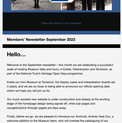

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Members' Newsletter September 2022

Hello....

Welcome to the September newsletter – this month we are celebrating a successful week at hosting Museum talks and tours, in Exeter, Chelmarshoe and Tavistock, as part of the National Trust's Heritage Open Days programme.

Inside our mini-Museum at Tavistock, the display cases and interpretation boards are now in place, and we are very grateful to the volunteers who put the finishing touches, which we hope you will join us for.

Our much-awaited new website is under construction and already at the exciting stage of being populated with content. We will be sharing a preview with you in our next newsletter towards the end of October.

Finally, before we go, we are pleased to introduce our Archivist, Andrew Mark Cox, a welcome addition to the Museum team, who will oversee the cataloguing of our collection and archive material.

Bye for now,
Tessa Blackstone-Pitching in Devon and Cornwall.

CEO's monthly update

Even though it has been summer (or what passed for it), the Museum team have been very busy indeed. Our Tavistock pop-up Museum at the Bedford Hotel has been pulled out in record days to make it accessible at the Museum's participation in the National Trust's Heritage Open Days weekend, 9-18 September.

Readers will have spotted our events- talks and tours of the objects collection in Exeter, Chelmarshoe and Tavistock. The Tavistock pop-up at the Museum's new mini museum in Tavistock once again hit the jackpot.

It's attempted to record all the ways the team have gone over and above the call of duty to get everything prepared, we could be here all day.

My name may be mud as a result, but I have been to thank the team's loved ones who, with good humour, have put up with the absence of their partners, plus shepard the dogs, while their better halves have been working hard to make the Museum changes' things which pick up to make any event a success. The fact that the Chelmarshoe talks sold out, and the Exeter one was almost full, is testament to the new-looking offer from Team. But- there's our success.

Once we have caught up (well, we will have to try to meet demand for more events with special Memorial Day options but!)

It is great to be able to add Tavistock to the Museum's offering. As well as bringing potential history to greater public attention, the site means the Museum takes a step nearer being ambitious, to become an accredited museum and to work more closely with Tavistock's Museum.

Elsewhere, it's so! Listened to the NTU Heritage Portfolio conference at the end-June Up in Birmingham. We came away inspired with lots of new ideas for the future, especially for Tavistock.

Finally, at the staff and volunteer team gross, we are going to need to look the part when we meet the public, so look out for some new Museum-branded polo shirts!

Before I sign off, next month we are going full throttle, recruiting more volunteers to help with the Museum's ambitious plans.

We need help with our digitalisation project and cataloging Tavistock. So, if you feel you can spare a few hours, please email ceo@blackstonepitching.co.uk.

Until next time,

Greg White, MIHPDMC CEO.

Below is the new mini-Museum premises at Tavistock, which has proved to visitors.

Our visitors were able to see a range of objects from the Museum's collection

A word from the Curator

I'm proud to say we have opened our mini-museum in Tavistock for the Heritage Open Days week – a national event hosted by the National Trust.

The events hosted by the museum - found of the archive in Exeter, our stores in Chelmarshoe and our temporary pop-up museum at the Bedford Hotel in Tavistock, proved extremely popular and attracted around 250 visitors.

The more presents so popular, that we already have a waiting list, and plan to run more in the near future – which will be advertised with plenty of notice in our newsletter.

If you missed out, I will be opening the Tavistock Museum for our members, 10am – 3pm every Wednesday in October and I hope to meet lots of you in the coming months.

We have also been attending events to recruit volunteers in the hope of opening this space regularly.

Recently I attended Plymouth University's student union wellbeing and volunteering event, to highlight what we do.

If you are interested in sharing your packing history, knowledge, and expertise with us, or just want to spend some time in the place, please let me know when you visit, or by email.

Bye for now

Alison Holmes, Curator

Above: Curator Ali visit the Museum at the road, in a bid to recruit new volunteers.

Meet the Archivist.

Hello, my name is Andrew Mark Cox and I'm the new Police Project Archivist here at the Devon Heritage Centre.

I was appointed in July to work on the archives of the Devon and Cornwall Constabulary, on behalf of the Museum of Policing in Devon and Cornwall (MOPDMC).

Among my main activities is to continue the work of cataloging the collection to ensure it is as accessible as possible via the online catalogue available on the South West Archives website.

To do so, I will be using a Heritage Lottery-funded project to bring on volunteers who are currently cataloging the thousands of photographs held in the collection. Alongside this, I will be also be developing a volunteer recruitment and training for the collection and offering guidance to volunteers.

Apart from accessioning and cataloging some recently donated material that had been building up for a little while, my first big task has been to reorganise the hundreds of mostly horizontally piled volumes within the collection.

This has involved bringing them together in a single run of shelving, getting them all upright, and then creating proper locations for them within our catalogue.

Not only has this made the volumes far easier to locate and retrieve it has also had the effect of making the collection look far more impressive.

To promote police heritage and ensure the collection is seen by a wider audience I will soon be involved in a programme of public engagement. This will include talk and events held in Exeter but also in collaboration with our curator to make use of the Museum's new premises in Tavistock, where we are able to display highlights of the collection. I hope to see you there!

Above: Archivist Andrew, Mark, has started to reorganise the Museum's archive

Media and communications

The length of the Museum's time has notably in training great artists - thanks to the talents of our Tessa Blackstone-Pitching in Devon and Cornwall.

The Home page has been finished and signed off, after plenty of feedback and input from Greg and me.

Already the new look website feels like an exciting place to visit, with a fresh new colour scheme that complements several carefully selected images curated from our archive.

The opening website content has been pulled across by the design team and has been laid out in such a way that it incorporates video, long reads, and news in one seamless flow.

A line has been made to have been working on the internal layout and functionality of the site. This will give us an idea of how the rest of the site will look when it's finished.

We now have several new internal pages to review - and can make any changes we feel are needed to the layout and content. Once we have, I can't wait until we can reveal the new, finished, website. It truly has the potential to set the bar high. It's a brilliant that it deserves a launch party (hint, Greg!) It's important that we make the most of the work that has been done to promote the Museum and highlight our social media presence. It's something to be really proud of. It's exciting to get working on it - it will be time to work scope for ok.

Becca Gibbins, Communications and Marketing Officer

Visitors of all ages were keen to visit the Museum's Tavistock for Heritage Open Days

Museum News

Heritage Open Days

For the first time, the Museum of Policing in Devon & Cornwall took part in the National Trust's Heritage Open Days, where we offered tours of the stores in Chelmarshoe Police Station.

Over the two days, the stores were full of people were fully booked for the morning and afternoon tours, as we sent to such getting a good visual experience together for our visitors.

Due to the venue normally being a storage space, we had to carefully move some of our collection into a temporary display area to make it safe for our visitors.

On the first day, the station car park was being dug up and resurfaced, as Curator Ali was going to talk to our first tour visitors in the Blue Accommodation. The building was shelving! Undeterred our visitors moved to storage room one, where our volunteers Ian and Ian had prepared a display of our Victorian Constabulary helmets, uniforms, weapons and other items we are able to be exhibited.

Back in the library/workroom, photographer Andrew gave everyone an overview of our digitisation project helped by volunteer Keith. Visitors were then able to see our handle some objects laid out on the table. Ian and Ali also explained and demonstrated our conservation work on the Victorian helmets. Finally, the day's discussions were had with our visitors about collecting history and heritage.

On the second day the main resurfacing of the car park was done, so it was much calmer all round and no one needed to shout.

When planning the tours, we wondered how we were going to fill 90 minutes, we needed have worried as both tours significantly over ran.

Our visitors were fascinated by what they were able to see, and in their feedback the comments ran "more please".

Handling Sessions

In addition, at the end of August we delivered handling boxes to two demonstrations, one at Exeter and the other at Chelmarshoe Museum.

These ones well received by staff at both homes, who said- Thank you for thinking of us!

The homes will keep the handling boxes – filled with objects, clothing and photos- for a month, and we then doing sessions with their residents to reminisce about the past, sharing conversations.

The care homes have promised to take some photos of the sessions, which we hope to be able to share with you in the next newsletter.

Archive Find of the Month.

A coverage in the Museum's archive at Exeter revealed a photo album of a Community Friendship Week, held in Plymouth in 1951.

Chief Constable John Alderson announced the Devon and Cornwall Constabulary would hold a week of events, to promote better relations between the force and involvement with the public, stressing the human face, warts and all.

Multiple events were organised throughout the city, led by Divisional Chief Superintendents, which were taken as a "splendid effort".

A letter from the Chief Superintendents Office, sent from Council House Station, in Plymouth, said similar future events would "take some breeding".

The letter, among photos from the week, stated "Many people have expressed their appreciation of our work and being allowed to see their police at closer quarters."

Clockwise L to R: The programme of events; Chief Superintendent William judges a power competition; the Devon and Cornwall Police band march through Plymouth.

Clockwise top L to R: Parade goal competition, a police TV unit on display to the public, police pull in a game of tug of war during a day of activities for youngsters.

Clockwise L to R: The Plymouth Traffic Division, a WPC stands in church service team held during Community Friendship Week, a display at Ainstead HQ.

Below: Pictured here is Chief Constable, John Alderson and Divisional Chief Superintendent Wintern meeting for a church service at Andrew's Church, Plymouth.

Object of the Month

Pictured here are the bullets recovered from the December 1974 Carlton Cyprus Casino Robbery, which left one man dead, and a number of others injured and were recently photographed for the ongoing digitisation project.

This photograph stirred up memories other members of volunteer Pam Ellery's Facebook photo ID page out of their cobwebs the "Tragic night", when PC Dennis Smith was killed, along with three other victims.

Pam remembers being in her mum's car, on her way to the first police car to arrive at the scene, and her mum "nearly crashed into it".

Another, who was called to the casino that night, said "there's not a Christmas that goes by without me thinking of it".

The Museum archives hold a file of newspaper cuttings reporting the murders, plus court and witness statements.

And there are two black and white crime scene photos showing gunman Martin Ferreira's Ford Granada car, at the point where he was stopped by PC Dennis Smith and shot dead.

Two other great shots are Ferreira's terrorist several painted cars as he tried to lose the Plod-car, eventually stopping - turned out to be real.

PC Smith was shot at point blank range by Ferreira as the officer approached the Granada car.

The gunman fled, leaving the car plus fatally wounded officer lying in the road. His entire first official 24 hours as an about 4 hours, in Falkland Road, Torquay, snapping the his scant care.

Ferreira drove the Cyprus, with his nights spoil on corner, pro- Torquay.- It was found abandoned in Torquay, Cockington Lane, a little than 24 hours later.

Days before Christmas, 1975, gunman Martin Ferreira came walked into the Carlton Casino, a gun in each hand – in a mask which initially prompted residents to believe he was in fancy dress.

Spending no interested longer, Ferreira pulled the guns from the waistband and Mr Teigeirlas began over a casino table, holding under another.

The gunman fired "wildly" into the busy casino, only stopping once all the bullets were spent.

Witnesses told how brave victim Arno Arslan - a 28-year-old couples from Paignton - had grappled with the gunman, for 10 minutes, only with the gunman before he used his last bullets to shoot him. She died in hospital.

Posthumously, Arno was awarded with the Queen's Commendation for Bravery for his actions to stop the shootings.

After shooting the customers – many more cheated death when the gun jammed – Ferreira calmly left the casino for his scant car.

A police manhunt lasting two hours resulted in officers setting up roadblocks across Devon, finally spotting Ferreira's vehicle on Exeter Bypass.

When two Police Constables gave chase, the gunman repeatedly tried to ram their patrol car.

The pursuit ended some 40 miles away, at Tiverton Prepatorio, near Sidmouth, East Devon, after another officer Donald Fletcher cut off the road, and ordered his car into the path.

Pulling open the car door, the three officers found Ferreira had stabbed himself.

He was taken to hospital, refusing a blood transfusion, but survived to stand trial for murder, and was jailed for life.

It was reported Ferreira died in prison in 1988, having served 12 years of his sentence.

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Our mailing address is:

Museum of Policing in Devon & Cornwall

Okehampton Police Station

Okehampton

EX20 1NN

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