

**(9.0) Annex A – Great Yarmouth Museums Curatorial Summary
Area Museums Committee**

Period July – September 2013

Acquisitions during the period include:	<p>A collection of trench art from WW1 Remember When collection (Approximately 70 objects from 50's to the 90's) Local industry Patterns Johnson collections of archive material, photographs and textiles Commemoration sampler and stitched bookmark celebrating 1953 anniversary</p>
Documentation	<p>As an outcome of working on Learning and youth projects we have been able to increase the documentation of object records using high resolution image photography.</p> <p>For the Learning Project Officer and the programme with Royal Museums Greenwich we have worked with a museum trainee and a professional photographer to take high resolution images of the second stage of the Stories From the Sea collections teaching resource. This focuses on 15 objects from both our stored collections, maritime archive and objects on display with the theme of lifesaving. This will form part of a teaching resource online with RMG. This will also have the benefit of developing our own collections documentation and images databases which can be used for all sorts of commercial enterprises as well as research.</p> <p>I have been able to begin sourcing images of non collections photography for the digital archives for GYM. These include retail stock for the recent Frayed exhibition which can be used to promote the shop and our retail offer online.</p> <p>With the Youth Engagement Officer we have provided objects for the Youth Arts Awards Taster sessions aiming to improve skills by working on photography of the collections using the ship models in store. Students looked at the different approaches to photography of the collections.</p> <p>Working with the Museums of the Broads (Stalham, Norfolk) as part of their Trustee and Management committee we have been looking at the accessioning of the collections that come into museum and the database systems.</p> <p>Work has started on the main store with the Cromer curator on the main store audit of the collections for the long term project to rationalise and find alternative storage locations for the artefacts stored in the basement. The first stages of this process have been looking through our existing documentation in the archive and online for collection surveys, audits and moving records. The Cromer curator is starting a physical check of the stored collections and compiling a spreadsheet. We will be looking at these stores in terms of subject specialist collections and hopefully drawing on the expertise of specialist curators in NMAS to determine the relevance to our collecting policy and to decide if they are candidates for rationalisation. The first of the collections that we have finished is the Masonry and architectural salvage collections. Work with specialist Archaeology curator Tim Pestell on further research and identification of objects is now being planned. The second stage of the process has begun on working on the costume collections audit. This is a much larger collection and will take a longer time period to</p>

	complete. Once the initial audit of the costume is complete we will be able to draw on the expertise of the costume and textiles department to assess how much of the collection can be submitted for rationalisation and its significance.
Public enquiries received during the period, including:	<p>At the very beginning of this period we hosted the BBC filming in the galleries for their series Timeshift in the wreck and rescue gallery looking at the Manby and lifesaving collections. Research was also done into the Lowestoft porcelain for the BBC series Arts and the Sea.</p> <p>We have hosted a very well attended reunion (62 people, with standing room only) of employees from the local clothing company Johnsons & Sons Ltd at the museum which was opened by the Mayor.</p> <p>The benefits of a database of high resolution images of the archive material and objects in the collection also benefit the increasing number of enquiries asking for image prints of the collections.</p> <p>Working with the Maritime Curators Group's network and using the knowledge of its curators and volunteers we have successfully identified part of a Schooner for Orkney Museum.</p>
Conservation: object specific issues	<p>With the conservation team we have looked at the next stage of collections management following the completion of the seaside gallery redisplay. With our Conservation department and an external conservation officer we have completed an assessment of our collection of works on paper by the artist, W Bettesworth, and also our canvas railway posters which are currently in store though being considered for potential display at Time & Tide.</p> <p>Pest monitoring of the Bay 5 natural history specimens as we have noted some carapaces. One object sent off for freezing.</p>
Collection Management: activities include	<p>With the exhibitions coordinator we have worked on the Frayed exhibition audio and will be uploading this onto our main guides system at the beginning of October to aid the interpretation of the exhibition.</p> <p>Work continues on creating the object list and completing research for the new 'Super Models' Exhibition opening at Time and Tide in Spring 2014. The exhibition will bring together GYM collections of models, loans from across NMAS sites and loans from national museums and private collectors and businesses.</p> <p>Collections and research has been gathered for the summer events programme including botanical illustrations for the printing press event. Chemist and pharmacy collections including our dentist's drill were taken out of store for the Hoards of History event at the beginning of the month. The medical collections included grouts bandages, medicine bottles and penile probes.</p> <p>Research into the Nelson Drape documentation for its loan to the Forum coordinated by the NMAS costumes and textiles curator.</p> <p>Working with the Maritime Curators group and the MHE network we have been using the groups to share research and networking opportunities for</p>

	delegates, including perhaps most notably a mapping exercise of 'Nelsonia' with RMG, the organisation of the Mike Stammers memorial event with National Museums Liverpool and a research project about WW1 archive material across the region.
Loans etc	<p>Visit from ACE National security advisor concerning security arrangements at the Time & Tide exhibition galleries, to complete loan agreement for sampler from the Victoria & Albert museum. Site tour delivered and facilities reports agreed and updated with the Operations Assistant.</p> <p>Research, photography and selection of the Patterson sketches for the Wonder of Birds exhibition with the exhibitions team at the Castle.</p>
Display work	<p>In the galleries at Time & Tide we have completed the transformation of the Seaside displays. New editions to the gallery include two framed sets of GY postcards, bespoke costumes for visitors to try on and archive material which has been digitised and now appears on rotating screens in the gallery. The railway posters have been re-hung and planning has begun to rotate the store collection of these. The seaside cut out is having an additional interactive painted. The artist commissioned is taking direct inspiration from our postcard collection to create a link between the objects and the Interactives for visitors. The Remember When gallery planning for the new displays in 2014 has moved to incorporate the themes which the objects will be grouped to inform the design of the gallery. We have created a small temporary display in one of the galleries to promote the idea of the gallery to visitors and to ask for feedback and participation from the design process onwards as we will be using the community consultation to inform display decisions.</p> <p>Together with David Waterhouse (Natural History Curator) we have been working on the interpretation for the cabinets of curiosity cases. The interpretation for these cases will be in the form of a printed book to offer additional layers of information than printed labels. For example, audio on the 'Orpheo' handsets will offer an in depth take on the history of the museum and the Boulter collections.</p>
Volunteers	<p>With the Youth Engagement Officer we have started the induction of the young volunteers programme by creating training sessions about the collection and the curatorial side of museum work.</p> <p>Volunteers continue to work regularly on documentation tasks in the archive and on collection security related projects 2.5 days a week. The volunteers have been looking at and cataloguing some of the new postcard and archive photographic collections accepted during the period. They have begun working on the new Johnsons related collections that were donated at the anniversary event. This collection comprises of archive material, photographs, books and costumes/ textiles.</p>
Archive and store users (include)	<p>We have hosted over 10 research visits in to the maritime archive in this period to enquire about the fishing photographic collections and study them in the museum, including research concerning our WW1 collections.</p> <p>Archive researcher visit to look at the photos of fishermen for a PHD project on fashion and clothing of the fishing industry. Preparation work and collections searches done in advance of all visits to the archive.</p>

	Research work with local historians Colin Tooke and Bob Malster on the WW1 collections in the archive on print and photos for their respective publication development. One focusing on the history of maritime Great Yarmouth generally and one looking specifically at wartime Great Yarmouth and the effect of the First World war on the town. These projects are helping to organise the war collections ahead of projects during the centenary next year.
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Jo O'Donoghue, Curator, Great Yarmouth Museums (October 2013)