

Appendix 1

Kirklees Museums and Galleries

Collections Summary

The collections can be divided into three broad areas: human history, natural history and media archives. These have been further divided into smaller areas. Each area contains highly important collections. However, there are currently no natural historians or media archivists in the reduced curatorial team. Understanding of the collections in these areas is limited and development work can only happen in collaboration with outside specialists.

Explanatory Notes

Each collection has a collecting status: closed = no further collecting at present; passive = suitable items accepted when offered; proactive = actively seeking particularly relevant items.

HUMAN HISTORY

General Introduction

The people of Kirklees have always been interested in the wider world and have a history of welcoming people of diverse backgrounds. Its geographical position has long made it an important trade route and stopping off point for travellers. This is most clearly shown by the important collections from Slack Roman fort, a stopping off point between York and Chester, and now close to the M62.

As the area developed economically and industrially, local industries attracted workers from around the world, and they helped develop the region's unique character. Today, Kirklees contains both urban and rural areas. Agriculture is a significant economic activity, with associated industrial trades such as David Brown tractors. The textile (woollen) industry has dominated the region for two hundred years but other industries have also been important, especially engineering and coal mining. These industries are well represented in the collections.

Social and cultural life has been shaped by the area's industrial and economic activity and the two are closely interlinked. Brass bands developed in the collieries; Rugby League emerged because Union matches clashed with mill working hours; the woollen mills provided attractive employment for textile workers from the Indian sub-continent; successful industrialists developed interests in the arts and collecting; contrasts between workers and employers encouraged political awareness and activism.

The first museums in the area reflect the local towns' proud ambitions. They collected world-wide, and collaborated with top institutions to build up world culture collections of great aesthetic value, academic research potential and popular interest.

Collection : **Industry, agriculture, work and technical**

Status : Proactive

Number of items: 9800 on modes



Collection Summary and Aims

All aspects of work and industry have been collected, and some areas are especially significant: all aspects of the local textile and supporting industries are represented and holdings from the early days of industrialisation, when Kirklees lead the world, are extremely significant; Kirklees has the most important collection in the world of material relating to Bamforth and Co, local publishers of postcards and lantern slides; there is some significant agricultural material with good local provenance; local transport and engineering firms are represented. There are also substantial holdings of more generic trades and industries.

The aim in future is to focus on distinctive local practice, major local firms and industries and businesses with a strong local identity or community association, such as local chains of shops, and to review holdings of more generic trades.

The Bamforth collection is currently stored by Huddersfield University archive service at Heritage Quay.

Future collecting

We will actively seek out collections that fill gaps or improve representation of significant local industries, businesses and their workforce. This includes the following areas:

Bamforth and Co gaps.

Products made from locally produced cloth.

Any clothing by Jessop tailors.

Medieval mining activities at Emley

Wire works at Cleckheaton

Stay/corset making around Kirkburton and Shelley

Exclusions

David Brown tractors (no further collecting but retain existing)

Shop and office equipment and fittings

Packaging, unless of exceptional local interest.

Review Areas

Generic trades, especially cobbling, blacksmithing, coopering

Collection : **Personal, domestic and community life**

Status : Proactive

Number of items: 22000 on modes



Collection Summary and Aims

This forms the largest portion of the human history collections. However, social history collecting has often been generic rather than locally focussed and there is a great deal of material with little or no provenance, much of poor quality. Also, all sites collected social history independently prior to the formation of Kirklees as a unitary authority, so there is a lot of duplication.

Some areas are notable, often reflecting past curators' particular interests. Local numismatics are well represented and there have been attempts to build up a representative collection of national currency. There is an extensive collection of toys, especially mechanical tin toys. There are collections relating to the buildings the museums are or were housed in, the families who originally lived in them and the founding curators. There is a large collection of costume, mostly C19th and C20th baby and women's wear. There are collections of C17th and C19th domestic furnishings to dress Oakwell Hall and Red House (now closed). Any further collecting or review of this area should take account of the collections at Temple Newsam and Shibden Hall. There is a good collection of musical instruments, some locally made, but without any particular focus. There are also some small but significant collections of key local themes, such as sports, politics and protest, public transport etc.

The aim is to develop and maintain a collection that helps tell the story of the public and personal lives of the people within the area now covered by the Kirklees boundary. This covers civic and public developments, diverse communities, the impact of and contributions to significant national events, domestic and social life. Plans for future museum developments have highlighted music, sport and political activism as priorities. The service will also collect and maintain good quality generic items that support exhibitions, display and education work.

Future collecting

We will actively seek out collections in the following areas:

Kirklees districts that are less well represented in the existing collections (e.g.: areas of north Kirklees, esp. Dewsbury, villages)

17th century and earlier Yorkshire vernacular furniture for OH, to improve interpretation and reduce reliance on loans.

The Battle of Adwalton Moor and the English Civil War in Yorkshire.

Political protest and radicalism

Diverse communities of Kirklees

Sport and music across Kirklees

Exclusions

Due to extensive holdings we will not collect material in the following areas, unless there is an exceptional local story or significance attached:

Bed linen, women's and baby clothing 1860-1910.

Sewing machines and typewriters

Flat irons, laundry and cleaning equipment

Books, newspapers and magazines.

Postal collections.

Trophies

Longcase clocks

Due to lack of space and resources, we will not collect architectural fittings or furniture, (except for OH display).

Review Targets

Poor quality and generic material

Duplicates

We will aim to transfer items that have geographical relevance to a different area to museums in that relevant area.

Furniture, except Yorkshire vernacular furniture.

Collection : World Cultures incl. Egyptology

Status : Closed

Number of items: 3225 on modes



Collection Summary and Aims

These collections were sourced largely from major institutions or significant private collectors. The Egyptology collection is regularly studied by post graduate researchers but also provides one of the service's most popular galleries. Although the material itself is obviously not local, there are connections with local collectors and its presence is a reflection of the museum's and the local town's ambitions in the early 20th century.

The majority of the Egyptian Collections were received by Bagshaw and Dewsbury museums directly from the Egyptian Exploration Fund, the British School of Archaeology in Egypt and similar groups from the 1900s to 1930s. The collection covers the entire span of Ancient Egypt and is especially good on pottery.

The world culture collections were developed by Bagshaw Museum and feature items transferred from the Royal Collections, the Imperial Institute and the V&A Museum and items from specialist collectors such as John Hilditch, Copland Sparks, John Speak and the museum's original honorary curator, Walter Bagshaw and his family, who travelled extensively. It mainly comprises decorative arts, costume and textiles and weaponry from Japan, China, the Indian subcontinent and Africa. In recent years there has been some collecting of domestic social history from Kirklees residents' origin communities overseas. The focus has now shifted to reflecting the experience of these communities as they have travelled to and lived in Kirklees and are covered under Personal, domestic and community life (see above).

There are no plans to develop these collections further. Some of the weaker areas may be reviewed for possible transfer.

Future collecting

None

Review Targets

European and American material. (These collections are small and generally of poor quality. Any good quality material would be better off in another museum.)

Collection : **Archaeology**

Status : passive

Number of items: 21600 on modes



Collection Summary and Aims

Kirklees contains a number of significant archaeological sites covering a range of periods, including Slack Roman Fort, Grimescar tile kiln and Upper Heaton kiln. The service is the main repository for excavation material from across Kirklees, but has also received material from other parts of West Yorkshire and the Lancashire border, sometimes because the boundary areas have changed or because other services were not collecting archaeology. There have also been a number of significant collections from individuals, whose collecting was not confined to the local area. Tolson Museum has a history of association with Huddersfield and District Archaeology Society (HDAS) and has been actively involved in excavations. The results are a variable collection, with some periods better represented than others, and more than just local material. The most important part of the collections is the Mesolithic material, which includes a collection of microliths of national importance. The aim is to focus on Kirklees material and to minimise more generic or wider representative material.

The service is committed to supporting the Portable Antiquities Scheme.

The service is currently working with HDAS to catalogue undocumented collections. This may identify future collecting or disposal targets.

Future collecting

Kirklees M&G acts as the public depository within Kirklees for archaeological archives generated from work as part of the planning process, under the National Planning Policy framework. It is the policy of Kirklees M&G to accept complete excavation archives from excavations carried out in the administrative area of Kirklees that produce finds.

As long as there is no archaeologist on the curatorial staff, external specialist advice should be sought before agreeing to acquire any other material.

Exclusions

Collections that are entirely or primarily from outside Kirklees.

Roman tiles and pottery

Review Targets

The service would benefit from having the existing excavation and watching briefs reports reviewed.

Disposal cannot take place without specialist input from an archaeologist. Future targets are likely to be non-local material.

Collection : Fine and decorative art

Status : Passive

Number of items: 2800 on modes



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Collection Summary and Aims

The Kirklees art collection was formed in 1974 as a result of local government reorganisation. It includes substantial works of art that were donated to or acquired by Town Halls, along with significant gifts from the Contemporary Art Society. The greatest strengths lie in 19th and 20th century work by British artists and features a number of outstanding artworks of international significance, including the first painting by Francis Bacon to enter a public collection. Artworks from the collection are shown in exhibitions around the world helping to raise the profile of Kirklees and its reputation as a centre for excellence in this area.

The aim is to maintain Kirklees' reputation as a centre for modern and contemporary art by continuing to acquire significant works from the 19th century to the present day (where there is the necessary financial support). We will reflect the quality and diversity of contemporary and historic artistic talent in Kirklees and continue to enable residents and visitors to feel inspired with new ideas and the desire to express their own creativity.

Future collecting

Work in all media by notable artists from 1800 onwards, as bequest and grants permit.

Work in all media by contemporary artists of national standing. Gifts by the Contemporary Art Society have proved an important source of work in this category.

Work in all media by regional artists of artistic merit, representative of the professional artists originating from or working today in Kirklees.

Work in all media by artists of national standing representative of the diverse communities in Kirklees.

Exclusions

Our ability to collect certain sorts of work, e.g. Sculpture and 3D craftwork is limited by the available storage space at Huddersfield Art Gallery.

Acquisitions are therefore dependent on adequate storage facilities. Consideration will also be given to the insurance implications of acquiring certain artworks. Future collecting will also recognise the major collections at the art galleries in Leeds, Manchester, Bradford, Sheffield, the Yorkshire Sculpture Park and the Hepworth at Wakefield.

NATURAL HISTORY

General Introduction

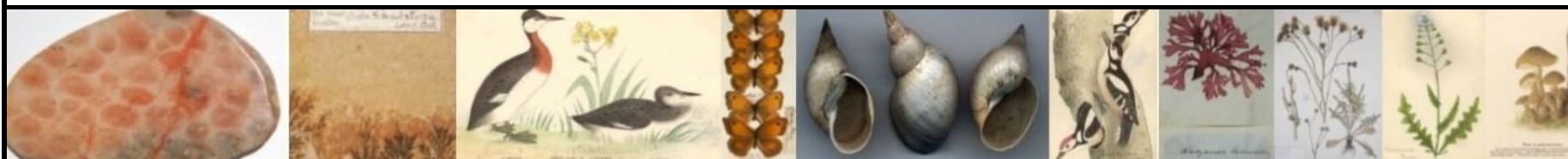
The study and collecting of natural history have been extremely significant historically in Kirklees. Tolson Memorial Museum grew out of the collections of the Mechanics Institute and Beaumont Park Museum, both of which focussed on science and natural history. Early curators at Tolson Memorial Museum include prominent local natural historians and they engaged in active collecting in the field. The museum was also an important hub for local, regional and national natural history societies.

Aims

We will maintain collections that support future development plans by telling the story of Kirklees' natural environment and the development of scientific and learning opportunities in the local area.

Future collecting

No active collecting or disposal can take place without specialist input from a natural historian, which is lacking from the current staff. Well documented collections of local material, supported by appropriate field data may be considered if offered to the service, after consultation with an appropriate specialist.



Collection : Botany, Zoology and Geology

Status : Passive

Botany : Summary

The collection comprises several major herbaria from a number of significant local collectors and includes material of national importance and species now extinct in the British Isles. Fungi are included here and these collections reflect the importance of the local area in the setting up of the British Mycological Society.

Number of items: 27500 on modes

Zoology: Summary

There is a large taxidermy collection of mostly birds and mammals which primarily have value for display and educational use. This includes a small but significant historic group of double preparations (half skeleton/half taxidermy) which are used in display. There are historic taxidermy displays of birds in both Tolson and Bagshaw Museums.

Number of items: 29300 on modes

There are also collections of documented and scientifically valuable British and world-wide specimens, mostly from local collectors. Bird skins and eggs are well represented and there are good collections of some insect groups, the caddis fly group being especially important.

Geology : Summary

Number of items: 2400 on modes

With a history of coal mining in the area, geology has been a popular subject of study. There are representative fossils, mostly British, from most geological periods. The strength of the collection is its coal measures fossils, including plant and fish material, a number of them figured specimens. There are sedimentary, igneous and metamorphic rocks, mostly British, with a strong tendency towards local Coal Measures and Millstone Grit specimens.

The primary sources of the collection are the Learoyd Collection, Huddersfield Technical College Museum and Beaumont Park. There are important historic links with Huddersfield Geology Group.

Review Targets

Poor quality, worn and damaged mounted specimens of no scientific value.

Duplicate mounted specimens of no scientific value.

MEDIA ARCHIVES

Collection : Image Archive

Status : passive

Number of items: 62000 scanned images

Summary

The collection of photographic images is vast. It includes significant holdings of key local photographers from the early C20th and also images from the Huddersfield Examiner. The majority are local, but there are some national and international subjects. Substantial parts of the collection have been scanned and are available to the public through the Kirklees Image Archive website. The digital archive also includes images where Kirklees does not hold the original but has been given permission to scan and publish them. The online archive also includes some museum collection items of a 2D nature, such as samplers and botanical drawings. Work on scanning the remaining collection is currently on hold as there is no longer an image archivist. There is no systematic collecting of photographic images, though donation offers may be accepted in support of local social and industrial history. The collection is currently stored at Huddersfield University Archive service at Heritage Quay.

Future collecting

No further collecting at present. Any future collecting is reliant on suitable staffing resources and expertise.

Collection : Sound Archive

Status : closed

Number of items: 600-700 recordings

Summary

Between 1985 and 1993 local people were interviewed and recordings made, as part of a systematic oral history project. Since then, a few more ad hoc recordings have been made. The people interviewed were born as early as the 1890s and the recordings are of enormous importance. The archive will be maintained, and ideally, supplemented with further recordings. However, the service does not have the resources to continue with oral history recording at present. The focus at present is on digitisation and transcribing of existing recordings, through a partnership with York St John University.

Future collecting

No further collecting at present. Any future collecting is reliant on suitable staffing resources and expertise.