



SHC NEWS

SOCIAL HISTORY CURATORS GROUP

Issue 79 October 2017

Who were the Huguenots?

This country's
early refugees

Also inside this edition:

Conference 2017

How museums adapt
to changing tides

From Fear to Queer!

LGBTQ History in
Norwich 50 years on

Their Mortal Remains

Breaking ground with
the Pink Floyd exhibition



Welcome to Issue 79 of SHCG News and my first issue as editor.

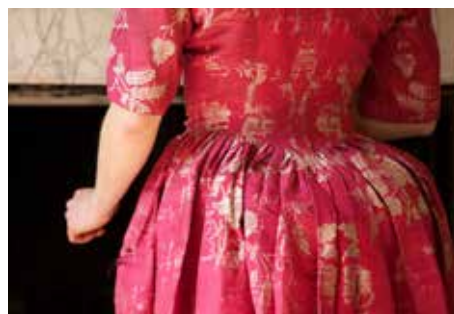
It's been a pleasure to work with all the contributors and although I've had to learn the ropes pretty quickly, I've thoroughly enjoyed myself. Thanks to everyone who's contributed articles, Nick Drew for the beautiful design and to the outgoing editor, Emma Harper. I'm already excited to start work on Issue 80!

Would you like to advertise in SHCG NEWS?

Please contact SHCG Marketing & Partnership Officer Leah Mellors to discuss options and prices:

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Front cover image

Who were the Huguenots.
Photograph by Marenka Gabeler.

The pieces in this issue take us zig-zagging all over the country, from Cornwall, through Devon, across to Norwich and up to Scotland, with a transatlantic foray to Washington DC thrown in for good measure. Whilst all contributors are working with very different museums, collections or subjects, it strikes me that they all, in some way, address how attitudes change and how the plurality of voices is ever increasing. Some of those voices are rightly getting louder and continue to do so.

It is especially pleasing that this cohesion of purpose emerged naturally, without any editorial lead, showing that these thoughts are ever present in the work we do as curators, museums and heritage professionals. The theme of SHCG's conference this year then, 'Changing Tides' (reviewed on page 6), remains apt, in ways that go far beyond recent political events.

Even within these commonalities, the articles show, as always, plenty of variety in how we deal with

such ideas. There's prison history at Dartmoor Prison Museum; the future of church buildings and a call to arms to discover the legacy of French Huguenots across the UK. All the writers in this issue show, at least implicitly, how social history, culture and heritage helps us to understand our local and wider communities.

National identity has always been a confusing beast and it seems ever more so at the present time, but as Rebecca Nelson points out in her review of the NMAAHC, discussing and celebrating undervalued and neglected histories 'are crucial elements of a national narrative'. I'm proud that all these articles contribute to such narratives.

I hope you all enjoy the result.



Jessie Petheram

Editor, SHCG News

E: jessie.petheram@shakespeare.org.uk

This Is What We Do!

Advocacy in Social History Museums & Beyond

Nottingham Castle,
Monday 6 November
2017, 10am-4pm



Advocating for your museum, role or collection is crucial, especially in times of cuts. Whether to external stakeholders, visitors, colleagues, volunteers or trustees, advocacy is something we all need to get right.

In this practical seminar you will hear from museum professionals from the **National Justice Museum, Newstead Abbey, Birmingham Museums Trust** and **The Cardiff Story Museum** about actions they have taken to advocate for their museum, collection or role. **Practical problem solving sessions** in the afternoon will put the theory into practice and help you to create your own **advocacy action plan**. The day also includes a **tour of Nottingham castle**.

£25 SHCG members, £40 non-members. Booking is now open.
For booking and further information visit: www.shcg.org.uk

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Write an article for SHCG News?

You can write an article for the News on any subject that you feel would be interesting to the museum community. Project write ups, book reviews, object studies, papers given and so on. We welcome a wide variety of articles relating to social history and museums.

DEADLINE FOR NEXT ISSUE: 9th MARCH 2018

SHCG NEWS will encourage and publish a wide range of views from those connected with history and museums.

The News aims to act as a channel for the exchange of information and opinions about current practice and theory in museums.

The views expressed in the News are wide ranging and do not necessarily express the views of the SHCG committee or SHCG, unless otherwise stated.

The suggested word count for submissions is:

Bulletin Board 100-300 words,

Theory & Practice 900-1,000 words,
Reviews and Object Focus 400- 500 words (one page) or 900-1,000 words (two pages).

Please submit your article by e-mail saved as a Word file (Arial 12 point). Images must be high resolution and can be submitted via an online transfer site, email or, if necessary, USB.

Send all contributions to:

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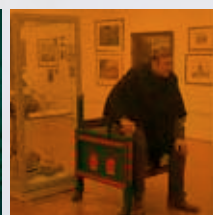
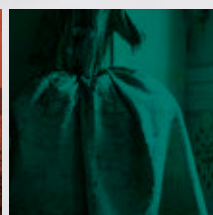
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History in the Attic in Cornwall

“Not everyone makes the history books but everyone’s got a story to tell.”

That’s where we started with our project Heart of Conflict looking at World War One in Cornwall – and we ended up with a treasure trove of previously untold tales of heroism and sacrifice.

It all began with a conversation in a pub in a village in west Cornwall early in 2014. Our volunteer George Harris was chatting about World War One and the upcoming centenary. We were exploring ways of remembering the heroism of those years – at home and overseas.

A local man, Royston Broad, said that he and his wife had a relative’s medals at home. They’d kept them for years and knew very little about them. Now, he said, they never would as they had stored them under the boiler and it had leaked, so all the paperwork was destroyed.

George, intrigued, asked to see them. He found a regimental number and discovered they’d belonged to Frank Johns, a young carpenter from St Ives who had emigrated to Canada just before the war. He was a cousin of the Broads. Like many other Cornishmen who’d left at that time in search of work, he’d hoped for a better life on the other side of the Atlantic. But he missed home and had enlisted in 1914 thinking he would have a quick passage back. Everyone thought the war would end by Christmas.

Tragically, Frank was killed at La Bassée in March 1915.

The medals and old papers may have suffered water damage after years under the boiler, but Frank Johns was now remembered. History was stretching toward us – and Heart of Conflict was born.

George wrote a successful bid for funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund. Girl Guides in Camborne were trained in interview techniques and worked with members of local Women’s Institutes, Redruth Boys Brigade and St John Ambulance. Local historians and specialist libraries and collections provided background. As word spread, people came forward with artefacts and photographs and discovered the history behind them - stories that hadn’t previously been told.

Derek Head and Chris Negus, grandsons of two of the men who played in the Cornwall-Devon rugby match at the Front, 1915. Photograph: Bridging Arts

We held a first exhibition at the Cornish Studies Library, Redruth, in spring 2015 and two ‘pop-up’ exhibitions locally in November that year. We worked with descendants of a woman who kept the light burning at home in Redruth for years in case her beloved son – missing in action – returned. And another whose grandmother (who could neither read nor write) had crushed rock at local mines to make ends meet. A newspaper cutting led to the discovery of three rugby matches at the Front in 1915 between soldiers from Cornwall and Devon – we tracked down the descendants of men who played.

The Royal Cornwall Museum, Truro, was a wonderful venue for an expanded exhibition in 2016/17 of photographs, carefully preserved letters and objects like embroidered postcards, bugles and hat badges – priceless to the owners and given an important platform for the first time.

Lessons learned: everyone really does have a story to tell and history tucked away in the attic; a heritage that they might not have previously explored. People have been proud to celebrate their history and to tell the world about it.

As 2018 approaches, we’re developing ideas for the next step and plan to stage a series of poetry workshops, inspired by the names on local memorials. A poetry workshop during the exhibition at the Royal Cornwall Museum proved immensely successful and moving - and we’re keen to build on that work. We’re keeping the project website alive as things progress.

Visit www.heartofconflict.org.uk to find out more.

 **Susan Roberts**

Director Bridging Arts
www.bridging-arts.org





Photograph: Alyson Brown

Exhibition at Dartmoor Prison Museum

Dartmoor Prison, in Princetown, Devon, is certainly one of the best known and historically notorious English prisons. Even beyond the enormous symbolic meaning that prisons communicate, Dartmoor Prison has been perceived as iconic in both historical and architectural terms. For a long time it was one of only two prisons that held the most serious offenders (called convicts until 1948)

The strength of the images and representations surrounding the prison no doubt explains why the Dartmoor Prison Museum attracts considerable public attention and over 35,000 visitors a year, even though the museum itself isn't actually within the prison, which remains in operation. The museum is located in the old dairy, vacated as the Prison Service withdrew from maintaining a considerable farm on which convicts used to labour. The website of the museum states that it vividly portrays 'more than 200 years of this prison's turbulent history ranging from the beginning, when Dartmoor was a Prisoner of War Depot for French and American prisoners of war, to the later convict era through to today' (www.dartmoor-prison.co.uk/).

How many structures could match such a powerful and emotive history? In some respects the history of Dartmoor reflects the ebb and flow of faith in the prison and the

multiple uses to which modern prisons have been put. It also reflects the extent to which disturbances have marked prison life and experience for both inmates and prison staff.

As a social historian whose research experience focuses on crime and punishment, the large-scale riot which occurred at Dartmoor prison in January 1932 kindled my interest not only because it was one of the biggest press stories of that year, but also because relatively little had been written about it. During my research I became acquainted with the very positive and supportive curator at the museum, Brian Dingle. He was keen to develop exhibitions in the museum. A couple of years ago I put together the first two posters and then, as a contribution to the recent reopening of the museum, added a further two posters to complete a multi-perspective small-scale exhibition on the riot.

It has to be said that the exhibition has been completed on a low budget and in a low-tech manner, but I am pleased with the content and the look, which will hopefully encourage visitors to invest some time exploring the events and their contexts. The exhibition takes the form of four posters covering: the causes of the riot; the impact of the riot; the trial of the Dartmoor convict defendants following the riot; and the prison staff who were working at the prison at the time of the riot. On such a contentious event, maintaining a balance of perspectives within the exhibition was a challenge. A further challenge was the balance between text and images and the appropriate level of detail. Visitors will no doubt come to their own conclusions on such issues.

 **Professor Alyson Brown**

Associate Head of English, History & Creative Writing,
Edgehill University.



Photograph: Jemma Conway

Changing Tides

Reading, 29th and 30th June 2017

The 2017 SHCG conference focused on the 'Changing Tides' of the UK's political climate and how museums must react to adapt to this, but also reflect this in their output.

The main topic of conversation early on Day One was our Reading University accommodation: home to the world's smallest fitted sheet! Our shared experiences of attempting to make our own beds and the acts of contortion that were necessary certainly helped to bond the group, as did the lack of promised Wi-Fi. How were we to survive?

The venue for the first day's talks was Reading University which sits in a beautiful leafy campus with gorgeous red brick buildings. Here we were met by Tony Butler, Executive Director of Derby Museums and founder of the Happy Museum, for his keynote address on how 'institutions must be democratic and transparent'. His talk was humorous, showing how museum professionals must look beyond the liberal 'bubble' but also illuminating, presenting how museums have reacted to the Brexit vote, Trump's election and a number of terrorist attacks across the country in the last 12 months.

The day continued with a presentation by Jude Holland and Victoria Ryves of Doncaster 1914-18's Welcome to a Foreign Shore project, using authentic cakes and the stories of Belgian refugees from the First World War to reach out to Doncaster's communities, new and old, as well as marginalised groups.

Claire Frampton then asked: 'How do live events in museums and galleries deal with contemporary issues?' based on her experiences at Oxford's Ashmolean Museum and looked at whether contemporary drama has a place in a museum setting.

This was followed by a short talk from Oliver Douglas, curator of the Museum of English Rural Life, before the opportunity to look around the museum. Cue much tweeting and the winning of the Day Tweet award by Victoria Rogers, referring to Theresa May's recent comment about 'running through fields of wheat' as a child. (Victoria would appear again in the winning Night Tweet as one of the Three Victorias: Rogers, Ryves and the Queen).

Then it was time for the SHCG's AGM and the election of five new members, including myself. We were sad to say goodbye to Catherine Newley as Chair and Jemma

Conway as Marketing and Partnerships Officer with bottles of the traditional SHCG gin!

With the serious business of Day One taken care of, it was time to move on to the evening events. Firstly, to Reading Museum where we were graciously hosted for a drinks and nibbles reception by the Friends of Reading Museum and entertained with a surprise drama based on Reading's part in the relationship between King Henry I and his daughter Matilda.

Dinner was at the marvellous Sweeney Todd restaurant which was, thrillingly, next door to a barber shop. Seemingly, every type of meat was represented in the choice of pie available (sorry, vegetarians!). Unfortunately, it was a warm summer night and the group left for the fresh air outside before we all melted.

The group decamped to Reading's premiere drinking establishments and settled in for a few rounds of the traditional conference gins. I won't deny that it was shortly before midnight that I got into my bed, attempting not to disturb the precarious bedding.

The next morning started with breakfast and a discussion about what had happened a year previously when Britain woke up to find that it had voted to leave the EU. Given that an election had taken place a few weeks previously, it was interesting to discuss responses from different areas across the country and how our museum colleagues had reacted.

A return to the venue of the previous evening's drinks reception, the excellent Reading Museum, for Day Two which began with a keynote address from Heledd Fychan of National Museum Wales, discussing issues facing the heritage sector in an uncertain political future and, therefore, the importance of effective advocacy.

After a short break, we settled again for Lauren Ephithite, Assistant Curator at Norfolk Museums Service, who presented on how best to create debate in a site such as Gressenhall Farm and Workhouse, where the issues of the past reflect those of the present.

Adrienne Wallman was next to present on her project using oral history and Jewish genealogy to look at cultural identity, demonstrating that 'genealogy is about more than searching for documents in archives' and that museums should be using this type of research.

Following this was Rebecca Odell, Museum Officer for Hackney Museum, looking at the controversy surrounding the LD50 gallery's programme of 'Neo-reaction' events, becoming an 'organising space for racists', and how her organisation reacted as events unfolded. It highlighted the need for debate and the importance of tolerance in the 12 months since the vote for Brexit.

The conference then held its own version of the Question Time panel debate, chaired by the SHCG's Holly Trubshawe. Heledd Fychan returned to the stage to represent Wales, Scotland was represented by SHCG trustee Jenny Noble, Northern Ireland was represented by Triona White Hamilton, whilst England was represented by the previous speaker, Rebecca Odell. It proved to be a fascinating discussion focusing on national responses

to the recent political climate, including nationalism and devolution, and (again) the importance of reflecting these in our museums. The responses of both the panel members and the audience showed that the conference's subject matter was particularly prescient in 2017.

The day ended with the final two presentations. Jen Kavanagh, a freelance curator and oral historian, looked at the issue of copyright and contemporary collecting at the Museum of London. How do you collect material which may not have a named creator, such as graffiti and protest material? How do you protect copyright in these cases?

Jen gave an insightful presentation into an area that many curators, such as myself, have little experience in.

Finally, Jack Ord, Project Assistant at the University of Oxford's History of Science Museum, gave a brilliant presentation on the use of volunteers which caused many of us to cast an eye back to the start of our careers (few failed to raise their hands when asked who had previously volunteered in a museum, and the majority kept them raised when asked if they felt that this had helped to contribute to gaining paid museum work). It was an interesting note to end the conference on.

I was sorry to miss the tour of historic Reading on Saturday morning given by the Curator of Reading Museum, Brendan Carr. I greatly enjoyed my short time there and would have enjoyed learning more about its rich history.



Photograph: Jen Kavanagh

SHC Amy Rowbottom

Curatorial Assistant,
Bronte Parsonage Museum



Norwich LGBTQ trail, design Nicoletta Dyble-Hall

LGBTQ History in Norwich 50 Years Since

This year marked 50 years since the partial decriminalisation of homosexuality in 1967; a historic change in the perception of same sex intimacies.

Although this Act did not equalise the sexualities, it is an important date to commemorate and celebrate. I (as a queer person) count myself lucky that I was in a position to facilitate this celebration, along with colleagues and individuals from the community.

We curated a community based project that aimed to bring queer histories centre stage, and highlight their existence throughout the city and its history. Our pièce de résistance was an object that had been accessioned recently, and was highlighted in Volume 41 of the SHCG Journal – David Shenton's 'Duvet of Love.' Annual Pride celebrations

continue to grow and grow, and this year all across Norwich local businesses and venues embraced the event. To mark 50 years since partial decriminalisation, as well as this year's Pride, the Museum of Norwich at the Bridewell proudly displayed the duvet in its window. Alongside this we created a pop-up display inside the museum, which placed the duvet in the wider historical context of the 1967 Act and LGBTQ history.

As well as our display in the museum space, we felt it important to bring queer histories out into the city.



We had spent so long discussing their personal experiences it felt a necessity; they were the inspiration and content, the foundation and legacy. In order to do so we recorded interviews, created a trail map throughout the city, From Fear to Queer, and released these oral histories (with permission) via a podcast on Soundcloud.

The responses to the project, in and outside the museum, were fantastic; here are a few of the comments:

- "A nicely curated mini exhibition giving Pride today relevant context"
- "Duvet of Love a creative celebration of diversity"
- "Important for you to support this"
- "It's nice to find things like this, not many people recognise the LGBTQ+ community. Thank you!"
- "Love is love"
- "50 years of making progress"

Freya Monk-McGowan
Teaching Museum Trainee
(Collections Management),
Strengthening Our Common Life

Visual Design

In putting together the designs for our posters, leaflets and LGBTQ trail, I felt it was important to take the recognised images of 'Pride' and colours of the LGBTQ community. It was crucial in this project to show support and unity, while telling the stories of those impacted by prejudice and discrimination, both before and after partial decriminalisation.

The trail was particularly engaging to be a part of, as I got to interview and absorb stories from the past and present. With those stories in hand, I took the map of Norwich for the trail and turned it into an explosion of colour with a

message of acceptance and belonging in mind. I wanted to show the LGBTQ community that their history has a place within this city and to acknowledge that it exists in the same places that mainstream histories dwell.

I felt honoured to be a part of this project, and will carry that pride for a long time. With the stories we have been told and with the historical context in which to place them, there is still a lot of space to open eyes and hearts in the future.



Nicoletta Dyble-Hall

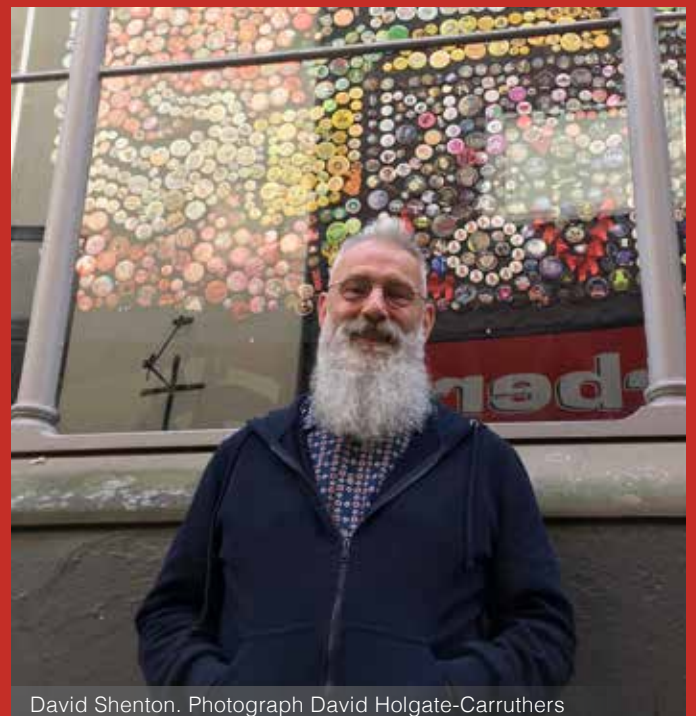
Teaching Museum Trainee (Business Development),
Norfolk Museums Service

Social History Collecting and the Queer Community

David Shenton's 'Duvet of Love' is bold, bright and beautiful. When it was donated to Norfolk Museums Service in August 2016, our social history collection gained a unique, vibrant object. The Museum of Norwich charts the history of the city, exploring the lives of local people and the industries that they worked in. Tools of industry, personal effects and recorded memories illuminate individual lives, placing personal, dynamic experiences in wider historical context.

Objects in social history collections are part of the material culture through which collective memory functions, and this is why the 'Duvet of Love' is a particularly important addition. Even after the partial decriminalisation of homosexuality, centuries-old laws remained in place referring to 'unnatural offences'. Even just touching or kissing was still an offence in public, as was inviting sexual contact – known as 'soliciting'. In practice, this meant that gay men could be and often were arrested and convicted just for smiling, winking or holding hands in the street. It should come as no surprise that within LGBTQ communities, queer lives were lived off the radar by necessity. In looking for these histories you can read the bigger picture through public records and newspaper articles, but the individual story often remains hidden, unseen and untold. The duvet helps to remedy the lack of material objects with historic LGBTQ relevance in our collection, but it also represents David Shenton's own collecting, and individual expression – a personal and tongue-in-cheek political act, crafted in a domestic space.

This project initially grew out of oral history recordings. Whilst it is not enough to replace material objects with audio and (with the use of photography) images, it is nonetheless important that we continue to consider



David Shenton. Photograph David Holgate-Carruthers

voices and faces as historic artefact. This is particularly true when exploring aspects of social history that are not already well documented, whether that be a vanishing industry, a changing landscape or the experiences within a marginalised community. Individual stories can give unique insight as primary documents and enrich physical collections.

The duvet acted as a catalyst for this project and it is our hope that it will be displayed again. With the help of the textiles department it was able to stand visibly in the museum window for two important dates, both locally and nationally, although this did involve conservation issues. Looking to the future, there is certainly scope to build a larger exhibition around the duvet. There is great potential in reaching out to the local community (hopefully expanding our social history collections further), and in exploring different ways to exhibit the individual stories of lives lived here in Norwich.



David Holgate-Carruthers,

Teaching Museum Trainee (Community History),
Norfolk Museums Service



What does the future hold for our churches?

In a recent article in the Guardian, it was reported that statistics have revealed that for the first time, more than half the UK population say they have no religion (The Guardian 2017). For example, “Almost three out of four 18 to 24 year-olds say they have no religion, a rise of nine percentage points since 2015” (The Guardian 2017). Similarly, last year it was recorded that the number of people attending Church of England services fell below 1 million for the first time (The Guardian 2016).

These facts have to raise the question of what will happen to these buildings as they fall out of use. When thinking about our historic buildings, a key element to ensure their future could be their continuing usefulness in modern society. This, perhaps, is one of the reasons so many historic homes have survived the turn of time, as they continue to be useful as dwelling places. In similar ways, it is easy to see how out-of-use factories can be easily regenerated into modern trendy housing, and how public buildings such as halls can be repurposed for community arts venues etc. But what is possibly harder to see is the survival of purpose-specific church buildings.

One reason for this could be that the original intended function of an ecclesiastical building is so ingrained in the design and layout of these structures that it is difficult to see how such a building could be used for anything else. However, despite the original uses of these buildings declining in many areas, and with society seemingly becoming more secular, the historical significance of these structures deserves to be recognised.

For example, if you search Historic England's listed buildings register with the keyword “church”, there are 72,589 (Historic England 2017). For a building to be suitable for listing it is judged to hit several key indicators including:

Evidential Value – the potential for a place to give evidence about past human activity

Historical Value – places which can illustrate how past people, events and life can be connected to the present

Aesthetic Value – places where people can draw sensory and intellectual stimulation from a place

Communal Value – the meanings of a place for the people who relate to it, or for whom it figures in their collective memory or experience (Historic England 2008)

Places of worship can be considered to display all

of these values; indeed Historic England points out that “With their strong claims to special architectural, archaeological, artistic, historic and cultural interest, places of worship deserve considerable respect and care” (Historic England 2011, 2). Throughout much of time, churches and other places of worship have been a recognizable and important feature of our landscapes playing a huge role in the fabric of our lives. Indeed, Historic England recognises that:

“People feel strongly about them, whether or not they are active members of a worshipping congregation, and they are often repositories for the collective memories of the local communities, and their historic place of burial” (Historic England 2011, 2).

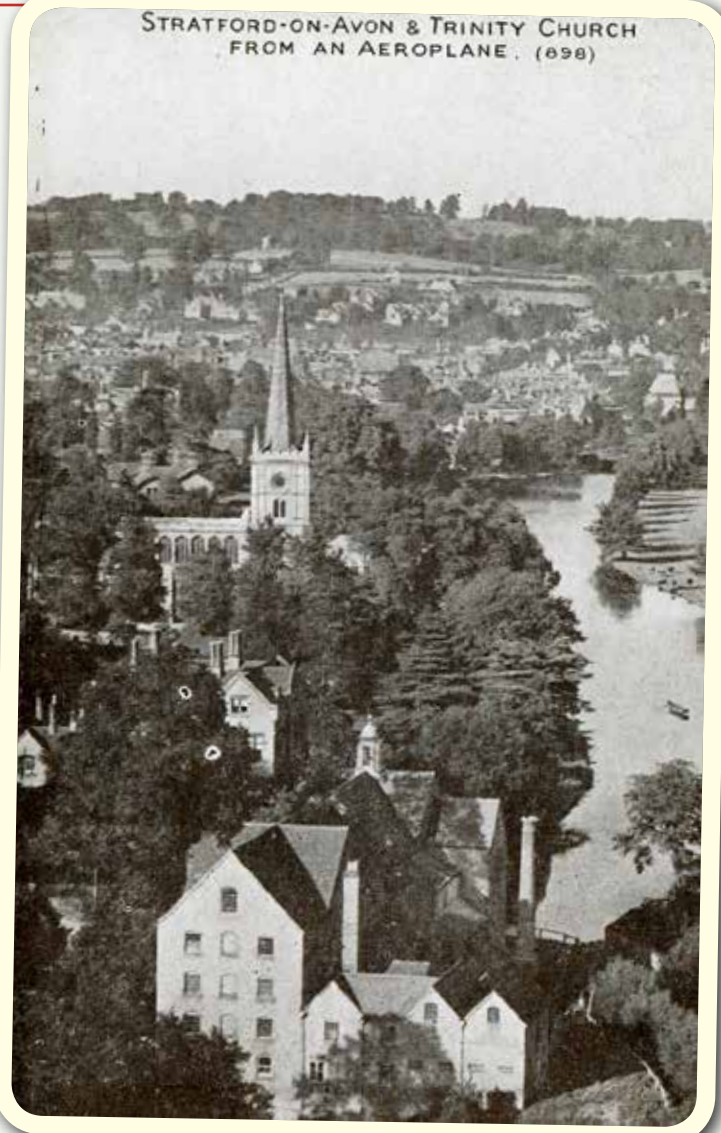
But how are these important structures to be saved if they no longer remain relevant to people in their lived experiences, as opposed to simply becoming a static, unused, and one day derelict reminder of their historic use and significance?

One such answer may be found in the approach taken by the Churches Conservation Trust (CCT). They work with local communities where a church at risk is situated to keep it open and in use so that it is “living once again at the heart of their communities” (Churches Conservation Trust 2017a). What their approach stands out for is that they are keen to recognise:

“what these buildings can contribute to modern life; whether as a heritage gem to discover during a walk in the country, a place to meet or learn, a cultural venue or a destination to visit as part of a day out” (Churches Conservation Trust 2017a).

This means that although some churches in their care are restored simply as working churches, other under-used churches are regenerated through reuse projects.

For example, at All Souls Church in Bolton, the CCT rejuvenated the church to become a centre for its surrounding community. This included building two three-storey pods into the centre of the church which contains offices, conference and meeting spaces, a coffee shop and a multimedia exhibition on local history (Churches Conservation Trust 2017b). At St Paul's Church in Bristol, the CCT worked with a company called Circomedia to restore and adapt the building to become a venue for a wide range of events and activities, including as a space for learning circus and theatre skills (Churches Conservation Trust 2017c).



Photos courtesy of the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust

Therefore, as can be seen in the CCT's approach, there is much potential for these buildings to be reused and rejuvenated. I believe that by adapting churches and their use to reflect the needs of modern society, these important historical buildings can again become treasured buildings worthy of saving, and deserving of their place in the physical pattern of our communities and lives.



Helen Simmons

Project Manager
Culture Syndicates

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Images courtesy of the Shakespeare Birthplace Trust

Huguenot Heritage

Who were the Huguenots?

The Huguenots - French Protestants - were this country's first refugees, escaping religious persecution in Catholic France after the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes by Louis XIV in 1685. Many settled in London: in Soho, the City, Clerkenwell, Greenwich, Spitalfields and Wandsworth; but others went further afield, to Canterbury, Colchester, Faversham, Norwich and Sudbury, where they could practise their faith in peace.

Nobody knows where the word Huguenot comes from, but from the mid-16th century it was in common parlance as an abusive word by the French Catholics against the French Protestants. Louis XIV forbade them to leave France on pain of imprisonment, torture and death. Despite these terrible threats, around 50,000 were motivated to emigrate to this country, leaving behind family, friends and possessions. The majority arrived with nothing, except their enterprise, industry and talent.

The Huguenots transformed the skills-base of the cities and towns to which they moved, establishing new businesses. Academics say that it is in the textile industries where the Huguenots' greatest contribution was made, but there are countless traces of their heritage around the country: memorials to the Huguenots in Westminster Abbey and Winchester Cathedral; paintings in Hampton Court; silks and ceramics at the V&A Museum; weavers' homes in Canterbury, Norwich and Sudbury; gunpowder works in Faversham; the Guildhall Clock in Winchester, made by Huguenot clockmaker David Compigné; and Dyrham Park, part-designed by a Huguenot architect, Samuel Hauduroy.

But there is so much more in cathedral treasures, display cases in museums, and in our architectural landscape – from street names to former workshops and homes. Can you help us to identify the traces of the Huguenots who once lived and worked in your part of the country? We would love to hear from you!

Huguenot Legacies

There is hardly a skill-set where you cannot find the impressive talents of a Huguenot: whether it is gun-making, engraving, jewellery, pharmacy, painting, ceramics, textiles, ivory, clock-making, portrait painting, printing, bookbinding, glassblowing, cartography, acting, medicine, science, papermakers, architecture, furniture, sculpture, goldsmiths, miniaturists, city commerce: the list is endless.

Our aim is to encourage cultural organisations to include the word 'Huguenot' in their descriptions across all interpretative materials and in printed and digital displays (often, the provenance is solely identified as 'French'). Why? Because we are determined to see the Huguenots gain credit for their achievements and effects on the history of this country. Furthermore, it is thought that one in six of us has Huguenot ancestry – many of the surnames we presume to be English are indeed from our French ancestors – so, many visitors will connect with this shared heritage.

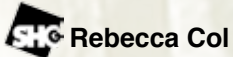
The Huguenot legacy is diverse: Paul de Lamarie is considered to be the finest silversmith this country has ever known and the Courtaulds, Pantin, Harache and Willaume, were incredibly talented. Think of elaborate gentlemen's pistols and the name Pierre Monlong and Pierre Gruche spring to mind; think of clockmakers and Blachett, Collo and the outstanding Nicholas Ourseau, who constructed Hampton Court's great astronomical clock – they were Huguenots too; glassmaking was the talent of Jean Carre of Arras and the founder of the Derby Porcelain factory was the ceramicist Andre Planche. Huguenots are everywhere you look! It was Vautrollier who settled in London to establish new print works and Le Blon introduced new methods of colour printing; Issac Basire was the first of four Huguenot generations of engravers; Fourdrinier specialized in the formation of architectural plans; Gribelin specialized in publishing pattern books; and Jean Rocque, cartographer, created the very first A-Z of London.

The Huguenots were also present in the worlds of theatre and music - the playwright Thomas D'Urfrey and actor-manager, David Garrick. Peter Prelleur published the guide for musicians entitled *The Modern Musick-Master*, which for 300 years was considered the most important singing manual.

The Huguenot legacy in science and medicine is quite extraordinary too: the Chamberlen family are notable for their invention of the obstetric forceps; Gideon de Laune, the appointed Royal Apothecary to Anne of Denmark (wife of King James I), was instrumental in the founding of the Society of Apothecaries and we have to thank de Mayerne for coming up with the idea of recording patients' medical notes.

The first Commander in Chief of the British Army was a Huguenot fighting the French and historians say that the Glorious Revolution of 1688 would have been a bloody revolution had it not been for the Huguenots, while the first Governor of the Bank of England, Sir John Houblon, was also a Huguenot.

Most notably, the Huguenots revitalised the textile industry; in particular, silk weaving. Many of the refugees from France had been merchants, master weavers or journeymen but being Protestants they were forbidden entry into the Grande Fabrique in Lyons. They settled in Spitalfields where there was already a fledgling narrow silks industry. Talented individuals such as James Leman, Peter Lekeux, Simon Julian and the Ogier family designed and created beautiful silk patterns that can now be found in museums round the world.



Rebecca Col

Huguenots of Spitalfields



Photograph: Marenka Gabeler



Photograph: Marenka Gabeler

Who we are

The Huguenots of Spitalfields (registered charity no. 1151801) highlight the contribution Huguenots made to this country through a series of walks, talks, events and days out, and through educational and heritage programmes.

Currently, the charity's focus is to highlight the remaining Journeymen Weavers' houses in Spitalfields; expand the 'Meet the Huguenots', a primary school programme and resource; 'Huguenot Threads', an initiative to inspire young fashion students studying at the UK's leading fashion colleges with the work of the Huguenot silk designers and weavers; and to connect with Huguenot towns, identifying Huguenot artefacts wherever they are. Four festivals have been staged with audiences of over

30,000 attending, and we have over 3,000 people who read our regular e-newsletter.

How you can help

The Huguenots of Spitalfields is keen to make partnerships across the U.K. We would like to hear from SHCG members to help us in our ambition to ensure the Huguenot legacy is identified, respected and appreciated. Can you help us?

For more information please visit www.huguenotsofspitalfields.org or contact Rebecca Coll, Heritage and Education Coordinator, at info@huguenotsofspitalfields.org to send in any information you have on Huguenot objects if you can help us with our campaign endeavours.

Violet Dix's Trunk

In 1973, a leather trunk was donated to Saffron Walden Museum, containing the belongings of a girl called Violet Dix. Violet died in 1919, aged 10. Her belongings were packed into the trunk, perhaps by her parents who were too upset to deal with them, and kept, untouched, by her sister Elsie until her death.

The belongings include clothes, toys, books, schoolwork, letters, and material relating to Violet's death. From these objects we can piece together a picture of Violet and her childhood in Saffron Walden.

School

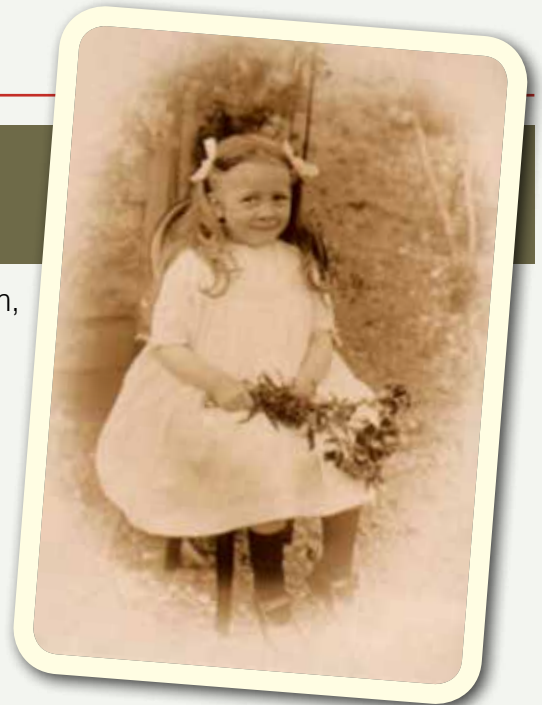
Despite frequent illnesses, Violet's schoolwork and letters show an intelligent girl with a sense of humour. In a note to her mother, she wrote "If you want to know where your safety pins are, look where you told me to put them", suggesting she got away with being cheeky. Violet was at the top of her class at school and her writing shows skill and imagination. Included in her belongings are embroidered items, most likely sewn by Violet in needlework class.

Play

All of Violet's social arrangements were made by letter so we know that she often had friends to play at home or she visited others. She liked to collect things and the trunk contains packs of cigarette cards, pictures of trains, and cut-out paper dolls. There are numerous boxes and tins with handmade peg dolls, small toys and brooches.

Clothing

Violet's clothing includes dresses, petticoats, underwear, scarves, coats and boots. Violet's dresses are delicate white, embroidered cotton with lace and ribbon trimming. In contrast, her underwear was made to last, in heavy duty cotton, with large tucks to allow for growth, and her socks are heavily darned, indicating that the family was thrifty.



Health

School reports and other documents reveal Violet's poor health. She was absent from school for long periods, suffering from ear trouble, measles and coughs. In 1919, just a few days before she died, Violet wrote in a notebook "I have had a long illness, and I am not well yet. I had to go to London to a great ear specialist. And soon I have to go to his nursing home...I do not want to go". Four days later, her mother wrote home from London "Violet got through the operation but is very bad today. They will not tell me much". Violet died the next day.

Death

Poems about Violet's death, written by her mother, were left in the trunk, along with letters of sympathy, in memoriam cards, and photographs of Violet's coffin and grave.

It has been argued that World War I marked a shift in attitudes towards death, from the Victorian fixation with outward expressions of grief to an attitude in which death was shameful and forbidden.¹ The material in Violet's trunk seems to represent the cusp of this shift. Whilst the photographs of Violet's coffin and grave are reminiscent of a Victorian reaction, the family's mourning is carried out more privately, through poems, diary entries and letters. In contrast to many Victorian mourning cards which use "died" or "departed this life", the card announcing Violet's interment states that she "fell asleep".

Violet Dix's trunk and its belongings are a fascinating and deeply personal collection. The museum has welcomed several members of the Dix family and friends to view the collection over recent years. In 1996, a book about Violet's trunk was published locally² and an exhibition staged at the museum, but the collection has not been displayed since.



Leah Mellors

Collections Officer (Human History),
Saffron Walden Museum

¹Aries, P, *Western Attitudes Towards Death from the Middle Ages to the Present* (1974)

²Holman, G, *Violet Dix's Trunk: Childhood in Saffron Walden 1910-1920* (1996)



Brown Besses of the '45

1730 Muskets at the Museum of Edinburgh

The Museum of Edinburgh has a collection of 28 early-mid 18th century flintlock muskets. The museum has inherited an assumption that they belonged to the Edinburgh City Guard, a civic law-enforcement unit before the police was established. Research into these guns, combined with surprising evidence from the museum's own collection, has finally unlocked the full story of these fascinating objects.

Tiny variations in the muskets were explored to extract a detailed understanding and chronology. Most of the locks have the maker's name, date and ordnance marks, indicating they were official issue from the King's army. Of the 28 muskets, 5 are 1730 Long Land Pattern, the earliest type of standard military issue musket. Most of the others are 1740 Patterns which demonstrate developments in gun technology. Two muskets have no engravings or ordnance marks, but bear features of Dutch manufacture.

In the years before the 1745 Jacobite Rebellion broke out, fear of a French invasion in support of the deposed Stuarts drove a push to re-arm and defend the nation. We know that 5000 small arms were sent from the Tower of London to Scotland in the spring of 1745. Some of these ended up in Edinburgh Castle, and it is not unreasonable to surmise a number of these being supplied to the City Guard. The picture was emerging of a scramble for arms to prepare for trouble. Edinburgh was provided with state of the art firearms, the latest 1740 Pattern, with a handful of earlier 1730s thrown in, and a couple of non-issue

Dutch muskets brought back, most likely, from the British army's presence in the Netherlands.

The final piece to the jigsaw was the re-discovery in the collection of a manuscript inventory of the city's civic wardrobe and armouries from 1747. It lists 39 muskets belonging to the guard, but also includes 60 other firelocks, explicitly described as "old". The 39 were therefore newer, and likely those sent to Edinburgh in the 1740s. The City Guard would have kept these muskets for subsequent use. Council Minutes refer to at least two payments to gunsmiths in the 1760-1790s for cleaning and restoring muskets. Indeed, on close inspection of the museum's arms, few of the locks show evidence of regular firing, if any, but the brass butt plates have been worn down to the wood from years of square bashing. More importantly, most surviving 1730 and 1740 Pattern muskets are from military contexts and would have been refurbished with metal ramrods as part of a general refitting later in the 18th century. The Edinburgh muskets have retained their wooden ramrods, and are more or less, in their original state.

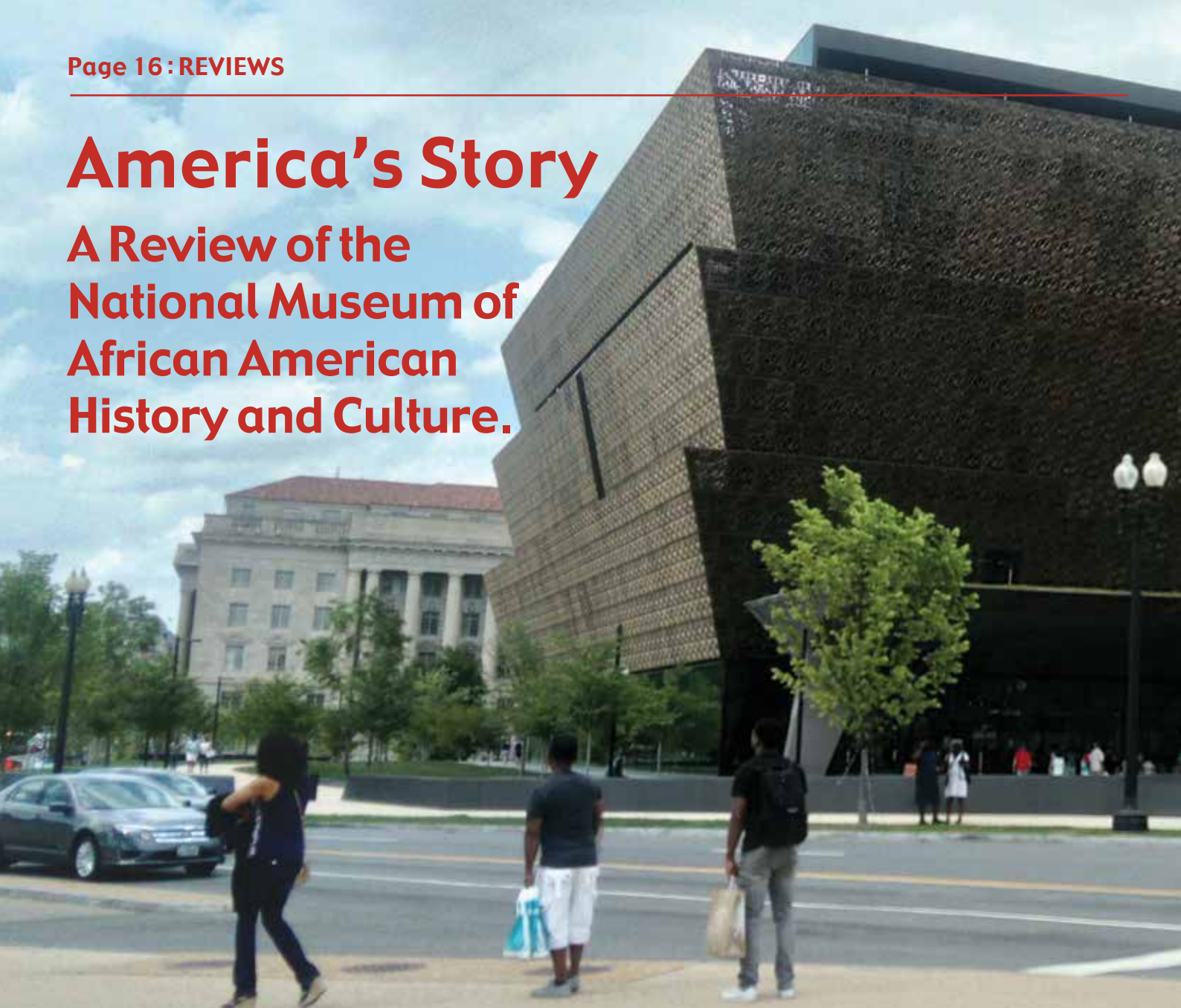
The collection is thought to be one of the largest of its kind, and certainly the five 1730 Patterns have attracted attention from specialists. Having at least four different patterns of muskets allows us to see the typology change over the years, but the supporting documentary evidence, and human stories behind the City Guard's muskets, really brings them to life.

 **Nico Tyack**

Collections Information Officer
The City of Edinburgh Council Museums & Galleries

America's Story

A Review of the National Museum of African American History and Culture.



In June 2017, I visited the National Museum of African American History and Culture (NMAAHC) in Washington DC. The museum opened in September 2016 and has since had over a million visitors. The 37,000-strong collection of objects has been built up from scratch, via donations and acquisitions from around the world. In order to visit you have to secure a time-slot ticket approximately three months ahead; this clearly signals the level of demand to see what's on display.

The museum is visually striking from the outside. The bronze cladding which covers the three-storey building draws the eye from far down the National Mall. Symbolism is an important feature of the NMAAHC and is present in the very fabric of the building; from the three-tiered design representing a traditional African wooden column, to the metal work inspired by the wrought iron gates on plantations across the USA. According to the NMAAHC's website, 'the building's form and materials are intended to express strength, faith, hope and resilience,' all themes which continue inside.

The displays themselves are in two halves. The first section consists of three history galleries which have been designed to showcase significant milestones in African American history. As in many UK museums that engage with similar issues, the displays start with cases which illustrate the richness of the African continent prior to the devastation inflicted by European slave trades. The exhibition then explores the process of enslavement and the middle passage. Here, curators have cleverly chosen archival material which allows the voices of the enslaved to speak directly to the visitors about the horrors that faced them. Running parallel to these displays about the slave trade is a display which charts the development of the USA as a nation. This creates the impression that slavery is inextricably linked to America's national history.

This link is emphasised through the remaining exhibits, which examine plantation life, abolition and emancipation, reconstruction, and civil rights. There is a vast range of objects on display, including archive material, domestic items, archaeological finds and full-sized installations of buildings and vehicles. Interactives are used to explore the collections further but also facilitate the visitor in imagining what some of these situations may have been like. For instance, one replicates a 'sit in' at a 1950s diner, reflecting a method of protest often utilised during the Civil Rights

The National Museum of African American History and Culture on Washington's historic National Mall. Photograph: Rebecca Nelson



Movement. The history displays are comprehensive, covering a wide range of themes from politics to popular culture.

The range of topics covered is extended further in the other half of the museum, the community galleries which illustrate the ongoing achievements of the African American community. From sports, through military exploits, to science, music and television, amongst these galleries are many 'celebrity' objects like Michael Jordan's 1996 NBA finals jersey, and one of Jimi Hendrix's vests. Though slightly less serious in tone than the history galleries, the underlying message very clearly speaks to ideas of hope and resilience. There are even more opportunities in these galleries for visitors to engage in these spaces, particularly with the 'Robert Frederick Smith Explore Your Family History Centre,' where visitors can browse digitised archive material with expert guidance to explore their own family tree.

Overall, visiting the NMAAHC was an amazing experience. The sheer number of objects on display and themes discussed is quite overwhelming, and I think a repeat visit is essential just to absorb everything fully. The most admirable quality of the museum is that, while in name it addresses African American history and culture, this is a museum which charts the national history of America as a

whole. The displays have been very carefully considered in every aspect, to provide a balanced view of both the history and the legacies of slavery and its aftermath. All visitors are invited to contribute their own stories and comments to each set of exhibitions. As its director, Dr Lonnie Bunch, stated prior to the museum opening, 'this Museum will tell the American story through the lens of African American history and culture. This is America's Story and this museum is for all Americans.' He was absolutely right. Institutions around the world should take note of the NMAAHC as an example of how to bring people together to learn and to discuss and to celebrate histories that have traditionally been undervalued and neglected due to their perceived challenging nature, but are crucial elements of a national narrative.



Rebecca Nelson

PhD Researcher
Wilberforce Institute, Hull

Pink Floyd – Their Mortal Remains, V&A

There was a time when it would have been unthinkable for contemporary popular culture to be celebrated in our national museums. Rather than social history, the nationals have always focused on the otherworldly and dazzling. Yet in recent years there has been a sea-change, most noticeably at the V&A.

In many ways Pink Floyd represent the logical next step. They are so intrinsically linked with the late 60s and early 70s, yet continued to do ground breaking and hugely successful work right into the mid-noughties. A career like theirs is clearly a wonderful story to tell, and has spanned many generations.

The most immediate feature of the exhibition is the set of headphones given to visitors at the entrance. Music or dialogue is continually looped into the headphones in relation to where a visitor is stood. It certainly makes for an immersive experience, and the quality is brilliant (Floyd are a muso's band - this stuff matters). It does take away from the communal aspect of visiting an exhibition though- removing the headphones at times did remind me of being in a silent disco.

The exhibition is arranged chronologically, with a surprising number of personal objects, particularly from the band's early years. These are mixed with early stage equipment and instruments. One of the most affecting objects is the very first you see, a letter written by a teenage Syd Barrett to his girlfriend. The words are immediately recognisable as his, written in the same crazy, fairy-tale language we hear in his songs. To see this letter in the same space as his brilliantly decorated chrome guitar goes a long way to conveying the wide range of his character.

The whole exhibition is augmented with interviews with all four post-Barrett band members. They are an excellent tool



for understanding the objects, and allow for more detail about specific points. For example one film explains the process of their live film at Pompeii, while another describes their experience with the huge inflatables used to promote *Animals* and *The Wall*.

It is especially pleasing to see attention given to Storm Thorgerson, the visionary artist who worked with Pink Floyd on all their album covers. Some of these are truly astonishing images, and the explanation of the ridiculous processes endured to attain them gives a real depth to the exhibition. (He had 700 hospital beds lined up on a beach for one shot, only to be displeased with the light so had them removed and returned the next day).

The most moving part of the exhibition is actually one of the simplest- one screen devoted to a rolling animation based on the cover of *The Dark Side of the Moon*. *The Great Gig in the Sky* is played in our headphones, and it is a beautiful experience to listen to the song in this way. It is a welcome reminder that powerful art, in whatever form, can always speak for itself. It is a message that this excellent exhibition conveys brilliantly.



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