

Liskeard & District Museum - C & E report

Iga Webb 01/07/2023

- I am delighted to have been given the opportunity to manage Liskeard & District Museum, taking over from India Jolly at the beginning of June. The past month has been all about settling in and absorbing as much information as possible, which has been made easier thanks to one of the previous museum coordinators - Karen Partington, as well as Yvette Hayward. My background is in theatre, engagement, and education – I look forward to utilising my previous experience and skills in my role at the Museum. I am a Liskeard resident, which makes me feel connected to the local community and the town's history.
- We have had 3 new volunteers join us in the past 2 weeks. Their skills range from creative writing to housekeeping and DIY. This brings our total number of volunteers to 14, 8 of which are regulars. I am meeting Jo Hoskin next week to discuss designing a volunteer recruitment pull up banner to advertise for roles such as: marketing, fundraising, de-accessioning, stewarding and events. On Friday, July 7th, we are having a volunteer lunch at the Public Hall, which should be a great opportunity for the volunteers to get to know each other and think together of a way forward for Liskeard Museum. It is also my plan to invite everyone to vote for new members of the Museum Management Team.
- As you will be aware, the Museum has received a grant from the Southwest Museum Development towards a new display, centred around Edwardian clothing, donated from Canada. The project is likely to be delayed slightly, due to the change of management; however, our funding obligations will still be fulfilled. We've booked a conservator to come down on July 24th to advice on how to restore and display the garments, as well as run a training session on costume handling for our volunteers. If there are spaces, I will open the session to other museums from the area. We're focusing our research on Edwardian fashion, Edwardian weddings, Caradon Farm and 1900s farming. The new exhibition is likely to replace the 50s/60s display in the period October-December (to be confirmed asap after the conservator's visit).
- One of our volunteers, Lynne, has started work on a small display on Tremar Pottery and Liskeard Glass, which will feature in this year's Liskeard Unlocked. We will also set up family-friendly crafts based around plasticine and model making.
- We are expecting 2 school visits to the Museum mid-July – Liskeard School & Community College and Looe Academy. The students are taking part in the Moor to Sea Valley Stories project and will start their explorations with an introduction to Liskeard Museum and a quick workshop, delivered by myself and Brian Oldham. That same week, we will also have a Saltash student on work experience with us.
- We took part in the Family History Day last month. We are also due to participate in Liskeard Show, as well as the Summer event in Castle Park on the 12th August.

Coming up:

- Summer programme: I am currently working on our offer, which will include events on selected dates in August (talks, storytelling), self-directed crafts in Daniel Gumb's room and (hopefully) a new trail. We have already booked in Sally Ronchetti to deliver a talk on Emily Hobhouse (August 5th, 11am) – tickets available via TIC and marketing is live.

- KEAP's *Liskeard Stories of Stuff* – we will be a partner on this project, with activities on selected dates throughout September and November. We are supportive of the initiative; however, I must add that the communication with the organisers has been poor and I wish we'd been consulted on certain aspects of the project, prior to the Liskeard Town Council Grant bid submission. I've raised my concern with one of the project leads.
- It is my ambition to reimagine the children's activity/learning area in Daniel Gumb's room. I am currently on a lookout for funding opportunities, that would allow us to employ a designer and contractor to make that happen. I'm also planning to crowdfund for that project.
- Additionally, I'm planning to apply for the Association of Independent Museums' Collections Care and Conservation Grants (closing in September). Independently of that bid, conservator Helena Jaeschke is going to pay us a visit on July 31st to deliver a collection condition audit.
- Lastly, I have been working with Phil Chapman on improving the clarity of his toy display. We are looking to create new interpretation cards to go alongside some of the more prominent exhibits. November this year also marks the 60th anniversary of 'Dr Who' – an opportunity not to be missed with our #LiskeardDalek!