

September
2020



Leicestershire
County Council

Communities
& Wellbeing

Volunteering News

As you will know many of our traditional heritage and library volunteering activity is still suspended, however it's been fantastic to see that there's still lots going on remotely and behind the scenes. As we slowly move to 'recovery' we want to continue to shine a spotlight on the inspirational project's volunteers have been working on and share and celebrate with you.

Do You See What I See

Come and tell us...

We are very excited to share the wonderful news that our DYSWIS? exhibition has finally been installed at Charnwood Museum. Over 75 local people have contributed to the display's design and development over the last 12 months, and we are thrilled to report that it looks fantastic!

The exhibition was originally due to be installed the same week as the government announced the Coronavirus pandemic. We have made several adaptations to ensure the exhibition is "Covid-friendly"; the content remains the same, we've just had to present things a little differently!



Take part in The People's Online Gallery!

You can get involved yourself! Choose an object with personal significance to you and share your connection to it by taking a picture of the object and one of yourself. Send them to us via messenger, or by posting on our Facebook wall at facebook.com/CommunityCurators, or tweet us at twitter.com/ComCurators

Participants from the workshops have successfully taken on the role of Community Curators and have been truly imaginative in the way they have chosen to share local people's unique connections within existing museum displays. A wonderful volunteer team supported us to make this happen.

Come and see objects speaking for themselves with giant speech bubbles and recordings of participants voices, a touch screen to view more objects in our online 'People's Gallery', a short film about the project, as well as a family trail around the museum with an opportunity to add your own voice to this unique exhibition.

Before you come and visit, please look at Charnwood Museum's website for information regarding re-opening days and times: www.chnwood.gov.uk/chnwood_museum

Community
Curators



Three cheers and a happy retirement!

After many years of dedication to the Home Library Service (HLS), volunteers Patricia McLoughlin, George Carpenter, Margaret Deaville and Valerie Maher are retiring from their roles!

They have delivered books to housebound residents around Leicestershire over many years, and have been extremely dedicated to their clients and the library service. We know that HLS is much more than a book delivery service, and the volunteers are a vital part in keeping in touch with the wider world, tackling loneliness, isolation and helping people feel happier in their lives.

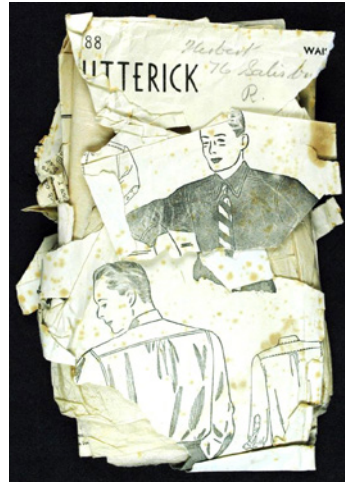
The team would like to thank all the volunteers for their hard work and wish them a very happy retirement!

Fixing and stitching

Vine Lacey has been volunteering remotely with the Collections Resource Centre for nearly 8 years! In that time, she has carefully restored over 150 books! Her most recent venture has been conserving a collection of dressmaking patterns to be used and shared with fashion students.

Patterns were never intended to be long-lived and inevitably suffered much wear-and-tear. The process of restoring them involves carefully reforming the backing and piecing the pages back together again.

Vine is a very valued volunteer, and although she is not at the centre in person, she is a big part of the team in spirit.



"I like to imagine that I am helping, in a very small way, the vast and prestigious British Fashion industry!"

Vine Lacey

Make friends, with a book online

In our May newsletter we shared with you that the volunteer leaders for shared reading groups have resumed several of their groups digitally, allowing members to stay in contact with each other from the comfort of their own home!

The geographical freedom of going digital was not lost on the leaders, and the prospect of long-term loss of face to face meetings has encouraged them to offer this fantastic way of sharing literature to a wider range of people through two completely new groups.

Interested in joining these sessions? If you have a telephone or internet connection, you can join one of the new 'virtual' groups on Zoom: Wednesdays, 1.30-2.30pm OR Thursdays, 5.00-6.00pm.

For more information and to join these sessions, contact Leicestershire Shared Reading through their website and they will get in touch. Visit www.leicestershireshareddreading.org



Celebrating Loughborough's market - the heart of the town

Next year Loughborough celebrates the 800th anniversary of its Market Charter granted by King Henry III in 1221. Charnwood Museum, in partnership with Leicestershire County Council will be hosting an exhibition to commemorate this anniversary. This was ample justification for the Loughborough Library Local Studies Volunteers (LLSV) to investigate the history of Loughborough Market and its annual fair. LCC's Participation Team's role is to explore the modern stories and connections linked to the Market we all know and love today. We are sure that working in partnership on this exhibition will make for an exciting and evocative journey.



Photograph by Nigel Bampton

Keeping busy during lockdown!

In early 2020 and during lockdown two new LLSV publications came to fruition. The book, *The Forest Line*, had already launched and *The Loughborough Suffragette Trail* was safely with the printers.

Market 800 resumed electronically. Following the approval of the LLSV's plan of approach, the team of seven keen researchers shared out the topics.

"Pre-1221, markets developed when our ancestors' nomadic lifestyle changed to permanent settlements. Through the ensuing centuries, markets and fairs changed with the times. Some specialised in one product like a cheese or a horse fair and hiring fairs began with a labour force reduced by the plague in the 14th century. Loughborough's hiring fair evolved into the pleasure fair."

The research questions facing the team were wide and varied. The internet is a worthwhile tool for the exploration of historical information and albeit with limited access to the Library's documents, so it is that answers have been found. When a July catch-up garden meeting resulted in a veritable profusion of material, it revealed that for seven lock-down local historians, boredom was certainly not an issue."

Sharon Gray and Kathy Phillips, LLSV Volunteers



Covid update

We recognise that these last couple of months have been a challenging time and we want to take this opportunity to thank you all for your continued support. Volunteering is an important part in many people's lives and we understand that many of you are eager to return (just as we are all eager to see and work with you again!). As a service we are currently working hard with the health and safety team to make sure our sites and activities are Covid-safe. There is not a one fits all approach and timeframes for reinstating activity will be dependent on the role and venue, but we thank you all for your patience. If you have any questions, concerns or comments please speak to your Volunteer Manager.

THE
1620s
HOUSE & GARDEN
at Donington le Heath

Garden volunteers are back!

The 1620s Garden Volunteers have been back on site since the start of July. The team are working incredibly hard to bring the gardens back to their usual high standards. As you can imagine, after three and a half months left unattended the gardens are looking rather untamed.



Although, it must be said that some areas have really flourished; there is now a gorgeous cottage garden feel abounds with some plants self-seeding and introducing gorgeous new displays!

Work has been going well, and while early visitors will notice the effects lockdown has had on the gardens, their endured beauty cannot be denied.

The volunteer team are delighted to be back and can't wait to share the gardens with visitors once again when the site reopens!

For more information visit www.1620shouse.org.uk

Participation
Leicestershire, Heritage & Libraries

On July 1st Communities and Wellbeing formed a new Participation team, bringing together members of the service with a strong community focus. Your volunteering is supported from within this team. A priority will be around reducing social isolation within our communities using activities linked to libraries, heritage and culture. We are hoping to harness the incredible community spirit experienced during lockdown which brought so much compassion and creativity during such a heart-breaking and unsettling time.

If you would like to find out more about the wider team activity, then please visit www.communitycurators.co.uk or find us at facebook.com/CommunityCurators or tweet us at twitter.com/ComCurators

Our new website

This website also hosts some of the amazing work you have been involved with. You might even spot yourself at a celebration event.

We definitely recommend reading the blog written by volunteer Steve Kettle from the 1620's House and Gardens.

We would be particularly delighted to receiving more articles and blogs linked to your volunteering so please do get in touch.

We very much look forward to welcoming all our heritage, market town museums, libraries, collections and archive volunteers back, when it is safe to do so!

If you are looking for community volunteering opportunities during this time please visit this partnership website www.llrprepared.org.uk/one-prepared/

If you have any questions, please feel free to email nicola.seika@leics.gov.uk

**Your community
Your opportunity**

Keep in touch and stay safe