

**Case Studies: examples of museums projects
for**
Cultural Coordinators and Creative Links Officers



Time Quest, East Dunbartonshire

Introduction

Museums offer Cultural Coordinators tremendous opportunities. The case studies below give some idea of the sorts of projects that are possible when Cultural Coordinators work with museum staff to utilise the rich learning resources available through museums.

These case studies were presented at events in Inverness and Glasgow that brought museums and Cultural Coordinators/ Creative Links Officers together. The featured projects have taken place using previous SMC funding schemes, which offered up to £500 per Cultural Coordinator for projects developed between with museums. Although the way Cultural Coordinators and Creative Links Officers apply to the SMC for grants has changed, as they are now offered through the SMC's Small Grants Programme, the priorities remain the same and we hope that you might find these examples interesting and inspiring. They have been divided into 5 themes to help you find examples that might be useful to you:

Working with schools in museums
Taking museums out to schools
Working with older pupils
Citizenship projects
Re-enacting the past

Further ideas feature after the case studies. These have been put together from creative discussions that museums and Cultural Coordinators/ Creative Links Officers had at the events.

If you are interested in learning more about the grants, our funding priorities and how to apply please visit:

http://www.scottishmuseums/areas_of_work/learning_and_access/cc_funds.asp

The SMC would like to thank Estelle Quick for reporting on the events and writing up the case studies that follow.

Case Studies – working with schools in museums

Falconer's Fossils

(Anne Owen, Falconer Museum, Forres, and Pam Diamond, Cultural Coordinator, Moray Council)

The purpose of the project was to enable the 34 pupils of Dallas Primary School to work on the Hugh Falconer fossil collection in advance of the museum's impending closure for refurbishment and to produce material which could be used in the new displays, although the main aim was to get the children into the museum. Anne had previously worked with the school to create a museum in the school, so there was an existing relationship with the children and staff. Another important element of the project was the involvement of the Friends of Falconer Museum, for whom this was a new way of supporting the activities of the museum. Preliminary work was done in school, following which the children visited the museum. On their first visit they had a general tour and were encouraged to choose and talk about their favourite objects. The importance of the stories behind the objects was explained, a piece of coal from one of the German ships scuttled at Scapa Flow being used as an example. The children also spent time looking at Hugh Falconer's drawings of the fossils.

The children returned the following week and were divided up into nine groups, each group consisting of a range of ages from P2 to P7 (there were no P1s this year). Nine fossil workstations had been set up, each with fossils, gloves, magnifying glass, pens, paper, clipboards and workbooks. The workbooks contained a list of the fossils in the museum and prompts to help the children without making it too easy. The Cultural Coordinator had helped to prepare these. Each workstation also had a friendly fossil helper (from the Friends group) armed with notes about the fossils. The groups spent about five minutes at each workstation identifying the fossils and the whole process was filmed as part of the project.



After lunch the groups returned to their first workstation for a more detailed inspection of the fossils there, introducing the idea of in-depth scientific recording. The children were asked to draw the fossils as accurately as they could and to write one paragraph about them. The drawings and descriptions were very imaginative and brought the fossils to life. One definition of what a fossil is: "when a fish has a heart attack and falls to the bottom of the sea". Each group reported back Big Brother style through the video camera.

The positive outcomes highlighted for the museum were stronger links with the Cultural Coordinator, the school and the Friends group,

experience in dealing with the funding, material for the new displays and good press coverage. The feedback from the school was very positive. The children had gained experience in a wide range of areas including language skills, team working, problem solving, introduction to scientific recording and working with video media.

The project went ahead because of the £500 grant funding available: this was money that could not be hijacked for other areas. The Friends added a further £500 to bring the budget up to £1000. The money was spent on buses to bring the children to the museum, and equipment such as the video camera, clipboards, gloves, magnifying glasses and workbooks.

Museum backpacks

(Molly Duckett, Grantown Museum, Badenoch and Strathspey)

Grantown Museum needed a resource aimed specifically at children. The museum has a good relationship with local schools and also has children visiting as part of family groups. The area Cultural Coordinator, Nancy McKenna created backpack kits which can be used by children as they go round the museum whether from school or with their families. There are five kits, enough for one class, as each can be used by several children working together in groups. A separate teacher's pack explains how the backpacks work. Everything in the packs is either reusable or can be easily reproduced and replaced.

While the packs were being developed a pilot was held with local schools to see how they would work, and as a result of evaluation by children and teachers some minor changes were made before they were finally produced. The Cultural Coordinator put in the grant application and did the organising. Molly's advice: "Get to know your Cultural Coordinator. £500 was a lifeline and produced an excellent piece of work."

Medieval Tales

(Caroline Leitch, Cultural Coordinator, Highland Council, Inverness Area)

This project was undertaken in partnership with Inverness Museum. Medieval Tales linked with the museum's new medieval gallery and aimed to raise awareness about the medieval period among schools. It was a small project that was covered by the SMC's £500 grant plus additional Cultural Coordinator funding.

Caroline worked with Aldourie and Croy Primary Schools. Aldourie only had four children in P7, so working with another school was a useful experience for them. The pupils visited the medieval gallery with a storyteller to draw out the stories behind the objects and create their own stories around the displays. There was a further session with an artist to look at medieval manuscripts and use some of the ideas to illustrate their own stories. Each school has a copy of the completed stories and a further

copy is on display in the gallery. The teachers now have ideas for similar activities they could do in future based on other parts of the collection at the museum.

Case Studies – taking museums out to schools

School loan boxes

(Lisa O'Brien, Cultural Coordinator, Highland Council, Ross & Cromarty)

Lisa visited eight primary schools in Wester Ross including Gairloch Primary, which expressed an interest in loan boxes. Although Gairloch Heritage Museum has good educational resources, the schools do not visit often because of the cost of transport. It was hoped that the loan boxes would help to stimulate interest in the museum among the schools. All of the schools are small, with a maximum of 15 pupils, which means that classes are of mixed ages and only part of the curriculum is taught each year. The loan boxes therefore needed to be versatile so that they could be used to support different curriculum areas, depending on the work that was being done in the schools. Lisa worked with the curator of Gairloch Heritage Museum to choose two topic areas, both of which would have a wide scope.

The two topics chosen were lighthouses and the Victorians/history of crofting. The museum has strong displays on both these themes, with the original light from the nearby Rua Reidh lighthouse, and a Victorian schoolroom and croft house.

The lighthouse box includes books about inventors, an electrical circuit board for experiments, a DVD of an interview with the person who transported the Rua Reidh light to the museum, a lens kit, gas camping light and mantles, map jigsaws, maps, compasses and worksheets.

Curriculum areas covered are:

- Society. People in the past, lighthouse engineers - the Stevensons, inventors - electricity, the age of revolution. Stories collected about past keepers and shipwrecks refer to the human environment, local historical importance, heritage, Scotland, where you live.
- Science. Heat, light and sound - the property and uses of energy including lenses, reflection and refraction.
- Environment/technology. Geography of Scotland, how times are changing. Technology - current needs and how they are met. The lighthouse is now operated by modem from Edinburgh.

Practicalities: The loan boxes will be sent out to the schools via the mobile library system. A flyer will be produced to advertise them to the schools.

Tips: Be clear about who is responsible for doing what – this hadn't been discussed in enough detail at the start. Allow plenty of time for ordering materials if purchasing through a local authority, or find another way of doing it.

Pocket Museum

(Susan Walker, Cultural Coordinator, Highland Council, Skye & Lochalsh)

The Pocket Museum was created by the Cultural Coordinator, Dualchas Heritage Service and the Museum of the Isles, for schools in Skye and Lochalsh. Its theme is crofting, clearance and way of life, and the aim is to enable schoolchildren from P1 up to Higher level to look at how their landscape has changed.

It includes resources for two sample areas of Skye: maps, rent rolls, the Napier Commission report, old photographs and worksheets. The maps and archives are from the Museum of the Isles' collection, and the photos from Dualchas Heritage Service. There are also English and Gaelic captions, teachers' notes, pupils' notes on the photos, a crofting quiz, and sheets on butter making and peat. The quiz encourages pupils to do their own research and to examine the resources carefully. All these materials were copied and put into folders for 23 schools. The project funding paid for the printing costs, polypockets, folders etc.

The project is still under development. Future additions will include Gaelic worksheets and a worksheet on understanding maps. It is also hoped to get funding for traditional skills workshops and another pocket museum on a different topic.

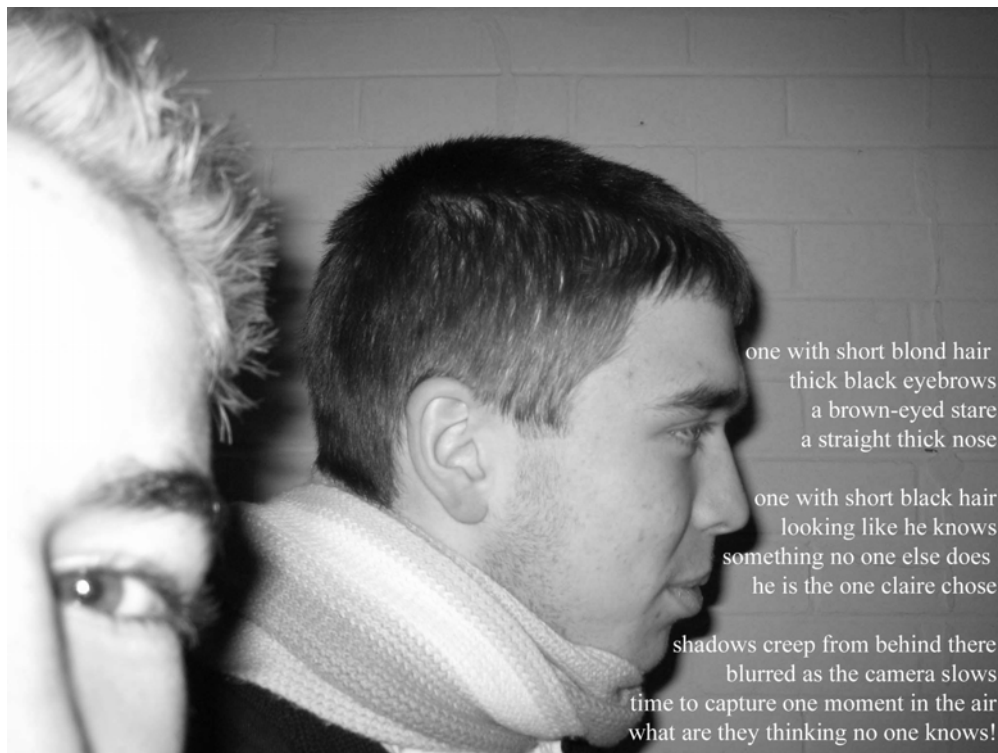
Working with older pupils

Writing with Light

(Louise Higgins, Cultural Coordinator, North Ayrshire)

The aim of this project was to increase access to the photographic archive in North Ayrshire Museum. S3 pupils from Garnock Academy worked with museum staff, a writer and photographer to explore the archive and create new images and writing inspired by it. They visited both the museum and the Ayrshire Archive Centre, where they were particularly interested in maps and books relating to their own area.

Following the museum and archive visits the pupils participated in a series of creative workshops. They worked with a photographer on traditional photographic techniques and the use of digital cameras and photo editing software. They took photographs in different roles, e.g. as a journalist or family member. Writing workshops covered the use of prose and poetry, and the effective use of language to create text to accompany the images. The images and text created will be displayed at the museum.



The starting point for the project was the enthusiasm of the museum staff. Both they and the teacher met their objectives and achieved good partnership working. The feedback from the school was that the pupils were genuinely interested in both the photographic and archive collections and were positive about the role of the museum and archive. They had developed specific skills, gained in confidence, and been encouraged to think creatively and work together. The school would definitely work with the museum and archive again.

After the project 90% of pupils said that they thought objects, photos and archives should be kept and displayed. "It shows us how far we have evolved in life and it gave me a sense of wellbeing".

Things that could be done better next time: more pre-planning with the school on course links; arranging the museum/archive visits later in project after the aims have been established; more investigation of how the archive collections could be used for schools. The main costs were in artists' fees.

Inverness Reviewed

(Caroline Leitch, Cultural Coordinator, Highland Council, Inverness Area)

Caroline developed this project in partnership with Inverness Museum. This project involves working with 16 year old pupils on images and writing inspired by the museum's Turner painting of Inverness. This is a larger project funded by the SMC's small grants scheme, Scottish Book

Trust, Inverness High School, Inverness Museum and the Cultural Coordinator's budget.

For Inverness Reviewed, 16 year old pupils at Inverness High School will look at views and photos of Inverness to see how it has changed since the 1830s. They will work with an artist to produce contemporary views on the same scale as the Turner, using digital photography, computer manipulation and printmaking techniques. There will also be three creative writing sessions on life in Inverness. The work produced will be displayed alongside the Turner when Inverness Museum and Art Gallery reopens after refurbishment in 2007. It is hoped that this project will help young people to take ownership of the museum.

Case Studies – citizenship projects

Why Inherit the Past?

(Lesley Dunlop, Creative Links Officer, Glasgow City Council)

The focus of this project was heritage conservation and citizenship in Glasgow's Southside and East End. Glasgow has a huge museum service and five cultural coordinators who work in specific fields such as music and drama. Lesley, as Creative Links Officer, is based in the Council's Education Department but works closely with Culture and Leisure.

Children from a number of schools took part in a variety of activities at Pollok House, which is owned by Glasgow City Council but managed by the NTS. The activities were designed to illustrate the meaning of conservation and citizenship in different ways, and were linked to the general curriculum theme of Victorians. The activities included:

- A practical conservation exercise, which looked at examples of moth and woodworm damage, the effect of light on wallpaper, how furniture and furnishings can be conserved and repaired etc. and the reasons why we preserve objects from the past.
- A drama exercise. The children had a tour of the house with a costumed guide in order to get a feel for what it was like to live there. They then produced a play which was performed in the servants' quarters.
- Art activities in which the children worked with a visual artist and stained glass artist.

Apart from engaging the young people in conservation-related activities, there was a positive benefit to them in terms of giving them new experiences and broadening their horizons.

The budget for the project was £2000. Costumes for the drama were borrowed from the museum service and the local authority provided transport free of charge, which meant that most of the money could be spent on other items such as artists, materials, and NTS costs.

Burma Star

(Caroline Leitch, Cultural Coordinator, Highland Council, Inverness Area)

The idea for this project arose during discussion with a Burma Star veteran who was looking for material for an anniversary exhibition at the museum. The aim was to involve children and record memories of service in Burma.

The partners in the Burma Star reminiscences and recollections project were the museum, the Burma Star Association, and Cradlehall Primary School. The pupils took part in oral history interviews of the Burma veterans and also an art project which culminated in the production of a book. The children learnt about the background to the Burma campaign in advance and then spent time with two veterans from the Burma Star Association, one from the artillery and one medical officer. The veterans brought some items with them – kitbag, telegram, photos, medals etc – and recounted their experiences in Burma.

Material that was going into the Burma Star exhibition, including sketches done by a soldier and photographs, fed into the art project. The children wrote down buzzwords inspired by the pictures. These were printed and folded into origami shapes. Drawings and haikus were produced inspired by the stories the children had heard. The production of the book enabled some of the material on loan to the exhibition to be permanently gathered together.



Case studies – re-enacting the past

Keiss Primary School mini broch and heritage panels

(Christine Russell, Cultural Coordinator, Highland Council, Caithness)

Keiss Primary School approached Christine with a request for a way to brighten up their playground. Keiss is one of 18 primary and two secondary schools in Caithness, and shares its head teacher with another school. The head is dynamic but has limited time available. The school is in a beautiful area with lots of history and a strong community. The garden has recently been developed but there is a lot of concrete and tarmac, and beige walls.

Christine agreed with the head teacher that the project should be for the children, that it needed to be relevant to them and the community, and that if possible it should have lasting value.

The aim of the mini broch was to echo the numerous local brochs, particularly Keiss Road, excavated by Tress Barry between 1890 and 1904, to raise awareness of the importance of the children's own heritage, and to complement other local heritage initiatives. It was to be a low level structure that the children could climb and sit on. It was built by local drystone craftsman George Gunn – after some delay due to bad weather - using stone from the shore, which might have been washed out from the ruined broch there. Authentic features such as a triangular lintel were incorporated, although it was not possible to include the planned guard chamber because of the small scale. It is planned to add a well later.

The £500 grant funding was spent on the broch building. The Cultural Coordinator worked with Dunbeath Heritage Centre and Caithness Archaeology Trust on the project.



Time Quest

(David Young, Cultural Coordinator, East Dunbartonshire Council)

This was a two part project which aimed to educate young people about the historical significance of their environment, and to give them a sense of the layout of Peel Park and the Antonine Wall during Roman times. Drama activities enabled the young people to work with professionals in an adventure based project, and a visual arts element focussed on the making process and culminated in an exhibition of work at the Auld Kirk Museum, Kirkintilloch.

In the drama activities, the children had to help a Time Monitor uncover historical information about the area so that he could be promoted to Time Lord. The Time Monitor had been instructed to investigate the Roman, medieval and Victorian periods. Actors were used to play the characters the children met during their quest.

When the children arrived at the museum they were given a tour by the curator looking at the three time periods chosen. Each child was given a special time travel passport which needed to be stamped after each activity had been successfully completed so that they could move on to the next time zone.

The activities had been set up in different areas of the park. In the Victorian period the children had to complete a series of games under the guidance of a schoolteacher. In the medieval period they had to set the table for a banquet which was to be attended by Mary Queen of Scots,

and learn dances to entertain her. In the Roman era they learned Roman combat methods.

At the end of the series of tasks the information was collated and given to the Time Monitor, who wrote to all the pupils a week later to say that the quest had been successful and he had achieved his promotion to Time Lord.

The total cost of the project was £3370: 4 actors @ £600 (2 weekend rehearsals + 1 week project), transport £750 (10 schools), printing £120 (passports, badges and letters), choreographer £100. This was covered by an SMC grant of £1200 with the balance coming from the local authority. The SMC's £1200 was made up of the maximum (at the time) grant of £200 for each of the county's six cultural coordinators.

Pict for a day

(Sam Groves, Access and Learning Development Officer and Pauline Meikleham, Creative Links Officer, both Angus Council)

Sam Groves' key role is developing learning partnerships in Dundee, Perth and Kinross, and Angus. She started looking at the idea of doing a project on the Picts. The area is rich in Pictish history and at the time of this project there were other Pictish initiatives in progress. There is plenty of material on the Picts available but very little is written or interpreted for children. It was felt that of the three areas Angus needed the project most, as it has a number of small museums with limited resources and no educational infrastructure. The Meffan in Forfar was chosen as the location for the project; it has open gallery space and an extensive display of Pictish stones.



Eight schools visited the museum over a period of four days in a single week. A museum assistant acted as tour guide, showing the children round the museum and handling objects from the store. Fergus the Pict, a re-enactor, then appeared to tell stories about what life was like, explain what sort of food the Picts ate and show the children some of the tools they used. This led into an art session where the children worked with a visual artist to make a banner inspired by the Pictish stones by printing designs using polystyrene tiles.

The project was a learning experience for the museum as it was the first time they had handled a mass influx of children and there were inevitably practical issues to be sorted out. The feedback from the schools was very positive. The teachers detailed what worked best and interested them most. It has led on to another project involving a storyteller, the museum and all the primary schools in the area. It has helped to forge partnerships and laid the ground for further projects in the future.

The project budget was £1500 split between three Cultural Coordinators.

More ideas (from breakout sessions)

Here are some more project ideas that may help to inspire you. They resulted from Museum staff and Cultural Coordinators/ Creative Links Officers working together in break-out sessions at the events. Themes discussed ranged from shoes to shipbuilding, farming tools to Travellers and from archaeology to World War II but a few recurring project ideas were:

- Pupils researching the history of their own houses/ communities to develop visitor interpretation and resources for other children researching their area
- Storytellers working with classes to bring objects and landscapes of the past alive
- Using storytelling and traditional music to bring Travellers' pasts alive – possibility to link similar project across Highland using pod casts to allow sharing of stories and music
- Developing a multimedia resource on the planned development of an historic town using museum archives and photographs
- Researching a collection theme and involving people by asking for them to bring objects on this theme to museum and encourage a creative response. The objects and response could be exhibited.
- Developing a heritage walk that would promote the interesting local shipbuilding past and also healthy living to local schools. Pupils would meet older people who have links to the shipyards and look at objects and photographs on the theme. Pupils walking to the maritime museum would be accompanied by a storyteller and the visit to the museum would involve a tour and follow up activities.
- Bringing pupils and older people together and using museum handling boxes to encourage discussion about WWII. The pupils would also learn songs and dances from the period and share what they learn with the older people
- Learning about art and science through shipbuilding – discovering the science behind ship building and also learning about the art collected by those who made money from the shipbuilding industry
- Creating a virtual gallery based around the collections theme of farming tools. Interpretations of the objects would be created by young people. They would also be involved in crafts, object

handling and observation, creative writing, photography, research, oral history and interviews.

The suggested legacies have included:

Multi media resources, a virtual gallery, DVDs, education packs, increased community relations and new skills for participants

The costs to consider included:

Transport, artist/ craftsperson/ writer/ storyteller involvement, film making equipment and film editing, worksheets/ resources and replica objects