



**JOINT COMMITTEE OF BEAMISH,
THE NORTH OF ENGLAND OPEN AIR MUSEUM – 26TH APRIL 2013**

**MANAGEMENT OF THE BEAMISH COLLECTIONS
– REPORT OF THE HEAD OF SOCIAL HISTORY & COLLECTIONS ADMINISTRATION**

1. Introduction

This report is to formally request the de-accessioning or transfer of items in the Museum Collections. Like any healthy museum, Beamish needs not only to continue to collect, but also to periodically review its holdings in the light of future plans and developments, and the ongoing costs of collections care and management.

Most of the items in this report are either badly decayed, duplicated by better examples in the collections or, in the case of some industrial items, contaminated with asbestos and their disposal involves the management and disposal of this hazard.

2. Disposals Policy

The Museum operates within the strict policies and guidelines provided by Accreditation. In addition to this we are very clear that we must never, under any circumstances, dispose of any material whatsoever without the absolute confidence that we know three things;

- i) We know exactly what it is.
- ii) We know exactly why it was collected.
- iii) That for the now and future Beamish the decision that was made in the past to collect is no longer valid or sustainable.

Under the terms of our Museum Accreditation any item no longer required must be offered firstly, without charge, to other accredited museums. The presumption is that where possible material will remain publicly accessible.

Unless an item is being disposed of due to being of poor condition or hazardous in nature.

3. Industrial and Transport Collections

Simplex 40 H.P. Petrol Locomotive 1971-67 Approval is sought to de-accession this item to transfer ownership to the Imperial War Museum. The locomotive has been on loan to the Imperial War Museum since 1981. It forms an important part of their WWI display and if returned to Beamish would not have a role within the engagement. So transferring ownership to the Imperial War Museum will ensure the locomotive will remain accessible within the public domain.

4. Agricultural Collections

Mole Plough 1977-128.1 Approval is sought to de-accession this item due to poor condition. It is in such poor condition that it cannot be operated and it has no role in the future of the museum.

5. Social History Collections

As part of the preparation for the Open Store a project has begun to assess the costume collection. Due to the nature of an open air museum the costume collection at Beamish has to perform a different role to that which it would play within a traditional museum. The costume collection at Beamish needs to be a local collection, reflecting the lives of the people who lived and worked in the North East. In addition the collection needs to be a working resource for the Costume Team to help them create the period costume that the Engagement Teams wear.

Therefore the costume has been assessed on two specific categories, the condition of the garment and the provenance. The condition impacts upon the Museum's ability to use the costume within the open air museum environment and as a working resource, and so garments in poor condition are not suitable for this. For this reason it is proposed that garments assessed to be in poor condition are disposed of. The collection needs to reflect the culture of the North East so the garments need to have a known history of use within the region. Items that do not have a known or local history do not add to the Museum's understanding and ability to interpret what life was like within the North East. So it is proposed that such items are disposed of and offered to a more geographically appropriate museum.

Within the costume collection there are a number of items that came from the Bowes Museum collection when was established. In light of the developments at the museums and their different approaches to the use of costume it is proposed to transfer a number of items back to the Bowes where they can be used within the more traditional museum environment.

Accession No	Name	Condition	Provenance	Reason for Disposal
GS 22/05/ 2002.26	Wedding Dress	excellent	poor	no local provenance
1974-99	Wedding Dress	excellent	medium	Better examples in collection
1997-57.1	Wedding Dress	excellent	strong	Better examples in collection
1983-161.1	wedding dress	fair	poor	not good example
1976-125	wedding dress	good	poor	Better examples in collection
1964-760	wedding dress	good	poor	no local provenance
1969-333	wedding dress	good	poor	no local provenance
1972-658.21	wedding dress	poor	poor	no provenance and poor condition
1972-74	wedding dress	poor	poor	no provenance and poor condition
1996-135	wedding dress	poor	medium	no local provenance
1972-531	wedding dress	fair	poor	no local provenance
1975-190	wedding dress	fair	poor	no local provenance
1979-821	wedding dress	excellent	poor	no local provenance
1971-433	wedding dress	excellent	nothing	no information
1986-194	wedding dress	good	poor	no information
1998-145.1	wedding dress	excellent	poor	no information
1972-223	wedding dress	excellent	poor	no local provenance
1968-147.3	dress	good	nothing	offer to Bowes Museum as originally from their collection
1968-80	dress	good	nothing	offer to Bowes Museum as originally from their collection
1993-221.2 and 1	dress	good	nothing	no local provenance
2001-50.1	mourning dress	good	medium	no local provenance
1970-94.1	dress	good	nothing	no information
1975-101	dress	good	poor	no local provenance
1983-218	dress	good	poor	no information
1979-83.8	dress	good	poor	no information
1965-223	dress	good	poor	offer to Bowes Museum as originally from their collection
1996-170.4	dress	good	poor	no information
1996-.2	dress	fair	poor	no information
1996-170.1	dress	good	poor	no information
1965-150	dress	good	poor	offer to Bowes Museum as originally from their collection
2001-41.3	dress	good	poor	no information
1967-329	dress	fair	poor	offer to Bowes Museum as originally from their collection
1999-110	dress	good	poor	no information
1967-332	dress	good	poor	no information
1992-195.12	dress	good	poor	no information
GS 03/12/2001	dress	poor	poor	no information
1986-187	dress	good	poor	no information
1993-145.1	dress	good	poor	no information
1969-157	dress	good	poor	no information

6. Kelly's Work

While working on removing the collections in Kelly's a number of items have been identified as suitable for de-accessioning and disposal due to the deterioration in their condition or being contaminated.

Object No.	Description	Reason
1978-375.1	OXO enamel sign	condition
1977-162	Key for Half tester bed (tag found on ground)	condition
1978-853	Veterinary X-ray machine	ACMs
1979-360	Exit Signs Albert Cinema	condition
1979-360	Box of carbons from albert cinema	condition
GS 22/01/1985	cinema projector lense	condition
GS 14/12/1984	Box of cinema equipment from Langley Moor	condition
GS 14/12/1984	Cinema Light Switch	condition
1980-404 M	Trough Pin for rope works	condition
1979-601d	table	condition
GS 02/03/1988	Counter	condition
1972-152	Counter front	condition
1985-94.5	Shell petrol pump signs	condition
1979-388.16	Enamel Sign	condition
1982-124 B	Bench	condition

7. Recommendations

The Committee's agreement is sought to the de-accessioning and transfer or disposal of the listed items.

8. Approvals Sought

The approval of the Joint Committee is sought for the de-accessioning and transfer or disposal of the listed items.

KATE REEDER

Head of Social History and Collections Administration

17th April 2013