

Curator's Report 26th January 2022

Building and Grounds

Thanks to Robbie Taylor for securing shelving for use in the office and back corridor.

The recent adjustments to the external vents have made the library and store much more pleasant places to work over these winter months.

Collections

The Wildcat from the former Wildcat Stores (RS McColls) has been donated to the museum as the shop is undergoing a refit and there was no space for it. We are pleased to have this in our collection and are considering a suitable place to display it.

A large number of books have been disposed of from our library collection as they were duplicates or because they have no local relevance and do not fit with our collecting policy. A list is appended to this report.

Over the winter months we have caught up on a small accessions backlog, created some space in the store for new objects, and made storage bags for recently acquired textiles. Priorities for the next few weeks include cleaning and auditing the library as well as tackling the large archive backlog.

I am in contact with a number of other museums about the issues around migrating our documentation system to Axiell. The costs are high for small museums and MGS seems to be taking up the baton of providing support and advocacy on this. I have approached Axiell for a quote, but suggest we do not make a move until we know more about other museums' experiences.

As well as helping with cleaning and collections work, Rachael has been doing a great job putting together Facebook posts about items in our collection.

Interpretation and Displays

I am chasing an electrician to repair the electrical fault in one of the vitrines in the lower gallery.

I am also chasing David Fingland (Service Graphics) about the top of the fishing panel from the outdoor museum, which needs to be recovered.

We have been advised that the design for the plinth at Chapel of Sand will require too much disturbance of the ground so Roy will design an alternative. There are still issues with freeing up the funds for this work.

We have spent three weeks cleaning the displays and have made minor changes to the Walk Through Time Gallery.

Education and Training

I have attended the following training and professional development event since the last board meeting:

Folklore and Intangible Cultural Heritage in Scotland (MGS)

I made a presentation to the HES organised Scotland's Community Heritage Conversations #10: Cool Yule: Celebration and Traditions on New Year Traditions in Gairloch – and won a box of shortbread!

I continue to attend the Museums Heritage Highland organised Heritage Cafes on behalf of the Museum.

Events and Outreach

Our application for a two day per week events was successful and we are currently recruiting to that post.

Foundation Apprenticeship students from Gairloch Highland School have visited the museum to work on their Digital Creative Media studies. Mark is in regular contact with the students and their tutor.

The stories exhibition project we had hoped to establish with MHH (Highland Storybooth) has not come to fruition and we are looking to other ideas for the MGS stories grant, possibly with some match funding from the money donated through Mark Feeny.

MHH have obtained funding from Art Fund for an online learning hub for a digital learning hub for students and teachers to connect with Highland Museum Collections. We will be part of this project.

Projects

The Trustees of Commun Gàidhlig Inbhir-nis and Urras an Eilein are working on content for the interpretation panel and a design for the plinth in the burial ground. Doug Miles has supplied the necessary application forms which he will submit to Highland Council when completed.

We are in contact with the Travel in Time project (Estelle Slegers Helsen) and Aultbea Stories projects about how we can work together and how the museum can help with their projects.

I am in discussions with some of the other Highland Museums about a joint funding application to BnG for a Gaelic Development Officer.

Misc

Gairloch High School are looking for a volunteer to interview students to give them experience of this sort of thing.

Karen Buchanan (Curator)