



Annual Review 2023-24

HSM@100

HISTORY
OF SCIENCE
MUSEUM



UNIVERSITY OF
OXFORD

From the Director

This has been the most amazing, exhilarating, challenging year I can remember in the ten years I have been in post. Not only did my personal tenth anniversary coincide with our Museum's 100th birthday on the first weekend in March, but the stars were truly aligned in so many other ways these past twelve months – enabling us to achieve some truly outstanding results. We are looking towards our second centenary taking enormous pride in what we have achieved at what may be the University's most bijoux, but globally recognised Museum.

It has been a wonderful and truly humbling experience to work with the extraordinary individuals whose commitment, dedication, and persistence in the face of frustration have made it possible for us to celebrate so many successes, and to overcome what at times appeared to be insurmountable challenges, during this very special year: my colleagues in the Museum, across our division GLAM (Gardens, Libraries and Museums), and in the wider University. The generosity of our supporters has once again been hugely encouraging, and has helped us to fulfil so many of our aims. Thank you!

The following pages share some highlights of this very special year – thank you for being part of our story.

Dr Silke Ackermann FSA
Director

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From the University of Oxford's Head of Gardens, Libraries and Museums

The academic year 2023-24 has been a momentous one for the History of Science Museum. Celebrating the simple fact of a 100th birthday would be enough for any institution, but the Museum has abounded with energy and initiative throughout the whole of the past year.

The innovative display of the Museum's Founding Collections, *About Time: One Passion – a World of Histories*, opened in March exploring the collecting instincts of Lewis Evans, and allowing the celebration of the Museum's history to commence in style. This was combined with a series of large-scale, public events (in the Weston Library) which thrilled a wide range of the public over the centenary weekend. Following a restructure, the Museum was able to establish a permanent curatorship for the Founding Collections and another curator has been appointed on a three-year funding scheme for the Sir Martin Wood Curatorship of Oxford Science.

Energy also abounded when the end of the Collecting COVID project (a collaboration with the Bodleian Libraries) was marked in June with a final display in the Museum. *A Healthy Future for All?* was the closing exhibition funded through this innovative programme.

The Museum's strong public engagement work was rewarded when it received two Community Partnership Awards as part of the Vice Chancellor's Award, and when the Multaka Oxford Team (working across the HSM and the Pitt Rivers Museum) won the national 2024 Museums and Heritage Award for Community Engagement.

To cap a brilliant year, more than 184,000 visitors crossed the Museum's threshold to help them celebrate their centenary year, key evidence of the vitality of this thriving Museum! Dr Ackermann and the HSM staff deserve huge congratulations for such an outstanding year.

Richard Ovenden
Bodley's Librarian and Head of Gardens,
Libraries and Museums
University of Oxford



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Headlines 2023-24

Alwaleed Cultural Network Board Meeting

On 29 April, the Museum welcomed the Alwaleed Cultural Network for its inaugural board meeting. At the same event, the MultakaOxford project showcased its work from the History of Science Museum and its partner the Pitt Rivers Museum.



Visitor numbers continue to climb

In the last year, the HSM welcomed nearly 185,000 public visitors. This represents a 10 per cent increase on 2022-2023 and is the highest number of public visitors since 2016.

3 March Public Event at Weston Library

On 3rd March, the HSM presented a drop-in programme which brought the Museum to life. Visitors enthusiastically explored the collection through a range of hands-on experiences, an event supported by Mr John P Leighfield CBE and Mrs Margaret A Leighfield, and by the Beard Charitable Foundation.

Multaka Conference and Sector Sharing Day

On 23 April, the MultakaOxford project hosted its first international conference. Over 130 local, national and international colleagues celebrated the range and depth of international Multaka and enjoyed the collaborative approach that characterises this project.

African Families in the UK

This year the HSM worked with the community group 'African Families in the UK' to introduce young people of African and black Caribbean heritage to the ground-breaking scientific work being done within a few miles of their homes.

1 March Centenary Dinner

The evening of 1 March saw the HSM celebrating its 100th Anniversary with a sumptuous dinner held in the dazzling surroundings of the University of Oxford's Divinity School.

A Healthy Future for All?

With support from the EPA Cephalosporin Fund, the Museum opened the third and final exhibition in its innovative *Collecting COVID* series in June. *A Healthy Future for All?* examines how medical science is using COVID experiences to stay one step ahead of the next pandemic and asks if we can deliver a healthy future for all.

About Time

Lewis Evans was the owner of one of the finest collections of timekeepers from Europe and the Islamic World. Starting with the gift of a sundial when he was 16 years old, he went on to build a collection to rival any museum. In its centenary year the HSM created this new exhibition to celebrate its founding collection.

Facts and Figures

Offered engaging museum experiences ...

47 volunteers supported regular public engagement roles

2,894 students aged 5 to 18 took part in **136** teaching sessions in person and online

3,902 newsletters were opened **3,757** times by **1,002** subscribers (66 were new this year)

Our team ...

31 people make up the Museum team including part-time and project staff, totalling **16.6 full-time equivalent**

178 student teachers took part in training in the Museum

366 adults brought **731 children** (0-16 years old) to enjoy family activities in the Museum

218 students in higher education and training took part in facilitated sessions

184,338 public visitors came to the Museum - a **10 percent increase on 2022-23** and the highest number of visitors since 2016

981 hours were donated by **78 volunteers**, including MultakaOxford, across the full spectrum of our activities.

177,450 visitors experienced our stories and services online across **335,283 website views**

And our visitors gave back ...

£84,500 were spent in the shop - a **4 percent increase on 2022-23**

£38,900 were donated by visitors

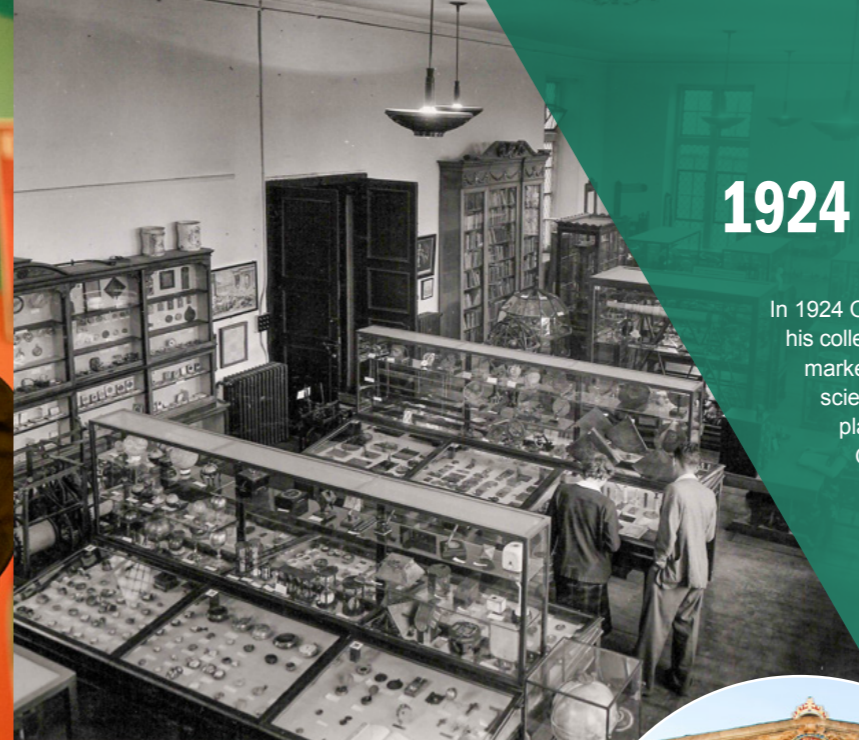
30,504 social media followers liked, shared, and commented on our stories **13,427** times

A very special birthday

Well, we did not receive a letter from the Monarch ... but apart from that we could not have asked for a more memorable 100th birthday weekend in early March: a wonderful array of friends and colleagues joining us in very festive mood in our spectacularly transformed building for a vibrant opening event, followed by an almost magical dinner in the Divinity School across the Sheldonian Yard. And a couple of days later a vibrant, dynamic, thought-provoking, fun day for all took place across Broad Street in Blackwell Hall, attended by enthusiastic visitors of all ages and a huge range of backgrounds and interests, with activities including a first-ever opportunity to put finishing touches to a perfect replica of one of our finest astrolabes that even had specialists go weak at the knees. And to cap it all, the team secretly organised a whole array of colourful balloons cheerfully festooning our building on that gloriously sunny day – making the Director *very* happy, indeed ...

But what made it feel most special was the sense of staging a celebration together as a team with literally every single staff member involved, and many more joining from across GLAM and our Volunteers' team, learning new skills in preparation of a special element of the programme, and sharing hitherto unknown talents – all generously giving up time, postponing holidays, and finding creative ways to make the impossible possible along the way. Our centenary gave us an opportunity to develop and flourish, and to go confidently forward together – and thus set us up beautifully for the public launch of Vision24, our ambitious strategy for complete transformation for the next 100 years. And how better to come together after a day's rest for our very own slightly more private celebration with a very special birthday cake?!

Alexander Ho, Director of Maxson Network Ltd, opens *About Time*, and (below) Silke Ackerman, Suzy Gooch and members of the HSM team, with a very special birthday cake!



1924 – The year it all started ...

In 1924 Oxford University officially accepted Lewis Evans' donation of his collection of historical scientific instruments. This formal acceptance marked the beginning of a new museum devoted to the history of science: Lewis' collection was offered on condition that 'a suitable place' be found to house it. The suitable place that Robert Gunther, first director of the new museum, 'found' was none other than the 'Old Ashmolean Building' on Broad Street.

The discarded shell of another museum doesn't sound like much – but this building, and its original purpose, are very special and much more closely linked to the History of Science Museum than many people realise. In 1683, this building opened as a centre for the new experimental learning in Oxford, with a laboratory, spaces for experimental demonstration and dissection, display space for Elias Ashmole's collection, and accommodation for the Oxford Philosophical Society. It is the only surviving building from the influential movement to reform natural knowledge in the 17th century, which also created the Royal Society in London in 1660.

It was thus a logical step that, in 1924, the Museum of the History of Science (since 2019 the History of Science Museum) was founded in this building. The new museum was intended as a place of safety, preserving objects from the threat of destruction and ensuring that the intellectual and social sophistication of science in past ages could be showcased – while also establishing a new area of scholarship. Robert Gunther and Lewis Evans together were the driving force behind the new museum: Evans donated his extraordinary collection to the University, and Gunther campaigned for them to be displayed in the 'Old Ashmolean'. Gunther's vision and Evans' donation thus restored the building to its original purpose, making it the oldest public museum building in the world still in use.



Lewis Evans – a lifetime of passion for time

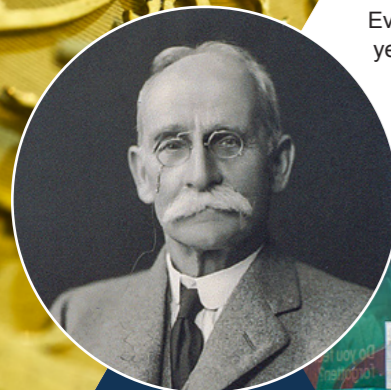
Evans' collection was astonishing for many reasons: its size (over 800 instruments), its quality (Evans collected instruments that could be authenticated by date, name of maker, or circumstances of production), its significance (the masterpieces in the collection were notable for their technical sophistication and for their illustrious owners), and its geographical scope (instruments ranged in time and place, across the European and Islamic worlds). It was a personal collection that rivalled the public museums of the day, and it was the perfect collection to spark interest in the history of science.

Evans' own interest in instruments had started 55 years earlier. In 1869 his father, the head of John Dickinson & Co and a famed antiquarian, gave Lewis – aged 16 and on the cusp of finishing school – a Butterfield sundial.

This gift sparked a lifelong fascination with the ingenious methods and instruments that people across time and place have used to determine time.

Two years after this gift, Lewis became an apprentice to his father's successor at the paper-making company. In the early years of his work at John Dickinson & Co, Lewis travelled extensively, sometimes joining his older brother, Arthur, on far-flung travels. Of the three brothers in the family of five, Arthur was considered the scholar – he shared his father's interest in archaeology and ancient civilisations – and it was Arthur who attended university at Oxford.

Lewis, nonetheless, was tireless in his pursuit of historic instruments and knowledge. The records he left to the Museum reveal that he collected instruments from other collectors, scholars, and antiques dealers across Europe. In London and Paris alone, he bought over 250 instruments from at least 42 dealers between 1880 and 1922.



France General Description Butterfield type F. 86
 "Butterfield Paris"
 An octagonal sundial with a folding gnomon, to the S of which is a compass.
 The gnomon consist of 2 parts, the lower which is in the shape of a fork is fixed between two rings, it lies flat or else stands erect being maintained upright by little feet near its N end which pass through the dial plate & touch a flat spring the pressure of which on the 2 feet makes it stand vertical along the N-S line, & when depressed within to the E or W the pressure on the feet on that side, keeps it flat on the dial plate.
 This sundial is found of northern plates between which there is a third plate to support in shape, the acute

The object that started the collection: the Butterfield-type Sundial, and Lewis Evans' handwritten object card.

The instruments he collected were remarkable for their sophistication. Lewis was an astute collector – and researcher. In addition to the instruments, he also collected an incredible library of medieval and early modern texts on dials, astrolabes, mathematics, and astronomy. He became a well-regarded expert in sundials and

astrolabes, publishing and presenting papers to learned societies. In recognition of his scholarly contributions and generous donation, the University of Oxford awarded him an honorary doctorate.

Lewis Evans built not only an unrivalled collection but also an extended, diverse network of fellow collectors, scholars, and dealers. His collection has provided unparalleled opportunities for research from his day until now.

In the century since Lewis Evans' donation, his collection has continued to inspire and support research at Oxford. The Museum became a centre for the history of science at the University, and its collection has continued to steadily grow, now encompassing (amongst many other

treasures) an unrivalled collection of early astronomical and mathematical instruments from Europe and the Islamic world, and an exceptionally rich set of microscopes. Researchers visit the museum to study not only instruments, but also the manuscripts, early printed books, early photographs, and scientific prints held in the Museum's archive.

When returning to the collection that started it all for the preparation of our centenary, we renewed our connection to the Evans family and created a bold new display of Lewis Evans' collection with the generous support of Maxson Network Ltd. Four of Lewis's great-granddaughters generously shared their time and opened up the family archive to us. Thanks to their support, we had the opportunity to understand Lewis in a new light. Our visitors in turn now have the chance to meet the person as well as the collector in our new display of Lewis Evans' collection.



A museum for the next 100 years

Preparing for, and celebrating, a special birthday invariably leads to a moment of reflection, of taking stock, of focussing on the future.

With our centenary firmly in our sight, we started this period of reflection almost a decade ago – and in the same spirit of coming together in our celebrations early this year, this process of reflection has included every single member of our team: Who are we? Who do we want to be? What are our priorities and goals for the future? Whom do we want to partner with and whom do we want to reach? Most importantly: how do we get there?

Vision24 is our ambitious strategy for the future of our Museum and the goal is clear: to achieve full inclusion – physically, intellectually, and emotionally. And equally importantly: to achieve financial and environmental sustainability.

Vision24 has a myriad of elements to it, but one is right at the centre: our stunning building with its almost unbroken history of housing museums – but now woefully inadequate for 21st century expectations for access, and also in dire need of some tender loving care to safeguard its historic fabric for the future.

Bringing representatives of our Local Planning Authority, statutory bodies, and advisory committees on board right from the start as critical friends, we have been working intensely over the past five years with our architects Purcell to develop plans that the Director has consistently referred to as ‘Oxford’s Louvre Pyramids’ – namely a stunning addition to Oxford’s architectural landscape in its own right that enhances and references our building and unique collections, creates new and cutting edge spaces for visitors, staff, researchers and students, and enables us - together with our many partners - to place our objects centre stage for telling intriguing, beautiful, unexpected stories, bringing the many histories they embody to life.

Vision24 is arguably the most exciting project in our Museum’s history after its founding 100 years ago and it involves every member of our team – as well as our audiences and partners. We no longer want to think in terms of ‘permanent displays’ and ‘special exhibitions’, but rather we envisage dynamic changes and interventions in modular cases and flexibly used spaces that reflect what life outside our walls is like: constantly changing. We want to future-proof our plans as much as we possibly can so that our successors feel that the world (or rather: our bijou building) is their oyster and a canvas on which every new generation can draw afresh. At the time of writing we are focussing on reaching a major milestone for Vision24: submission for Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent.

Throughout this whole period, we have engaged with our many supporters and donors to discuss how they may wish to get involved in Vision24. If you would like to be part of this discussion we would love to hear from you!

Vision24

You are standing in the world's oldest public museum building.

And we are on a transformational journey to preserve the Museum's heritage and safeguard its future.

To find out more about how you, or your organisation, can become involved in supporting the History of Science Museum and Vision24 please contact:

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Staff Changes

Research, Teaching and Collections

Over the past year the Research, Teaching and Collections section has seen significant growth and development.

With the addition of two curators, the team is now well-positioned for future work.



Dr Sumner Braund, the newly appointed permanent Curator of Founding Collections, will lead efforts to engage with the Museum's historic collections in ways that set a strong foundation for the next century.



Thanks to the generosity of Lady Audrey Wood, **Dr Tina Eyre** has joined as Curator of Oxford Science, a three-year post allowing the Museum to expand on its Collecting COVID project and to emphasise the outstanding achievements in Oxford's scientific community.

Dr Lee McDonald's return to the library and archive will also be pivotal in enhancing access to the Museum's 2D collections and driving collaboration.



The section continues to collaborate with Emeritus Curator **Dr Stephen Johnston**, including on the forthcoming Lines of Faith exhibition at the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies.

Audience Engagement and Marketing

Working together to create dynamic, engaging content and experiences is essential for a thriving Museum.

That is why this year the HSM has rethought how to harness its rich pool of storytelling talent for the benefit of all audiences.

As part of the Vision24 programme, the Museum has created a new Audience Engagement and Marketing team to lead and facilitate more effective cross-team collaboration from in-gallery teaching and learning, through displays and exhibitions, to talks and trails.



Helen Pooley has won a well-deserved promotion to the new role of Learning and Engagement Manager. In addition to becoming the resident expert on the ACE Let's Create programme, Helen will lead on the creation of a new formal learning strategy for Early Years to Key Stage 5 (including SEND). A further role will be recruited to strengthen the Museum's digital presence and relaunch the adult programme.



Luena Pimenta Ricardo joined the team as the Multaka Learning and Outreach Facilitator in June, fresh from completing an Oxford MPhil in Global and Health Studies, with a focus on Community Engagement and Social Justice.

Operations



This year has seen HSM reshape its Operations team and introduce the role of Operations Manager and we were delighted to welcome **Jordan Wernyj** to the team. This new role will allow a concentrated focus in support of our capital project, Vision24. In addition, it will allow us to enhance our existing strengths, such as visitor welcome, and to continue to evolve our visitor offer.



Harry Thomas joined HSM one day per week while undertaking an administration apprenticeship within the GLAM Divisional Office, which allows him exceptional breadth to work across GLAM.

Directorate



Helen Jezzard joined the Museum in May and will be bringing her full range of experience – in academic publishing, marketing, charity and corporate communications, IT journalism, university administration and primary schools - to the role of Executive Assistant to the Director.

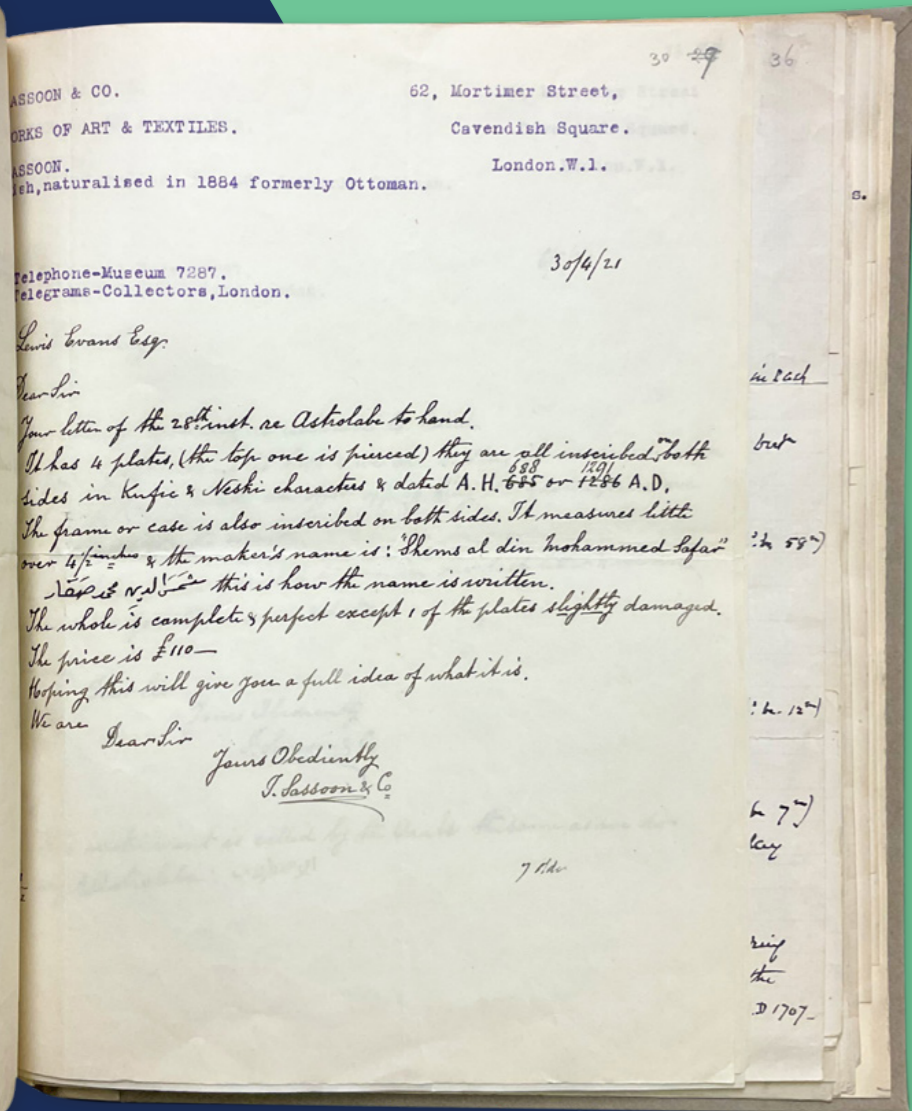
And we said goodbye to ...

In the course of the last year we have said fond farewells to Nuha Abdo (Learning and Outreach Facilitator), Lucy Blaxland (Collections Research and Access Manager), Rebecca Brown (Front of House Supervisor), Sabrina Brown (Front of House Supervisor), Suzy Gooch (Executive Assistant to the Director of the Museum), Ruth Hazard (Front of House Supervisor and Events Co-ordinator), Jess Miller (Operations Manager), Lisa Mitchell (Head of Public Engagement and Programmes), Liam Nash (Administration and Finance Manager) and Hadi al Nuri (Multaka Community Connector).

All of them contributed in their own personal ways to our success over the years and we wish them the very best for the next stage of their lives.

Spotlight on ...

The Museum has continued to accept new items which build on and enhance existing collections. We would like to thank all the donors who have



supported our collections and donated their treasures, as well as those who make it possible for us care for the artefacts.

This year we have enhanced our Marconi collection with a Maritime Marconi shortwave receiver (inv. 18777) which was able to pick up both voice and Morse code transmissions and was used for ship-to-shore communications. The receiver is a rare example dating to the late 1930s and fills a gap in our collection between the wooden sets of the 1920s and the enclosed metal sets of the WWII era.

The Museum was very pleased to accept into the collection two estate sales catalogues (inv. 18780 and 18781) for Lewis Evans' homes in 1920 and 1930. The catalogues cover furniture and other household effects, and include photographs of important pieces as well as some of furnished rooms. The catalogues are annotated with prices and, in some cases, the initials of the buyer (including R T Gunther). They provide insight into Evans' domestic living spaces and give further context for his collection of instruments. For example, they reveal that Evans was an enthusiastic collector of 'decorative' Eastern art objects (Chinese and Japanese porcelain vases and bronzes) as well as late 18th- and early 19th-century English and Scottish landscape paintings.

Letter to Lewis Evans from London antiques dealer J. Sassoon & Co, 1921

In its closing year, the *Collecting COVID Project* has accepted its final items. The collection reflects personal lives during the pandemic and showcases the work of local companies, organisations, and laboratories. It highlights the collaborative nature of much of this work and looks forward to new opportunities and inventions. One fun item in the collection is a set of dominoes (inv. 18755) made from LFD COVID-19 tests. The set shows the ingenious way one family kept themselves occupied and entertained during lockdowns, reusing the suddenly very commonplace plastic items that would otherwise have gone into landfill.

The Museum also gratefully received an Oxford Box Aerosol Shield (inv. 18772). This is a piece of medical equipment developed during the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic. The shield comprises five pieces of acrylic that clip together to form a box which could be placed over a patient's head during intubation, thereby minimising the exposure of medical staff to virus particles. Several local engineering companies worked with Oxford University Hospitals Trust to develop this piece of equipment including the Formula 1 Renault team, based in Enstone, helping out with world-class aerodynamic flow studies. The Oxford Box was used at the John Radcliffe Hospital during the pandemic and tested there in the OXSTAR training suite. It is a fascinating example of the collaborative and cross-disciplinary way of working that evolved through necessity during the pandemic.



In 2021, Catarina Vicente from Oxford University's Sir William Dunn School of Pathology made this set of dominos from disposable COVID-19 lateral flow tests.

Concerned about the amount of plastic waste the tests produced, Catarina reused them to make at least 3 sets of dominos for friends and family.

Inv. no. 18755

Uncovering Knowledge

You asked...

Over the past 12 months, the Museum handled 117 research enquiries, 55 of which included researchers visiting the Museum to look at the collection *in situ*.

The vast majority of the enquiries (84 percent) concerned specific items held by the Museum. The remainder were a mixture of general enquiries and people asking about items they owned.

Many of the researchers were private individuals (42 percent). Of the rest, 19 percent were academic staff and 21 percent were students.

Twenty-six percent of enquiries came from within the University of Oxford, 48 percent from within the UK but outside the University, and the remaining 32 percent were from international researchers.

Scientific Instrument Commission (SIC)

Between 18 and 22 September 2023, the Museum's research strength was in evidence at the SIC's annual symposium in the beautiful Sicilian city of Palermo. Following a hugely successful inaugural session on *Decolonising the Past, Present, and Future of Scientific Instrument Studies* at the previous SIC symposium in Athens in 2022, co-organisers Museum Director, Dr Silke Ackermann, and Professor Helmuth Trischler from the Deutsches Museum in Munich were joined by Head of Research, Teaching



HSM staff at the SIC annual symposium in Palermo

and Collections, Dr JC Niala, who thoughtfully introduced the first of the two parts of the session. At this session the Director reflected on the colonial background of the term 'Islamic Science', while HSM Learning Producer Helen Pooley presented a paper on 'Mahogany in the collection of the History of Science Museum'. Later in the week, Curator Emeritus Dr Stephen Johnson delivered a paper in the *Early Modern Instruments* session entitled 'Some Assembly Required: Instrument Volvelles and Interaction in Giovanni Paolo Gallucci's *Theatrum mundi et temporis* (1588)'.

At the same symposium, Dr Sumner Braund, Curator of Founding Collections, presented her research from the Finding and Founding Project in a panel session entitled *Within the Market: On the Identity of Dealers in Scientific Instruments and the Nature of their Commodities*.

Milking It: Colonialism, Heritage, and Everyday Engagement with Milk

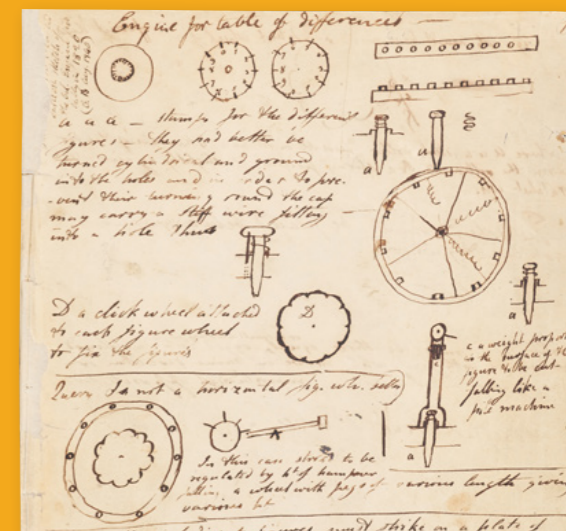
In a partnership with University College, London, Dr JC Niala has won funding from the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) to research the historical forces that have shaped milk and our relationship with this everyday substance. She will be looking at how northern European relationships with milk have influenced global dairy policies especially in Kenya and the UK. The research will cover such themes as the impact of colonialism, industrialisation, climate change, sustainable and unsustainable development, and heritage and health.

Colonial Standards: Using Scientific Instrument Collections in India and the UK to Investigate Mechanisms of Control

Partnering with the Institut Français de Pondichéry, this project examines the social history of mathematical practices in India from the 9th to the 19th centuries. It focuses on the standardisation of weights and measures in South India during the British East India Company period, examining these processes and connecting mathematical knowledge across time and place.

Babbage Project

A significant portion of the Museum's unique archival material associated with Charles Babbage (1791–1871), which is held alongside components of his prototype mechanical computing machine, has this year been conserved and digitised by a team drawn from the HSM, Oxford's Bodleian Libraries and freelance specialists.



The material – which carries the shelfmark

'Ms Buxton', referring to the Buxton family who donated the archive – includes early manuscript notes and drawings on the difference engine, and a print with manuscript annotations by pioneering mathematician Ada Lovelace.

The same print carries Babbage's own manuscript note of a conversation with the astronomer William Herschel about 'computing by steam'.

High-resolution, studio-quality images are now stored in the Museum's digital archives, catalogue records have been enhanced and the physical material has been re-bound, stabilised and foliated.

This important work has secured a unique and valuable part of the Museum's collection for future research, interpretation and exhibition. The images have been prepared for public access via the HSM's *Collections Online* interface. The Museum has already garnered research interest in the archive which it expects to be enduringly popular with scholars.

The Museum is grateful for generous support for this project from the Clay Mathematics Institute and from a United Kingdom Research and Innovation (UKRI) grant held by Ursula Martin, Professor Emeritus in the Department of Computer Science, University of Oxford.



CONSERVATION

Preserving the past

Our conservator, Cheryl Wolfe, has been exceptionally busy this year. Quite apart from preparing objects for display, loan, and relocation, she has also been overseeing the work of asbestos specialist KADEC.

KADEC was brought in to the Museum to consolidate identified asbestos in the collections, allowing safe access and handling and, ultimately, the movement of objects out of temporary storage in the old Special Exhibitions Gallery to allow an archaeological exploration as part of the Museum's *Vision 24* project (see pages 12-13).

In addition this year, a total of sixteen objects have been prepared for loan to the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies (OCIS), allowing rarely seen artefacts to be displayed locally for the next few years.

Conservation work was carried out on eighteen objects for the Museum's new *About Time* exhibition. Repairs were also made to objects removed from the Museum's long-standing Lewis Evans display, including an 18th-century Equinoctial Dial (inv. 45510) which had suffered breakages and heavy tarnishing from its long period on show.

Several other loans were prepared this year as items were sent on loan to the Ashmolean Museum and the Bodleian Libraries in Oxford; the J Paul Getty Museum in Los Angeles; Hampton Court Palace in London; the Faith Museum in Bishop Auckland, County Durham; and the Science Museum Group (Manchester).

In January, Oxford's GLAM (Gardens, Libraries and Museums) Conservators group enjoyed a three-day, practical, intensive workshop on the *Conservation of Wax* at the University of Oxford's Museum of Natural History. The workshop covered issues such as degradation, types of wax mixtures, cleaning, repairing, and colour matching.



Eighteenth-century Equinoctial Dial



PUBLICATIONS AND CONFERENCE PAPERS

Communicating Findings

Museum staff continue to share their knowledge and research with a wide range of audiences nationally and internationally through talks and presentations.

Publications

Niala, JC

(Re)creating a Living Memorial: Urban gardening as a multispecies co-creating practice (2023) *Ecozon@* 14.1: 40–55

(together with Zetterström-Sharp, J and Ondeng' Juma) *Unpacking database terminologies for community participation* in (eds) Alice Stevenson and Cara Krmpotich, *Collections Management as Critical Practice*. London: UCL Press, 2024

Restitution, Repatriation, Reparations in (ed) John Giblin *Routledge Handbook of African Cultural Heritage*. London: Routledge, 2024

What to take and what to leave behind: contemporary ethical collecting for a museum in Oxford in (eds) Susanna Corder, Jan Kavanagh, Ellie Miles, Rosamund Lily West *The Ethics of Contemporary Collecting* London: Routledge, 2024

Developing digital research methodologies for Kenyan collections held in UK Museums with Juma Ondeng' in (eds) JoAnn McGregor, Napandulwe Shiweda, Nicola Stylianou *Decolonial Futures for Colonial Collections* Third Text, 2024

Johnston, S

Jim Bennett (1947-2023): Life as a museum practitioner *Science Museum Group Journal*, 21 (2024), <https://dx.doi.org/10.15180/242105>

Millward, M and Pooley, H
GEM Case Studies Number 31: Social Impact, November 2023.

Romans Revealed,
Ashmolean Magazine 87

Farewell to Jim Bennett

Jim Bennett (1947-2023), the Museum's Director from 1994-2012, is pictured here arranging a photoshoot of key objects for *The Renaissance in Astronomy*, the last exhibition he curated before retiring. Jim was an internationally respected historian of science who led the Museum through its millennium transformation, overseeing new public programmes, greatly increased visitor numbers and digital and web initiatives. His insight, warmth and wit are much-missed.

For an appreciation of his full career, see <https://www.theguardian.com/science/2023/dec/19/jim-bennett-obituary>



LOANS

Sharing treasures

The Museum's loan programme continues to be broad in geographical scope and includes both short-term and longer term loans.

The Museum's Biological safety cabinet (inv. 18543), which is on loan to the Science Museum Group, continues to be a crucial part of the touring COVID exhibition, *Injecting Hope*, and in July moved to its second venue at the Science and Industry Museum in Manchester.

This year the HSM supported our GLAM partners with a loan of two folders of dyed samples by the Berlin Aniline Company (inv. 76075 and inv. 91260), which formed an integral part of the Ashmolean Museum's *Colour Revolution: Victorian Art, Fashion and Design* exhibition. The HSM also has two items in the Bodleian's *Kafka – Making of an Icon* exhibition: an empty cocaine bottle (inv. 10652) and a hypodermic syringe with its case (inv. 85085).

Other loans include the Painswick astrolabe (inv. 47869) – which went to the newly opened Faith Museum in Bishop Auckland, County Durham for an initial period of two years – and Wolsey's Portable Polyhedral Dial (inv. 54054) which takes its place in a major refurbishment of the Wolsey Rooms at Hampton Court Palace (HCP) in London. The dial forms part of the opening exhibitions and will be on loan to HCP for an initial period of two years.



Clockwise from left: the Painswick Astrolabe, a 19th-century hypodermic syringe, and Cardinal Wolsey's Portable Polyhedral Dial.



Empty cocaine bottle on loan to the Bodleian as part of *Kafka: Making of an Icon*

Advisory Bodies

The Director, **Dr Silke Ackermann**, served on the Research Advisory Board of the Deutsches Museum Munich (Germany) and on the Academic Committee for the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies.

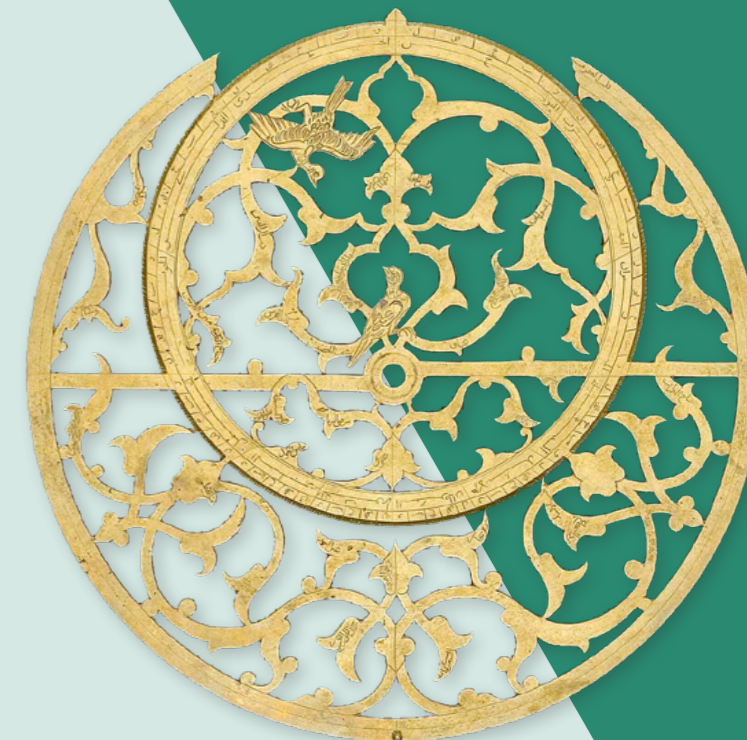
Head of Research, Teaching and Collections, **Dr JC Niala**, served on the Museum of Oxford Development Trust Board, the Research Committee at the V&A, and the Collections and Research Committee at the Royal Museum Greenwich.

Assistant Archivist and Librarian, **Dr Lee Macdonald**, served on the Library Committee and the Astronomical Heritage Committee of the Royal Astronomical Society.

Rete

The Museum continues to administer Rete, the international mailing list on the history of scientific instruments. This year the number of subscribers to Rete grew to 881, of whom 103 were new subscribers, and they are an active group.

Rete's coverage is genuinely global, reaching countries in Europe, the Americas, Asia and Africa. Through the mailing list the Museum not only serves and connects a worldwide community of individual researchers, academics and museum professionals, but also provides the principal means of communication for the Scientific Instrument Commission of the International Union of History and Philosophy of Science.



DISPLAYS

A successful end to the Collecting COVID project

The *Collecting COVID* project ran from November 2021 to June 2024 as a joint venture between the HSM and the Bodleian Libraries to preserve the University of Oxford's research response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

With generous support for the project from the E P A Cephalosporin Fund, the team collected around 120 objects and over 100 oral history interviews, which are now available online. Through this project, the Museum has been able to conserve the historic research of the pandemic, and will be able to share the unique collection with researchers, scholars, and the public, for generations to come.

Through varied public engagement activities – including in-gallery and online displays, tours, school sessions, blog posts, podcasts and social media – many different groups have engaged with Oxford University's research.

In acknowledgement of these achievements *Collecting COVID* was shortlisted for a University of Oxford Vice-Chancellor's Award for Research Engagement.

The final exhibition of this project – entitled *A Healthy Future for All?* – was launched in June 2024 during a celebration to mark the culmination of the project. Co-developed with researchers at Oxford's Pandemic Sciences Institute, these most recent displays investigate how the pandemic strengthened scientific processes and practices, looking at the science behind vaccination and advances made during the pandemic in areas such as clinical trials, ventilation and diagnostic testing. This third exhibition of *Collecting Covid* shows how Oxford University's research during the pandemic is benefitting global healthcare, both now and into the future and gives visitors an insight into how researchers are preparing for the next pandemic.



Stories from a Segregated Society travels to the Houses of Parliament

In January 2024 a 'pop-up' COVID: *Stories from a Segregated Society* exhibition – the second of the Museum's *Collecting Covid* displays – travelled to the Houses of Parliament in London.

At the invitation of Tracey Allen MBE – the Secretariat to the All Party Parliamentary Group on Vulnerable Groups to Pandemics – the Museum developed this in-gallery display in collaboration with University of Oxford researchers and the *Forgotten Lives UK* community. Ms Allen had heard about the exhibition and wanted to raise awareness among MPs and peers about those for whom moving on from Covid was not straightforward.

"The Collecting COVID project ... has bridged the gap between research and policymaking ... With a strong commitment to inclusivity and raising awareness of difficult issues, the project demonstrates excellence in public engagement, creating tangible benefits for society."

TRACEY ALLEN MBE



About Time: One Passion. A World of Histories

To celebrate the Museum's centenary in March 2024, the HSM launched a new display of its founding collection entitled *About Time: One Passion. A World of Histories*.

Generously supported by Maxson Network Limited and designed in collaboration with Easy Tiger Creative, *About Time* built on the findings of the John Fell-funded *Finding and Founding* research project which ran from 2022 to 2023 and was aimed at establishing how, and from whom, Lewis Evans assembled his extensive collection, notably the instruments from the Islamic World.

Working with national and international archives, our John Fell Research Fellow, Dr Sumner Braund, traced the social, political, and economic networks within which Evans operated and which made it possible for him to collect a myriad of unique and significant instruments from Europe and the Western and Eastern Islamic World.

About Time presents these rich histories and stories using a 'digital-first' approach. Visitors engage with a display showcasing Evans' collection as he experienced it, with instruments, rare books and letters displayed alongside each other. The interpretation – which covers object descriptions, social and historical context, and Lewis

Evans' own personal story – is accessible on two touchscreens, enabling visitors to choose which stories they would like to explore and in what order.

This flexible approach also makes it possible for the Museum to share more of its collection by rotating the objects and books on display. It also opens up opportunities to develop temporary, themed interventions in the future.

Exploring Truth and Deception

In an exciting collaboration, the HSM was delighted to support and amplify the work of Professor Patricia Kingori, Professor of Global Ethics, and the Medical Quality Research Group (MQRG) at the University of Oxford.

April Fakes Day brought together thirteen partners from London and Oxford to explore the complex world of hoaxes, forgeries, and fakes.

Between 1 and 6 April, events and displays across the partner institutions highlighted the nuanced nature of fakes, from harmless museum exhibits to life-threatening falsified medicines via disturbing deepfakes.

Professor Kingori's research delves into different types of fakes, challenging us to question what is 'authentic', and the value we place on 'the real'.

The collaboration included a special screening at Oxford's Ultimate Picture Palace of Orson Welles' 1973 docudrama *F For Fake*. This was followed by a question and answer session chaired by the HSM's Head of Research and Collections, Dr JC Niala, during which the audience, together with Professor Kingori and Dr Andrew Dunning, Curator of Medieval Manuscripts at the Bodleian Library, debated the intellectual spaces inhabited by lies, forgeries, truth, and deception.

As part of this project, the HSM was proud to host *The Disease of Greed*, a display of falsified medicine which is available in the Museum and online and which addresses the serious consequences of falsified medicines with contributions from the MQRG's Paul Newton, Celine Caillet, Cathrin Hauk, Sophie Patten, and Diana Lee. In April, this display was visited by a distinguished delegation of over 50 visitors, including key stakeholders such as the World Health Organization, decision-makers of medicine regulatory authorities from all over the globe, and experts and developers of screening technologies. This collaboration was a resounding success and the Museum and Professor Kingori are already planning April Fakes Day 2025.

Celebrating and Learning Together



Vice-Chancellor's Awards 2024

The History of Science Museum's commitment to community involvement was recognised by the University of Oxford in the Community Partnerships category at the 2024 Vice Chancellor's Awards. This year's joint winners were:

- Inclusive Programming for Adults with Learning Disabilities
- My Place, My Science

Inclusive Programming for Adults with Learning Disabilities

Adults with learning disabilities are some of the most vulnerable, isolated and under-represented people in society. Across the University of Oxford's Gardens, Libraries, and Museums division there are initiatives to help combat this exclusion. The HSM offers a programme of free, inclusive sessions in a friendly, welcoming environment. Activities include object-handling *Sensing Culture* Touch Tours for those with sight loss, and *Meet Me at the Museum*, a social group for older people and those living with dementia. HSM inclusive programming is developed with community input to ensure the offerings meet real needs, enabling individuals to access the Museum's collections with confidence.



My Place My Science

Building on the University of Oxford's *Science Together* initiative, this award-winning project worked with community group African Families in the UK (AFiUK) to bring together young people of African and black Caribbean heritage and the world-class scientists working a short distance from their homes in Blackbird Leys – one of the 20 percent most deprived local authority wards in the UK overall, and one of the 10 percent most deprived in terms of education, skills and training.

The HSM-led programme offered over 250 engagement opportunities including workshops on superconducting magnets at the University's Department of Physics; sessions on radio communication at the Museum; star-gazing at Oxford City College; and a sickle-cell disease workshop at Vertex Pharmaceuticals.

The aim was to show the young people what the life of a scientist was like, and to help them see it could be their life too.

The final event was a celebratory science festival at the HSM at which the young participants chose favourite experiments to demonstrate to Museum visitors and members of Oxford's African community.

"I took part in an activity communicating through Morse code and was able to create a circuit connected to a radio. I really enjoyed this trip and hope to return."

13-YEAR-OLD PARTICIPANT MUSEUM WORKSHOP



MultakaOxford

Winning the 'Oscars of the museum world'

The prestigious 2024 Museum and Heritage Award for Community Engagement Programme of the Year was won by MultakaOxford.

Multaka means meeting point in Arabic, and this award recognises the team's achievements in bringing communities together to share the knowledge and heritage of people from all over the world who have made their home in Oxfordshire.

Staff and volunteers from the MultakaOxford team heard the judges praise the programme for using art, culture, and science to unite diverse communities.

The judges were particularly impressed by the way MultakaOxford nurtures an interconnected vision, using museums and collections as springboards for collaboration and mutual understanding.



Hosting the world of Multaka

In April 2024, the Museum welcomed colleagues and donors from around the world to two international events.

Co-planned and supported by volunteers, the inaugural International MultakaOxford Conference was a resounding success, showcasing the human stories of science, art, culture, and faith that lie at the heart of Multaka's mission. Experiencing the fruits of three years of volunteer-led, socially engaged practice, delegates enjoyed a carousel of activities and experienced the power of this team to create a sense of joy and community.

April also brought the opportunity of hosting the first ever Annual Meeting of MultakaOxford supporters Alwaleed Philanthropies and the Alwaleed Cultural Network. The Museum team and MultakaOxford volunteers delighted their prestigious international visitors with a selection of intercultural activities.

Outreach at the Oxford Maths Festival

The Museum was delighted to take part once again in May's Oxford Maths Festival at Templars Square Shopping Centre. This annual event gave shoppers the chance to chat with HSM staff and volunteers, and to get hands-on with a wide range of historic calculating devices and navigational instruments.



Islamic Art Day

MultakaOxford celebrated 2023's UNESCO International Day of Islamic Art by co-creating a family event called *Patterns in the Sky*.

Facilitated by members of the Learning team and Oxford-based Iraqi artist Lana Al Shami, young people at Oxford's Sudanese Saturday School and Al Sham Academy were invited to find connections between science, faith and culture through activities including scientific instrument handling, interactive digital mapping, calligraphy workshops and collage activities.

The event also included work created by the cultural schools displayed in the form of a *mihrab* (a prayer niche in a mosque that indicates the direction of Mecca).

Online, the Director of the Museum, Dr Silke Ackermann, joined Professor Stefan Weber, Director of the Islamic Art Museum in Berlin to discuss *Islamic Art and Science in Museums* as part of a programme organised by the Alwaleed Cultural Network. The event can be watched here: <https://www.alwaleedculturalnetwork.org/en/events/islamic-art/>

Mental Health Awareness

The HSM contributed to the University of Oxford's Mental Health Awareness programme with a staff workshop. Participants started with a tour of *About Time*, the new display showcasing the story of the Museum's founding donor, Lewis Evans, before taking part in some therapeutic craftwork to produce working models of pocket sundials. Featured in the founding collection, these beautiful instruments were often the timepiece of choice for harried merchants in sixteenth-century Europe.

Flexible learning

Digital Learning at the Langley Academy

The HSM's long-term relationship with the Langley Academy – part of the Arbib Education Trust and dedicated to museum learning – has this year gone from strength to strength.

Located in an ethnically diverse area near Slough, the Langley Academy has long valued the Museum's learning offer to support their students' interest in STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths) subjects while also providing cross-cultural enrichment.

Following the launch of its Virtual Classrooms during the pandemic, the Museum has continued to support Langley Academy with a programme of virtual study which offers science workshops that reach every student in the lower school. More than 550 learners aged between 11 and 13 engaged with such topics as disease and vaccination, astronomy, and science in the early Islamic World.

In addition, around sixty Year 7 students visited the Museum this year and were able to explore the galleries in person and watch demonstrations of early electricity experiments.

In January, the Museum's Learning team joined a Langley Academy staff training day, which offered the opportunity to strengthen links between the Trust's primary and secondary curricula.

Embedding research in teaching

This year the Museum hosted five secondary school study days. This long-standing programme of hands-on workshops offers GCSE and A-level students a unique opportunity to meet Oxford University academics and researchers, and to develop an understanding of some social and historical aspects of science.

One of these workshops, *Developing Vaccines*, was run in partnership with the University's Pandemic Sciences Institute and looked in depth at Oxford University's pioneering vaccine research.

A second was entitled *Women in Astronomy* and was run in partnership with the Physics Department with the aim of supporting girls (an under-represented group) in their study of GCSE physics.

This year a new study day – *Resisting Silence* – was developed in partnership with the Pitt Rivers Museum. This delved into the history of slavery in the West Indies including the findings of recent research into the conditions on ships transporting enslaved Africans across the Atlantic Ocean. It also investigated the ways that slavery and colonialism were entangled with scientific endeavour, looking at the hidden stories behind the ivory and mahogany commonly used in scientific instruments at the time. *Resisting Silence* came out of a week-long event for 38 teachers and museum professionals, including the HSM's Learning team, held at Balliol College which explored different ways to teach students about transatlantic slavery using objects.



Praise for Resisting Silence



I THINK THIS IS A REALLY IMPORTANT TOPIC FOR SOCIETY TO DISCUSS AND THE STUDY DAY USED SO MANY DIFFERENT APPROACHES IN TERMS OF SUBJECT AREAS AND SOURCES.

Teacher

THIS WAS A VERY EXCITING AND INFORMATIVE DAY WHERE I FELT CONFIDENT TO ASK QUESTIONS AND LEARN ABOUT KEY HISTORY.

Student

Outreach and co-creation

The Museum's partnership with Cheney School has deepened this year.

In addition to enabling a Year 9 museum project with a 'behind-the-scenes' stimulus visit and delivering multiple workshops at their March sixth-form conference, the Museum worked with a group of fifteen Year 10 students to co-curate *Technology through Time*, a new display in the school's unique Rumble Museum.

The display of technology objects – contributed by the schools' extended community – is designed to support a new history department initiative to teach 'technology through time' to Year 9 students not only in Cheney School but throughout other schools in the River Learning Trust academy group.

The project included six workshops focusing on different curation techniques for exhibitions which involved the students dividing into smaller groups to develop themed narratives supported by both the objects and their personal interests.

Unveiled in July at an opening ceremony attended by staff from both the school and the HSM, *Technology through Time's* themes include telecommunications, television and broadcasting, music and recording, and early home computing. The display will continue to evolve, underlining the rich cross-curricular learning opportunities afforded by the practice of curating. Enthused by experience gained while working on the Rumble display, one Cheney student has applied for work experience at the Museum.

School box project

MultakaOxford partnered with Church Cowley St James Primary school to develop classroom resources that reflect the diversity of children within the school, enabling the entire community to learn about each other's different cultures in a fun and relevant way while challenging stale pre-conceptions and rigid stereotypes.

MultakaOxford volunteers and staff used their own experiences to inform the choices of countries represented in the boxes. Each told the stories of three fictional characters from around the world. In a series of sessions, volunteers found out more about the English primary education system, explored Museum collections to see how their own cultures were represented, and decided what to include in their boxes. The Year 4 pupils at Church Cowley St James loved the boxes and there are plans to create a digital resource for teachers.



SEND Backpacks

This year, with funding from the Science and Technology Facilities Council (STFC), the HSM worked with partners at RAL (Rutherford Appleton Laboratory) Space to create family learning resources that are accessible to children and young people with SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities).

The HSM partnered with students from Iffley Academy, a special school for children and young people with moderate cognition and learning difficulties, autism, and social, emotional and mental health difficulties. The students acted as consultants on backpacks, demonstration boxes and science-at-home booklets. They gave invaluable feedback which helped Museum staff to develop the contents of the backpacks and the range of activities. Once developed, the resources were used in volunteer-led events in the museum and outreach activities at Harwell science campus. More than 200 young people and their families engaged with the Magic Science Show and the backpacks, getting hands on with science and developing confidence in exploring scientific concepts.



Ships, Storms and Climate Change

The Museum took part in *Museum of Climate Hope*, a cross-GLAM multimedia support resource for climate educators which was initiated by researchers at the University's Environmental Change Institute in response to high levels of 'climate anxiety' among young people.

The HSM Learning team supported the Museum of Climate Hope with a successful in-gallery event, *Ships Storms and Climate Change*. Families were able to get 'hands-on' to explore navigational instruments and museum objects featured in the climate-change trail, including the 'storm glass' promoted by Admiral Robert Fitzroy, founder of the Met Office in the 1800s. Visitors also enjoyed engaging with interactive demonstrations by Department of Physics researchers showing how chaos theory has helped improve weather forecasting and climate change modelling.



Volunteer-led tours

This year the Museum has been able to restart its popular volunteer-led museum tours. At the beginning of 2024, MultakaOxford volunteers started offering tours in languages other than English and, during May, a cohort of newly trained volunteer tour guides joined the multi-lingual offering. Visitors to the Museum are now able to book guided tours in English, Arabic, Chinese, Polish, Portuguese, Ukrainian and Urdu. Trained volunteers are also available to offer tours for those with learning difficulties and visual impairments.

Teachers' Consultative Group

As well as providing introductory sessions on museum learning to groups of trainee teachers from the University of Oxford secondary science PGCE programmes, Oxford Brookes University primary PGCE programmes, and an in-service training programme for teachers at the Cherwell School, the HSM contributed to a teachers' development day at Trinity College and

an Oxfordshire history teachers' network conference in July. The Museum is also piloting a new teachers' consultative group. Following July's successful in-person professional development event, a group of teachers who regularly work closely with the HSM have engaged in further online discussions with learning and collections staff. Listening to insights from teachers is key to optimising the value of the HSM's learning programme for future students.

Alice's Day

MultakaOxford's young people group created a storytelling trail for this year's Alice's Day celebrations on 6 July. The trail was called *Heroes, Fabulous Monsters and Curious Creatures* and it showcased museum objects from different cultures, taking visitors on a tour of objects and stories from Poland, Pakistan, and China. MultakaOxford and GLAM volunteers also led such in-gallery activities as making story-cubes which used objects to inspire stories.

Outreach to Pakistan: The Lahore Mela

In October, the Museum was invited to take part in the Lahore Mela, a huge science festival that is one of Pakistan's most important popular science engagement events.

The HSM's Learning team gave a virtual seminar exploring early scientific instruments from the Islamic World, including a selection from the Museum's astrolabe collection and a remarkable celestial globe made by a family of highly accomplished instrument makers based in 1700s Lahore.

Over 50 visitors attended the virtual session including families. The Museum has plans to build on this relationship, extending its role in fostering cross-cultural conversations and supporting ongoing research into the provenance of objects from its founding collections.

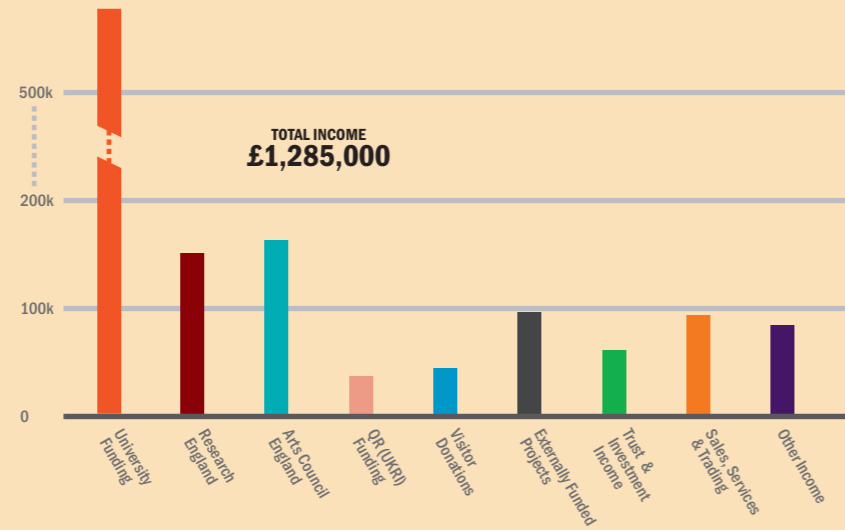
Income

The HSM achieved a £85,000 surplus by the end of the financial year 2023/24. Within year, USS pension contributions decreased from 21.6 percent to 14.5 percent, and the Museum was asked to save £22,000 in order to ringfence a surplus to offset future costs from the University-wide pay and conditions review. The HSM achieved this £22,000 saving and attained additional surplus through non-pay expenditure savings.

In order to facilitate the *About Time* exhibition and some movement of collections, the HSM drew down more trust funds during the year than had been anticipated for in the third-quarter

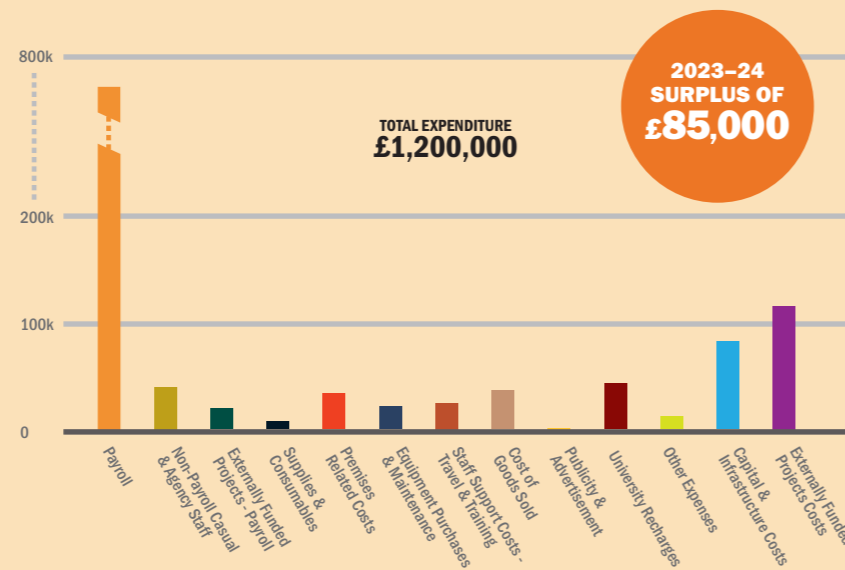
forecast. The award-winning Front of House team welcomed more than 188,000 visitors between August 2023 and July 2024, and raised over £41,000

in donations. Shop sales also remained strong in comparison to previous years with £84,000 worth of sales made within the financial year.



Expenditure

The HSM managed a large underspend in property management because of asbestos work – required by safety checks of the Museum’s collection – to be carried out in 2024-25. This work was later funded by the Collections Move Project within the GLAM division. Other small saving variances in non-pay expenditure were achieved by the Museum by a decrease in activity or was otherwise funded from external sources.



Front of House and visitor experience

This has been a year of highs: exceptional visitor numbers, our highest-ever retail income, and an amazing level of visitor engagement in our galleries. It has also been a year of celebrations and new beginnings. Our Front of House team and volunteers were proactively involved in every aspect of our centenary celebrations while our visitor offer has been substantially refreshed and enhanced through the introduction of new tours, autism-friendly events, and a new family-oriented offer.

Visitor welcome

We were delighted to have sustained a strong post-COVID recovery. Our team welcomed 184,338 public visitors, a 10 percent increase on 2022-23 and the highest number of guests that we have had the pleasure of hosting since 2016.

Our Front of House colleagues and volunteer Welcome Hosts strive to give our guests a warm welcome to the Museum, and this year we handled an unprecedented number of visitor queries: 21,521 in total. This represents a 64 percent increase on last year, and is a fantastic demonstration of our team’s efforts to be accessible, engaging and informative.



Reward and recognition

We would like to congratulate our Front of House Supervisors, each of whom earned a Recognition Award for their effort in promoting our till donations programme and supporting group bookings.

Visitor giving and onsite retail

Visitor donations form a key part of our funding. Our Front of House team and Visitor Welcome Hosts are active fundraisers for the Museum. This year through their efforts and the generosity of our guests we raised £39,000.

Onsite retail has grown substantially within the Museum since its inception to form an increasingly important funding stream. This year we reached new heights post-COVID and through the hard work and dedication of our Front of House team achieved our highest-ever retail income of £84,500.

Tours and activities

Volunteer Museum tours

We are delighted that we were able to re-introduce a regular programme of free HSM Museum tours as part of our public offer. We are privileged to work with an exceptionally knowledgeable and talented team of volunteer guides, who lift the veil on some of the hidden gems within our collections.

Family-friendly activities

This year the Front of House team worked in tandem with our Learning team to plan and develop a new family offer entitled *How Does it Work?* which combines SEND-friendly activity backpacks, object handling and family trails to enhance our weekend guests’ experience.

Visitor Giving Income
£39,000

Retail Income
£84,500

Visitors Queries Answered
21,521 **64% INCREASE**

Visitors Welcomed
184,338 **10% INCREASE**

Museum Staff

Senior Leadership Team

Dr Silke Ackermann FSA
Director

Suzy Gooch
Executive Assistant to the Director (until March 2024)

Helen Jezzard
Executive Assistant to the Director (from May 2024)

Cai Marshall
Operations and Commercial Manager

Lisa Mitchell
Head of Public Engagement and Programmes (until March 2024)

Dr JC Niala
Head of Research, Teaching and Collections

Andrea Ruddock
Head of Marketing, Digital and Communications

Research, Teaching and Collections

Lucy Blaxland
Collections Manager (until March 2024)

Dr Sumner Braund
Research Fellow (to July 2024) then Curator of Founding Collections

Sarah Chard-Cooper
Collections Manager

Dr Tina Eyre
Curator, Collecting COVID Project (until June 2024) then Sir Martin Wood Curator of Oxford Science

Anna Grybenyuk
Digital Asset Management System Manager (shared post with Pitt Rivers Museum)

Dr Stephen Johnston
Curator Emeritus

Łukasz Kowalski
Collections Management Systems Manager (shared post with the Museum of Natural History)

Owen Shaw
Display Technician

Cheryl Wolfe
Conservator

Public Engagement and Programmes

Chris Parkin
Learning Producer

Helen Pooley
Learning Producer

Multaka Oxford

Nicola Bird
Project Manager

Nuha Abdo
Learning and Outreach facilitator (to January 2024)

Hadi al Nuri
Community Connector (to May 2024)

Helen Pooley
Learning and Outreach facilitator

Luena Abigail Ricardo
Learning and Outreach facilitator (from June 2024)

Operations

Rebecca Brown
Front of House Supervisor (until July 2024)

Sabrina Brown
Front of House Supervisor (until July 2024)

Marie Chapman
Gallery Assistant

Phoebe Clothier
Gallery Assistant

Manfred Driver
Gallery Assistant

Peter Eills
Gallery Assistant

Ruth Hazard
Front of House Supervisor (until March 2024)

Chris Humphrey
Front of House Supervisor

Karen Humphrey
Gallery Assistant

Rana Ibrahim
Gallery Assistant

Jess Miller
Operations Manager (until March 2024)

Silvia Pinna
Front of House Supervisor

Izzy Treyvaud
Front of House Supervisor

Jordan Wernyj
Operations Manager (from March 2024)

Honorary Research Fellow

Dr Elizabeth Bruton

Students working closely with the History of Science Museum

Mathilde Daussy-Renaudin
Collaborative Doctoral Award Student

GLAM (Gardens, Libraries and Museums) Front of House Pool, Shared Services within GLAM, GLAM Divisional Office, GLAM Volunteer Services, and the Central University teams

We warmly thank all colleagues for their unstinting support throughout the year and for generously sharing their knowledge and expertise: your contributions are greatly appreciated.

Board of Visitors

Professor Shadreck Chirikure
Edward Hall Professor of Archaeological Science; Director of RLAHA; British Academy Global Professor

Professor Nandini Das
Tutorial Fellow in English at Exeter College, University of Oxford

Professor Roger Davies (Chair)
Philip Wetton Professor of Astrophysics and Fellow of Christ Church College, University of Oxford

Ms Olivia Holder
Marshall Scholar at the Faculty of History, University of Oxford; Arts Support Officer, St John's College, Oxford

Imam Monawar Hussain MBE DL FRSA
Third Chairman and Founder of the Oxford Foundation; Imam of Eton College

Dr Catherine M Jackson
Associate Professor of the History of Science in the Faculty of History, University of Oxford (acting for Professor Robert Iliffe)

Mr Henry Kim
Associate Vice Provost and Director of the Michael C Carlos Museum at Emory University, Atlanta, USA

Richard Ovenden
Head of Garden's Libraries and Museums and Bodley's Librarian, University of Oxford

Professor Sir Andrew Pollard
Director of the Oxford Vaccine Group in the Department of Paediatrics at the University of Oxford; Consultant Paediatrician at Oxford Children's Hospital; Fellow of St Cross College, University of Oxford

Dr Venetia Porter
Honorary Research Fellow, (formerly Assistant Keeper, Islamic and Contemporary Middle East Art), British Museum

Professor John Wheeler
Professor of Physics and Fellow of University College, University of Oxford

One of the Proctors or the Assessor of the University of Oxford

Thank you for your support in 2023-24

Thank you to everyone who has donated, volunteered, visited and supported the History of Science Museum in 2023-24. We are incredibly grateful for the generosity you have shown to the Museum, which has helped us in our mission to inspire both in-person and virtual visitors over the past year.

Philanthropic support from individuals and organisations will continue to be vital for the Museum in future, and will ensure the successful delivery of our ambitious Vision24 transformation.

We would like to thank the following for their particularly generous support during this year:

ACE (Arts Council England)

Alwaleed Philanthropies

Art Fund

Beard Charitable Foundation

E P A Cephalosporin Fund

Clay Mathematics Institute

Professor Raymond Allen Dwek CBE, FRS and Mrs Sandra Dwek

Caroline and David Fox

Mr John P Leighfield CBE and Mrs Margaret A Leighfield

Maxson Network Ltd

UK Research and Innovation

Lady Audrey Wood OBE



Be part of making the History of Science Museum a museum for the future

If you are interested in making a donation to the Museum, please visit <https://www.development.ox.ac.uk/history-of-science-museum>

To find out how you, or your organisation, can become involved in supporting the History of Science Museum and Vision24 to help the Museum fulfil its potential, please get in touch:

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Art Fund



**HISTORY
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