



TRUE'S YARD FISHERFOLK MUSEUM REPORT

Report by Museum Curator

December 2024

1. Temporary exhibitions and events at True's Yard Fisherfolk Museum

1.1 Exhibition Programme.

Our next exhibition will celebrate the history of the Timber Trade in King's Lynn. It will be followed by an exhibition celebrating the 20th anniversary of King's Lynn joining the Hanseatic League

1.2 Summer Art Exhibition

Our annual art exhibition theme for 2025 is being finalised but the provisional title is *True's Yard Artists at Work*. We want to celebrate our artistic volunteers and supporters.

1.3 True's Talks

Our spring programme will launch on 3rd February and will run to 21st March between 1pm-2pm. Subjects include Medieval Ship Graffiti, the History and Archaeology of St Margaret's Priory and the Jewish Cemetery. All talks will take place on Thursdays between They remain free to attend.

1.4 Pat Midgley Memorial Lecture

To celebrate the 10th anniversary of our annual memorial lecture we got the incredible, Dr Jago Cooper, Executive Director of the Sainsbury Centre and professor of Art and Archaeology at the University of East Anglia. His lecture 'Museums of the Future' enjoyed 58 attendees and was extremely thought provoking. The radical concept introduced at the Sainsbury's Centre of ceasing to think of collections as property but as living things and that, their responsibility should be to give them their best life.

Other Museum Developments

2. Events

Christmas Events

Saturday 30th November we held a Fantastical Christmas Creatures Trail, Storytelling of J.R.R. Tolkien's *Letters from Father Christmas*, Letter writing to Santa, Games and Fun! Decorating the cottages for Christmas was not something we had done before but it really cemented that these were lived in spaces. We had 19 families attend.

Wednesday 11th December All Saints Church Carol Service. We had a full house (100 attendees) and the event was attended by both the Mayor and High Sheriff of Norfolk. The performances by North Wootton School Choir proved particularly popular.

Saturday 14th December Christmas Quiz and Christmas Shop. Both events proved popular and brought in much needed income.

18th December 7:30pm – Mayor’s Charity Christmas Film Night fundraiser at Corn Exchange Cinema. It’s a Wonderful Life or Home Alone.

3. Fundraisers

3.1 The Mayor’s Charity of the Year

This year we were most fortunate to be selected alongside the King’s Lynn Sea Cadets as the Mayor’s chosen charities. Our Fundraising Committee and Friends of True’s Yard have banded together with the Sea Cadets Committee to put on several successful events. The next being the Christmas films showing at the Corn Exchange on 18th December.

3.2 Friends of True’s Yard

We are most fortunate to have an active and supportive Friends group. This year in particular they have really stepped up to help with our Mayor’s Charity events as well as their own fundraisers.

4. Partnerships

4.1 Collusion- Queer stories of Lynn

The Museum has previously worked with Collusion on several of their projects in the town and was due to be involved in the above named project in 2025.

Unfortunately, a defamatory article published in the *Sunday Telegraph* [30/11/2024] that was not only bad publicity but also featured false information about the Museum’s involvement with the project. We were made aware of this when we started receiving complaints from stakeholders and volunteers. We contacted Collusion for an explanation and made a post on our social media channels correcting the misinformation. This, remarkably, did not go down well with Collusion who seemed surprised at our defending ourselves.

The worrying aspect was that the information coincided with the first draft press release provided by Collusion and Historic England which we had previously raised concerns because they’d stated a permanent display would be put in True’s Yard at the end of the project. This was not something we had agreed to and they agreed to change the wording of the press release at our meeting on 12th November 2024. We had agreed in principle to a temporary display but the content would need to be viewed in advance. True’s Yard is an Accredited Museum and Charity and we must adhere to the Museums Association Code of Ethics and thought this was made clear.

After an email exchange, Collusion made the decision to proceed with a different project partner. We wish them well.

5. Learning and Outreach

5.1. Activities

Slime and Bubbles & Victorian Fairground Activity Days

13th August - Slime and Bubbles – this activity proved to be incredibly popular with 81 children and 65 adults. In future, we will be having designated slots for these activities as demand outstripped supply at one point.

27th August- Victorian Summer funfair - 83 attendees.

October Half term

Halloween themed activities – 70 attendees.



5.2 Oral History Project- Capturing Memories

Our new Oral History Committee is hard at work capturing new oral histories and so far 16 new stories have been recorded (last report 11). The new project ‘Capturing Memories’ will focus on recording the memories of the last generation of Northenders and those of the people of Lynn.

5.3 Social Media

Currently the Museum’s Facebook page has 2.4k followers; Twitter/X has 1,454 followers, and Instagram 468 Followers (last report 439).

6 Visitor Numbers

Figures for 1st April 2024 –17th December 2024 =8,714

7 Resource Implications

Grants

West Norfolk Lives

We were successful in our application to the West Norfolk Lives Fund for £15,000

towards running costs. The terms of the grant was that the Museum will be free entry 2 days a week. We have selected Wednesdays, which are currently our quietest day and Saturdays, which opens the Museum up to family and working people.

Warms Spaces Fund

We were successful in our application to the Norfolk Community Foundation Warm Spaces fund. We have received £1,000 to provide a warm space this winter and to set up a Chat and Natter group Friday mornings (with free refreshments) as well as board game and Dungeon and Dragons.

8 Recommendations

That the Area Committee note the report.

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