

## GENERAL UPDATE ON THE NORWICH MUSEUMS

### Report by the Norwich Museums Manager

This report updates the Committee on work in the Norwich Museums over the last 3 months and forthcoming activities.

#### 1. VISITOR NUMBERS AND ADMISSIONS INCOME

##### 1.1 **Museum & Study Centre Visits 2009/10** (See Appendix for details)

- The visitors figures for the Norwich museums in the financial year 2009-10 have been excellent. We welcomed more than 157,000 visitors to the Castle in the year, 12,000 more than last year. In fact, this was the best year for the Castle since 2001-2, immediately after the major redevelopment.
- Highest number of Feb half-term visitors to Norwich Castle on record.
- At Strangers' Hall too, visits are up: 11,088 in 2009-10 compared with 8,595 the previous year. The increase partly reflects the extended opening hours, but it is heartening nonetheless to see the increase in visits.
- Carrow House is now fully open, and received almost 2,000 visits in 2009-10. A major programme of talks and events is now well underway at Carrow and going well.
- The Regimental Museum has maintained its level of direct visits but whilst visitors to the Royal Norfolk Regimental Museum via the Tunnel from Norwich Castle have improved following the re-opening of the Natural History Gallery, they have not yet reached figure achieved prior to the re-display of the Decorative Arts Galleries during which the Tunnel was shut for a considerable period. Staff are reviewing signage and information provided by reception staff in order to make people aware of the offer to visit the museum and increase visitor numbers.

##### **Why?**

- Varied temp exhibitions programme suiting a wide range of interests
- Popular events programme including post Christmas family focus weekends drawing on and adapting events and activities developed for school groups, plus special Christmas and Garden events at Strangers' Hall.
- Successful Marketing campaigns.
- Smooth delivery.

##### 1.2 **School Visits 2009/10** (See Appendix for details)

School visits for the Norwich Museums as a whole for 2009/10 were 2066 or 12% higher than in 2008/9. Norwich Castle and Strangers' Hall did particularly well with Norwich Castle receiving over 16,000 visits. The Norwich Learning Team work closely with schools and deliver a wide range of high quality sessions to primary and secondary pupils.

The additional costs of delivering workshops and other sessions are charged to the school (*cost of freelance education workers*) but no profit is made by NMAS.

Norfolk schools do not pay admission fees to the Norwich Museums. There is no admission charge to schools that choose to undertake self-guided tours and material is available on the web site to support teachers to undertake self-guided tours.

There is also a bursary available for schools who request help with covering travel costs.

## 2. RECENT AND CURRENT TEMPORARY EXHIBITIONS AND EVENTS

### 2.1 Norwich Castle

#### ▪ Temporary Exhibition Programme

Celebrating the 1960s at Norwich Castle '**Beatles to Bowie: the 60s exposed**' is the new major exhibition at Norwich Castle. On loan from the National Portrait Gallery, the exhibition explores the leading pop music personalities who helped create 'Swinging London' in the 1960s. Over 150 photographs, together with a range of memorabilia, illustrate how the photographic image, music and performance made these pop stars the leading icons of their time. The exhibition runs until 5 September 2010, and on 5 June 2010 is joined by a linked exhibition in the Bernard Matthews Gallery Bridget **Riley: Flashback** of a selection of works from the Arts Council Collection by the artist Bridget Riley, whose work was especially popular in the 1960s.



- **Norwich Castle welcomed Chen Hong**

Chinese artist, Chen Hong, was Norwich Castle's artist-in-residence during May 2010. Chen Hong gave demonstrations and delivered workshops at Norwich Castle and at some Norfolk schools. Known as the 'Fish God' in his homeland, Chen Hong is an expert painter of traditional Chinese motifs and in particular, images of fish.

His residency marks the start of *Stories of the World: Eastern Exchanges in Norfolk*. Stories of the World is the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council's (MLA) major contribution to the London 2012 Cultural Olympiad. Stories of the World will take a fresh look at collections, seeing them through the eyes of people from diverse cultures now living in the UK.



- **Red Ball at Norwich Castle on Thursday 20th May**

As part of the Norfolk and Norwich Festival, Kurt Perschke's 15' red ball has been squashed into 14 different locations across Norwich giving people the opportunity to experience the city's architectural landscape in new ways. On Thursday 20th May the ball rolled over to Norwich Castle and entirely blocked the gates at the bottom of the bridge leading to Norwich Castle between

- **Museums at Night (Sainsbury Centre)**

For the third year running, Norwich Castle Museum & Art Gallery collaborated with the Sainsbury Centre for Visual Arts to deliver an exciting evening of entertainment as part of Norwich's celebration of Museums at Night at the Sainsbury Centre. Norwich Museums curators and Interpreters joined Sainsbury Centre staff to deliver an evening of live music, storytelling, tours and creative fun and the chance to meet curators and handle real objects.

- **Concerts at Norwich Castle**

The walls have been alive to the sound of music over the last few months at the Castle. This is because the Great British Art Debate was given the go-ahead to develop concerts themed according to their exhibitions. In December we saw in the festive season with Stalham Junior School bringing a 130 strong choir in to accompany the *Great British Art?* exhibition. They treated us to a rap based on 'The Great British Art De-bate', and there wasn't a dry eye in the house when a small and unassuming 10 year old with a HUGE voice gave us 'World In Union' to the tune of 'I vow to thee my country'. This concert and the next, based on the Watercolour exhibition, were performed from the Rotunda balcony. The Watercolour concert in February brought in the Press, with 30

children from St Michael's Bowthorpe, theming their songs around 'Travel'. 'I am sailing' went down very well, as did the final, gentle blessing: 'May the road rise to meet you'. It has been a great pleasure for one of the Great British Art Debate's Learning Officers, Anna Green, to spearhead these concerts with a superb music teacher, Beverley Downes, and we are looking forward to many more.

- **Drawing on success**

Norwich Castle's October 2009 Big Draw event was one of six Highly Commended Winners in a Campaign for Drawing competition with funding from the Barbara Whatmore Charitable Trust. Anna Green attended an Awards Ceremony at the British Museum to receive a certificate and a £50 cheque

### **3. OTHER NEWS**

- **BBC's A History of the World**

Norfolk Museums & Archaeology Service is the lead partner for Norfolk's contribution to the BBC's exciting project: A History of the World. There is a series of programmes on Radio Norfolk centered around ten iconic objects from Norfolk museums and there have also been associated events during the school holidays including broadcasts from Norwich Castle during the half-term holidays.

- **Washday at Norwich Sure Start Children's Centres**

The Learning Team have offered free outreach sessions during the Spring Term, to all Norwich Sure Start Children's Centres (5 sessions in total). The session run has been based on the theme 'Washday'. Activities have included exploring objects used in washday in the past (washing tubs, irons, old pegs etc), singing songs and reading stories related to washing and laundry, and playing with a selection of modern day toys related to washing in order to learn about washing tasks today and how they compare with the tasks in the past. Colouring and painting activities were also available each session. Children aged 6 months - 5 years have taken part, and all were able to gain from the session at a variety of levels. It has been an excellent opportunity to build links with the children's centres, which will be taken forward next term with another free session.

- **START programme: Costessey schools explore our art collections**

In March 2010, we had about 500 year students from the Costessey cluster visit our *Watercolour in Britain Travelling with Colour* exhibition. The year 1 students explored the exhibition with a specially made 'I spy' activity. The year 2s, 3s and 6s used the exhibition to create pieces of writing. We divided them into groups and gave them a specific painting to look at. We asked them to focus on either colour or shapes. From here, they created a list of vocabulary which they put together in a piece of prose. At the end of the session, each of the groups presented their work. We had a wonderful variety of poems and some students even wrote raps! All of the students also had a chance to create their own watercolour painting. Here are two of the paintings and one of the poems.

## 4. PROJECT UPDATES

### 4.1 The Bridewell Redevelopment

*Separate report and presentation*

#### ▪ **Bridewell Project Outreach at Hellesdon High School**

On 21 and 22 April 2010, The Bridewell was brought to life at Hellesdon High School when Michelle Sorensen and John Barwell from the Learning department ran special sessions for the whole of Year 8 (300 pupils) working in partnership with the NRO.

Students looked at archive material and objects from Caley's, Colman's, Startrite, Howlett & White, Steward & Patteson, Bullards, Rumsey Wells, Barnards and Boulton and Paul to understand the nature of Norwich industries from 1750 – 1900.

Over the next 5 weeks the children will be working in groups to prepare and present a business plan for one of the industries presented to them. In teams they will elect people to organise the team, be in charge of art work, advertising and find out the history of the firms. Both the NRO and Norwich Castle have provided teacher packs and resource materials.

On the 27 May 2010 the best group from each class will present their work to a panel of experts in a Dragon's Den style. The Panel will include school, museum and county advisory teachers.

### 4.2 Keep Basement Prison Story

Work is progressing re-interpreting the Prison Story in Norwich Castle's Keep basement. The prison display has been removed from the Keep main floor and new displays are currently being installed in the Keep basement. The new displays will open to the public for the Summer holiday 2010.

## 5. LOOKING AHEAD

#### ▪ **Medieval Machines Castle Keep 20 July -16 September 2010**

From a water wheel to a siege engine, visitors will be able explore medieval technology with this hands-on exhibition from Science Projects, London. This interactive exhibition will be enhanced by in-house Interpreter led events in the Keep over the summer months on related subjects such as arms and armour.

#### ▪ **The Art of Faith 2 October 2010 – 23 January 2011**

Norfolk has been the home to many varied faiths across the centuries. This exhibition celebrates this diversity which is intrinsic to the history, art and material culture of Norfolk. The exhibition and associated events and activities have been developed in partnership with the University of East Anglia and the Interfaith Group.

Rachel Kirk  
Norwich Area Museums Manager

**NORWICH AREA MUSEUMS COMMITTEE - 7 JUNE 2010 - ITEM 8 - APPENDIX**

## NORWICH MUSEUMS: Visitor Numbers

**To include comparisons against previous years and against target**

[illegible]

MUSEUM VISITS cont.		APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	ANNUAL TOTAL
TOTAL MUSEUM VISITS	2007/08	15,976	19,617	14,170	21,074	29,544	12,885	17,572	11,869	8,586	8,429	17,064	16,360	193,146
	2008/09	14,592	13,531	13,357	15,566	22,783	12,814	15,239	10,611	7,143	9,669	19,763	13,518	168,586
	2009//10 TARGET	15,953	16,926	13,922	19,657	27,877	13,075	16,820	11,324	7,779	8,788	19,058	15,321	186,500
	2009/10 ACTUAL	18,129	14,494	14,289	20,464	21,643	13,795	15,866	12,038	9,552	9,413	22,111	17,206	189,000
	Variance against target	2,176	-2,432	367	807	-6,234	720	-954	714	1,773	625	3,053	1,885	2,500

**SCHOOL VISITS**

		APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	JAN	FEB	MAR	ANNUAL TOTAL
<b>Castle Museum</b>	2007/08	469	1,115	1,648	1,278	0	617	991	1,309	309	683	1,225	1,097	10,741
	2008/09	995	835	1,895	1,047	65	684	908	1,946	734	1,140	1,719	2,066	14,034
	TARGET	709	945	1,716	1,126	31	630	920	1,577	505	883	1,426	1,532	12,000
	<b>2009/10 ACTUAL</b>	<b>453</b>	<b>932</b>	<b>2,416</b>	<b>964</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>517</b>	<b>1,386</b>	<b>1,956</b>	<b>1,297</b>	<b>1,399</b>	<b>1,624</b>	<b>3,050</b>	<b>16,002</b>
	Variance against target	-256	-13	700	-162	-23	-113	466	379	792	516	198	1,518	4,002
<b>Strangers Hall</b>	2007/08	91	11	79	45	0	38	118	104	171	130	197	266	1,250
	2008/09	70	194	74	165	0	3	166	267	313	170	342	324	2,088
	TARGET	68	86	64	88	0	17	119	156	203	126	226	247	1,400
	<b>2009/10 ACTUAL</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>237</b>	<b>109</b>		<b>32</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>609</b>	<b>403</b>	<b>79</b>	<b>332</b>	<b>394</b>	<b>2,381</b>
	Variance against target	-40	-38	173	21	0	15	-9	453	200	-47	106	147	981
<b>Royal Norfolk Regimental</b>	2007/08	45	54	29	0	0	0	69	128	0	0	38	75	438
	2008/09	56	43	0	0	0	0	203	121	52	141	0	133	749
	TARGET	51	49	15	0	0	0	137	126	26	71	19	105	600
	<b>2009/10 ACTUAL</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>0</b>				<b>159</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>166</b>	<b>554</b>
	target	-6	-20	-15	0	0	0	22	-8	-2	-71	-6	61	-46
<b>TOTAL SCHOOL VISITS</b>	2007/08	605	1,180	1,756	1,323	0	655	1,178	1,541	480	813	1,460	1,438	12,429
	2008/09	1,121	1,072	1,969	1,212	65	687	1,277	2,334	1,099	1,451	2,061	2,523	16,871
	TARGET	828	1,080	1,795	1,214	31	647	1,176	1,858	734	1,080	1,671	1,885	14,000
	<b>2009/10 ACTUAL</b>	<b>526</b>	<b>1,009</b>	<b>2,653</b>	<b>1,073</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>549</b>	<b>1,655</b>	<b>2,683</b>	<b>1,724</b>	<b>1,478</b>	<b>1,969</b>	<b>3,610</b>	<b>18,937</b>
	Variance against target	-302	-71	858	-141	-23	-98	479	825	990	398	298	1,725	4,937

NB Bridewell Museum closed until late 2011