



Viva Volunteers!

Oxford University Museums Volunteer Service

April - June 2018



UNIVERSITY OF
OXFORD

We moved!



MyVolunteerPage.com

We are delighted that the new volunteer management system is now up and running. All registered volunteer records have been transferred over and our webpage is now live on the Gardens, Libraries and Museums website at www.glam.ox.ac.uk/volunteering. We hope the new software will help volunteer supervisors and ourselves to communicate with volunteers and keep track of volunteering activity across the museums, whilst being compliant with the new General Data Protection Regulations.

On Friday 3rd August, a message was sent to all registered volunteers, containing their personal usernames and passwords for their profiles on the new volunteer portal (MyVolunteerPage.com). Hopefully, everyone can now login and check that the information we have about them is up-to-date and make changes where necessary. Let us know if help is needed!

After initial staff training in May, the Joint Museums Volunteer team are now training staff Volunteer Managers and Event Organisers to use the system, so please bear with us during this time, whilst we all find our feet. More volunteer hours for this quarter will be logged as staff get trained, so more news on stats next time...

OCVA Awards - Congratulations to ...

Our biggest congratulations to Joyce, who received honours at this year's Oxfordshire Charity and Volunteering Awards ceremony held at the Town Hall in June. Joyce is the longest-serving volunteer in the Ashmolean Museum's Eastern Art Department, having worked there for 20 years. During this time she has made an enormous contribution, particularly in her support of the Curator of Japanese Art, across a wide range of activities that are key to the Museum's goals, including research, documentation, exhibitions and public engagement.



New Recruits

After a brief hiatus in recruitment we have recently started recruiting and inducting new volunteers to a range of roles. If you see any new faces, please make them feel welcome.



In May, Caroline gave birth to a lovely little girl. They recently had their first museum visits together, and are both well and doing fine. Olive (the dog) is gradually coming to terms with this new creature in the house, and has already learnt to retrieve blankets and the like for Caroline.

For those of you who don't know Caroline, she is our Volunteer and Outreach Officer on the Joint Museums Volunteer Service, and will hopefully be back with us around early Spring 2019.

Sensing Culture: Just the beginning...

Our Sensing Culture project with the RNIB (Royal National Institute for the Blind) may be coming to an end, but it's certainly just the beginning of the relationship between our blind and partially sighted visitors and volunteers. Over the project 66 volunteers attended audio description training to help make tours and other gallery activities more accessible. This training will continue into the future.

We've also had amazing support from two stalwart volunteers Ken and Mary, who have been helping out at each of our touch tours, providing continuity of support and relationship building with our visitors; a key factor in making these tours a success. We hope to build on what we have learnt over this project and continue to improve the services offered to blind and partially sighted visitors in the future. Volunteers will be key in helping us achieve this.



Thank You (with Cream and Jam on Top)!

On the 5th June, we marked Volunteer Week with a celebratory cream tea at the Botanic Gardens. Education Officer, Emma Williams got the party started with a tour of the Garden, a highlight being shown the 'lady in the bathtub' hidden within the flowers of *Lamprocapnos specabilis*, commonly known as 'bleeding hearts'. Afterwards there was much chat and a chance to mingle with mouthful in the Conservatory. We are SO grateful to all our volunteers and were delighted to catch up with some new and some familiar faces. Our thanks also to the Garden for hosting.



Emma kick starting the party at the Botanical Family Beds



Volunteer revealing 'lady in bathtub'



Cream Teas, Catch-ups and Celebrations in the Conservatory

A chance for volunteers to write about objects significant to their volunteering...

'My Favourite Object...' No.10

Your name: Beth

Your chosen object: Raphael Drawing: Studies of Two Apostles
The museum the object is in: Ashmolean

What connection the object has to your volunteering: I was one of the 'Artist of the Day' volunteers for the Raphael: The Drawings exhibition (June - September 2017), drawing objects on display in a gallery, and encouraging visitors to try their hand at drawing too.

Why you've chosen the object:

As an artist I love all aspects of art, but am particularly passionate about drawing. Raphael is a particular favourite of mine and the Ashmolean has a large collection of his work. I especially liked seeing how his work developed over his short lifetime, and having the opportunity to see drawings from other museums. This particular drawing is outstanding and inspiring to me!



'My Favourite Object...' No.11

Your name: Laura

Your chosen object: The Beehive

The museum the object is in: Museum of Natural History
(Wytham Room, upstairs)

What connection the object has to your volunteering:

I was so amazed by it that it convinced me that the Museum of Natural History was the right place for me to volunteer.

Why you've chosen the object:

My family and I spend a lot of time peering at the incredible work of the bees and we were all thankful to the Museum for such a great idea that allowed us to discover and have a look at the mysterious world of those magic insects.



We hope you've enjoyed this edition of the quarterly volunteer newsletter!
If you have any volunteer news you would like us to share in our next issue (July - September 2018), please get in touch.