



**The Bill Douglas**  
**CINEMA**  
**MUSEUM**

**The Bill Douglas Cinema Museum Annual Report 2015-16**

This report is submitted by the Board of the Museum to the trustee of The Exeter University Foundation. May 2016.

**Introduction by Chair of the Board**

*I was delighted to be approached and asked to Chair the Museum Board and since my appointment, earlier this year, I have had the opportunity to meet many of those involved with the museum including the very generous donor Peter Jewell. I have been particularly struck by the level of enthusiasm and commitment of all those I have met and the significant achievements of the museum during the year. The Board is determined to ensure the development of the museum both as an important part of the academic life of the University and also as an attractive visitor centre for the public.*

Signed .....

*Patrick Swaffer*

P Swaffer

Date .....

*18<sup>th</sup> May 2016*

## **Executive Summary**

During this year the Museum has moved to a new, simplified governance structure approved by VCEG and Council in 2015. This document forms part of the updated procedure for reporting to the Foundation (see item 3). As part of the new structure we welcome our new independent Chair of the Board, Patrick Swaffer.

The Museum was invited to re-apply for Accreditation in February 2015. One of our key aims (item 9) is to maintain Accredited status and significant activity for this has included the preparation of updated Forward Plan and new Mission, Constitution and Governance and Collections Development plans for submission in August 2015.

Regarding annual progress and achievements, we are maintaining our financial resources and are pleased that the Curatorial Assistant role has returned to a full time post (item 2 refers). There have also been a number of significant additions to the collection, including world-renowned collector Ralph Hyde's research on the Panorama. In addition, the Curator has also continued to review the collection for duplication and has contributed materials to several significant exhibitions over the last year (item 4). The Museum aims to increase its contribution to research and has been involved in research projects totalling over £1 million of research income for the University. Equally, the Curator has been able to diversify teaching and learning opportunities with academic colleagues and the Museum was included in the MOOC on British Empires, which has run on several successive occasions (item 6.2). Item 6.7 demonstrates the importance of extra-curricular volunteer opportunities provided by the Museum for students, highlighting some of the careers that past volunteers have progressed to. Many, but not all, of the volunteers are drawn from the taught students who encounter the collections. Finally, statistics for consultation and use of the collections remain at a steady high level and the number of visitors to the museum has increased.

We request that the University Foundation accepts this annual report, as signed, above, by the Chair of the Board.

**C Faunch**  
**Head of Heritage Collections**

**4 May 2016**

## Introduction

This annual report to the Exeter University Foundation provides headlines on progress over the last year in the significant areas of activity for the museum based around its key aims outlined in the Forward Plan 2012. This plan will be replaced this year by the Forward Plan 2016, which is in the process of approval by the museum's Board, the Vice-Chancellor's Executive Group and the University Council. New aims building on the achievements since the last Forward Plan will be agreed. The new Forward Plan will then be submitted to Arts Council England in August as part of the museum's accreditation renewal.

The report was approved by the board at the special board meeting on 4 May 2016. (Minute 5:3)

## Overview

### 1. *Mission*

**Key aim: The museum is a University-wide resource and we aim to make sure that we benefit everyone within the university and fulfil the function of being an important bridge between the University and the community.**

- 1.1 An updated Forward Plan, including a revised vision and mission statement has been drafted and sent to the museum's board for approval.
- 1.2 New Mission, Constitution and Governance and Collections Development Policies have been drafted and sent to the board for approval prior to accreditation renewal.

### 2. *Resource*

**Key aim: To keep building the resources available for the museum to deliver its forward plan.**

- 2.1 The museum's operating budget for 2015-16 has remained at just over £6000 per year.
- 2.2 We have continued to receive revenue from Adam Matthew Digital in royalties from the Optical Entertainments and the advent of film publication. A new edition last year boosted sales once more and we received a further sum of £6491 in academic year 2015/16.
- 2.3 After 2 years in which his time has been split between the museum and the Devon and Exeter Institution, the Curatorial Assistant, Mike Rickard, returned to the museum full-time in early February. There is now once more 2 full-time equivalent staff at the museum.

### 3. Governance

**Key aim: The museum has a governance structure that can support its aims and meet national museum standards for Accreditation.**

3.1 The new governance structure was agreed by the Museum advisory board in May last year and approved by the Vice-Chancellor's executive Group and Council. The trustees of the Exeter University Foundation stood down at their meeting on 31 July 2015, with the University becoming a single corporate trustee. A new Board with an independent chair and the responsibilities for disbursement of the investment fund formerly held by the Foundation has been established. The new arrangements came into operation in for the new academic year.

3.2 Patrick Swaffer, the President of the British Board of Film Classification, who is also a lawyer and an Exeter alumnus, has kindly taken on the post of independent chair of the new Bill Douglas Cinema Museum board for a term of three years. The first meeting of the new Board took place in February 2016.

### 4. The Collection

**Key aim: Our aim is for the collection to be recognised as one of the most important resources of its type in the world.**

4.1 This year has seen a number of notable acquisitions that enhance the strengths of the collections and have significant teaching and research value. These include:

- The Ralph Hyde Collection of research papers on the Panorama – Ralph was the world expert on this pre-cinema entertainment and we now hold the most significant public collection on the panorama and diorama in the UK. This is a subject of study for English, History, and Art History.
- Editions of the fan magazines *Picturegoer* and *Picture Show* that fill in the gaps in the existing collections. These sources are used extensively in Film Studies, History and English.
- A portfolio of images from the family of German Actor Max Gulstroff whose career spanned 1910s to 1940s. This could be a valuable resource for German and History.

4.2 Following the disposal of 300 duplicate books to Plymouth University, a further 80 duplicate books from the collection were passed on to Arts University Bournemouth.

4.3 Use of the museum's website and catalogue has increased, with pageviews, users and sessions all indicating a significant rise by August compared to the previous academic year. Details can be found in the table below.

4.4 We have loaned material this year to:

- Imperial War Museum for their 2016-17 exhibition, *Real to Reel: A Century of War Movies*, including the Moy-Bastie camera used by WW1 filmmaker J.B McDowell.
- Torquay Museum for their summer exhibition on cats, following on from the loan to their Science-Fiction exhibition last year which was seen by over 13,000 people.
- London Transport Museum for the exhibition *London by Night*
- Ilfracombe Museum for an exhibition to promote the Ilfracombe Film Festival on moving images and the sea.

## 5. Research

**Key aim: To maximise the potential for research income in a wide range of disciplines and to fully utilise the museum's potential value to the academic impact agenda, both through virtual means and as a physical showcase.**

5.1 Funded research projects which have used the museum's resources for research and impact outcomes have included:

- Dr Joe Kember (Film/English) .European JPI Heritage scheme funded project entitled 'A Million Pictures: Magic Lantern Slide Heritage as Artefacts in the Common European History of Learning'. Total project funding €750,000 Exeter and European partner institutions in consortium.
- Dr David Thackeray et al (History). AHRC network 'Imagining Markets: British Trade and Empire'. Total Project funding £35,000
- Dr Danielle Hipkins (Italian). AHRC 'In Search of Italian Cinema Audiences in the 1940s and 1950s. Total Project Funding £690,000 (Exeter/Bristol/Oxford Brookes).
- Dr Helen Hanson (Film/English).British Academy/Leverhulme.'Hollywood Soundscapes: Film Sound Style/Craft and Production 1931-1948'. Total Project Funding £9,995.

In addition books drawing extensively on the collections will be published by Exeter academics this year. Dr Lisa Stead's study *Going to the Pictures* will be published by Edinburgh University Press and Dr Helen Hanson's book *Hollywood Soundscapes* is being published by BFI/Palgrave MacMillan

5.2 The Bill Douglas and Peter Jewell Trust have generously donated funds to pay for a student internship to catalogue the working papers of Bill Douglas that have already been donated to the museum. Arielle Woods, a second year English undergraduate was appointed and is currently undertaking this work. Bill Douglas's archive will be a valuable research resource for film scholars around the world.

- 5.3 Funds from the University's impact fund paid for 'Object Stories', a project last summer in which student intern Mini Warren filmed three academics from Film Studies talking about their research using the museum's collections. The films were used to launch the museum's YouTube channel and there have been well over 1000 views thus far.
- 5.4 The museum is represented at the Doctoral Training Partnership open day and the first doctoral partnership student whose project significantly uses the collections has begun his study.
- 5.5 The Curator has given talks about the collection to students at Falmouth, Bristol and Arts University Bournemouth, leading to research visits. He also spoke about the museum at the European Network of Media Studies conference in Poland last summer.

## 6. *Teaching and the Student Experience*

**Key aim: To continue to increase learning and teaching opportunities using the collection. This will be achieved both through intensive engagement with students within the curriculum and by addressing the University's employability and cultural agendas. Virtual access will enable us also to pursue learning and teaching opportunities with other students from around the world.**

- 6.1 The numbers of students, sessions and objects used in classes using the museum collections continue to be very high, although there is a slight reduction on the extremely high peak of 2014-15. Over the last 5 years the numbers of seminars using materials have increased threefold. Details can be found in the statistics below. A wide range of subjects used material for teaching including Film Studies, English, History, Drama, Sociology, Art History and Visual Culture and Liberal Arts and the collection was used for both undergraduate and postgraduate teaching.
- 6.2 The MOOC (Massive open online course) on the British Empires, featuring artefacts and film excerpts from the museum has now run three times with a total of 18,000 registrations and 34% of those starting the course completing it, high for an online course. Further repeat runs are planned this year.
- 6.3 The MA in International Film Business ran for the second time in the Autumn. This is a premium fee course in which the museum plays a key role and in which Film Studies and the Business School are also involved, in collaboration with the London Film School. As last year the final week assessment of the Exeter half of the course was a curated pop-up cinema event which was held in the museum's lower gallery.
- 6.4 The Curator's 3<sup>rd</sup> year module, British Screens, which is based entirely in the museum, ran for a third time in autumn term 2015. The students again curated

exhibitions as part of their assessments, which are on display in the foyer of the Old Library and the course received an accelerate mark of 4.55.

- 6.5 Tours of the museum were provided for both pre-offer open days in June and September and for offer holding candidates in Film, Film combined honours and Art History and Visual Culture in February and March. We also provided tours for Kenyon College, the University's longstanding US partner, Jedan University in China and the University of Bangalore.
- 6.6 In September the production company Train of Thought visited to film a DVD about the museum and its holdings which will be marketed to 6<sup>th</sup> forms and FE Colleges studying film. Academics were filmed talking about the artefacts. The DVD will be useful in making potential students aware of the museum and the value it gives to studying at Exeter and hopefully will encourage student recruitment.
- 6.7 The museum continues to have a full and vibrant volunteer body of students who make a vital contribution in many areas. Many students have gone on to obtain excellent jobs in heritage and culture, aided by their experience with us. Just a few recent examples include:
- Amy Hubbard (2014) is now working for our partners at Adam Matthew Digital
  - Olivia Luder (2014) is on the BBC Graduate Trainee Scheme
  - Emily Vine (2014-15 MA) gained a PHD place on a collaborative scheme between Queen Mary College, London and the Geffrye Museum
  - Zoe Wolstenholme (2013) is working as a curator at the Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew
  - Hannah Lamarque (2013) blogs for the Huffington Post, after running social media for the museum.

## 7. *Branding and Marketing*

**Key aim: To raise the profile of The Bill Douglas Centre with both the public and opinion formers**

- 7.1 We now have over 800 Facebook likes and Twitter followers.
- 7.2 New wayfinding signage has been installed throughout the museum and entrances to the Old Library.
- 7.3 2017 will see the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the official opening of the museum and work is beginning on considering promotional events and activities that could mark this occasion.

## 8. *Community Engagement*

**Key Aim: To continue to be a vibrant attraction for the community and to visitors to the area and to continually improve the experience for both physical and virtual visitors to the centre.**

- 8.1 Visitor figures have continued to rise in 2015-16 following on from increases in the previous academic years. We installed a people counter in January which should provide more accurate data than was available previously and indeed indicates that figures had been underestimated in the past. Visitor numbers have in any case more than doubled since 2009. There have been issues with parking in recent months that have proved problematic for visitors.
- 8.2 Events included a magic lantern show in December with 65 people attending. The Curator spoke about the collections at the Unveil'd Photography Festival held in the City in September.
- 8.3 The museum was involved in the revived Animated Exeter Festival in February, curating 2 displays at Exeter Phoenix and Exeter College and hosting a public lecture.
- 8.4 A wide range of local groups have visited the museum. We are undertaking work to produce a new teacher's guide and have had collaborative meetings with the Northcott Theatre to encourage more school visits to the museum following changes to the national curriculum.
- 8.5 The museum worked extensively with the 1<sup>st</sup> Ilfracombe Film Festival, which proved very successful. The principal donor spoke about the collections at a gala event to launch the festival and we provided a display in the town's museum as well as advising this community initiative.
- 8.8 We are working with the new Head of the Exeter Cultural Partnership, Martin Thomas, and have links to other arts organisations in Exeter.

#### *9. Stewardship*

**Key Aim: To maintain and improve standards of stewardship and ensure that we retain our accredited museum status.**

- 9.1 We have received an invitation for accreditation renewal, which requires submission in August. Accreditation shows that the museum is being run to a high standard and is required for any designation application and for funding bids.
- 9.2 The upper gallery, and around half of the lower gallery of the museum have now been completely redisplayed with less cluttered exhibits and clearer and more attractive labelling, thanks to the work of graduate volunteer Alice Clements.



9.3 CCTV and people counters have been installed in the lower gallery, funded through our Adam Matthew royalties. This will improve security and capture accurate visitor data.

9.4 We continue to explore creative solutions on space, which remains a problem for the museum.

#### STATISTICS By Academic Year

	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12	2012-13	2013-14	2014-15	2015-16 (to 28/04/16)
Number of BDC items consulted by researchers	2152	2113	1775	1767	1956	2745	2444
Number of researchers looking at BDC Material	260	267	276	322	273	262	226
Number of BDC Seminars	37	46	63	55	103	159	132
Number of students attending BDC Seminars	532	705	1072	869	1723	2451	1962
Number of BDC items used in seminars	854	1219	1414	1493	2479	4562	3929
Number of Visitors to Galleries	1269	1927	2188	2550	3163	3302	3682 <sup>^</sup>
Number of outreach events/tours to public	32	52	58	73	49	69	41
Number of people attending outreach events/tours to public	572	550	1455	1968	1341	1122 (+over 100,000 at Central Library)	975

Number of Collection enquiries	132	168	207	204	210 (Est)	230 *(est)	180 (est)
Number of website users	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	27, 534	26,777
Number of Website sessions	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	32, 583	32,199
Number of Website Pageviews	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	116,716	101, 081

^ Note:

In the middle of January we acquired a people counter to track visitors coming in to the lower gallery of the museum. Previously our figures had relied on whom the Curatorial assistant and I had seen in the galleries. For the 2016 figures so far included in this table I am taking the monthly figure from the people counter data and subtracting an average of ten per day of the month (ie in a 30 day month I will subtract 300 from the monthly figure to cover entrances from me, the curatorial assistant, other staff, volunteers etc). This does still indicate that figures had previously been underestimated as they are higher than before, even though the counter is only in the lower gallery and would not capture those who only look at the exhibitions upstairs.