curatorial Assistant is probably the most varied one, especially as it is based at two regional museums where you really get to see and do everything! As an ex-teacher, I was interested in the schools activities, but I wanted to find out more about managing collections and creating exhibitions too.

One appeal was the chance to find out more about the heritage and history of west Norfolk, as my previous experience has been focused more upon the centre and the south of the county.

**OB: What are your initial impressions of Lynn Museum?**

**SC:** The museum is housed in a wonderful building and the collections are even richer and more wide-reaching than I had realised. Some of my favourite items include the pilgrim badges found in the river, the Savage's wooden carved prototype of a cat's head for a fairground roundabout and the Baines paintings. Some other items are being added to the exhibits this summer and I am very excited, as we will soon have a new display case for temporary displays in the foyer, which will enable us to show even more from the collections. I am impressed by the quality and diversity of community responses to paintings on show at the Inspired Choice exhibition which opened recently.

**OB: What are you looking forward to achieving at Lynn Museum over the coming year?**

**SC:** I am keen to make a useful contribution to the display, events and learning programmes at the museum and to develop the use of social media to promote the museums. I am putting together a programme of temporary displays for the foyer at Lynn Museum. The task of making the collections accessible on-line is very important, but never-ending, so I plan to recruit and oversee a team of volunteers to help with this.

The support of the Friends of the museum has clearly been essential in securing important acquisitions and conserving valuable items. I am keen to contribute to the design of their new brochure and to other activities which raise the profile of the Friends and encourage others to join and to get involved.

Members of staff have been really helpful and generous with their time and expertise, so I have already learned a great deal! I hope that I can repay their kindness by offering a useful extra pair of hands over the next few months.

## Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse

The Gressenhall Curator was supervisor for two Teaching Museum trainees, **Wayne Holland** and **Dayna Woolbright**, based at Gressenhall. The two trainees form part of the *Shine A Light* Project Team, working in the Superstores to improve access to several thousand stored collections (see pg. 85). They are developing skills in documentation, collections management, volunteer work, conservation research. The curatorial team has regular contact with the trainees, and provides ongoing informal training in all aspects of their work.

## 5 CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

Inspiring the imaginations of children and young people is a core element of the Museum Service's work. A highly skilled learning team leads on the delivery of specific programmes for this age group across the Service, including developing and delivering school sessions, outreach sessions (where staff and collections go out into the community) and informal family learning opportunities.

Curators contribute their time and expertise to this programme, working with their colleagues in Learning to unlock the creative potential of our collections. This includes inputting into the content of learning resources and, even more importantly, giving talks and demonstrations. The opportunity for young people to meet experts with a passion for their subject is a unique strength of the Service's learning provision.

2012 – 13 also saw the appointment of four Youth Engagement Officers working across the service, building on NMAS' track record of working with this age group, increasingly involving young people in the planning and delivery of services. The resulting expansion in provision for this age group will be highlighted in next year's report.

### **Formal Learning: Schools and higher education**

Almost 45,000 school contacts were achieved by NMAS in 2012-13, including visits by schools and outreach projects. Curators work closely with their learning team colleagues to improve and refresh the learning offer – which covers sessions for all key stages across the curriculum. A companion to this report, the first county-wide Learning Report, gives a fuller picture of the breadth of activity in this area.

### IN FOCUS

#### Ancient House Museum, Thetford: Arts Award Programme

Melissa Hawker, Learning Officer, continued to lead a successful programme of engaging young people through the Arts Award scheme. She presented a case study about the Ancient House at the regional museums SHARE conference at Ipswich to encourage other museum workers to get involved and presented to a conference in Cambridge.

The *Mapping The Town* exhibition opening showcased a short film made by Ancient House Teenage History Club exploring Thomas Martin's first sketch map of Thetford. Eight local young people aged 12 – 16 were involved in creating the animated film as part of their Bronze Arts Award. After the film, Cllr. Barry Stone presented Teenage History Club with their Bronze Arts Award certificates.



*Young volunteer Margaret at Ancient House who achieved her gold arts award*

For further details about Arts Award, please see: [www.artsaward.org.uk](http://www.artsaward.org.uk)

The external Arts Award moderator was very positive about how Ancient House had delivered the Arts Award programme:

*“ The projects were very interesting with some very good work produced. The young people spoke with enthusiasm about their participation in the Arts Award and the work produced. They are keen to go on to the Silver Award and have several projects to consider. ”*

Melissa Hawker, Learning Officer, is keen for Ancient House to continue delivering the award: *“ Overall, this pilot has demonstrated the flexibility of Arts Award framework to accredit a range of activities and disciplines. It can also be used effectively with a wide range of abilities – our first cohort span undergraduates, gifted and talented and SEN young people. We are enthusiastic about extending our Arts Award offer to include the new Discover and Explore award which are suitable for seven year olds and over. We are also keen to partner with schools in the future. ”*

## Lynn Museum

### Co-creation with Local Schoolchildren

The Learning Officer worked with approximately fourteen key stage 1 pupils from Whitefriars Primary School. Accompanied by teachers and school governors, they visited the museum and worked with museum staff to create a mini display in a temporary case in the museum's reception area. The topics explored included Ancient Egyptians, Romans, Toys and Games, Victorians, World War Two and 'Best Objects'. Whitefriars School held a successful celebration event at the Lynn Museum on 22 May to mark the culmination of this work. For this event the children created their own displays using museum objects which they had personally selected. The celebration event was attended by Vanessa Trevelyan, Head of NMAS.

Lynn Museum worked with 345 pupils using funding from the Audrey Stratford Trust. The pupils explored Romans, Invaders and Settlers, Tudors, Toys and Games in the Past and the history of the Lynn Mart. Over the last term Lynn Museum worked with Whitefriars School to deliver Discover and Explore Arts Awards for a group of key stage 2 children. The children's work was included in the *Inspired Choice* exhibition.

### Connecting People Pop-up Exhibition

The Learning Officer has been supporting the county-wide *Norfolk's American Connections* community exhibition project (see [www.norfolksamericanconnections.com/](http://www.norfolksamericanconnections.com/)), which formed part of the Cultural Olympiad. School pupils from eight schools (including American base schools) researched and created an exhibition about some of the famous, and not-so-famous, people who link Norfolk and North America.

The children explored the following American connections: Thomas Paine, Lincoln Family, 19th Century Migration and the 'Friendly Invasion'. Pupils researched the topics using documents, objects and drama. They also analysed text and graphic panels in the museum and used the techniques they identified to create their own draft texts. The Learning Officer worked with Whitefriars Primary School Year 2 class on this project. These children spent three mornings at Lynn Museum exploring the life of Captain Vancouver, followed up by two days working at school.

The project was coordinated by staff of NMAS staff. The exhibition that the children created is on six pull-up banners which can be easily erected and taken down. The exhibition toured to a number of venues around Norfolk in 2012.

## Eastern Area: Formal learning

### Time and Tide Museum

#### Takeover Day

Time and Tide took part in a national initiative which saw museums, galleries and historic homes invite children and young people in and give them a meaningful role. 'Takeover Day' on 23 November was organised by Kids in Museums and the Children's Commissioner to bring new ideas and a fresh perspective.

Six students from Great Yarmouth high schools worked alongside film maker Kevin Hunn to create '*Time and Tide – A New Take*'. Students directed, filmed and edited the documentary film. They accessed all areas and interviewed staff and visitors. They chose their 'must see' objects and contributed dramatic ideas, whilst telling us how they think the museum could be made even more attractive for their age group.

The project has given us an opportunity to try out a new way of working with young people whilst gaining a better understanding of their needs and interests. It will be a springboard for young people's continued involvement with our museums. Students can share the film with family, friends and schools to show what they've achieved and help create and strengthen our partnerships. By asking young people what they want from us we hope the museum will become a special place for them.



## IN FOCUS

### Time and Tide: Museum Club – Increasing cultural capital for Great Yarmouth children

The Education Team at the Time and Tide Museum has been working with St Georges Infant and Nursery School to set up a weekly after-school History Club. The school is situated in the socially deprived Nelson Ward in Great Yarmouth: 43% of pupils are in receipt of free school meals and almost 30% do not have English as their first language. For this reason museum and school staff collaborated to devise a learning programme which would allow pupils from all backgrounds and achievement levels to work together in an accessible, inclusive and informal setting.



Supported by objects and costumed characters from the museum, pupils have enjoyed a visit by 'Elizabeth I', played with Tudor Toys, found out how Tudor adventurers lived at sea and fought off fearsome pirates! With all this action and excitement it's not surprising that the club has proved to be very popular, with a waiting list of pupils wanting to join the fun.

Mrs Mitchell, leader of the History club said, “ *Exploring the past as another culture encourages pupils to talk about their own traditions and customs. It's been great to see how the History Club has encouraged them to find out about the past and the learning and social skills they are picking up are giving them more confidence in their lessons.* ”

St Georges School and the staff at the Time and Tide are already planning exciting new ventures and look forward to working together in the spring term.

### Collections Access

The *Engineering the Landscape* project used museum spaces and the exhibition gallery in a photography project for a group of NEETs (young people not in employment, education or training). The project was run in partnership with Camouflaged Learning, a provider of educational resources and projects based in Great Yarmouth. Students were encouraged to look at the museum as a social and dynamic environment, with a particular focus on the offshore collections, both in store and on display.

Site visits included Horsey Windpump (a five-storey drainage windpump on the Norfolk Broads), Stow Mill, a tower corn mill at Mundesley on the Norfolk Coast, and the Scroby Sands wind farm Visitors Centre at Great Yarmouth, as well as Time and Tide

Museum where they enjoyed a collections handling session. These visits focused on questions such as, 'How do these places work and what purpose did / do they have?', 'What contributions did / do they make to our lives?' and 'Are these places important to us and why?' Informal discussions and photography provided the tools for engagement. The conclusion of the project will be a photographic road show across the county, working with libraries, including the Great Yarmouth library.

## **Cromer Museum**

### **Cromer Academy's Summer School Programme**

This year, for the first time, we have been supporting Cromer Academy's summer school programme. This aims to offer enrichment activities for 11 year olds about to make the move up to secondary school. For the July session, our activities were based around creating a small exhibition of fossils from the handling collection in our Education Room. The children found out about typical Norfolk fossils, like belemnites and echinoids, handled lots of fossils from our handling collection and each chose a group of fossils to display in the exhibition. They were given information to help find out more about their chosen fossils and used the school's ICT suite to research and produce labels and information panels.

For the August session, the activities were based on developing a 'play in a day', using two murals from the museum as the starting point for the work. Having developed their ideas back at the school's drama workshop, parents were invited to see the play at the end of the day.

### **Schools programmes**

In December we held *A Victorian Christmas*. This focused on Christmas traditions including cooking Christmas pudding in the cottage kitchen, making tree decorations using rag rug techniques and looking at objects from the Victorian handling collection.

In 2013 we provided schools events for the *Homes Long Ago* topic and we welcomed Mundesley Junior School to the museum for our popular *Victorian Life* event. The children had been well-prepared with a good understanding of Victorian history. The 'washing' activity was very popular, even in rather chilly conditions.

### **Pop-up Museum Outreach Project**

Our *Pop-up Museum* course at Holt Primary had a delayed start due to snow. Victoria Chamberlin attended the session with artefacts connected to childhood. Attendance was very good with more adults turning up than had been provisionally booked – 14 in total with 15 children. All participants expressed interest in completing the course and all signed enrolment forms. A second session was held in January, led by the Family Learning Team.

## Norwich: Formal learning

### Strangers Hall

We delivered two introductory lectures and tours to NUA students on Norwich textiles.

Bethan Holdridge is the Learning Assistant responsible for liaison between Strangers Hall and the Learning team, and her familiarity with the collections as well as the learning delivery has resulted in a more seamless, integrated programme.

Cathy Terry meets regularly with youth engagement officers to plan events and projects at Strangers Hall.

### Bridewell Museum

A teacher preview was held in July 2012 on the opening of the museum. This attracted 22 teachers and offered an opportunity to gather feedback on potential themes for the school events programme.

During the autumn and spring terms we ran and evaluated school sessions on local history topics – *Made in Norwich* and *Inventions and Machines*. A new learning space dressed as a traditional corner shop was created and used as the setting for a key stage 2 event *A Day in the Swinging Sixties*. This all-day event was successfully trialled with a Year 6 Class. Feedback from the school was very positive: “*Two members of staff have already been to see me (unprompted) and said it was one of the best trips they have ever been on with a school.*”

Key stage 3 / 4 events have begun to be researched and developed with two partner schools on the themes of *Norwich in the Industrial Revolution* and *The Effects of WW2 on Social Change*.

### Norwich Castle Museum Curators

#### Archaeology Department

Staff provided object handling sessions for UEA History BA students.

#### Art Department

Francesca Vanke gave talks on the curatorship of the *Arts of Living* gallery to UEA students.

Hannah Higham continues to work with NUA (Norwich University of the Arts) students and has received new interest from Norwich City College students.

## Costume and Textile Department

We delivered:

- Local schools AS textiles groups study days with drawing collections
- NUA students' induction to Norwich Castle Study Centre and on-going continual research visits

We support the NMAS learning team by planning events based around objects from our handling collections.

The timing of the *Skin 2* event (see pg. 59) was an opportunity to display mounted costume within our stores which not only highlighted the contemporary breadth of the collection but our street style photographic archive too. This archive was begun in 1985 by previous curators aware that it is important to document what people are wearing in Norwich of all age groups. We have been able to add to our archive with a new series of photographs taken by Norwich City College photography students, one of whom I met during the *Skin 2* event. He had proudly brought his family to view his work – it was lovely to speak and encourage him.

## Natural History Department

*Biodiversity 6th Form Conference 2012*

David Waterhouse ran a workshop called *Carry on Collecting*, as well as being involved in the planning of the conference and designing the conference logo. Over 80 6th form students and tutors attended the conference organised by Kathy Moore (Norwich Museums, Learning Department).

- Tony Irwin acted as an advisor for students from the **University of East Anglia** on making taxonomic collections
- Teaching 10 'looked after children' (aged between 10 – 13) about the natural history of Australia, using NMAS collections (David Waterhouse)
- Talk and tour of natural history stores to 10 Diploma students, four Foundation students and a lecturer from **Eastern College** (David Waterhouse and Tony Irwin)
- David Waterhouse led a British species recognition workshop for 18 students at **Great Yarmouth College**
- Session with eight people about birds in Norwich Castle Museum's Bird Gallery for the **Norfolk Youth Offending Team** (David Waterhouse and Molly Carter)
- Talk and tour of Natural History Gallery at Norwich Castle Museum and Art Gallery for **University of East Anglia**, World Art students (David Waterhouse).



*Biodiversity 6th Form Conference 2012 logo (designed by Dr David Waterhouse, Curator of Natural History), including a swallowtail butterfly (Papilio machaon britannicus), an extremely rare invertebrate, which in Britain, is only found on the Norfolk Broads.*

## Informal Learning: Families

Providing an evolving programme of events and activities, particularly for families, is an important element in the museums service's programming. This element tends to focus on drop-in sessions and activities. Our informal learning programme helps to refresh each site's offer to the public, encouraging return visits, and is important in broadening access to our collections.

### Western Area: Informal learning – Families

#### Ancient House Museum

Examples of the active events programme at Thetford include:

##### Christmas Switch on event

The annual festivities of the Christmas Lights Switch on in Thetford included an open evening at the Ancient House with staff and volunteers welcoming visitors to a Georgian Christmas. This followed a very busy day of school visits and created a daily attendance of 296.

##### Big Draw event

This connected the Museum with this programme as part of the National Campaign for Drawing.

Other National events the Museum is involved with include the Festival of British Archaeology, Heritage Open Days and Museums at Night. These events receive welcome national publicity to supplement local marketing efforts.

##### Museum Club

Ancient House Museum Club is for younger children and takes place monthly on a Saturday. A recent session explored life at sea linking to the *Norfolk's American Connections* project. The members worked with Karen-Emma White, Museum Learning Assistant, to explore life on board an 18th Century ship on route to America. The children tried their hand at creating scrimshaw using soap, tea spoons and shoe polish. They also sampled some of the foods eaten at sea. Here is one of their reactions:

*“ I'd like to be a seafarer. Most of it was quite nice, the bits I liked was the salted beef, the lime, the hard tack and the pickled onion. I didn't like the raw onion. ”*

##### Knitted Gloves and hat from Gressenhall wool

In a textiles partnership between Ancient House and Gressenhall, fleece from a Gressenhall sheep has been prepared, spun and knitted into a hat and gloves by the members of the Ancient House 'Knit and Knatter' group. This group, led by Museum

Learning Assistant Sue Ketchell, goes from strength to strength. The members act as great ambassadors for the Museum and its work.

### **Summer Holiday Events**

There was a very busy summer holiday programme at Ancient House including *Archaeology Day*, *House Alive* events and '*Here be Mermaids and Dragons*', drawing upon the museum's print collection.

### **Summer Reading Game**

This summer the Ancient House Museum was part of a trial scheme to integrate museums into the Library Service Summer Reading Game. The idea was that a museum visit includes reading so can 'count' as a book. Any child who signed up to the Reading Game at Thetford Library received a free family admission voucher for Ancient House. Several families visited the museum for the first time through this partnership.

### **Thetford Festival**

Museum Service staff played a leading role in the development of this year's Thetford Festival, including the combination of the Thetford town offer for Heritage Open Days, Anglo-Sikh Heritage Day and the finale of the Thetford Festival to offer one big day of activities and events.

Throughout the town there were sites of historic interest open to the public and guided heritage walks on offer. At Ancient House Sarah Norcross-Robinson, Conservator, showed people how to protect and preserve the historic building. At Kings House Gardens there was an Anglo-India themed extravaganza.

The programme was coordinated by Karen-Emma White, Museum Learning Assistant, who also secured external funding for the event. Jaya Dance ran two Bhangra and Bollywood dance workshops accompanied by an authentic Dhol drummer. Author and historian, Peter Bance spoke to visitors about Maharajah Duleep Singh and Sikhs in Britain. The famous Baba Fateh Singh Gatka Akhara mounted a display of traditional sword dancing. Also on offer were children's crafts, object handling from Elvden Hall (home of Maharajah Duleep Singh), face painting, Indian food and other themed stalls.

### **Lynn Museum**

A programme of family events took place at Lynn Museum including *Easter Crafts*, *Shadow of the Workhouse*, *Archaeology Day*, *Ancient Egypt*, *Monster Mammoths and Deadly Dinosaurs* and *In Sickness & Health*.

## Eastern Area: Informal learning – Families

### Cromer Museum

Cromer's extensive events programme includes many family-friendly events – see section 2 pp. 52 – 55.

2012 – 13 also saw us collaborating with the Family Learning Team from Adult Education to deliver a half-day family learning event. This proved a useful pilot and we're now discussing working in partnership with a local school and the Family Learning Team to increase participation for future family learning events.

### Time and Tide Museum



*GFS Platform  
creative session*

#### **February 2013 - Art + Play Platform**

Young parents from GFS Platform in Great Yarmouth have been taking part in artist-led sessions linked to the *Art + Play* exhibition as part of the Youth Engagement programme. Artist Sophie Fox delivered a gentle introduction to the exhibition with an outreach session using purpose-made resource boxes to inspire creative play. Then families visited Time and Tide and had a wonderful time exploring, creating, singing and story telling. Weekly sessions continued throughout the exhibition and the offer has been extended to St Pauls Lodge supported housing scheme for young mothers. Our

extensive events programme during weekends and school holidays is designed with families in mind – see section 2 pp 55 – 57 for examples.

## Norwich: Informal learning – Families

### Strangers' Hall

Cathy Terry is working with Natasha Harlow to develop high-quality interactives/ activities for Strangers' Hall based on our teaching / puzzle collection. The first board game, *'The Cottage of Content'*, is already proving popular with visiting families.

The Toyroom has been improved with the addition of comfy seating, a rug and additional traditional toys for the Under 5s to play with.

Strangers Hall have provided family events for every school holiday, aiming to offer something that is linked to collections and

the Strangers USP of a quirky old building. These have included making Fabergé eggs at the *All that Glitters* family event, and the *Out of Place* trail.

Other activities have included the planning and delivery of a Christmas event at Strangers Hall for family visitors, including a Tudor Puppet Show and Magic Lantern Show.

### **The Royal Norfolk Regimental Museum**

Three different groups of young people have been engaged with working on the interpretation of the new displays, by producing content for the digital Timeline.

- Aylsham High School. A group of eight GCSE History students have written a 'strand' on the Timeline aimed at younger children. They did their own research and image sourcing, took photos, and created artwork for a fictional character called 'Reggie'. Students visited the museum to learn about the displays and how they are put together
- NMAS Youth Forum. A core group of the Youth Forum are working on the 'Cultural Events' section of the Timeline. The work will involve writing content and image research
- Cultureworks East at the Open. A small group of NEET young people will be researching and producing content for five 'events' on the Timeline.

### **Norwich Castle Museum Curators**

#### **Natural History Department**

- *Mammoths and Monsters Day* at Cromer Museum. Fossil handling and identification day linked with large fossils from Norfolk within the NMAS collections. Drop-in event (David Waterhouse)
- Nocturnal animals for November half-term event. Drop-in session at Norwich Castle Museum and Art Gallery (David Waterhouse).

### **Norwich Castle Museum – Design and Technical Department**

One of the ways of making the displays more accessible, especially to younger audiences, is the use of high quality interactives that are not only fun to use but also have benefits in terms of learning outcomes. Through evaluation and our unique experience of having developed, designed and manufactured interactives over the last decade we hope to improve our interactive delivery countywide.

## APPENDIX

### Communicating through publications and other media

#### Norwich Castle Museum Curators

##### Art Department

Francesca Vanke wrote catalogue entries on Norwich silver, Lowestoft porcelain and Norwich stained glass for the Sainsbury Centre for Visual Art's *Masterpieces* catalogue. She also gave a paper on the history of collecting at Wallace Collection research seminar in April 2013.

Hannah Higham wrote an entry on Ivon Hitchens for forthcoming exhibition catalogue (*Uproar*, Ben Uri Gallery). Hannah is also working on a publication with Frances Kearney for a forthcoming exhibition.

##### Natural History Department

David Waterhouse contributed illustrations for; '*Science Communication: A Practical Guide for Scientists*' by Laura Bowater and Kay Yeoman. Publication date: November 2012. ISBN10: 1119993121, ISBN13: 978-1119993124.





