

- LISKEARD UNLOCKED

The 'Local Creatives' display attracted a good number of visitors (199 between September 8th-17th, which is up from 124 during Liskeard Unlocked 2022). We have decided to keep the display up for that little bit longer, due to the upcoming major movement of exhibitions coming up in December. Unfortunately, the family-friendly playdough crafts that accompanied the display attracted considerably less visitors than we had hoped for, which came as a surprise, after a number of well-attended Summer events. Perhaps an alternative activity formula, different timings, or a booking system is needed during term-time.

- FILMING CREW AT THE MUSEUM

I am pleased to say that despite initial logistical concerns, the experience of hosting a BBC film crew at the Museum was a positive and exciting one. This would not have been so without our incredible volunteers (a very special mention to Phil, Brian, Karen and Kevin), who helped to clear out John Allen room prior to filming, then reinstalled the display in what seemed like no time at all, in order to allow for our October half-term activities to run as planned. We should be able to see the results sometime in Spring 2024. I am keen to explore the idea of a public screening of the episode at the Museum. The crew seemed interested in the prospect of returning to our museum, should an appropriate script present itself.

- OCTOBER HALF-TERM

Our half-term offer, 'Charms and Witches', included volunteer-curated displays on real-life witches and a local folklorist, William Paynter, as well as a good selection of themed crafts, a new trail, Halloween dress-up corner and Storytime. I was on annual leave over that period; however, I have been told all activities ran smoothly, and were popular. We had 112 adults and 80 children visit, which is slightly less than in the previous year (144 adults and 89 children). Moving forward, I would like for the Museum to find an alternative 'tone' during October half-term. There has been an overwhelming array of pumpkin/witch/ghost-themed events in our area this half-term; perhaps a more unique approach would make us stand out more.

- MUSEUM MANAGEMENT TEAM

Our volunteers have recently been invited to vote for the new members of the Museum Management Team. The results were close to unanimous, with the vast majority favoring Karen and Brian. Our first management team meeting in this formation took place on October 6th. In the meeting, we were accompanied by our new museum mentor, Stephanie Clemens, whose primary role is the Museum Development Officer for Cornwall.

- GANS KERENSA

Our Christmas activities will run between Saturday, December 9th - Friday, December 22nd, and will be in John Allen room. We are working with a theme of a 'Christmas card', which will inform a temporary display, as well as self-directed crafts. We will be offering festive events on the following dates: Saturday 9th, 16th and Friday 22nd (these might be ticketed, and are likely to include Storytime, Creative writing workshop, and a supervised crafts activity). More details to follow shortly.

- THREADS

The Museum will close all rooms, but John Allen's room, between Monday, December 4th – Friday, December 22nd. The Museum will close completely for the period between Saturday, December 23rd – Saturday, January 6th. This is to allow for all necessary work to happen to install our new exhibition, 'Threads'. The official launch date is Monday, January 8th, with a preview for invited guests on Friday, January 5th, between 5-7pm.

- ACCREDITED MUSEUM STANDARDS

At the museum we are proud of our accredited status and have worked hard to achieve and maintain it. This status brings several advantages, including possibilities to work with and loan items from other museums, a professional standard which gives people loaning and donating items to the museum confidence that their items will be properly cared for, extra weight in funding applications, and a pride for the team of volunteers

without which the museum would not run that they are making a difference when preserving and caring for Liskeard's heritage.

This does involve processes and documentation controlling storage, display, handling, transportation, restoration, loans etc. which can also impact on insurance, and while these can feel onerous are there to protect the exhibits we care for and align with one of the Town Council's aims to 'Protect and enhance the culture and heritage of the town'. When our team are following these standards, they are not being difficult or obstructive, they are caring for items they are passionate about, and following professional practices which would be expected of a Town Council operated museum.

There is a broader need within the staff and volunteer team at the Council for training in the handling of museum objects, and raising awareness of the complexities of working in an accredited museum, which I will be developing with the Deputy Town Clerk and Facilities Manager, and Councillors would be very welcome to share what is rolled out to help understand this and support us in the great work we do.