



**Herefordshire Museum Service Support  
Group (HMSSG)  
Registered charity 1171756  
Newsletter**

**April 2024**

Dear Museum Supporter. We are delighted to be sending you news from Herefordshire Museum Service Support Group (HMSSG) and Herefordshire Museum Service. This edition will cover news about the expansion of the Museum Service, the redevelopment of the Museum and Art Gallery and an update on what is going on at the Black and White House and the Museum Resource and Learning Centre (MRLC). We'll bring you up to date with the Herefordshire Hoard and how it's being exhibited in York, the first of stories from members of the Collections staff about their favourite pieces in the Museum and some other news from the service and from around the county.

Just to remind you, between newsletters you can look at our website at

[www.herefordshiremuseumsupport.org.uk](http://www.herefordshiremuseumsupport.org.uk) and our two Facebook sites at 'Herefordshire Museum Service' and 'Hereford Museum Service Support Group-HMSSG'.

Please note the Facebook site, 'Hereford Museum and Art Gallery', is *not* an official site.

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### **Museum Service redesign**

We are grateful to Damian Etheraads and all the staff of Herefordshire Museum service for their continuing commitment to the redevelopment and reorganisation of the service - we do appreciate their professionalism and dedication.

The service redesign funded by investment from Herefordshire Council will increase the number of permanent staff in the curatorial, front of house and education teams. Recent advertisements for five posts attracted 346 applications and have led to the appointment of highly skilled individuals. The first new staff will start in April. Two more full time posts, Senior Curator (Collections and Engagement) and Senior Visitor Experience Officer, have just been advertised and are expected to be in post by the autumn. The five year activity plan, supported by the National Heritage Lottery Fund as part of the development project, provides funding for additional staff needed to deliver the proposed business plan. These posts will be advertised later in the spring. The recruitment of the expanded service team over the next few months will be key to the Museum and Art Gallery's long term success.

Sadly, at the end of April we will be losing two highly valued and experienced staff members - Judy Stevenson and Julia Radburn. We hope you will be able to join us as we say farewell and show our appreciation for their outstanding commitment over so many years. More details of their contribution to the service over the years and their leaving party on 29 April are provided later in this newsletter.

Despite the rather forlorn appearance of the façade of the Museum and Art Gallery building in Broad Street, work has been continuing behind the scenes to refine the understanding of the physical state of the building and to investigate and resolve issues raised in the planning process. The Invitation to Tender for the final design of the gallery layout has been opened and is part-way through the award process. We expect to have more positive news to share in the early summer. As ever, HMSSG will be encouraging the Council to include mechanisms for public consultation as the development moves into the delivery phase. An outline of the project is provided below.



*The interior of the Broad Street building-survey work in progress*



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## The Black and White House Museum, High Town, Hereford

OPENING HOURS  
From 1 April 2024

Monday: closed  
Tuesday to Saturday: 10am -5pm  
Sunday 11am-4pm

Our charming 17th-century timber-framed building in the heart of Hereford's High Town is a popular visitor attraction, especially at the weekends. To enable more people to enjoy our treasures, we are increasing opening hours from 1 April.



Be sure to stop by and explore this remarkable building during your next visit to Hereford's High Town. Take advantage of guided walks around the building with one of our volunteers. Tours are available on Wednesdays at 11am and 3pm and on Fridays at 3pm.

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## The Museum Resource and Learning Centre (MRLC), Friars Street, Hereford

The MRLC is the central storage facility for the County's museum collections, also currently acting as the temporary Hereford Library and as a result bringing many people into the building for the first time. Tours of the collection stores are also in the service plan to open up and enable wider public access and use of the building.

Regular family events are held, such as **Gloverly Gloves, Handy Handbags and Super Shoes**, which runs over the Easter holidays.

Fun activities include trying on some of our special gloves and shoes from the collection. Adults are always welcome too, of course! Look out for news of the latest events on our facebook page.



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## HMSSG wins a Highly Commended Award



Last summer, as members of the British Association of Friends of Museums we were asked to submit an entry for their 2022 Impact Award and were delighted to win their Highly Commended Award based on our campaign to acquire the Herefordshire Hoard, including the tale of the crime and ongoing actions to recover more artefacts.

An article was then included in their Journal which helped introduce the Hoard and the story to museum enthusiasts outside our local area.

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## The Herefordshire Hoard: An Update

At the time of writing the Hoard is in York, firstly to feature as a star exhibit in the Jorvik Viking Festival in February and then to be on display until September after which it will return to Hereford. As its first loan since the acquisition in late summer 2022 the Hereford teams behind the scenes in MRLC will not need to step around its case in the central walkway of the store for a few months!

The Jorvik team have made a series of video clips outlining the story of the discovery, the importance and quality of the artefacts and their relevance in rewriting history. With Judy Stevenson, Tim Hoverd and Gareth Williams each outlining these they make an ideal introduction and summary to anyone new to the story. Links to these are available from the Hoard website and our own for reference.

The January open days in the library went very well and attracted many visitors from further afield, which was encouraging to see in a rather miserable January. Feedback was enthusiastic with remarks about the fascination of the story as well as the beauty and mystique of the artefacts. Some visitors seemed concerned that the Hoard would not be returning 'home' after the summer. Assurances were given that inter-museum loans are common and enable sharing with the wider public who do not live within easy reach of wherever a collection is based. In future Herefordshire Museum team will request loans of collections from other heritage and cultural organisations thus widening the appeal of the items to be seen in Hereford alongside those from other UK collections.

Now that the recent Durham court case has ended resulting in sentences of 5.5 years each for the two men charged with selling coins deemed to be part of the Herefordshire Hoard, the next phase of fundraising activity and campaigning will commence once the coins have been made available. Albeit next time without the added complication of Covid lockdowns slowing up an already lengthy valuation process at the Department of Culture, Media and Sport level – this will not happen before end 2024. The magnitude of funds needed will be as much if not more than the original target for the 2022 acquisition of the jewellery, coins and ingot. We'll keep you up to date as the next phase of this acquisition project evolves.

If HMSSG members are also members of groups who may like to host a talk about the Hoard for their members please email Denise North on [dzn20@aol.com](mailto:dzn20@aol.com). Several groups in Herefordshire have already made requests and the feedback has been positive. The talks help keep up public awareness of the importance of the Hoard to this county, and the impact of history being rewritten cannot be underestimated.

For a reminder of the full story of the Hoard, please see [www.herefordshirehoard.co.uk](http://www.herefordshirehoard.co.uk). This includes links to an article published in the *New Yorker* on 16<sup>th</sup> November 2020 entitled 'The curse of the Buried Treasure' and other articles, including a recent one in the *Sunday Times*. Design of the permanent display for the HOARD in the redeveloped Museum and Art Gallery will be part of development of the design of the new galleries.



*A set of replica items from the HOARD can be made available at open days.*



## Schools workshops and event for young people

HMSSG has helped to fund the design of a workshop specifically for schools to offer children the story, the historical importance, and the moral of the theft based on raiding, trading and parading. The **'Vikings in Herefordshire?' School Workshop**, created for Key Stage 2 (7-11 year old) children was trialled in local schools last summer and is now available for primary schools to book.

During the session the children investigate a set of Viking/Saxon era artefacts that they compare by value then attempt to swap accordingly. They imagine joining a raiding party, decide what to pack for their voyage and explore the motivations behind raiding. Finally, they discover the background context of some of the objects in the Herefordshire Hoard before they were buried over 1000 years ago. The session embeds aspects of value-based learning particularly relating to the crime surrounding the discovery and concealment of the Hoard.

The Education Team also attends public events to show the Hoard. In March Carolyn Olney, one of the two Museum Educators, attended Herefordshire Council's Holiday Family Day held at a local secondary school.



Carolyn Olney with replica items from the Hoard at the recent Family Open Day.



Objects used in the School's workshop

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## Hereford Museum and Library Redevelopment – an overview

As you will be aware, the Hereford Museum and Art Gallery on Broad Street is currently closed to the public, but things are happening behind the scenes! In February 2023 initial plans for the redevelopment were submitted for planning approval. See HMSSG Newsletter March 2023 and our website for further details of the scheme. The final design will be completed in Spring/Summer 2024. Look out for details of public consultation over the next few months.

The redevelopment project has very wide support from communities across the county. In March, Herefordshire's High Sheriff Robert Robinson shared this post on his Facebook site, which provides an excellent summary:

*"This year work is planned to start on a major re-conception of Herefordshire's museum in Broad Street, Hereford. It'll take some years but Historic England is full of praise for the imaginative plans. The iconic Venetian Gothic revival-style frontage remains, of course, but the new building will have more light, more facility, more capacity to engage with people and more flexibility for exhibitions. The refurb will also put Hereford on the map for major touring exhibitions from London galleries. Most recent pre-closure visitor numbers of 10,000 pa are projected to reach 75,000 pa within 5 years, bringing what is currently one of the country's smallest museums into the mainstream for counties of our size and contributing to the wider*

*prosperity of the City. With some dating as far back as the year 1600 the museum has one of the country's best collections of costumes outside the V&A, with whom it is developing closer ties. This is a huge resource for inspiring designers and artists and there are 150,000 other items in storage. These include the Hereford Hoard and the remains of King Canute's corn mill. And the Duke of Wellington's top hat. Armour. Flint arrowheads. Finds from Snodshill Royal Chapel and from Arthurs Stone. Carriages and threshing boxes. Roman mosaics”.*

The building closed to the public in July last year to allow time to clear the building of all collections and fixtures ready for the building contractors. Volunteers worked closely with museum team staff to condition check and photograph artefacts with specialist contractors commissioned to remove the mosaics from the staircase. All artefacts are now stored securely at MRLC



*Ben Moule with the Roman mosaics in the MRLC store.*

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### **Leaving Celebration for Judy Stevenson and Julia Radburn 29 April 12 noon-3pm at MRLC**

Please join us as we say farewell to two long-standing members of the County Museum Service team and send them our warmest wishes for the future. On Monday 29th April we will be celebrating the fifty plus years of service combined between Judy and Julia, who are retiring from the Service.

**Judy Stevenson** joined Herefordshire Council's Heritage Services in August 1998 after ten years at the Museum of London. Her first post was as Collections Officer for Human History with responsibility for the Archaeology, Social History and Costume & Textile collections. In 2003 she was promoted and played a leading role in the development and management of the Museum Resource and Learning Centre. Since 2013 Judy has led the county's Museum Service as Museum Team Leader.

Despite large-scale cuts in funding which reduced the service team to a bare minimum, Judy has led the team to some fantastic 'firsts' including bringing the charged-for national touring exhibitions - LEGO and Grayson Perry - to the county and, of course, playing a pivotal role in the planning and delivery of the acquisition of the Herefordshire Hoard.

Judy was the lead officer working on this project for seven years from the initial discovery of the treasure until the completion of the successful campaign to raise the enormous sum of £776,250 required to secure the objects for the county in 2022. As the collections policy for the Service notes, the Herefordshire Hoard is 'the most important acquisition the museum has ever made'.

Not one to compromise over the imposed reduction in service, Judy has continued to challenge and work for improved provision of up to date gallery spaces and was instrumental in developing the case for investment and early funding applications for what has become the redevelopment project for the Museum and Art Gallery. This is expected to open in late 2026 with an initial soft launch.

**Julia Radburn** started work as an Assistant Children's Librarian with Hereford and Worcester County Council in August 1989, based at Hereford Library. She was later appointed as Schools Library Service Librarian, overseeing the schools' mobile library, project loan service, all book purchasing and advising schools on their library provision.

With the creation of Herefordshire Libraries in 1998, Julia took on the challenge of creating a new young people's library service for the county. She set up the Herefordshire Schools Library Service, managed public library services for children and young people and introduced new services such as a library card

for children and young people in care, the national Bookstart programme for babies and pre-schoolers, a book festival and the Summer Reading Challenge. When Libraries became part of Cultural Services in the 2000s, Julia set up the new Cultural Services Learning Team, which included members from Libraries, Museums and Archives. Working across disciplines gave Julia the opportunity to expand the cultural offer to all age groups with some exciting projects and events. The team was responsible for bringing Museum on the Move to Herefordshire, Destination Poland, Inspire, Korean Stories and many more.

Over the last decade Julia has headed up the front of house teams at the Black & White House and the Museum in Broad Street. Cuts to staffing necessitated the development of a volunteer team which Julia has led from the start. Our happy band of volunteers is largely due to her organisation and enthusiasm.

Both Judy and Julia were involved in the refurbishment and rebranding of the Old House which relaunched as the Black and White House with the introduction of an admission fee. Since its rebranding Julia has successfully developed the retail offer, collaborative projects with students from Herefordshire College of Arts and developed a programme of family and community activities.

The energy, expertise and enthusiasm of Judy and Julia will be sorely missed, as will their good humour.

**Please drop in to say goodbye- 12noon-3pm, 29 April at MRLC, Friars Street, Hereford, HR4 0AS**

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### **From the Collections Officer: Phyllocarida fossils by Ben Moule**

*In future newsletters, we will be asking members of the Collections Team to give us an insight into an item or items in the Collections which they find particularly interesting. Ben Moule, Collections Officer, is the first to write one for us here, on Phyllocarida Fossils.*

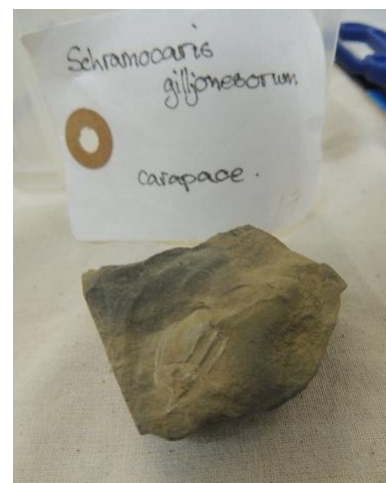
*Geology specimens were among the first objects to be donated to the county museum collections, many given by the Woolhope Naturalists' Field Club and other individual donors in the late nineteenth century. The collection continues to grow as new discoveries are made.*

During an audit of geological sites in Herefordshire, carried out by Herefordshire and Worcestershire Earth Heritage Trust between August 2007 and February 2008 as part of a project to develop a Geodiversity Action Plan for the county, Rollo Gillespie made an exciting discovery on the Great Doward.



He found fossils of a relatively uncommon crustacean which cast light on some poorly preserved fossils found in Mitcheldean, in the Forest of Dean, by Mrs J. Gill in 1982. The fossils are from the class *Malacostraca* (the class of crustaceans with hard shells that includes modern crabs, lobsters and shrimps) and Subclass *Phyllocarida*. The rocks in which they are embedded are sedimentary rocks from the Avon group of the Courceyan substage of the Tournaisian stage. Dating from 358.9 Ma to 346.7 Ma it is the oldest substage of the Carboniferous and is immediately preceded by the last substage of the Devonian.

This is only the fifth site in Britain where these fossils have been found. According to Moira Jenkins (Woolhope Club) the preservation of the fine detail of the Great Doward specimens is outstanding: in some specimens the cuticle is preserved as a haematite layer or as calcite. Jenkins suggests further research is needed to find out more about the Great Doward site, which is of national importance.





\*There are, however, some significant differences [from *Teallicaris* and *Pseudogalatea*] in the shape of the carapace, and the ornamentation of the carapace and pleon. The broad, squat telson is more akin to that of *Pseudogalatea*, but the length of the pleon and the lack of elongated sharp posterolateral angles to the carapace are more like those of *Teallicaris*. The apparent lack of a scaphocerite and the lack of an enlarged third pleomere are more suggestive of affinities with *Pseudogalatea*. Principal coordinate analysis on 12 landmarks of the carapace indicate that this new crustacean is distinct from both *Teallicaris* and *Pseudogalatea*. A cladistics comparison with other Devonian and Carboniferous crustaceans from around the world also suggests that it is distinct, but morphologically similar to a grouping that includes *Chaocaris*, *Tylocaris*, *Fujianocaris*, *Pseudogalatea* and *Teallicaris*.’ (Clark, Neil D. L., Gillespie, Rollo, Morris, Sam F., Clayton, Geoffrey, 2007).

Again, according to Jenkins, fossils of *Malacostraca* are rare, particularly of forms older than the Mesozoic (started 250 million years ago). This makes these Palaeozoic (Pre-Mesozoic) specimens a special discovery

Originally both the crustacean fossils collected from Mitcheldean, and the Great Doward were thought to represent a species of *Teallicaris*. On comparison with other Carboniferous crustaceans however, it is now suggested that this material belongs to both a new genus and species. This new species has been named *Schramocaris gilljonesorum* gen. et sp. Nov (Latin abbreviation for new genus and species) and appears to exhibit more similarities to previously described crustacean; *Teallicaris*.



The entire collection of fifteen samples were donated to us by Rollo Gillespie and the Earth Heritage Trust and are now part of our paleontological and geological collection in our natural sciences store.

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## Independent Museums around the County

A full list of the many independent Museums in Herefordshire can be found on our website. Many of these smaller museums only open for the summer season from around Easter to the autumn half-term. Most rely heavily on volunteers and community support and all really love having visitors. These are some of our favourites opening soon. Why not a plan a visit over the summer months?

### **Hereford: St John Medieval Museum, Chapel and Coningsby Hospital, Hereford**

Open April to October

**Kington Museum** Mill Street, Kington, HR5 3AL 01544 231748

Open 26 March to end September

**Ledbury: Butcher Row House Museum**, Church Lane, Ledbury, HR8 1DW

Open 26 March to 20 November

**Ledbury 16th Century Painted Room**, Church Street, Ledbury, HR8 1PL 01531 632306

Open March to end October

**Leominster Museum** Etnam Street, Leominster, HR6 8AL 01568 615186

Open 30 March to 2 November

**Much Marcle: Hellens**, Much Marcle, Herefordshire, HR8 2LY

Open 1 April to 15 October 2024

**Presteigne: Sidney Nolan Trust, the Rodd, Presteigne, LD8 2LL**

Open 23 March to 28 September

**Wormelow: The Violette Szabo GC Museum, Wormelow, HR2 8HN 01981 540477**

April to October, Wednesdays only

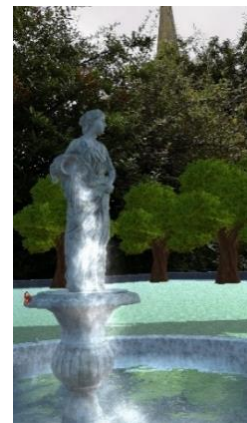
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## Museum Without Walls (MWW) in Ross on Wye

On different lines, and not based on physical artefacts, the Museum without Walls (MWW) project to “rebuild” vanished parts of Ross on Wye in augmented reality is a project started in 2019 and is still growing. Developed by createRoss, they and HMSSG committee member Ian Lewis continue to manage and develop it. Through a phone or tablet app, parts of the past can be seen and brought to life again in today’s Ross on Wye.



Exhibits include the fountain which stood in the Prospect during the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the rood screen in the church, Underhill in the Market Place, the High Street before Wilton Road was built, boats from the eighteenth century Wye Tour, and more all in their original locations.



This year the team have added the Plague Pit in the churchyard where 315 townsfolk were buried in 1637; and the Millpond, which occupied King’s Acre near Morrison’s car park, and there are plans for three more, bringing the museum to twelve locations in all.



All you need is a smartphone or tablet capable of augmented reality and the MWW app. Links to the app stores are on the Museum web site, where you can also read more about the locations and their history ([www.museumwithoutwalls.uk/get-the-app](http://www.museumwithoutwalls.uk/get-the-app))



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## The New Rotherwas Angel



On 8 March 2024, the Rotherwas Angel was officially unveiled. A sculpture honouring wartime munition workers in Herefordshire, this 2m tall (6.5ft) Rotherwas Angel now has a permanent home at the former site of the Royal Ordnance Factory (ROF) in Rotherwas, Hereford. The sculpture was created by art students in the city and commissioned by Hereford City Council in 2019 and should stand as a permanent memorial for local people whose family worked in munition production. Before moving to this permanent home, the sculpture stood in Hereford's skate park for a year. It was then donated to the history group Rotherwas Together but Covid-19 delayed plans for a permanent home so it was put in storage at the Hereford Archives and Records Centre (HARC). The Rotherwas factory in Hereford was one of Europe's biggest explosive-filling sites during World War One.



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## Hereford Library

Hereford Library will be moving out of the MRLC in summer 2024 to another city centre location. This will be larger than the current facility and will be open until the library moves to its permanent new home in the Shire Hall in 2026. An announcement from Herefordshire Council providing further details is expected in April/ May 2024.

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## 'A variety of Cultures' – Cider Museum, Hereford - Ends 9 April 2024.

Don't miss this exploration of the Apple World.

'An unmissable event'. *Country Life magazine*

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# ABOUT US AT HMSSG

HMSSG was formed in 2015 with the aim of supporting the Herefordshire Museum Service to continue to provide museums in Herefordshire so that the wonderful County Collections can be enjoyed by everyone. If you would like to support us please become a member. Membership is £10 individual and £15 joint; pick up a membership leaflet at one of the museum venues or email [membership@herefordmuseumsupport.org.uk](mailto:membership@herefordmuseumsupport.org.uk). We are a Registered Membership Charity and work to support and develop Herefordshire Museum Service, which comprises the County's History and Art Collections held in trust for Herefordshire's people; the Museum and Art Gallery in Broad Street; the Museum Resource and Learning Centre in Friars Street where the collections are stored; the Black and White House Museum in High Town; and the professional staff team.

Our trustees are committed to the need for HMSSG to support the Museum and Art Gallery Service run in an effective and efficient manner suited to the conditions of the twenty-first century. Current trustees are Jane Adams (Chair), Christy Bolderson (Treasurer), Jacqueline Addis and Denise North. All the trustees are also members of our Committee, alongside Chris Bucknell, Ian Lewis and Kate Seekings.

We are always seeking more people to help with administration, newsletter, events and social media so please, regardless of your skills, get in touch if you have any spare time to share in this rewarding activity: most tasks can be done from home at a time to suit. If you are interested, please contact any of us at [herefordshiremuseumsupport.org.uk](http://herefordshiremuseumsupport.org.uk).

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Produced by Kate Seekings for HMSSG, March 2024

With contributions from Jane Adams, Ian Lewis, Ben Moule, Denise North, Kate Seekings



Herefordshire **Museum**  
Service **Support** Group