



Museum network

LUMEN Newsletter

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Timetable

November to February

Host organisations send in placement details to Sarah who uploads them to Blackboard for our students to look at.

1 February 2016

Work Placement Marketplace event at the School of Museum Studies.

End February

Students make their choices and pass them to Sarah, who sends CVs for hosts to peruse.

March onwards

Museums and Galleries interview students, and confirm placements with Sarah.

18 July - 9 September

Museum and Gallery Experience.

Sarah Allard – New Work Placement Manager at the School of Museum Studies

Having just arrived at the School of Museum Studies Department as Museum Liaison and Student Support Officer, I have the exciting task of finding our students Museum and Gallery Experiences with you all! I was a Museum Studies student here back in 1999-2000. My placement was a wonderful stepping stone into working in the Sector, and I'm still grateful for the support and encouragement the staff at Kelvingrove, Glasgow gave me.

After graduating from Leicester, I managed the art collection at Derby Museum and Art Gallery for many years, before coming to the University and working in research admin and student support roles here. It's great to be back at Museum Studies, surrounded by so many familiar faces! I hope I'll be able to get to know you better over the coming year, though email and phone conversations and at the Work Placement Marketplace event in February.

It's certainly a challenge, picking up Barbara Lloyd's legacy after her twenty years' service.



Barbara arranged thousands of successful Museum and Gallery Experiences during her time here (my own being one of them!) I'm told that she is enjoying a wonderful retirement filled with pottery, amateur dramatics and stage management! I'm sure you'll all join with me in wishing her all the very best.



Work Placement Marketplace

Monday 1 February 2016

Our Work Placement Marketplace has now become an eagerly anticipated annual event at the School! Whether you've been before, or this is your first time, we'd like to invite you to come and visit us at School of Museum Studies. Here you'll be able to meet our students and some of our staff, as well as colleagues from other Museums and Galleries from around the country. I'm also glad to be able to offer you travel expenses and lunch as part of the day.

If you would like to attend this event please let me know via email at sa563@le.ac.uk. I will then send you more information about the day, and a list of the other organisations coming along. Our space is limited so we will be able to offer tables on a first come, first served basis.





Panel Writing at Palace Green

I was convinced that Palace Green Library was the perfect place for me to do my MGE placement, so I was ecstatic when I found out I would be placed there. During my eight weeks with them in Durham, I got to be very involved with the development of their upcoming WWI exhibit, *Somme 1916: From Durham to the Western Front* (opening March 2016).

Several factors influenced me to choose Palace Green. First, I was intrigued by their placement description: the WWI exhibit project tied closely to my existing interests. (My MA dissertation was entitled “Be yours to hold it high: WWI Centenary Interpretation in English Museums”, and I began a PhD at Oxford in fall 2015 on the material culture of WWI remembrance, specifically colonial CWGC memorials).

Second, my previous work was in a museum with a five-person staff, and I knew that I thrive on that small-team dynamic, so Palace Green was the best of both worlds: a very small team (2 full-time and a few part-time staff in the exhibitions department), yet with impressive institutional affiliations; it's part of Durham University and is also on a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Third, when I attended the Marketplace event in January, I asked each representative I met with the question, “what qualities do you value most in your volunteers and interns?”. I was so impressed by the answer of Julie Biddlecombe-Brown, Palace Green's Exhibitions Officer (who became my supervisor). Her description of the passion and commitment of the Palace Green Library team sounded like exactly the type

of environment I love being in and the type of people I wanted to learn from.

I was placed with another classmate, Ya-huei, and we had a great time working together! We hit the ground running as soon as we arrived at Palace Green: the *Somme* exhibit had already been in the works for months, so we had a lot of catching up to do. (And since neither Ya-huei or myself are native to England, let alone Durham, Julie sent us on some fun research field trips to other local museums to help get us up to speed on the historical context of the exhibit!).

My main responsibilities for the exhibit were researching and writing exhibit text. I began by compiling research sheets for each panel and artefact of the exhibit, doing my own research but also drawing upon research completed by Palace Green's Leicester student from last year. Then I had to create increasingly focused and stratified data sheets for each panel as we whittled down the content.

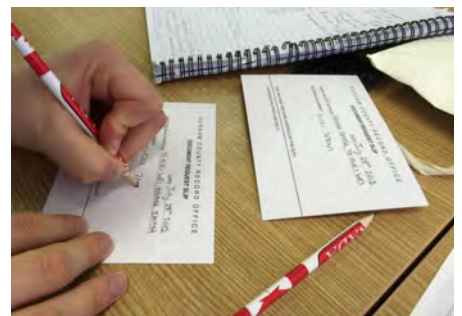
This culminated in me having the opportunity to write the first draft of all the panel text for this exhibit, which I enjoyed immensely! I knew already that I liked research- I had done some exhibit research during previous employment, and I worked as a research assistant during my undergrad- but exhibit text writing was new to me and was a great skill to learn that will be helpful in my future career. It was genuinely fun to get to hone my skills in synthesizing, prioritizing, and interpreting information for such an interesting exhibit project.

Everyone we met at Palace Green was lovely and welcoming. We worked closely with the Project Officer for the *Somme*

exhibit, Marleen; she graduated from Leicester's MA Museum Studies program in 2011. Every day during tea we spent time with the people from Palace Green's other departments, including the learning team, special collections, conservation, and graphic production; and our supervisor Julie arranged for us to spend a few days shadowing some of these people as well. Julie made us feel included in her team and invited us to lots of meetings, where we were encouraged to contribute, not just sit and listen. We also got to attend exhibit meetings between Palace Green and the exhibition designers, Studio MB.

I highly recommend Palace Green to this year's students; it was an unquestionably fantastic experience for me!

By Hannah Smyth, Museum Studies class of 2014/2015



'Morethanadodo' at Oxford University Museum of Natural History

When I discovered I had been accepted onto the Museum Studies masters course at the University of Leicester, I was excited about each and every aspect – however, I particularly looked forward to the Museum and Gallery Experience module. It gave each of the students an opportunity to take the theory, ethics and basic skills learned throughout the year and apply them to an 8-week period of real-life museum or gallery work. From the moment the course began, I was hoping wholeheartedly that the Oxford University Museum of Natural History (OUMNH) would put forward a placement. With my undergraduate in Zoology, I was one of very few students on the Museum Studies course whose main area of interest was natural history – and as the OUMNH is such a prestigious and historic institution, with strong ties to some of the UK's most influential scientists, I knew that if the right project was offered, I had to apply.

I was thrilled when the project offers became available and I saw an opportunity to work in the Entomology department of the OUMNH, re-curating a historic

Dermaptera (earwig) collection. Although I had very little specific

knowledge of earwigs, I did have experience working with invertebrates from my undergraduate, including mounting fresh specimens – and so I applied immediately and after a nail-biting interview process I heard that I had been successful. To have been entrusted with the task of taking this collection of around 1,200 earwig specimens and ensuring they were safely transferred to new storage drawers was an honour. The process involved cleaning, re-pinning, labelling and often repairing the specimens, all of which I was taught to do by my supervisors at the museum during my first week. Over the next month I re-curated the entire collection, and faced some real challenges along the way – for example having to repair damaged wings. During this process I also noted two specimens collected by Charles Darwin; to handle these particular insects knowing that they had been handled by Darwin himself was an incredible experience for me.

Once I had finished my main project, I then began to take part in other aspects of the OUMNH. I wrote a blog post entitled '5 Fantastic Earwig Facts' for the museum's 'morethanadodo' blog and was overjoyed to see it published just after I finished my placement. I also conducted three separate 'Spotlight Specimen' sessions in which I took objects from the collections into the gallery space and talked to visitors about

them. For my first session I took one of my brand new Dermaptera drawers, but for the next two I drew upon my wider zoological knowledge and talked about bird feathers and mammal teeth. All three sessions were quite successful and allowed me to gain experience on the public-facing side of the museum, to compliment the behind-the-scenes work I had been doing thus far. Finally, I also took part in integrated pest management (IPM) activities – namely checking the bird taxidermy and study skin collections for signs of pest activity. It was fantastic to have the opportunity to take what I had learned about museum pests in lectures and apply it to a real-life situation.

Overall, my placement was utterly invaluable. Not only did I learn how to adapt to a museum working environment, but I gained skills and experience in a whole range of roles. I believe that those 8 weeks have provided me with a strong foundation upon which to build a career in the museum sector and have certainly reinforced my passion for both collections and front-of-house work. I am very grateful to both the Museum Studies faculty and the Oxford University Museum of Natural History for giving me this unique and fulfilling opportunity; I now feel prepared to take the museum world by storm!

By Nigel Cook, Museum Studies class of 2014/2015





A Personal Approach at the National Gallery

With over six million visitors a year and a central London location on Trafalgar Square it can be hard to imagine the National Gallery as a place of calm and quiet; somewhere one might escape to recalibrate the senses and have an undisturbed moment *alone* with a painting.

We spend much of our time busily ensuring school groups, family programmes and daily talks, tours and courses enable our visitors to learn about our collection and about themselves – mainly verbally, often actively. Over the last few years, other models of engagement have become pertinent for us. Of critical importance is the need to develop self-directed resources with a focus upon wellbeing – resources enabling visitors to just be in the moment, discovering an artwork in their own time and way.

Personalised, life-wide learning experiences are central to our education strategy; it was with this in mind we hosted a LUMEN placement in 2015. The student's brief was to research and benchmark wellbeing resources within the sector and produce a report outlining short, middle and long-term strategies for creating resources.

Ashley Watson spent three months with us, fully participating in the daily work of the department; attending team meetings and taking part in group discussions and initiatives as well as working independently.

Ashley worked with colleagues across the Gallery, building a sense of how cross-departmental collaboration could facilitate a personalised approach to learning. The legacy for us is an excellent report, outlining a rationale for developing wellbeing resources underpinned with learning theory. Additionally, Ashley created sample resources which we had some fun with, trying out together as a team.

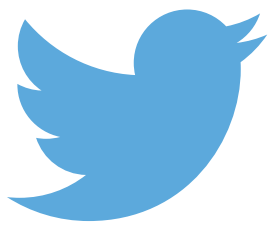
Imagine an art gallery as a place of digital rest, where it's possible to spend quality time alone with Rembrandt or Titian; taking in the details, textures and brush marks on your own timescale. Add to that the possibility of making connections between your own life and the human histories played out in paintings across the collection and a new sense of meaning and relevance can emerge. This is what we hoped to explore and Ashley's placement is going to take us a step closer to achieving that.

Over the next year we will begin to implement the resources proposed by Ashley. Taking part in this placement scheme is going to help us achieve our departmental ambitions whilst at the same time offering a student the experience of a daily work environment.

Gill Hart, Head of Education, The National Gallery



Martine Hamilton Knight



@LeicsMusStud

Museum Studies Leics Retweeted
sue lord @suelord6 - Jul 20
 Great first day with Yu-Chen @buryartmuseum our International Projects Placement from @LeicsMusStud MA Program

Museum Studies Leics Retweeted
Sarah Kirkham @sarahkirkham - Sep 1
 @LeicsMusStud fabulous work by your student @BHarriskitt for #TBT wimbledon.com/en_GB/news/art... #Museums #MuseumBlogging

SPaulsCollections @SPaulsColls
 Some careful book cleaning and condition assessing by our @LeicsMusStud students today. #library #conservation

September 1
 5.38 km · 15 Aug 2018

Museum Studies Leics Retweeted
Redoubt Curator @ResoubCurator - Aug 20
 From piles of boxes and papers to a library A great piece of work by our @LeicsMusStud student @KristenCholley

Museum Studies Leics Retweeted
Ben Uri Gallery @BenUriGallery - Aug 20
 Check out our new blog post by @LeicsMusStud student @oliviaperdew #BenUri100 bit.ly/1E76LVJ

Museum Studies Leics Retweeted
MuseumCollection Ctr @MTC1906 - Aug 21
 @RiceBrown our placement student from @LeicsMusStud is helping our monthly Open Afternoon first time @BM_AG

Museum Studies Leics Retweeted
Clare Plascow @CPlascow - Sep 11
 Our fabulous @LeicsMusStud placements, Anna & Kexing with their brilliant newly installed display @VestryHouse

Isabel SturtMD @isabelsturt - Aug 7
 @KatherineLee new @LeicsMusStud placement student Catherine is working hard photographing the collection!

Museum Studies Leics Retweeted
Emma Shepley @Emma_Shepley - Sep 4
 Great blog from our @LeicsMusStud placement James on a C19th diagnosis of #MultipleSclerosis rclondon.ac.uk/update/my-case...



Postgraduate Programmes

The School of Museum Studies at the University of Leicester is recognised internationally for the quality of its postgraduate programmes:

By Distance Learning:

- Museum Studies
- Learning and Visitor Studies in Museum and Galleries
- Heritage and Interpretation
- Research Degrees

On Campus:

- Museum Studies
- Art Museum and Gallery Studies
- Research Degrees

Applications can now be made for entry in 2016 and 2017. A range of scholarships are available.

For more information visit our website or contact us on
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