

# The Norwich Museums

Members' briefing September 2012

## Visitor Numbers

**2012/13** *See figures attached*

The Bridewell Museum opened on 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2012. Visitor numbers for the month were 2,745 and for August 3,015. This more than 3 times as many as the highest number of visitors for the same period prior to refurbishment. The Bridewell Business Plan projects average visitor numbers to be in the region of 14,000-15,000 per annum. This figure was estimated following market analysis of similar size and type of museums and heritage attractions and other information. NB *newly opened museums and galleries typically attract a higher number of visitors in the first and second year of opening before settling down to an average annual figure.*

Visitors to Norwich Castle were 17,237, just over a thousand lower than July 2011 and 19,947 for August, over 3,000 down on 2011. It has been projected that August visitor numbers might be lower than in previous years as a result of the Olympics and the Jubilee, but as there was an excellent start to the year, visitor numbers for April – August remain 14% higher than in 2011.

Strangers' Hall, now open 2 days a week is attracting on average 60-70% of the number of visitors in previous years when it was open 4 days a week.

**'Pop in for a £1'** A one hour ticket costing £1 available an hour before closing has now been implemented at the Bridewell and Strangers' Hall following popularity at Norwich Castle.

## Heritage Open Days September 2012

VISITOR NUMBERS		
<b>Strangers' Hall</b>	2008	590
	2009	455
	2010	642
	2011	739
	2012	440
<b>Bridewell</b>	2008	510
	2009-11	Closed for redevelopment
	2012	1,124
<b>Castle</b>	2008	1,353
	2009	1,535
	2010	1,660
	2011	1,580
	2012	1,410

## School Visits

2012/13 (*see figures attached*)

Reports from museums across the country site a general decline in school visits due to reductions in school budgets and financial pressures on parents who are generally expected to pay a contribution towards transport and school sessions. However, the Norwich Museums have managed to buck the trend during the summer term 2012 by sustaining visitor numbers. Schools have free admission to NMAS museums, but a charge is made for any optional sessions that schools want delivered.

Norwich Castle has been awarded a **Sandford Award for Heritage Education**. It is clear from the report that the judge was very impressed by what she saw on the day (KS3 Maths Storming the Castle event and KS2 Geology workshop linked to the Olympics). NB. *The judges report was circulated to member in July.*

## Retail and catering

Figures for NMAS's retail and catering operations shows that, despite the challenging economic climate, our shops and café are performing well and making a positive contribution to museum income. The public can access all Norwich museum shops and the Castle Café without buying an admission ticket. This information is clearly stated in the Norwich Castle leaflet, at the entrance to the Castle, and posters around Castle Meadow

The Retail Manager regularly introduces new product lines including products developed from NMAS's collections. Cushions covered in fabric developed from the Norwich textile pattern books are now available in our shops.

## Finance

NMAS is currently implementing an efficiencies programme that will deliver over £500k of savings 2011-14. The transfer of the Costume & Textiles collections from Carrow House to the Shirehall and the relocation of the Regimental Museum displays are part of that programme.

The requirement to make savings is likely to continue beyond 2014. The County Council is planning a Big Conversation in 2013, during which it will consult on options for making further savings.

## Norwich Castle Temporary exhibitions

### **Queen Elizabeth II by Cecil Beaton: A Diamond Jubilee Celebration**

Sat 7 July - Sun 30 Sept 2012

Norwich Castle continues to celebrate the Diamond Jubilee and the Cultural Olympiad with a photographic exhibition from the V&A. The exhibition has been popular with local visitors and tourists.

### **Cedric Morris & Christopher Wood: A FORGOTTEN FRIENDSHIP**

Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> October to Monday 31<sup>st</sup> January

This autumn Norwich Castle hosts the first exhibition 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



Cedric Morris, *Harding Down, Llangynwyd, Bridgend*, 1928.  
Gallery Oldham. ©Cedric Morris Estate

The friendship between these two artists had a marked effect on their separate careers. Both artists spent time in France just after the end of World War II, 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.

This touring exhibition celebrates a period of British art which is increasingly admired and collected. *Cedric Morris & Christopher Wood: A Forgotten Friendship* features loans from public and private collections across the UK. A fully illustrated catalogue accompanies the exhibition.

The show will travel to Mascalls Gallery, Kent and to Falmouth Art Gallery in 2013. A Mascalls Gallery exhibition curated by Nathaniel Hepburn



Christopher Wood, *Newlyn*, 1930.  
Glasgow Museums ©Culture & Sport Glasgow (Museums)

## **Norwich Castle Open Art show 2012: VISION AND REALITY** Sat 20 Oct – Sunday 9 Dec 2012

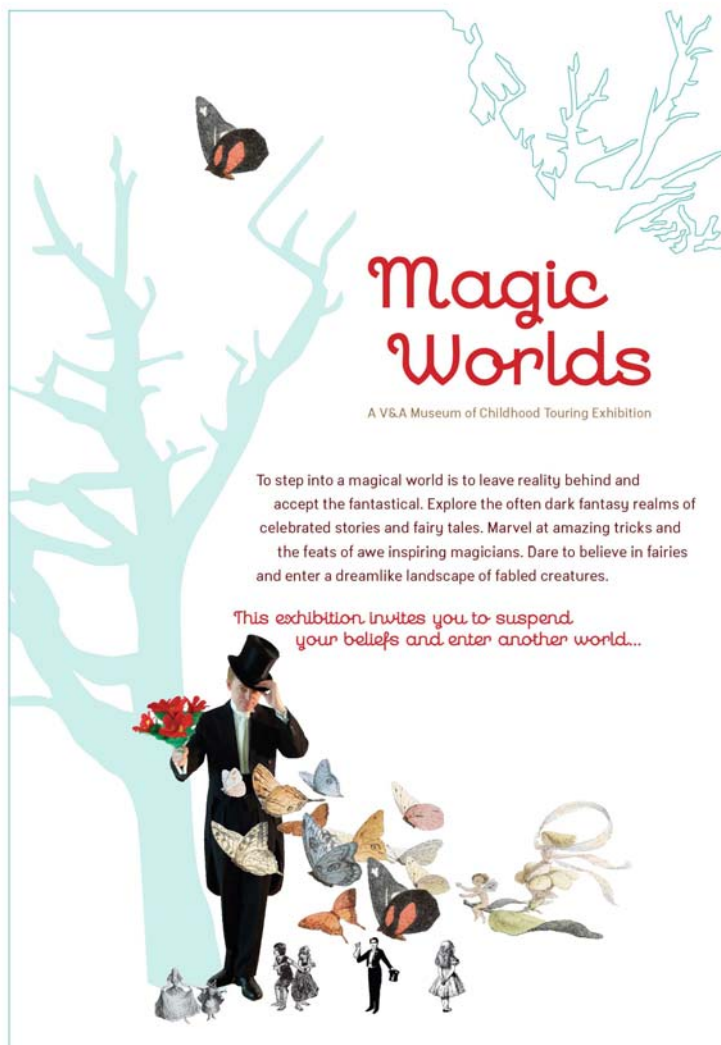
Norwich Castle opens its doors to artists, from across the region, to show and sell recent work. The Show is selected from 739 submissions received from 312 artists from Norfolk, Suffolk, Cambridgeshire and Essex. An experienced panel of distinguished artists made the final selection; John Lessore, Humphrey Ocean RA and John Wonnacott CBE (Chair). The selection, which resulted in 145 works chosen from 140 artists, demonstrates the vitality and

diversity of the region's creative talents in this popular show. All works in this show are available for sale.



**Louis Hudson** *Untitled Porthole 1*

*Norwich Castle Open Art Show 2012 is organised in association with the East Anglia Art Fund who are principal sponsors. The East Anglia Art Fund aims to support the art programme at Norwich Castle and artists living and/or working in the region.*



**Sat 26 Jan – Sun 14  
April 2013**

## **MAGIC WORLDS**

*loan exhibition from the  
Museum of Childhood  
(V&A)*



## Museum and Gallery refurbishments

### **Royal Norfolk Regimental Museum Display in Norwich Castle**

Working is progressing well on the research, object selection, and case design for the new displays on the Rotunda Balcony which will open in Summer 2013. The Trustees of the RNRM are very happy with progress.

### **Improvements to the permanent displays**

The Norwich Museums now have a modest annual budget as a result of ACE major partnership grant funding to support repairs, replacements and modest enhancements to the permanent displays. Curatorial and Display staff are currently compiling a work list to be rolled out over the next two and a half years.

### **Bridewell Museum**



In keeping with the community spirit of the museum, it was lovely to welcome Judith Quinton as the very first visitor to the refurbished museum on 3 July; not only was it her birthday but her father drove the steam-powered Carrow fire engine which is on display in the entrance.

Work continues behind the scenes at the Bridewell. This includes building and display snagging, the preparation and production of additional interpretative material, e.g. information folders and the development of additional interpretive material and interactives.

We're also investigating a more robust and/or permanent canopy solution for the courtyard now that we have a better idea on how it will be used.

Learning resources, including spaces and materials are being developed and liaison is taking place with schools and other learning providers with regards the development of the learning programme and school visits. The final funding claim to the Heritage Lottery Fund needs to be submitted at the end of December 2012. The Bridewell Curator of Community History and learning department staff are developing informal learning programme, to include family activities during school holidays and series of talks for adult visitors during term time.

## Special events

### **Cultural Olympiad Weekend – Saturday 21 and Sunday 22 July 2012**

Norwich Castle showcased an exciting weekend of events devised and presented by a group of local young people. The group, aged 16-25, chose Skin: Dissecting Beauty, as their theme and have used the museum's

collections to explore this idea. The result was a thought-provoking mix of events including: a pop-up tattoo studio with live tattooing, a taxidermy demonstration, a look at vintage furs and life drawing classes. Visitors were also have the chance to look at a book covered with human skin from a prisoner executed in East Anglia in 1828 and to play the giant Operation game while a DJ plays in the café area. Visitors were invited to write their comments on the issues raised. There were also short films made by local Looked after Children and the Youth Offending Team on a video loop and an outdoor art installation by local artist Liz Ballard. The event went extremely smoothly, many thanks to Rachel Trevor who organised the event. We're now thinking about how we can harness all the research and preparation involved to run regular events to involve and attract this age group.

## **LOOKING FORWARD**

### **Summer of Style - 50s Fest!**

On the afternoon of Saturday 15 September, visitors will be invited to step back in time to experience the hip world of the 50s, to dress up in vintage style, have their hair styled and enjoy the fashion, music and dance of the Rock 'n' Roll years.

### **Wednesday 19 September, 5.30 - 8pm**

#### **Be Dazzled! Norman Hartnell: Sixty Years of Glamour and Flash**

In the last of our Jubilee associated events, Michael Pick, writer, lecturer and friend of Cecil Beaton, talks about the glittering career of Norman Hartnell, celebrated designer and dressmaker to the stars of stage and screen, and to members of the Royal family. *In association with East Anglia Art Fund and the Costume and Textile Association.*

### **Christmas at the Castle**

Friday 7 December, 5-9pm

A craft fair, baroque music and dancing, and a special Christmas menu in the Cafe, all wrapped up in our first ever Christmas evening event, as the Castle sparkles with lights and music to celebrate the Festive season.

There is a daily programme of drop-in activities and talks in Norwich Castle throughout the year, inspired by the temporary exhibition programme, permanent displays, significant anniversaries and local and national celebrations, together with family focused activities on Saturdays and during the school holidays. See web site for up to date information for Norwich Castle, Strangers' Hall and Bridewell Museum.

## **Other News**

### **External Signs Update**

Planning permission has been awarded for the replacement of Norwich Castles' external directional signs leading into and within Norwich Castle Gardens. Quotes have been obtained and an order has been placed for production and installation.

## Teaching Museum

The recruitment of 8 posts of ACE funded Museum Trainees for January 2013 has commenced. Four of these posts will be based in Norwich. Adverts were placed on NCC jobs, MA website, Leicester University museum jobs website and The Guardian website, and also be circulated via regional networks, NMAS social media champions and the MENTER (East of England Black and Minority Ethnic Network) e-bulletin. Potential applicants are invited to book a place at a briefing session at Norwich Castle on either 21 or 22 September so that they can find out more about the scheme and decide if they want to apply. Following these sessions they will then be able to access an online application form. After shortlisting up to 60 applicants will be invited to an assessment centre on either 24, 25 or 26 October. Selection will be based on a strengths-based approach looking at attitudes and aptitudes.

## Collections

July saw the broadcast of ITV1's ***Britain's Secret Treasures*** which culminated in the Happisburgh handaxe being revealed as the top find of the past fifteen years – **Peter Robins, archaeology volunteer**, recalls the exciting discovery. There was a lot of media interest in the story and in response a leaflet has been produced highlighting the four NMAS objects which featured in the programme.

## **The Contemporary Art Society Annual Award Norwich Castle has been shortlisted for the Contemporary Art Society Annual Award with contemporary artist Juliette Blightman.**

Three museums have been shortlisted for the prestigious £60,000 award which goes towards an ambitious commission to enter the contemporary art collection. The application was made with Kettle's Yard, Cambridge and will result in a collection display at Norwich Castle and an exhibition in Cambridge in 2014-15. The deadline for the second stage application is Monday 29 October with the winner being announced on Monday 19 November.

If you want to discuss any matters in this briefing please contact Rachel Kirk [rachel.kirk@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:rachel.kirk@norfolk.gov.uk) or Vanessa Trevelyan [vanessa.trevelyan@norfolk.gov.uk](mailto:vanessa.trevelyan@norfolk.gov.uk)

For further information about the Norwich Museums, their services and programmes check out the website on [www.musuems.norfolk.gov.uk](http://www.musuems.norfolk.gov.uk) where you can also sign up to receive regular e-bulletins.