



Kent Museums Group
Protecting Kent's Heritage

Minutes of the 2015 Annual General Meeting

held at The Beaney House of Art & Knowledge, Canterbury on 24th November 2015

Present: Chair & Secretary: J Harrison; S Corn, C Boxer, M Thomsett, D Boston, C Foreman, R Morley, E Greenaway, H Wootton, D Wills, A Edwards, T West, J Fryer, L Newton, M Goodhew; speakers: Julie Cole, Dr Zoe Denness, Dr Sam Carroll.

1. Apologies:

J Adamson, S Gosling, T Hill, D Greaves, R Dann, A Boxall, P Divall, K Harris, K Macklen, L Thompson.

2. Minutes of the previous meeting & matters arising

Minutes of the general meeting at Rochester on 5th June 2015 were approved.

3. Accounts for period 1st Jan 2015 – 31st October 2015

JH noted for members that these Accounts were for a shorter period than normal in order to re-establish the AGM at the end of the current year, with subscriptions remaining 1st Jan to 31st Dec. CF noted a small error in expenditure subtotal during the meeting and JH submitted late invoice for web-hosting charge to Sept 2015; figures below show corrected Accounts.

Opening balance at 1st January 2015 **£3530.40**

INCOME

Subscriptions £360-00
SEMDP grant £1980-00*
Sub total £2340-00

EXPENDITURE

R Clark travel expenses £28-35
Refund on subs (paid twice) £15-00
Subs to Kent History Fed £15-00
Website hosting charge £74.25
Sub-total £132.60

Closing balance at 31st October 2015-11-26 **£5737.80**

* Less SEMDP Energy Audit grant **£3757.80**

Subscriptions for this year remain static, whilst the SEMDP Energy grant inflated income but is restricted funds.

JH reported with great relief that David Wills, having managed 2015's finances, has agreed to remain as Treasurer.

4. Chairman's Address

JH gave a short address: Members are well aware of the plans to develop KMG and the cancellation of the September meeting shows the necessity of such development i.e. the organization of meetings,

agendas etc cannot rest on one person as any diversion with that one person leaves the Group stranded; in this instance, it forced a delay to implementation of agreed development of meetings. I have been Chairman, a 2-year position, since 2004 and, in the absence of a replacement, took on Secretary duties in 2006, hence there is a need to recruit Council members at least.

Between myself and Sarah Corn, we have tried to create interesting agendas above and beyond the main speaker to attract more members to meetings. This has proven to be effective but not always possible, whilst there are other reasons, mostly geographical/travel, why attendance has dipped. I suggest also that Sarah's investment of work and support in sub-regional groups has engaged museums more effectively but might impact on those museums attending a regional meeting when they already attend a more relevant, local meeting sub-regionally. The sub regional groups, especially Swale, are forging ahead with forward planning and their own networking meetings. KMG needs to catch up! To this end I am meeting with Sarah (27.11.15) to look at ACE Resilience funding to support the actions we identified and agreed last year.

We face the Government's Autumn Statement and Comprehensive Spending Review tomorrow and, even in the last two weeks, the terrorist acts in Paris have changed the Governments priorities towards security and policing. This will mean that arts & culture is likely to lose more money [go to the KMG website <http://www.kentmusemsgroup.org/> to see the outcome and consequences for museums]. My concern is that a combination of higher level strategic work for our MDO and cuts to ACE funding will impact on the excellent support we receive from Sarah. MDO posts are unlikely to be cut directly but funding will affect grants etc. KMG is in a position to give more support to SEMDP service delivery e.g. providing additional training in the event of any reduction in MDO services, whilst also developing KMG to a level where it could become the commissioning body for museum development in the longer term.

However, the bottom line is that our members take advantage of the Group's support; our MDO may well redirect some of your queries to me in order to assist with our capacity building, but if we are successful in securing a substantial grant we will need to show the benefits to you, our members, and to the wider museums community. In the foreseeable financial landscape, a failure to do this could well result in KMG being marginalized and, ultimately, redundant. The success of the sub-regional groups is commendable but there is still a gap for representation between the sub-regions and the higher levels where national issues are played out. Hence I urge you to support and engage with KMG whenever you can.

5. Elections

JH apologised to members for forgetting Mary Thomsett's replacement of Jonathan Fryer on Council last year when sending out this year's election papers. JH also thanked David Wills for continuing as Treasurer.

No nominations were received for Officer positions or for Council membership. A continuance of current Council members and Officers until the next AGM was agreed unanimously by those present. JH noted that two offers of Council membership (Tunbridge Wells and Powell-Cotton) had fallen through and warned members that he would be head-hunting for new Council members.

6. Museum group development in Essex & Hertfordshire – Julie Cole

Julie gave those present some insight into the development of two, quite different county museum groups. Both Counties lack a County Council service.

Essex Museums Group (a CIO) has a wider range of membership rates (linked to income), and provides small grants after a donation from an Insurance Company, whilst paying towards core MDO costs. This financial advantage also allows the Group to give funding to non Accredited museums, whereas the MDO cannot.

Hertfordshire is more like Kent in its geography – widespread members but poor road infrastructure. The Group is an informal association (like KMG) but raises no funds by subscription.

Clearly, we are currently similar to Herts but need to move towards the Essex model whereby we can support MDO service delivery more effectively.

7. MDO and ACE News

Development Grant Scheme The 2015-16 Scheme is now closed as the allocated budget has been distributed, totalling **£21,014.36**. There were 8 grants awarded, 1 commissioned piece of work and 2 partner training days:

Development Grants:

- Sevenoaks Museum (Audience research and development, £3,000)
- Dartford Museum (Audience research and development, £2,000)
- Kent Museums Group (Improving energy use in museums, £1,980)
- Dover Museum (Interactive Guide for Print and Web Access, £3,097)
- Powell-Cotton Museum (British Sign Language Level 2, £2,896)
- Swale Museums Group (Running the Swale Heritage Forum, £700)
- The Seaside Museum (The Tardis Project: improving digital access, £1,961.36)
- Tenterden & District Museum (Installation of InfoAktiv to improve collection access, £2,000)

Commissioned:

- Tunbridge Wells Museums & Art Gallery (Dementia Toolkit, £1,900)

Training:

- Community Philosophy (with Powell-Cotton Museum, £1,000)
- First Aid at Work (with Royal Engineers Museum, £480)

The new Development Grant Scheme will **re-open in April 2016** for museums working within the Accreditation Scheme.

Training

We've had a very busy year so far in terms of training, with 8 training days targeted to Kent museums, a further 4 regional sessions open to all in the South East, and one joint session with our colleagues in Surrey & Sussex.

Topics have included:

- Collections Care, Conservation and Cataloguing
- Museums & Student Volunteers
- Introduction to Funding
- Creative approaches to working with schools
- Making the most of audience data

Still available for booking are:

- Emergency Plans in Practice (<http://southeastmuseums.org/Training?item=1956>)
- Peer2Peer: Dementia Friendly Museums (<http://southeastmuseums.org/Training?item=1770>)
- Business Innovation Fund Launch (<http://southeastmuseums.org/Training?item=1925>)

- Building Engagement: Creating outreach sessions (<http://southeastmuseums.org/Training?item=1771>)

Visit <http://southeastmuseums.org/Training> for a full list of training across the region.

Plus, colleagues in Hampshire have offered the following fundraising training to Kent museums:

- Individual donors, Southampton, 2nd December 2015 (<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/individual-donors-cultivating-mid-to-high-level-giving-workshop-registration-19078609635>) NB. Booking closes today.
- Enterprise & Philanthropy conference, London, 2nd March 2016 (<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/enterprise-philanthropy-building-relationships-to-fund-museums-registration-18470976187>)

Preventive Conservation

Our Kent & Medway Preventive Conservation Officer, Emily Nisbet-Hawkins, has returned from maternity leave (Siobhan Barratt has been covering the post since January this year and has visited many Kent museums over previous months).

You can contact Emily for advice at emily.nisbet-hawkins@brighton-hove.gov.uk.

Do you need some conservation equipment for small project or are you just missing that last bit of material to finish a task? Then take a look at our [Conservation Resources Bank](#) to see what is available and for more details about requesting equipment.

NB: this is only available to museums working within the Accreditation Scheme or those working towards. Networks are able to apply.

Free fundraising advice!

Do you have a fundraising challenge and need some help knowing where to go next or how to get started? Do you need to talk to a fundraising expert to get some advice to point you in the right direction? If so, a fundraising clinic could be just what you need.

You can sign up for a 30 minute telephone call with a fundraising expert where they will help you look at your fundraising challenge and provide suggestions on what to do next. By providing them with background on your challenge before the call, they will have time to prepare and research so that you get the most out of this call. They will then send you useful notes and further contacts discussed in your call. The call can be arranged at a mutually convenient time. This is provided free of charge as part of the HLF funded 'Inspiring a Culture of Philanthropy' project taking place in Hampshire Solent.

If you are interested or what to know more, please contact Romilly Beard, Project Director: romilly.beard@hampshireculturaltrust.org.uk or call 01962 826701.

Accreditation

The Accreditation Scheme is now inviting museums to submit their Return (which happens every 3 years). So those who were first invited to submit their full application in 2012, will be receiving a Return invite shortly.

For more details, visit the ACE website: <http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/what-we-do/supporting-museums/accreditation-scheme/accreditation-returns/>

8. Energy Audit Grant

JH told members that Cranbrook Museum had taken up the offer of funding and he was waiting for Chiddingstone to confirm their participation (Estate Mgr on leave). T West told members how useful the exercise had been, that they would save a lot of money – a better energy supplier alone saved £50/month, the water supply had been modified, and the report produced by Rowan was invaluable as

'ammunition' to effect internal change and to support a current application to British Gas for a grant (money to replace track lighting with more modern equipment). Sarah noted for members that there is an AIM National Energy Scheme

9. Any other business

JH reported that Thanet District Council had appointed Sarah Greenaway as Heritage Engagement Officer using Coastal Communities funding to support the post. Emily was present at the meeting and members had chance to chat with her during the break. Emily's post is an 18 month fixed term position and she is working to develop a Thanet network of heritage related attractions whilst also boosting tourism where possible.

10. Date, time and place of next meeting

Next meeting yet to be confirmed

Gateways to World War I

Our main speakers, Dr Zoë Denness and Dr Sam Carroll from the School of History at University of Kent, gave some insight into the fantastic range of support they can give to us when we're planning our World War I commemorations. The main website can be found at <http://www.gatewaysfww.org.uk/>

They offer:

- Promotion of your event through the Gateway
- Networking and contact with relevant academics who can give specialist lectures
- UKC Students to volunteer for you (email Zoë on z.denness@kent.ac.uk)
- Small travelling displays on the following to support your events with free delivery and collection (email Sam on s.j.casroll@kent.ac.uk)

WWI Cinema
WWI Theatre
WWI Maritime
WWI Indian Army
WWI Ypres

An associated project, run by the Imperial War Museum can be found at <https://livesofthefirstworldwar.org/>
Access to their database allows entry of information about individual soldiers etc as well as searching.

HLF have a new funding stream called 'Then and Now' <http://www.hlf.org.uk/looking-funding/our-grant-programmes/first-world-war-then-and-now> which provides funding of £3-10k and ways to WWI can provide a letter of support for your application

Members' News

Sevenoaks Museum

The Museum has a new exhibition at Sevenoaks called 'What's Your Passion'. We worked with about 30 local people who have lent us objects and photographs connected with the activity they are passionate about, from making baroque musical instrument to spinning and from Tai Chi to collecting African art. The participants were all interviewed about their passion so we have quotations in the exhibition about how they started on it and what they like best about it. The exhibition will be up until mid- March 2016