

JOHN RAPSON GALLERY REDEVELOPMENT

We are continuing with our monthly exhibition team meetings, which now include Elsabé Brits and Daniéla Barnard (The Story of Emily - TSoE). TSoE confirmed that the budget towards their curated part of the exhibition has been approved (10k-15k), and they will be engaging a professional experiential designer to present an interactive timeline of Emily Hobhouse's life in John Rapson's gallery. We have set up a project page where all parties involved can contribute their ideas.

We have also confirmed 4 creative workshops that explore the themes of photography and image transfer – these will be offered free of charge at the museum in July/August and will be led by a local artist Nicky Harwood. Two of the four sessions will be focusing on the actual making of the kinetic sculpture that will hang in the Rapson gallery as part of the new exhibition.

RAPSON DIGITISATION PROJECT

We have been awarded £5,000 from Museum Development South West (MDSW) Small Open Grants towards the planning and support for the digitisation of John Rapson's photographic negatives. The grant will cover 2 practical workshops, volunteer training content and ongoing support with Sarah Allen (photographic conservator), cataloguing support (Tim Burge), as well as help with targeted volunteer recruitment (Helen Horler, Culture Force Ltd). Six of our volunteers have recently benefitted from the *Introduction to photographic conservation and digitisation* workshop with Sarah Allen – the journey has begun!

Museum volunteer Kevin will be soon turning his attention to repackaging and transporting the last remaining boxes of John Rapson's collection to The Box before the Summer holidays. The collection will be stored safely in their media archives, as per conservator's advice.

VE/VJ DISPLAY AND SCHOOL HOLIDAYS

Museum volunteers thoroughly enjoyed getting involved in the events marking the 80th anniversary of the VE day. Big 'thank you' to Kevin for curating his first display, to Graham – for lending us his vintage phones, and to Lizzie – for programming engaging family activities exploring the theme.

Over May half-term, we teamed up with Kids in Museums, and adopted their Shrapnel Boys trail, which proved to be very popular (412 visitors in May, highest number of visits that month since 2022).

The VE/VJ exhibition and our ration items trail can be enjoyed until the end of the Summer, after which we will close the Rapson gallery for refurbishment & installation of the new display.

MUSEUM'S NEW VISUAL IDENTITY

We thank our Town Councillors for the consideration they have given to the proposed new visual identity for our museum. Thank you to Niall, our Digital Enhancement Volunteer, for preparing his excellent presentation and developing the new branding. Now that the approval has been granted, we will be focusing on the phased introduction of the new logo and colour scheme over the next few weeks, with new signage in place by Autumn.

VOLUNTEERING TEAM

We currently have 18 volunteers supporting our museum. The latest addition to the team has been Rose, who is keen to help with the research.

W/c 2nd June, we are celebrating the National Volunteers Week by hosting lunch for our volunteers and putting on a special 'Celebrating our volunteers' event on June 6th (14:00-15:30). The programme for the afternoon includes a short tour of the VE/VJ display, presentation about *Threads*, as well as refreshments. Everyone is welcome.

Celebrations on June 6th also coincide with our museum's 23rd anniversary of the official opening at Foresters Hall by HRH King Charles III.