

Welcome to NMDC's monthly news update...

In this issue:

- [New Coalition Government - Ministers and Priorities](#)
- [DCMS budget cut by £61m, with 3% cut for national museums](#)
- [The Big Arts Give - challenge fund to match public donations](#)
- [£4 million for Welsh libraries, museums and archives](#)
- [British Museum appoints first "volunteer Wikipedian in residence"](#)

and much more...

NEW COALITION GOVERNMENT: MINISTERS AND PRIORITIES

New DCMS Ministers - museums split from heritage

At the **Department for Culture, Media and Sport** (DCMS) roles and responsibilities for the four new DCMS Ministers (all Conservative MPs) have now been confirmed, with culture and heritage now split between two different Ministers. The Secretary of State's title has been expanded to include the Olympics, but the Department's name remains unchanged:

- **The Rt Hon Jeremy Hunt MP** is the new **Secretary of State for Culture, Olympics, Media and Sport**, with oversight over all areas of the Department's activity. He has been MP for South West Surrey since 2005, and was formerly Shadow Culture Secretary (2007-2010) and Shadow Minister for Disabled People (2005 - 2007). Before his election as an MP, Mr Hunt ran his own educational publishing business, Hotcourses. He also set up a charity to help AIDS orphans in Africa in which he continues to play an active role;
- **Ed Vaizey MP** is **Minister for Culture, Communications and Creative Industries** and also a Minister at the Department for Business, Innovation and Skills (BIS). He is based at DCMS where he has responsibility for museums and galleries, arts, creative industries, libraries, archives, media, telecoms and broadband and digital switchover. He has been MP for Wantage and Didcot since May 2005 and was Shadow Culture and Creative Industries Minister from 2006. Before becoming an MP he was director of a public relations company and a political speech writer; he has also trained and practised as a barrister;
- **John Penrose MP** is **Minister for Tourism and Heritage**, with responsibility for the national lottery, Royal Parks, licensing, gambling and horseracing, as well as tourism, heritage and the built environment. He has been MP for Weston-super-Mare since 2005, and was Shadow Business Minister 2009-2010, and Joint Chairman of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Further Education & Lifelong Learning. Before being elected to Parliament, he worked in publishing, management consulting and banking and was Chair of Logotron Ltd, a small independent company creating educational software for schools;
- **Hugh Robertson MP** is **Minister for Sport and the Olympics**. He has been MP for Faversham and Mid Kent since 2001, and was Shadow Minister for Sport and the Olympics from 2005-2010. He was an army officer from 1985 – 1995, and saw active service in Northern Ireland, the Gulf war and in Bosnia during the siege of Sarajevo. He then joined the investment arm of Schrodgers. [DCMS website](#)

Elsewhere in Government, the **Rt Hon Michael Gove MP** is the **Secretary of State for Education**, in the newly renamed Department for Education (DfE), where **Nick Gipp MP** becomes Minister of State for Schools and Liberal Democrat **Sarah Teather MP** becomes Minister of State for Children and Families. **The Rt Hon Caroline Spelman MP** becomes the new **Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs**, and chose the **Natural History Museum** as the venue to make her first announcement of the policy priorities for her Department on 20 May.

Deficit reduction - £61m from DCMS budget and 3% cut in museum budgets this year

The Coalition Agreement published on 20 May includes a commitment to "maintain free entry to national museums and galleries, and [to] give national museums greater freedoms" but the Government makes clear that, although "a vibrant cultural, media and sporting sector is crucial for our well-being and quality of life", "the deficit reduction programme takes precedence over any of the other measures in this agreement". As part of this overriding priority, the Government announced on 24 May that DCMS's budget has been cut by £61 million in the current year, with an additional £27m being shaved from the Olympics budget.

All DCMS public bodies, including the national museums which the Department sponsors, have budget cuts of 3% in the financial year 2010/11. By way of illustration, this equates to a £1.8m cut for the British Museum and £1.5m for the National Museum of Science and Industry. In addition, Arts Council England is losing an additional £5m on top of the 3% cut and £4m reduction announced previously, bringing its total budget reduction this year to £24m, 5% of its budget. The Department's statement says "we are discussing with ACE the use of historic reserves that it has been hitherto unable to access, which may allow extra spending this year to mitigate the overall reduction to the arts sector."

Culture Secretary Jeremy Hunt MP said that he had asked DCMS bodies to make these savings while protecting frontline services wherever possible. The Museums, Libraries and Archives Council issued a statement on 28 May setting out its plans to achieve the 3% cut, including cutting 2.4% from Renaissance Hubs, reducing budgets for discretionary new projects and activities, back-of-house savings, and further attention to administrative costs.

Across Government, the cuts include a £670m cut from the Department for Education budget this year, and £780m from Communities and Local Government.

[DCMS statement](#) [Arts Council Statement](#) [Programme for Government](#)

DCMS priorities: philanthropy, free admission, arms-length approach

Jeremy Hunt MP, gave his first key note speech on 19 May at The Roundhouse, North London and outlined the three main principles that would underpin his future policy:

- A mixed economy of public and private support for the arts, with stronger incentives to promote philanthropy.
- Access to high quality arts for as many people as possible, through continued free admission to national museums and galleries and continued education programmes.
- A reaffirmation of the arm's length principle, with no politicisation of funding decisions.

Mr Hunt said that "it should be simpler and easier to give, and for cultural bodies to thank and recognise their donors in an appropriate manner." In particular, he proposes to make private giving easier by:

- Reforming Gift Aid
- Building on the successful Acceptance-in-lieu Scheme to make it possible for donors to give works of art to the nation during their lifetimes
- Rewarding high-performing arts organisations through longer-term funding deals (of five years or more), so reassuring sponsors and donors that their support would complement public investment. Longer funding agreements would be "in return for coming forward with even more ambitious fundraising programmes."

Mr Hunt reported that work had begun on a major project to look at how Government can better help cultural organisations to tap into other sources of funding, and said he had written to the country's top 200 cultural donors to thank them for what they had done and ask for their advice as to how the Government can nurture more giving: "Not as a replacement to public funding, but as an additional pillar of support." Mr Hunt described this as a "twenty year strategy to open up new streams of funding and change the culture of giving in this country." [Full speech](#)

Increased share of lottery funding for arts and heritage from next April

In the same speech on 19 May, Mr Hunt also gave details of plans to change the share of lottery funding going to arts, heritage and sport from next year. He also proposes to change the Big Lottery Fund's remit to focus its support exclusively on the voluntary and community sectors. At present, sports, arts and heritage receive a 16.66% share each of lottery funding, with the Big Lottery Fund receiving the remaining 50%. From 1 April 2011, the Big Lottery Fund's share will be reduced to 46%, which reflects the proportion of the Big Lottery Fund's funding that went to the voluntary and communities sector in the most recent year. The Big Lottery Fund's share would then move to 40% in 2012-13, when diversion of funds to the Olympics ends. Shares for arts, sport and heritage would rise to 18% in 2011-12 and then 20% in 2012-13. DCMS has launched a three-month consultation on the changes. The Parliamentary Order effecting these changes is then expected to be placed before Parliament in September. [DCMS consultation](#)

Queen's Speech includes measures with potential impact on cultural organisations

Public Services (Reform) Bill gives Ministers new powers to abolish public bodies

The Queen's Speech on 25 May included a new Public Services (Reform) Bill, the main elements of which, according to a subsequent Government statement, are:

- The establishment of greater accountability, transparency and efficiency in Government by reducing the number and cost of public bodies (or "quangos")
- New powers for Ministers to abolish, merge or transfer "quangos" back into Departments: "as at 31 March 2009, there were 766 non-departmental public bodies", says the statement, "spending over £46 billion a year and employing over 110,000 people."
- Review of the functions of all public bodies every three years, as opposed to the current practice of every five years. The review will comprise a test: "Is the function technical; does it need to be politically impartial; and do facts need to be determined transparently?" [Number 10 website](#)

Decentralisation and Localism Bill includes Olympic legacy

This Bill, also announced in The Queen's Speech on 25 May, aims to "devolve greater powers to councils and neighbourhoods and give local communities control over housing and planning decisions. The main elements include:

- Form plans to deliver a genuine and lasting Olympic legacy.
- Require public bodies to publish online the job titles of every member of staff and the salaries and expenses of senior officials.
- New powers to help save local facilities and services threatened with closure, and give communities the right to bid to take over local state-run services.
- Give residents the power to instigate local referendums on any local issue and the power to veto excessive council tax increases.
- Create Local Enterprise Partnerships (to replace Regional Development Agencies) – joint local authority-business bodies brought forward by local authorities to promote local economic development. [Number 10 website](#)

Comments on new Government's cultural policy

National museum directors were among those quoted in the *Guardian's* survey of leading arts figures' reaction to the new Government's arts strategy. **John Leighton, Director of National Galleries of Scotland** noted that "it is public subsidy that unlocks private support, and the whole-hearted commitment of government has been essential to attracting this extra investment". He also called for support for continued commitment to support Renaissance in the Regions. **Sandy Nairne, Director of the National Portrait Gallery** expressed a hope that the "new government can fully recognise the huge positive economic and educational impact of our work", and said he would also like to see "efforts going into the Cultural Olympiad and festival around 2012 extended beyond the Games to give us major cultural development towards 2020." [Guardian](#)

Former Conservative advisor urges museums to think radical

Dr Bendor Grosvenor, Director of Philip Mould Ltd and former advisor to the Conservative Party on the arts and museums, has written a comment piece for *The Art Newspaper*, advising museums: "Don't panic, be stoical and think radical". He identifies scope for savings including cutting cost of transporting of works of art on loan, neighbouring museums merging back offices and security staff and also asks "can we any longer avoid deaccessioning, if acquisition funds are now empty and museums have to fund acres of storage for third-rate pictures." [The Art Newspaper](#)

Also, responding in the *Independent* to Mr Hunt's inaugural speech, columnist David Lister suggested a new hotel tourist tax to help fund national museums. [The Independent](#)

...and a new DCMS website

Following the election of the new Government, DCMS has a new website: the front page now includes a Twitter feed, photos from Flickr, YouTube videos of Ministers and a news stream including references to exhibitions at national museums. The specific museums section includes charts showing visitor figures and school visits, and a summary of museum education activities, with direct links to the learning sections of national museum websites.

Much of the content of the old site has been temporarily removed for review and that which remains has been amended to reflect the change of government. A pre-election version of the old site has been saved and can be viewed via the UK government web archive, on The National Archives website. www.culture.gov.uk [Archived DCMS site](#)

[MLA](#), [English Heritage](#), and [Collections Link](#) have also unveiled new websites in the past few weeks.

MUSEUM SECTOR NEWS

The Big Arts Give - challenge fund to match online public donations

Arts & Business has launched The Big Arts Give, a new challenge fund scheme to help arts organisations build and develop the income they receive via individual giving. This scheme, which has been devised with philanthropist Alec Reed and The Big Give, aims to see £3million donated to the arts by Christmas. An initial challenge fund of £500,000 will be used to encourage a further £2.5million from existing networks and the public. There will be an online 'challenge' starting in early December promoting arts projects and organisations for the public to support. Applications to join the scheme may be made up until 9 July. [Arts & Business](#)

Art Fund Prize short list revealed

The four museums on the shortlist for the £100,000 Art Fund Prize are:

- Ashmolean Museum, Oxford
- Ulster Museum, Belfast
- Blists Hill Victorian Town, Ironbridge
- The Herbert Art Gallery and Museum, Coventry

The winner will be announced on 30 June 2010. [The Art Fund](#)

£4 million for Welsh libraries, museums and archives

The Welsh Minister for Heritage, Alun Ffred Jones AM, has announced an investment package of over £4m to develop the work of libraries, museums and archives. Around £400,000 of this is to provide grants and support funding for local museums across Wales. This includes over £100,000 in grants as part of the Sharing Treasures initiative to enable local museums to display items from Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museum Wales.

One of the major capital projects is the redevelopment of a Grade II listed Baptist Chapel to provide a new library alongside a Customer First information centre and a space for worship. [Welsh Assembly Government](#)

Museum Development Officers deliver significant benefits

MLA has published a review of Museum Development Officers and the Museum Development function, by the consultants Jura. The report reveals consensus that museum development activity is delivering a significant benefit to small local authority, independent and voluntary museums. However, Jura recommend that greater strategic direction and the alignment of museum development activity with Renaissance priorities and Government agendas would maximise the benefits of the funding invested and strengthen the approach taken to museum development. They also recommend that Museum Development Fund should be re-designated as a Challenge Fund, and that the small grants schemes managed and distributed by Museum Development Officers in the regions should be phased out.

The majority of museum development activity is funded through Renaissance, either directly or indirectly. MLA will draw upon the Jura work and its recommendations in making future detailed proposals for the future delivery of Renaissance. [MLA website](#)

Museums in China networking event and tour

As part of the *China-UK: Connections through Culture* programme, the British Council will be running a networking event and study tour in China from 27 October to 6 November 2010 and is inviting applications from museums in the UK. Ten places are available: applicants need to demonstrate an interest in working in China, but do not need to have existing contacts.

China-UK: Connections through Culture is a joint initiative between the Department for Culture, Media and Sport and the British Council with support from the Scottish Government and Welsh Assembly Government. It aims to build lasting relationships between cultural organisations in the UK and China. For an application form email jane.weeks@britishcouncil.org [British Council](#)

British Council funding for cultural partnerships with India

Following the success of its *Connections through Culture: China-UK* programme, the British Council has now developed a similar programme for India. The *Connections through Culture: India-UK* is a three-year programme which aims to foster and support collaborative working between the UK and India in the arts, to generate long term partnerships. Funding of up to £5,000 is available for joint applications demonstrating commitment to developing a specific project or relationship. The deadline for current round of applications is 30 June. [British Council](#)

MLA research on leadership interventions

The MLA is conducting some informal research into the ways in which museum, library and archive services support and promote leadership qualities. They would like to hear from Directors and other senior staff, and are particularly interested in how organisations are identifying the need for leadership development and the ways in which they have responded to this need. This is part of a UK-wide evidence gathering project for the ALMA-UK Joint Forum, which brings together the museums, libraries and archives agencies in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. For more information contact katie.pekacar@mla.gov.uk

Private collector saves Baroque masterpiece for public display

A private collector, has stepped in to save a Baroque masterpiece from export, purchasing the picture for £9.2m and making provision for its regular public display. The Reviewing Committee on the Export of Works of Art and Objects of Cultural Interest (RCEWA) placed an export licence deferral on the painting, Domenichino's *Saint John the Evangelist*, owing to its outstanding aesthetic importance. It had already been sold to an overseas buyer for £9,225,250 at an auction in December 2009. This agreement was made in accordance with the 'Ridley Rules', which can only be applied after it is clear that no UK institution is able to raise sufficient funds to acquire a work. The Ridley Rules then allow for offers from private individuals, who will guarantee public access to the painting for 100 days within a 12-month period. The painting will be on loan to the National Gallery until November 2011. [National Gallery](#)

Jodi Awards 2010 nominations

The Jodi Awards are for the best use of digital technology to widen access to information, collections, learning and creativity for disabled people. Nominations are now being sought for the 2010 awards from museums, libraries, archives and heritage sites in the UK and overseas. The deadline is 13 September.

The UK Jodi Awards will be presented in Edinburgh in December to coincide with a National Archives of Scotland seminar on the problems and possibilities of online historical research by people with disabilities. The International Jodi Award for Overseas (non-UK) countries will be given in Brussels as part of the European Congress on e-inclusion. The deadline for nominations for the international award is 9 August. [Jodi Awards](#)

Also

MLA is inviting individuals or organisations to comment on the proposed revisions to the Accreditation standard via an online consultation. The revised standard will be launched in autumn 2010. [More](#)

Dr Hongnam Kim, former Director of the National Museum of Korea, will be giving a lecture at the V&A on 7 July. She will be exploring the changing role of cultural institutions in Korea and other Asian countries, as they respond to the challenge of demonstrating their value to society in the post colonial era. Tickets for the event are free. [More](#)

JISC Digital Media is running three courses in Bristol in June on digital media and copyright, managing digital collections and an introduction to image metadata. [More](#)

LEARNING

Opening up spaces for adult learning

MLA's new report, *Opening Up Spaces: bringing new people into museums, libraries and archives by supporting self-organised learning groups*, provides thought-provoking case studies of how cultural organisations responded to MLA's challenge fund to support informal adult learning. The MLA grants were a response to the call for more spaces for informal adult learning set out in the previous Government's White Paper, *The Learning Revolution*.

The initiative enabled museums to explore new ways of working – acting as facilitators rather than deliverers of learning, as well as attracting new audiences and building their profile within the community. Many of the members of the self-organised groups have gone on to become volunteers at the organisation that supported them. [MLA website](#)

Training for museum educators, teachers and support workers

MLA is inviting applications for funded placements and places on training courses available for professionals working with children and young people, through the Strategic Commissioning Workforce Skills Development Programme 2010-11.

88 funded placements are available for museum and archive staff who wish to develop their learning offer for schools, children, young people and families; and learning professionals, including teachers, extended school coordinators, educators and support workers, to work in partnership with museums and archives. The closing date for applications is 23 June.

1,000 placement opportunities for trainee teachers in a museum or archive are also available through the Initial Teacher Training (ITT) grants programme. ITT providers can apply in partnership with a museum or archive, with either taking the lead role. The closing date for applications is 25 June.

Over 2,000 funded places will also be available on training courses and other activities provided through the Continuing Professional Development programme offering opportunities to gain further skills, knowledge and experience to enable the cultural sector to deliver quality programmes for children and young people. [MLA website](#)

Learning Outside the Classroom Awards

The third annual Learning Outside the Classroom Awards for Excellence and Innovation have been launched. The Awards recognise the commitment of educational establishments to providing valuable and positive learning experiences for young people (up to 19 years old) beyond the classroom. This year, the judges are looking for nominations which showcase establishments that are working hard to create innovative and inspirational approaches to learning beyond the classroom. The closing date for nominations is 16 July.

[LOtC Award 2010](#)

In Parliament, Bob Russell MP has tabled an Early Day Motion on 25 May noting Ofsted's conclusions that "learning outside the classroom contributes significantly to raising standards" and calling on the Government to ensure all young people are provided with a wide range of quality experiences outside the classroom, including residential visits. [More](#)

CULTURAL SECTOR NEWS

First Minister announces second Homecoming Scotland in 2014

Scotland's First Minister, Alex Salmond MSP, has announced plans for *Homecoming 2014*, a second formal celebration building on last year's Year of Homecoming. *Homecoming Scotland 2009*, funded by the Scottish Government, was the largest collaborative tourism initiative Scotland has ever staged. It sought to deliver additional tourism visits and revenue for Scotland by engaging with and motivating Scotland's people at home and abroad to join a year long celebration of many of Scotland's great contributions to the world. New independent research published last month revealed that *Homecoming Scotland 2009*:

- Generated £53.7 million in additional tourism revenue for Scotland, exceeding the £44 million target by 22%;

- Attracted 95,000 additional visitors to Scotland;
- Generated £154 million of positive global media coverage;
- Inspired 86 international travel companies to develop *Homecoming*-themed products, and led to 53 international operators carrying *Homecoming*-themed promotions;
- Reached 95 million potential visitors across the world through the “I am a Scot” campaign.

[Homecoming Scotland](#) [Scottish Government](#)

Culture and the UK Economy

The *Financial Times* published a special supplement on 25 May which examined the contribution of culture and the creative industries to the UK economy and some of the key strengths of the sector. *Culture and the UK Economy* explored in particular:

Budget cuts

An article on looming funding cuts analysed Jeremy Hunt's first keynote speech, and reported Alan Davey, Chief Executive of Arts Council England's views on the tough choices prompted by the financial situation: "it may be preferable, for instance, to fund one art gallery properly at another's expense, instead of leaving two half-closed."

London

An article previewing the Mayor of London's forthcoming cultural strategy described the scale and strength of the creative industries in London: the creative and media industries in the capital contribute £21bn (\$30bn) to the London economy each year, contributing a sixth of the city's gross value added, and are the second-largest industry in London after financial and business services.

Private giving

In an article on philanthropy, the UK's mixed funding model for the arts is described as “the envy of the world”. Colin Tweedy, chief executive of Arts & Business, says private and public money are inexorably linked, emphasising that any cuts to the public purse will have a detrimental knock-on effect on private investment in the UK. He previews the Big Art Give saying that we need a “big push” to emphasise the national importance of the arts – “something on the scale of Comic Relief. Everyone wants to engage with the arts, and it is one of our greatest success stories.”

Tourism

An article on tourism argues for greater recognition of the tourism industry's contribution to culture and the economy of the UK. The article reports that “the Nation Brands index ranks Britain fourth out of 50 countries in terms of culture. It is ranked the fourth-best for contemporary culture, seventh for its cultural heritage and eighth for sports.” Other figures cited include:

- Inbound visitors are spending £4.5bn a year on culture and heritage;
- Tourism generates £114bn, including £15bn for HM Treasury;
- Leading visitor attractions visitor figures were up by 3.4% last summer and up an average of 11% for the year as a whole.

[Financial Times](#) [Download whole Special Report \(PDF\)](#)

Guidelines for internships and work placement schemes

Skillset, the Sector Skills Council for Creative Media, have published *Guidelines for Employers offering Work Placement Schemes in the Creative Industries*. The guidance, produced in collaboration with Creative & Cultural Skills and Arts Council England, aims to promote good practice and clarify the various entry routes into the creative industries. The guidelines include recommendations on:

- Limiting work experience placements to no more than 160 hours and reimbursing expenses;
- Paying at least the National Minimum Wage for anyone on a graduate internship;
- Limiting the working week of trainees and interns to 40 hours.

[Skillset](#)

HERITAGE

Heritage Lottery Funding for places of worship, town centre and landscapes

Funding announcements from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) over the past month include:

- £7m from the HLF and English Heritage to help restore 68 historic Grade II listed places of worship in England: in total this year, £22.7 million of funding has been made available to 222 of England's Grade I, II* and II listed places of worship;
- £17m from HLF's Landscape Partnership programme for ten projects to help communities look after their landscapes;
- £14m through the Townscape Heritage Initiative to regenerate eleven town centres across the UK. [More](#)

English Heritage consultation on protection of nation's heritage.

English Heritage is running a web-based survey as part of consultation on the National Heritage Protection Plan. This Plan will govern a substantial part of the work that English Heritage undertakes to protect the nation's heritage. It is also intended as a basis for developing a more co-ordinated and collaborative approach to protection on the part of the whole heritage sector. [More](#)

English Heritage's historical archive catalogue online

English Heritage has also published online for the first time the catalogue of more than a million historical photographs and documents relating to England's historic buildings and archaeological sites held by the National Monuments Record (NMR). Until now, these searches had to be done in person at the NMR's public search rooms in Swindon. There are over a million records on the English Heritage Archives website and more than 82,500 images. [English Heritage Archive](#)

Voluntary archaeology has more than doubled since 1987

A new report from the Council for British Archaeology found that 2,030 voluntary groups and societies are active in archaeological heritage throughout the UK, representing approximately 215,000 individuals. This figure indicates that the voluntary archaeology sector has more than doubled since a similar survey was carried out in 1987. [Council for British Archaeology](#)

Also

A new recruitment and advertising agency has been set up focusing on permanent and interim vacancies within the historic houses environment. Historic House Recruitment advertises positions for both the independent sector and other organisations such as English Heritage and The National Trust. www.historichouserecruitment.com

APPOINTMENTS

Director General of the Royal Air Force Museum

Air Vice-Marshal Peter Dye OBE has been appointed Director General of the Royal Air Force Museum with effect from 9th June. Peter Dye is the current Director of Collections and Deputy Director General. He has been Acting Director General since 1st February.

Prior to joining the Museum, Air Vice-Marshal Dye served in the Royal Air Force for over 35 years. He has a degree in aeronautical engineering from Imperial College and was awarded OBE for his achievements in support of the Jaguar Force during the Gulf War. [RAF Museum](#)

Trustee appointments

The Prime Minister has appointed Gareth Thomas as a **Tate** Trustee. He was until this year Retail Director of John Lewis and is a collector of 20th century British art. [More](#)

The Prime Minister has also appointed as Trustees of the **National Maritime Museum** Eleanor Boddington, Senior Solicitor at the Wellcome Trust, and Professor Geoffrey Crossick, who is currently Warden of Goldsmiths College, University of London and will become Vice-Chancellor of the University of London in September. [More](#)

INTERNATIONAL

Fire destroys major collection of snakes and spiders

A fire at a biomedical research centre in San Paulo, Brazil destroyed one of the world's largest scientific collection of dead snakes, spiders and scorpions. The collection at the Instituto Butantan, some of which was over 100 years old, served as the main source for research on many species and comprised approximately 80,000 snake specimens, and an estimated 450,000 spiders and scorpions. The specimens were preserved in flammable liquids, which fed the flames, and the entire collection was lost. [Associated Press](#)

French Parliament votes to return Maori remains

The French Parliament has voted to return the mummified heads of at least fifteen Maori warriors to New Zealand. The heads, taken by Europeans in the 18th and 19th centuries, are currently on display in several museums in France, and their return has been requested since the 1980s. The heads will be sent to the Te Papa museum in the New Zealand capital, Wellington, and then returned to tribal groups to be buried. [BBC News](#)

Ministry of Culture strikes close Acropolis and museums in Athens

Greek Culture Ministry staff held protests at the Acropolis in Athens on 24 May, as the Greek President and the Culture Minister attended the completion of a decade-long restoration of the historic site. The *Art Newspaper* reports that the protestors were workers on short-term contracts, demanding over more than a year's worth of back pay and calling for their temporary positions to be made permanent. The Acropolis and other museums and archaeological sites in Athens were also closed at the beginning of May due to strikes by Culture Ministry staff.

Budget cuts to deal with Greece's deficit have already hit museums. The National Museum of Contemporary Art has had an 18% reduction in the funding it receives from the Ministry of Culture, and is having difficulty finding private sponsorship. The Director, Anna Kafetsi, told the *Art Newspaper*: "There is no money for new acquisitions but we will continue our exhibition schedule with lower productions costs." [The Art Newspaper](#)

Arts Advocacy Day 2010 tops Twitter

More than 550 arts supporters in the United States visited more than 250 Congressional offices on 13 April, with the aim of securing more funding for the country's arts groups, arts workers, and creative industries.

"Arts Advocacy Day" was also marked with the inaugural Tweet Arts Day: an international grassroots effort to bring visibility to the arts and Arts Advocacy Day on Twitter. Organized by students at the Minneapolis College of Art and Design, the hash tag #arts reached the number five spot on Twitter's worldwide trending topic list during the morning of 13 April. [Americans for the Arts](#)

NEWS FROM NMDC MEMBERS

The [Museum of London](#) has opened its new Galleries of Modern London. The £21m redevelopment was supported by £11.5m from the HLF. The galleries focus on London as a world city, tied up with the people, ideas and goods from across the globe and focusing on Londoners who have built the city and have, in turn, been shaped by it. The displays include contemporary film and art commissions, as well as a recreation of a Victorian street, a 1930s Lyons Tea House and a 1920s mini cinema. The Lord Mayor's Coach, a highlight of the collection, is now displayed in a new window visible from the street. [More](#)

The [Natural History Museum](#) has opened the Angela Marmont Centre for UK Biodiversity. The Centre, on the ground floor of the Darwin Centre, is a resource for anyone, amateur or expert, who wants to improve their knowledge of and study British wildlife. It offers an identification and advisory service, a fully equipped visitor space, access to reference collections and a workshop and meeting room facilities. [More](#)

The [National Galleries of Scotland](#) have commissioned sculptor Anthony Gormley's latest project, *6 Times*, consisting of six life-sized figures positioned between the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art and the sea. Four of the figures will be in the Water of Leith itself. It is the first time that a work in the National Galleries' collection has been permanently located across the city of

Edinburgh. [More](#)

The [Royal Air Force Museum](#) has announced its vision for the future, including plans for a striking new landmark building to tell the story of the Battle of Britain. The building provisionally called "Battle of Britain Beacon", will include the latest audiovisual techniques to bring to life all aspects of the Battle, and will enable wider public access to the Museum's collection of Battle of Britain aircraft, memorabilia and archives. The Museum is now consulting widely about the project. The Trustees will take the final decision to proceed with construction after agreement with interested parties and authorities and securing the required private sector funding. [More](#)

The [Royal Naval Museum](#) will be re-branded as the **National Museum of the Royal Navy**. Trustees took the decision in October 2009 to make the National Museum of the Royal Navy the Sole Corporate Trustee of the Royal Naval Museum thus effectively passing ultimate control for the Royal Naval Museum to the National Museum. [More](#)

[Liverpool's International Slavery Museum](#) has been granted planning permission for its expansion plans. Currently the Slavery Museum, which opened in 2007, is in the Merseyside Maritime Museum and entered on the third floor. The new plans will see the museum have its own entrance at the Dock Traffic Office and a striking glass walkway will connect the two buildings. [More](#)

The [Science Museum](#) has commissioned a poll on lying which reveals that men lie more frequently than women, that women feel more guilty about it and that mothers are the people most likely to be lied to. The poll of 3,000 people was released ahead of the launch of the revamped 'Who am I?' gallery, opening this month, which makes sense of brain science, genetics and human behaviour. [More](#)

The [Science Museum](#) has also announced new details of '*atmosphere: exploring climate science*' the new climate science gallery opening this November. The plans include an immersive "gallery world" with its own atmosphere and landscapes which will respond to visitors' game-play in ways which imitate the Earth's complex system, and five "story zones" each using hands-on exhibits to explore different aspects of climate science. [More](#)

[The British Museum](#) and BBC project, *A History of the World in 100 objects*, returned to the airwaves last month. This time, as well as the hugely popular podcast, there is a mobile phone version with an image of the object of the day. The BBC also broadcast twelve *History of the World* regional documentaries on 17 May looking at ideas and inventions from different areas of England. [More](#)

The American Patrons of [Tate](#) hosted its second Artists Dinner in New York last month, including a special live performance by Patti Smith. At the event, Sir Nicholas Serota announced that three major works by leading American artists had been donated to Tate and more than \$750,000 had been raised towards the acquisition of works by contemporary artists from North and South America for the Tate Collection. Since 1999, the American Patrons of Tate, an independent charity based in New York has raised over \$100 million in cash and art donations from individuals, foundations and corporations in the US. [More](#)

[Birmingham Museums & Art Gallery](#) and Stoke Potteries Museum are seeking expressions of interest from conservation professionals, scientists, archaeologists and related professionals who want to join the Staffordshire Hoard Conservation Advisory Panel. The two museums are also offering a range of placements for conservation professionals and students who wish to develop their skills through contributing to the conservation of the Hoard. [More](#)

The [National Waterfront Museum](#) in Swansea has a special exhibition of work created by children aged five and under. The groups from Flying Start childcare programme worked alongside professional artists using a story theme as a starting point for the artwork. [More](#)

Digital initiatives

[The British Museum](#) has appointed a "volunteer Wikipedian in residence", the first residency of its kind anywhere in the world. Liam Wyatt, historian and President of Wikimedia Australia, will be working with the museum for five weeks and will build a relationship between the Museum and the Wikipedian community through a range of activities both internally and public-facing. These will include creating or expanding existing articles about notable items or subjects of specific relevance to the collection and the Museum's expertise; supporting Wikipedians already editing articles related to the British Museum both locally and internationally; and working with Museum staff to explain Wikipedia's practices and how they might be able to contribute directly to the encyclopaedia. [More](#)

The Museum is also organising a 'backstage pass' tour for local Wikipedians during June. [More](#)

The latest version of the [V&A Search the Collections](#), was judged to be “Best of the Web” in the research category at the international Museums and the Web conference in Denver in April 2010. Judges said the V&A had “raised the bar” for museum collection databases, and congratulated the team on getting a mobile version and a crowd sourcing activity out so quickly. [More](#)

The [Museum of London](#) has launched an augmented reality iPhone app *Streetmuseum*, bringing the Museum's art and photographic collections to the streets of the capital. *Streetmuseum*, developed with creative agency Brothers and Sisters, guides users to 200 sites across London where they can look “through” their iPhones and see the past emerge, locked as an overlay across the present scene. These can be viewed as ghostly alignments, or the archive images can be brought up and explored in detail. A 3D installation to accompany the app was situated in Trafalgar Square until 16 May to celebrate the launch of the new galleries. [More](#)

The [British Library](#) has announced a major new 10 year partnership with online publisher **brightsolid** to digitise up to 40 million historic pages from the national newspaper collection. **brightsolid** has previously delivered 1911census.co.uk project in partnership with The National Archives and owns the leading family history resources findmypast.co.uk and genesreunited.co.uk. **brightsolid** is taking on the commercial and technical risks of the project, with no direct costs to the British Library. The firm will digitise content from the British Library Newspaper Library, which it will then make available online via a paid-for website as well as integrating it into its family history websites. This resource will be available for free to users on-site at the British Library and copies of all scanned materials will be deposited with the Library [More](#)

The [British Library](#), in partnership with JISC and the Higher Education Academy, has digitised nearly 1000 Islamic Studies PhDs and made them available online through the Library's EThos electronic theses service. Up until now this research been dispersed across 97 universities and has only been accessible through individual academic libraries and archives. The collection represents nearly half of the 2000 Islamic Studies PhDs written between 1997 and 2006 and covers fields such as Islamic law, history, politics, finance, anthropology, sociology and gender studies, and research on Muslim communities in the UK. [More](#)

[National Museum Liverpool's](#) display on the Titanic was the inspiration for a new iPhone gift - a free virtual 3D model of the Titanic for iPhone users to send as a gift or keep for themselves. The Titanic gift, produced by virtual marketing startup Little World Gifts, was initiated and has been supported by VisitLiverpool.

[Imperial War Museum North](#) is running a competition for Flickr users inviting them to submit photographs on city life. The event is running in conjunction with the museum's current exhibition, *Shaped by War: Photographs by Don McCullin*. [More](#)

[The National Archive's](#) website has a new page on hung parliaments, with links to archival documents reveal how previous administrations and officials grappled with the complex constitutional questions arising when no one party has overall control of Parliament. [More](#)

Blogs take readers behind the scenes

Heads Up, the [National Galleries of Scotland's](#) regularly updated blog is taking readers behind the scenes during the transformation of the Scottish National Portrait Gallery. [More](#)

Stories from the Stores is a blog about the [Science Museum's](#) collections, with updates from curators across the museum. [More](#)

[National Museum Wales Amgueddfa Cymru's](#) blog includes updates from all areas of the museum, including the latest on the peregrine chicks nesting on the Clock Tower, whose every move is streamed live from a nest camera into the main hall of the National Museum Cardiff by the RSPB. [More](#)

Awards

Correction – Enjoy England Award 2010

In last month's newsletter, the article on the Enjoy England Awards included some of the 2009 winners instead of 2010 winners. Thanks to all those who pointed out the error. It's great to know you read right to the end in such detail! We should have reported the following:

- **Imperial War Museum North** won a Silver medal in this year's Large Visitor Attraction Award, with the **National Maritime Museum** and **National Railway Museum** being regional winners in this category;

- *The Railway Children*, staged by the York Theatre Royal at the **National Railway Museum** was a silver winner of the Best Tourism Experience of the Year Award;
 - **Imperial War Museum Duxford** was a regional winner in the Business Tourism Award for its corporate events facilities;
 - *The Grand Tour*, a collaboration between York Art Gallery and **The National Gallery**, won a silver in the Best Tourism Event & Festival Award. The project brought 49 full life size recreations of paintings from the National Gallery and York Art Gallery to the city's streets for 17 weeks. [More](#)
- The **Ashmolean Museum** has won a RIBA Award 2010 for its new building designed by Rick Mather Architects. The building which opened last year doubled the Museum's display space, creating 39 new galleries. [More](#)

Museums and Heritage Awards 2010

Jeremy Hunt MP's first statement following his appointment as Secretary of State for Culture, Media, Sport and the Olympics on 12 May was to congratulate the winners and all those nominated for the Museums and Heritage Awards 2010. He said: "The excellence of our museums, galleries and heritage sector is one of this country's most important assets. Your success in displaying, interpreting, marketing and making our heritage accessible is hugely important and the fact you have been short-listed is hugely deserved. Congratulations to everyone!" NMDC members' awards include:

- **The British Library's** *Timelines: Sources from History* won the Innovation Award. The Library's *Campaign! Make an Impact* project was also a runner up for the Educational Initiative Award;
- **The National Gallery** and Antenna Audio *Love Art* iPhone App was highly commended in the Innovation category;
- The Permanent Exhibition Award was won by the National Museums Northern Ireland for the new Ulster Museum, with the **Ashmolean** highly commended. The **Great North Museum, Darwin Centre** and **V&A's** Medieval & Renaissance Gallery were also shortlisted;
- The **V&A** won the Restoration and Conservation Award for the work on the Master of Bertram's Triptych of the Apocalypse;
- **National Museums Northern Ireland's** Marketing campaign for the reopening of Ulster Museum was highly commended and the **Tyne & Wear Archives & Museums'** Great North Museum and **National Portrait Gallery's** *Take Another Look* campaigns were runners up.
- The **Royal Observatory Greenwich's** Special Exhibition Gallery was a runner up for the Project on a Limited Budget Award.
- **Royal Armouries Museum** and the Historic Royal Palaces joint exhibition *Henry VIII: Dressed to Kill*, was a runner up for the Temporary or Touring Exhibition Award.
- **Martyn Heighton**, Head of the Historic Ships Advisory Committee, based at the National Maritime Museum, won the Award for Outstanding Contribution by an Individual.

NMDC JOBS

Our jobs website, www.nationalmuseumjobs.org.uk currently has details of over 20 vacancies at leading museums around the UK including:

- Financial Assistant, National Army Museum
- Formal Learning Manager, Imperial War Museum
- Head of Exhibitions and Displays, Tate Liverpool
- Procurement Advisor, Museum of London
- Museum Residency: Poetry, Victoria & Albert Museum
- Training and Volunteer Officer, Royal Armouries

For details of these jobs and many more visit www.nationalmuseumjobs.org.uk

If you would like to receive this newsletter by email or change your contact details, please email: Christine.toogood@nationalmuseums.org.uk

This newsletter can also be read online at <http://nmdcgit.nmdc.webfactional.com/news/newsletters/>