

Welcome to NMDC's monthly news update...

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MUSEUM SECTOR NEWS

Chancellor promotes importance of tourism on visit to NHM

The Chancellor of the Exchequer, Alistair Darling MP, visited the new Darwin Centre at the Natural History Museum to promote the benefits of visiting the capital and the importance of tourism. "Tourism is of huge importance to the London economy. If you look at the top 10 destinations in London most of them are museums", said Mr Darling, describing the new Darwin Centre as "fantastic": "Not only will it attract tourists to come to this and other museums but also importantly its aim is to interest young people in science. We need the new Charles Darwins of the future and one of the ways of getting young people engaged in science is to come and see that it can be fun as well as having a very serious side too". [Press Association](#) [See more tourism news below](#)

Culturelabel online museum boutique launched

The online venture *Culturelabel*, which unites the retail outlets of 60 British cultural institutions, allowing worldwide access to their products, launched at the end of July. The website enables partners to showcase up to 24 premium products and introduce their brand to a new consumer audience. It is designed to drive new traffic to each institution's own site to browse and buy. Although the site currently links only UK organisations, the plan is to make it a global venture, connecting museums and arts institutions across the world on one site. Also on the website is the publication, *Intelligent Naivety: Commercial Opportunities for Museums and Culture Institutions*, which argues that commerce has borrowed much from culture but culture has not borrowed enough from commerce. www.culturelabel.com

Shadow Culture Minister, Ed Vaizey MP, described *Culturelabel* as "exactly the kind of enterprise I want to see in the arts". In a comment piece on the *Guardian's* website, he said: "Museums and heritage groups now combine new technologies with entrepreneurialism, based on good Conservative principles". He continued: "There are clearly opportunities to identify smart savings to ensure the continued vitality of our cultural and creative sectors. This process is not just about efficiencies but about identifying and nurturing opportunities for creativity and innovation off-stage and beyond exhibition." [The Guardian](#)

DCMS/Wolfson Museums and Galleries Improvement Fund to "pause" in 2010-11

Culture Minister Barbara Follett MP has announced grants totalling £4m to help improve displays and facilities at 34 museums in England in the eighth round of the DCMS/Wolfson Museums and Galleries Improvement Fund. The announcement also states that "with the agreement of the Wolfson Foundation, the DCMS have decided to a pause in new awards next year (2010-11). This will allow both parties to assess what the Fund has achieved in the last eight years and use this as a basis for looking at how it could add value in future years." [DCMS press release](#)
This year's grants, jointly funded by DCMS and the Wolfson Foundation, include:

- Natural History Museum: £300,000 for the *Art & Illustration* gallery
- V&A: £240,000 for *Sculpture in Europe 1300-1600*
- National Gallery: £200,000 for Phase 2 of the lower galleries renovation
- Science Museum: £190,000, for *James Watt's Workshop: Engineering yesterday and today*
- HMS Belfast: £150,000 to reinterpret the ship's command and control centre
- Ashmolean Museum: £122,000 for the new textiles gallery
- Wallace Collection: £120,000 for *Venetian Vision* and the 19th century salon
- Sir John Soane's Museum: £100,000 for restoration of Soane's ante room

- Tyne & Wear Museums: £100,000 for redevelopment of the galleries at Segedunum Roman Fort
- Royal Armouries Museum: £87,000 for the creation and refurbishment of the social history galleries.

Museums at Night evaluation points to success

The evaluation of *Museums at Night*, the late night opening event on 16/17 May, has concluded that the campaign was a success, particularly in attracting new audiences. Highlights from the findings include:

- 157 events took place over the weekend with over 34,000 people attending across the UK.
- Over 60% were new to the venue, having heard about the event through national press, the Culture24 site, word of mouth, local press, radio or Twitter.
- Visitor satisfaction rates were high, with 80% of participants rating their experience as eight or above out of ten.
- Regional and national media coverage appeared in over 150 publications, securing an equivalent advertising value of over £40,000.

Museums at Night was funded by the MLA and NMDC and managed by Culture 24. Jane Finnis, Culture 24 Director, described the initiative as "a great example of what can be achieved by the cultural sector through an integrated approach to online marketing and PR that is both rooted in the sector itself and informed by an understanding of audience needs and online behaviour."

Recommendations for *Museums at Night* 2010 include the suggested appointment of a national coordinator and the launch of the campaign this September to enable advance planning, better tourism tie-ins and the encouragement of clusters of activity in cities or regions that can create a spread of events over the weekend. [Download evaluation report](#)

Spoliation Advisory Panel recommendation rejected by Glaser heirs

The *Art Newspaper* reports that the heirs of Dr Curt Glaser, who are pursuing a Nazi-era claim against the Courtauld Gallery for eight drawings, have written to the Culture Minister Barbara Follett MP to ask her to reject the recent recommendations of the Spoliation Advisory Panel. In June, the panel concluded that the moral case is insufficiently strong to warrant a recommendation that the drawings should be transferred to the Glaser heirs. This is the first time that a recommendation of the panel has not been accepted by one of the parties. Six heirs - five in North America and one in Brazil - are claiming the return of the eight drawings sold at auction in Germany in 1933. [The Art Newspaper](#)

Art Fund Museum Survey – call to participate

The Art Fund is encouraging all accredited museums to participate in the next round of its museum survey. The survey will examine how museums' visitor numbers and finances are faring in the recession. The survey will be live online between 7-25 September and is described as taking no more than five minutes to complete. The Art Fund will publish its findings in October to provide an overview of what challenges the museum sector is currently facing. For more information contact Lizzie Bloom on 020 7225 4804 or lbloom@artfund.org

PHILANTHROPY

New Arts & Business report on individual giving

Arts & Business has published a new report into individual giving – *Local Pride - Individual giving to the arts in England*. Support from individuals has become the single largest source of private investment in cultural organisation, more than doubling in the last 9 years. The research, carried out by City University focuses on low and mid-level giving outside London. Findings of the report include:

- 90% of arts donors give from £1- £1,000 a year
- Most donors visit at least 3 times a year.
- Local pride and a personal connection were the most common reasons for low and mid-level donors support.
- 72% of donors said their donations would not be affected by the recession. The other 28% felt they might be more prudent about the amount they gave but would certainly not stop giving to arts

and culture.

- Those donors who invest small amounts in a portfolio of individual giving products, are more likely to achieve, overall, a higher level of financial contribution than those who give once in the year.
- Being asked directly to give and being asked to contribute to a specific project were the most effective methods for mobilising giving. Much low-level giving happens at the point of sale rounding up ticket price or making a donation. [More](#)

LEARNING

Museums supporting adult numeracy

The MLA has published a study by NIACE showing how museums, libraries and archives can help adults can improve their numeracy skills. Better numeracy is a key government target. MLA has also published a briefing for museums which summarises research on motivating adults to improve their numeracy skills and provides good practice examples. [More on MLA website](#)

Science: [So what? So everything] Campaign

The Department for Business Innovation and Skills (BIS) is keen to involve museums, libraries and archives in their new campaign called *Science: [So what? So everything]* which aims to increase people's engagement in science and to help them to see the difference science makes to their everyday lives. Museums, libraries and archives can get involved through organising events and exhibitions to communicate the value and interest of science. BIS will promote any relevant event through an online calendar as part of their national PR campaign. [Science So What website](#)

Campaign! Make an Impact

MLA is encouraging museums to become Champion venues for *Campaign! Make an Impact*, a project which uses history to inspire young people into active citizenship. The programme is a British Library model which uses collections and past campaigns to aid understanding of the basics of campaigning, and then supports children and young people to develop campaigns about issues close to their hearts. Over the next two years, MLA will be rolling out the model through its DCSF / DCMS funded Strategic Commissioning programme to develop the sectors ability to engage with this agenda. [MLA website](#)

Their Past Your Future projects preserved in new digital archive

Their Past Your Future, the UK-wide learning programme exploring the impact and ongoing legacy of 20th century conflict on people in the UK, has launched a new website of digitised resources. www.tpyfdigitalarchive.org.uk/

COLLECTIONS

Southampton plans to sell art work to fund new *Titanic* museum

Southampton City Council has been criticised for plans to sell two works from the City Art Gallery to help fund the new Sea City Museum, which will be dedicated to the Titanic. The Museums Association guidelines require that any sale of work should benefit the collection. The works are Sir Alfred Munnings's 1937 painting *After the Race*, valued at around £4m, and a Rodin sculpture, *Eve*, valued at £1.5m. The Heritage Lottery Fund has provided £5m of the £15m cost of the new museum, and a spokesperson told *The Independent on Sunday* that any sale could "put at risk" the grant. Councillor John Hannides, Southampton's Cabinet Member for Leisure, Culture and Heritage told *The Independent on Sunday* that the money will be used to enhance the collection, as the new building will allow the museum to display a further 100 works. [Independent on Sunday](#)

Magna Carta awarded unique UN status

The four surviving copies of the 1215 Magna Carta have been awarded 'Memory of the World' status by the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The UNESCO Memory of the World International Register is a catalogue of documentary heritage of global significance and outstanding universal value – akin to a World Heritage Site list for documents and archives. The documents, held by the British Library, Salisbury Cathedral and Lincoln Cathedral, join 189 other items on the International Register, including from the UK the Mappa Mundi in Hereford Cathedral and the 1916 film, *The Battle of the Somme*, in the Imperial War Museum. [British Library website](#)

Five collections achieve designation as “pre-eminent”

Five new outstanding collections have joined MLA's Designation Scheme which identifies pre-eminent collections held in England's non-national museums, libraries and archives. They are:

- Kensington Palace's Royal Ceremonial Dress Collection
- Baring Archive's entire holdings
- Unilever Archives & Records Management permanent archive collections
- Bradford Industrial Museum's Worsteds Collection
- Porthcurno Telegraph Museum's archive and Core Collection of Submarine Telegraphy objects. [More](#)

CONSERVATION AND COLLECTIONS CARE

New X-ray technique reveals details and colours of hidden paintings

Scientists in the United States have reported use of a new X-ray imaging technique which reveals for the first time the fine details and colours of paintings hidden beneath another painting without removing paint samples. The technique uses a Synchrotron confocal X-ray fluorescence microscope and collects fluorescent X-ray “signals” given off by the chemicals in the various paint layers. Scientists can link each signal to specific paint pigments. The new technology, developed by Delaware University, provides much more detail than the black and white images of traditional x-radiography currently used by art historians. It has been described as the “the most efficient and effective approach to date” for revealing buried images in paintings. [The Telegraph](#)

New pest identification guide reflects changes in past 10 years

English Heritage and the Collections Trust have published a new free poster guide to identifying insect pests in cultural heritage organisations. *A Helpful Guide to Insect Pests found in Historic Houses and Museums* is an update to the original English Heritage pest identification poster, first published in 1999. There have been a number of changes over the last ten years which have seen the decline of some insects, and dramatic increases in other species which have now become established in the UK. To request a copy visit the [Collections Trust website](#)

New guide to collections management

The Collections Trust has published a new guide to Collections Management for cultural heritage organisations. *Collections Management: a practical guide* is a step-by-step guide to the effective management of collections for museums, libraries and archives. The book features many case studies from collections organisations including the V&A, National Museums Wales and Glasgow Museums, illustrating how they have enhanced the management of their collections to provide better user services. It also includes highlighted top tips and legal alerts, and a key steps guide to setting up good collections management practice in museums, libraries and archives. [Collections Trust website](#)

CULTURAL SECTOR NEWS

Call for Iraq Inquiry to look at destruction of Iraqi cultural heritage

In a letter to Sir John Chilcot, chair of the Committee of Inquiry into Iraq, a group of leading cultural heritage organisations have called on the Inquiry to include problems faced by British forces in safeguarding cultural heritage in Iraq in their investigation.

The signatories of the letter have expressed their concern over: the damage and loss inflicted on the National Museum of Iraq in Baghdad and other museums, libraries and archives; the looting of archaeological sites; and the damage to historic monuments that took place during the war and subsequent occupation. The signatories encourage the Inquiry to look at the extent of provision of generic and theatre-specific cultural property awareness training for UK armed forces. The signatories further raise the pressing issue that the UK has not yet ratified the 1954 Hague Convention for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict and its two Protocols of 1954 and 1999. The UK is the only major international power, and the only major combatant in the 2003 invasion of Iraq, not to have relevant legislation under discussion. The US ratified the Convention earlier this year. [Full statement on UK UNESCO website](#)

British Film Institute and UK Film Council to merge

The Government has announced plans to merge the UK Film Council (UKFC) and the British Film Institute (BFI) to create a single streamlined public body for film with both a cultural and economic remit. A DCMS statement said: "while it is expected the creation of a new body, with a clear line of accountability and a single Board would mean efficiency savings, the primary objective is to improve the service to film, by reducing gaps in provision and areas where activity is currently duplicated by the two bodies." The overall remit would not be reduced: the new body would focus on securing investment across the sector, steering the industry through the transition to digital, championing the cultural importance of the UK's film heritage and guaranteeing that the full diversity of film culture is available to all. The move has been welcomed by the Boards of the BFI and UKFC. A project board, chaired by DCMS will now look at the proposal to develop a possible new model and governance structure. [DCMS Statement](#)

Commenting on the announcement, the Conservative culture team said they would be open to alternative suggestions such as a complete de-merger of the two institutions, or even a link between the BFI and the British Library.

UK Government promotes international cooperation for creative industries

The programme for the first Creativity and Business International Network (c&binet) event has been announced. C&binet has been created by the UK Government to help business solve problems through international dialogue about the creative economy. The event will bring together representatives from foreign governments and leading figures from the world's most influential creative companies to build consensus on cross-border issues. [DCMS statement](#)

Heritage Minister outlines his vision for the Historic Environment in Wales

The Welsh Heritage Minister, Alun Ffred Jones AM, has outlined his vision for the historic environment in Wales, describing the notion of 'bro', the area which a person was brought up in or lives in, as central to the way that people relate to the historic environment. He said helping Welsh citizens to develop a real affinity with their historic environment is an integral part of the Welsh Assembly Government's approach to sustainability. The Minister also emphasised the important role of the historic environment in regeneration, saying that any regeneration should involve conserving and enhancing the built heritage and communities researching their own past to produce exhibitions and public performances. The Minister will be announcing his Strategic Statement for the Historic Environment in September. [Welsh Assembly Government statement](#)

Arts Council recession grants boost for opera and orchestras

Arts Council England (ACE) has announced the first two second round of awards from its £40 million Sustain fund for organisations under pressure as a result of the recession. The first 18 awards, totalling £6.7m, have gone to major arts organisations including Welsh National Opera (£900,000), English National Opera (£750,000), the Royal Opera House (£700,000), the Philharmonia Orchestra, London (£730,000) and the London Symphony Orchestra (£690,000). [ACE statement](#)

Witt and Conway libraries at the Courtauld Institute of Art

The Courtauld Institute of Art has confirmed that the Witt and Conway Libraries will remain open to the public five days a week and that the Photographic Survey collections will continue to be accessible by appointment, contrary to concerns recently expressed by some members of the art community. A statement from The Courtauld said: "Like other higher education institutions worldwide, The Courtauld has had to review all its operational activities and services in the light of the current economic climate. This review has led to a decision to restructure the management of our image libraries in order to minimise their net cost to the Institute. To allow time to implement the agreed changes, these libraries will be temporarily closed from 7 September 2009 and will reopen on 2 November 2009." www.courtauldimages.com.

Arts Council England publishes research on arts in the digital age

ACE has published research examining current public attitudes to and experience of arts content online and also a content snapshot assessing the current online presence of the ACE's regularly funded portfolio. Findings include:

- Arts attendees are likely to explore digital space as a complement to existing arts activity.
- Most people believe that digital can come into its own when providing context for the live experience in areas such as education and information.
- Digital technology is used primarily as a research tool that allows people to explore new areas of interest and find out more about artists and arts events.
- 56 arts organisations were currently shown to be providing public service content as defined in the recent *Digital Britain* report with a real potential to significantly raise this figure in the near future. [more](#)

TOURISM

13% rise in holiday trips in England by UK residents

Figures released from the United Kingdom Tourism Survey show that holiday trips taken by UK residents in England in the first four months of 2009 are up by 13%. This amounts to 1.2 million more holiday trips and over 5 million extra nights' holiday taken than in the same period of 2008. Business travel is down by 11% over the over the same four month period. [VisitEngland press release](#)

Visits to London attractions up by 8%

Visit London has announced that the number of people visiting museums, galleries and other attractions in the capital has continued to rise, showing an increase of 8.4% in June compared to the same month last year. The total number of visitors for the three months from April to June 2009 also showed an increase, up 12.8% compared to the same period in 2008. [Visit London press release](#)

Tourism plan aims to maximise opportunities from 2012 Games

The Mayor of London has published London's tourism vision, which centres on taking full advantage of the opportunities for the capital's economy arising from the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. The London Development Agency estimates that around 200 million tourism day visits are made to and within the capital. The London Tourism Action Plan 2009-13 includes:

- Marketing activity in both leisure and business markets.
- Promoting London as a unique destination offering history and heritage alongside a vibrant, ethnically diverse and contemporary culture.
- Maximising global media opportunities for a destination focus in 2012.
- The encouragement of tourism businesses to become more accessible to those with special access needs.
- Promoting a World Class customer service standard for 2012 and beyond. [More](#)

AWARDS

National museums sweep shortlist for 2009 Visit London Awards

Three national museums are on the shortlist for Visit London's 2009 *Visitor Attraction of the Year Award*: Imperial War Museum, National Portrait Gallery and National Maritime Museum. The Science Museum, Natural History Museum and British Library have all been nominated in the *Marketing/PR Campaign Award*. Staff at the V&A and National Maritime Museum are among those nominated for the *Outstanding Customer Service Award*; and the National Maritime Museum and the Churchill Museum and Cabinet War Rooms have been nominated for the *Best Tourism Experience*. The Natural History Museum has been nominated for the *Sustainable Tourism Award* and *Business Venue of the Year*. From 2 September, Londoners and tourists will also be able to nominate and vote for their own favourites in the *People's Choice Awards*. The overall winners will be announced in November. [Visit London website](#)

APPOINTMENTS

The Prime Minister has re-appointed Sir Nicholas Blake as a Trustee of the **National Portrait Gallery**.

Paul Finch has been appointed as the new Chair of the **Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment** (CABE) and will take over from Sir John Sorrell in December. He is the Programme Director of the World Architecture Festival, and Editor Emeritus of *Architectural Review* and *Architects' Journal*. He is also a former Commissioner and Deputy Chair of CABE. The remuneration for this post is £42,000 per year. [DCMS statement](#)

Alison Cole has been appointed as the new Executive Director of Communications at Arts Council England. She has been Director of Communications at Southbank Centre since 2005 and was previously Director of Communications at the Art Fund, where she spearheaded the four-year campaign that led to the introduction of free admission across the UK's national museums and galleries. [Arts Council statement](#)

Eva J. Pell has been named Under Secretary for Science at the **Smithsonian Institution**. She will directly oversee the operations of the National Museum of Natural History; the National Air and Space Museum; the National Zoo and its Conservation and Research Center; the Smithsonian Astrophysical Observatory; the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center; the Museum Conservation Institute; and the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute in Panama. [Smithsonian statement](#)

INTERNATIONAL

US Secretary of Education promotes arts education

The US Secretary of Education has written to schools and education community leaders emphasising the importance of the arts as a core academic subject. The Department of Education will be conducting a survey of arts education in elementary and secondary schools to create a comprehensive profile of music, dance, theatre and visual arts provision by 2011. [Department of Education](#)

Asia's Culture Ministers agree new cooperation

Cultural ministers from 17 Asian countries discussed efforts to boost cultural development during the global economic downturn at a meeting during the 11th Asian Arts Festival in China. The Ministers also signed an initiative on cultural cooperation. Japan's Agency for Cultural Affairs commissioner, Hideo Tamai, said that his country was making greater allocations for culture in the current year including funding for the enhancement of national museums and galleries. [China View](#)

Gallery sues Lufthansa after painting destroyed in transit

Lufthansa and Art Crating Inc have been accused of negligence after a painting by U.S. artist Brice Marden was destroyed while being moved from Moscow to New York in 2008. The 1969 two-panel painting *Au Center*, belonging to the Gagosian Gallery in New York, was valued at \$3m. The federal case seeking compensation has been filed by lawyers for AXA Art Insurance Corp, who claim that the painting was destroyed during the flight to New York after coming loose in its travel frame when a forklift operator crashed into it at Frankfurt airport. [New York Post](#)

Government of Pakistan to establish 'Culture Think Tank' to counter intolerance

Pakistan's Ministry of Culture is planning to set up a think tank to advise the Government on preserving and projecting the country's "rich culture" as an effective instrument to "counter the tendency of intolerance". The Pakistan's Senate Standing Committee on Culture has recommended that the 'Think Tank on Culture' be established to support the Government's work to promote and project culture both at home and abroad. [The International News](#)

Rijksmuseum's 'moon rock' is revealed to be petrified wood

The Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam has confirmed that a rock in its collection which was believed to have been brought back from the moon by a US astronaut is in fact a piece of petrified wood. Suspicions about the provenance of the rock were first raised after it was exhibited in 2006 and further research was carried out by Amsterdam's Free University. In an article published by the museum, geologist Frank Beunk concluded that it is "a nondescript, pretty-much-worthless stone." [Associated Press](#)

US museum directors \$1m+ salary and benefits

Media attention in the US has focused on the earnings of top museum directors. The *Los Angeles Times* has published details of the salary of Michael Govan, Director of the Los Angeles County Museum of Modern Art, who is expected to earn \$6m in salary, bonuses, benefits and deferred compensation over the course of his five-year contract. Mr Govan spends at least ten per cent of his time in New York, where he has been able to claim \$1000 a night to stay in his own apartment. A *Bloomberg* article describes salary and benefits package of Glenn D. Lowry, Director of the Museum of Modern Art in New York, worth \$1.32m in the last financial year, down from \$1.95 million the year before, and lists other top earners in the year to June 2009. [Los Angeles Times](#) [Bloomberg](#)

NEWS FROM NMDC MEMBERS

V&A at Dundee receives backing from Scottish Government

The Scottish Government has given the V&A at Dundee project team a significant commitment of support. Scottish Culture Minister Michael Russell MSP said: "We will contribute capital funding towards construction of the physical space and the exact support level will be confirmed once we are in a position to set budgets for the next 2-3 years in the next strategic spending review." The V&A at Dundee will house contemporary collections from the V&A, provide a space to showcase Scottish applied arts and design and create a gallery to attract international touring exhibitions. The V&A is providing support but not funding for the development, which is likely to cost more than £40m. The V&A at Dundee steering group, which is setting up the project, comprises Dundee City Council, Scottish Enterprise, the Universities of Dundee and Abertay, and the V&A. It is estimated that V&A at Dundee could bring an additional 500,000 visitors to Dundee and create up to 900 jobs locally, as well as adding £5.7 million output to the Scottish economy. An architectural competition will be launched after the site for the exhibition building is selected in October. [The Art Newspaper](#) [Scottish Government statement](#)

The [British Museum](#) and York Museums have jointly acquired the Vale of York hoard, the most important Viking Treasure find for over 150 years. The well preserved hoard contains a mixture of different precious metal objects, including coins, complete ornaments and ingots, with objects coming from as far apart as Afghanistan, Ireland, Russia, Scandinavia and continental Europe. It was discovered in the Harrogate area in 2007 by two metal-detectorists who kept the find intact and promptly reported it to their local Finds Liaison Officer. The hoard, valued at £1,082,000, has been acquired with £200,000 raised through public appeal as well as with funding from the National Heritage Memorial Fund, the Art Fund, the Challenge Fund and the York Museums Trust. It will

shortly go on display at the Yorkshire Museum in York. [more](#)

[International Slavery Museum](#) in Liverpool has reached the finals of The National Lottery Awards 2009. Public voting for the Awards has now closed. The seven winners - one in each category - will be announced during a special BBC1 programme broadcast live on Saturday 5th September 2009. [more](#)

[The Natural History Museum](#) is working with police and the Wildlife Crime Unit after it was discovered that 299 bird skins have been stolen from the ornithological collections held at the Museum's branch in Tring, Hertfordshire. They were found to be missing following a break-in on 24 June this year. The ornithological collections of the NHM are among the largest and most comprehensive in the world. There are approaching 750,000 bird skins representing 95% of known extant species. The museum holds 8,000 type specimens - the original specimen from which the description of a new species is made – none of which were taken. [more](#)

[National Museums Northern Ireland](#) have announced that the Ulster Museum will reopen on 22 October following its major redevelopment. The opening date coincides with the 80th anniversary of the official opening ceremony of the original Ulster Museum in 1929, then known as the Belfast Municipal Museum & Art Gallery. The announcement was made as the six metre long Edmontosaurus dinosaur skeleton – one of the museum's most popular exhibits - was installed at the foot of the new three-storey high *Window on Our World* display tower. [more](#)

The [Museum of London](#) has unveiled one of the largest collections of medieval and early modern buttons in the UK. Over two and a half thousand buttons of all shapes and sizes ranging in date from the late 14th to the late 19th century have been generously given to the museum by Tony Pilson, who collected them from the banks of the Thames over the past 30 years.

The [Museum of London](#) will be installing the Lord Mayor's Coach in its new City Gallery in November in advance of the launch of the new Galleries of Modern London in spring 2010. To mark the event, the Museum is hosting a two-day conference (12-13 November) about carriages as status symbols, and the influence of English carriage design and manufacture abroad. [more](#)

A six year old boy has applied to become the next Director of the [National Railway Museum](#), explaining that he would be perfect for the job as he had been on lots of trains, had visited the NRM, and owned an electric train track on which he could control two trains at once. The museum has instead appointed Sam Pointon as "Director of Fun", responsible for providing advice on how the museum can be made a fun day out. The Museum's Director, Andrew Scott, will be retiring later this year and his replacement is expected to be appointed in the autumn. [more](#)

The [National Galleries of Scotland](#) have commissioned the artist Richard Wright to make wall-drawings in the stairwells of the Dean Gallery. The project has been made possible by the Scottish Government's Expo Fund, which has announced awards for three new commissions last month. [more](#)

[The National Gallery](#) is celebrating a decade of *Take Art* - an out reach programme that provides opportunities for children and teenagers who are being educated in hospital. Sessions usually include interactive discussions followed by practical sessions. Last year eleven National Gallery lecturers made 77 visits to 17 hospitals in London, working with around 380 patients. Hospital groups have also visited the Gallery and teachers from participating hospitals have attended training course at the Gallery. [more](#)

The [Royal Air Force Museum](#) has reopened the Battle of Britain Hall after a major redevelopment. The hanger now has one wall made entirely of glass.

NMDC JOBS

Our jobs website, www.nationalmuseumjobs.org.uk has details of over 30 current vacancies at museums around the UK including:

- National Museums at Chatham, Store Manager
- Records Officer, National Army Museum
- Corporate Sales Co-ordinator, Museum of London
- Security Officer, National Museums Scotland
- Curator of Horology, National Maritime Museum
- Head of Conservation, Tate
- Interpretation Officer, The British Museum

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

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