

THE COURTNEYS & EMILY HOBHOUSE (project funded by Museum Development South West)

The portrait of Lady Catherine Courtney has been deposited safely at the conservator's studio in Falmouth. We'd like to thank Jay's of Cornwall for transporting it. The conservation work is due to begin shortly. We have been made aware that the portrait's author is George J Coates, an eminent Australian painter and WWI War Artist, which is exciting news. We have scheduled in a meeting with colleagues from Story of Emily to discuss their involvement in the project. Our in-house Emily Hobhouse specialist, Sally Ronchetti, will be attending, too, and will contribute her research. The Story of Emily have also expressed their interest in having their input in a more permanent display dedicated to Emily in John Rapson room – more details to follow.

MARVELLOUS HISTORIES – Summer programme

Our Summer programme was well received, especially museum talks. In total, we engaged 70 people across all events, including a representation from Story of Emily at one of the Hobhouse talks. Awesome Objects workshop, although well attended, appealed mainly to our volunteers. I am considering taking the workshop (which explores the idea of curatorship and treasured objects) to local schools next year, to see whether this format works better. We are also planning on refreshing our school boxes and memory boxes, which would complete the school offer. It has been noted that we have received less family history enquiries over the Summer than we had done in the past.

RAPSON COLLECTION & THE BOX, PLYMOUTH

The majority of Rapson collection has been deposited with The Box media archives. All went smoothly and we are expecting a call with the media archivist to talk through the logistics of us accessing the collection and working in their setting. A small portion of negatives remained at the museum, due to the limited space The Box offered. I'd like to thank our very dedicated volunteer, Kevin, who took a lead on this stage of the project.

The Box would be happy to offer us photo digitisation and cataloguing tutorials in near future. If time allows it, we will apply for a collection review grant through the Association of Independent Museums (deadline – end of September), which would make it possible for us to engage an external specialist to assess the condition of the collection and advise on further steps.

LISKEARD UNLOCKED – 'Routes, Networks, Connections'

We have been ambitious with our contribution to Liskeard Unlocked this year! Three new temporary displays, a holy well trail across the museum, and a one-off event at the Pipe Well (7th September 2024). We have displayed some of the Ukrainian garments and traditionally crafted objects, to celebrate our partnership with Kopychyntsi, which I am particularly pleased about. It's a poignant story that has to be told.

TEAM OF VOLUNTEERS

We have had 3 new volunteers join us in the past month. Sadly, one of our longstanding volunteers has left the team, which provoked a shift in museum roles and brought on some urgency into in-house training and skills sharing. Our volunteers have also cast their votes on our new Management Team, with Brian and Kevin emerging as members for 2024-2025.

COLLECTION CRITERIA AND FORWARD PLAN 2024-2028

Museum Management Team 2023-2024 has voted unanimously to remove the word 'significant' from our collection criteria: *It will continue to collect objects relating to ~~significant~~ local people, buildings and occupations, and it will continue to explore opportunities to acquire artefacts that will enable it to define and interpret more clearly the town's mediaeval and historic trading life.* (Collection Development Policy 2019). I'd like to thank our councillors in advance for their consideration of this request.

Museum Forward Plan 2024-2028 is underway. I would be grateful if the councillors spared the time to review it and consider it at the next C&E meeting (14th November). The plan needs to be approved by 31st December for accreditation reasons.