

1932  
2022  
CELEBRATING 90 YEARS

JEWISH  
MUSEUM  
LONDON

## KEY AIMS

DELIVER UNIQUE BENEFITS TO OUR AUDIENCES AND COMMUNITIES

WORK TOWARDS FINANCIAL RESILIENCE

CAPITALISE ON THE SKILLS, NETWORKS AND SYSTEMS WITHIN THE JEWISH MUSEUM LONDON

POSITION THE MUSEUM WELL INTO THE 'NEW NORMAL'

# MUSEUM IMPACT REPORT

October 2022 – March 2023

# MEET THE TEAM

## Leadership at the Museum



**Nick Viner**  
Chair of Trustees



**Sue Shave**  
Acting Museum Director

## Message from the Chair of Trustees

In November, the Museum was extremely proud to be awarded National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) status for 2023-2026 by Arts Council England, one of only eight London museums to receive this accolade and funding. Other funding highlights included a grant from DCMS/Wolfson to support the work of our new collections storeroom, and donations to develop and launch a new initiative, The Conversation Room.

The first theme that was explored in the Conversation Room was the theme of Havdalah (separation), particularly in relation to the current war in Ukraine. A panel discussion event explored these themes, alongside the role of museums. One speaker remarked, "It might not seem radical, but starting conversations in museums is radical. We don't do it enough."

I want to take this opportunity to thank Frances Jeens, who stepped down as Director at the end of October, after 10 years with the Museum. We wish her every success in her new role as Head of Education and Engagement at UK Parliament. At the same time, we were delighted to welcome Sue Shave, formerly Director of Discover Bucks Museum, as Acting Director.

As ever, I'd like to thank our all funders – current, and prospective – for their support, along with our partners, our volunteers, our Trustees, and above all, our staff, for their tireless and creative work.

## Staff



**Adam Corsini**  
Senior Collections  
Engagement Manager



**Eliana Mendelsohn**  
Learning Officer



**Emma Crew**  
Engagement  
Programme Manager



**Helen Atkinson**  
Operations Manager



**Lisa Shames**  
Senior Learning  
Manager



**Hanna Bubien**  
ARSP Intern



**Maria Duarte**  
Collections Assistant



**Megan Clout**  
Visitor Experience  
Officer



**Miranda Baxter**  
Senior Projects and  
Operations Manager



**Oliver Simnock**  
Finance Officer



**Rachele Nizi**  
Collections Engagement  
Assistant



**Rhiannon Parkinson**  
Museum Manager



**Shereen Hunte**  
Learning Programme  
Manager



**Tali Krikler**  
Head of Strategy



**Yasmin Downie**  
Learning and  
Engagement Assistant

## Trustees



**Alexina Mwense**  
Finance Director



**Damien Egan**



**Daniel Korski**



**David Meller**



**Frances Jeens**



**Gina Koutsika**



**Jamie Beaumont**  
Treasurer



**Kelly Webb-Lamb**



**Liz Cleaver**



**Robert Swerling**



**Tanya Persey**



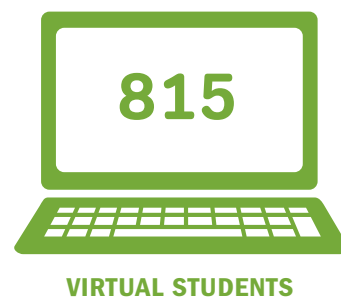
# SCHOOLS AND TEACHERS



**From 1st October 2022 to 31st March 2023, we welcomed nearly 19,000 bookings within our multi-stream learning programme. We are pleased to have delivered visits across all our offers for schools, both in and outside of the Museum.**

Our most popular workshops were 'Totally Torah' and 'Shabbat Shalom', two Judaism workshops, followed by 'Every Object Tells a Story' and 'A Child's Journey', two Holocaust education workshops.

## Learning in Numbers



## The Sandford Award

In 2022 the Museum's Learning and Engagement Team was awarded the Sandford Award for Education. This is a nationally recognised award for excellence in heritage education. The Museum was presented with the award at a virtual ceremony in December 2022.

### The assessors for the Museum said:

"The Jewish Museum London have an excellent learning team who explain all aspects of Jewish life to schools in a sympathetic, knowledgeable way through the themes of migration, family, faith and culture. They are helpful to those who are familiar with the subject and informative and clear if it is a new topic. Sessions are in the museum or virtual, all are supported by excellent relevant artefacts to handle or admire. Pre and post visit literature, related to the curriculum, is useful and appropriate to all ages. A session from the museum will teach your pupils to think and question and through the study of Jewish life encounter many issues that are currently relevant."

## Teacher Feedback

During this period, all feedback from schools has rated us either 'Good' or 'Outstanding' for both quality of learning experience and quality of teaching.

**"Informative, educational, sobering."**  
Key Stage 3 teacher – 'Never Again Auschwitz' workshop

**"Enriching and valuable."**  
Key Stage 1 teacher, 'Shabbat Baking' workshop

**"The children got to touch artefacts and objects that are better than showing pictures, which is the best I can do in the school."** Key Stage 2 teacher – 'Totally Torah' workshop

**"A lot more in-depth than the classroom. This session brought the lesson alive."** Key Stage 5 – 'Migration and Movement' workshop



## ARSP Volunteer



Every year the Museum welcomes a volunteer from the Action Reconciliation Service for Peace, to work within the Learning Team. This is an organisation based in Germany that was set up in the wake of the Second World War to promote peace in Europe. From September 2022 to August 2023 we are being joined by Hanna Bubieñ.

"I am the ARSP volunteer at the Museum for the academic year 22–23. I assist the team with daily tasks, such as preparing for the school workshops, creating resources for family days and baking workshops, or doing some object research for the 'Curious Minds' programme and 'Inclusive Judaism Library'."

As an aspiring teacher, my year with the Learning team is very useful. It is a great opportunity to develop a range of skills and to learn how to engage students of different ages, and to spark their interest in creative ways.

In addition, participating in the ARSP project allows me to learn more about the diverse Jewish culture and history, which has influenced and intertwined in so many ways with the traditions and history of the country I come from, Poland."

## Emotional Evaluation

Alongside our formal schools feedback process, we also engage in a process of emotional evaluation for our students. We believe it is important, not only to ensure that we teach to a high standard, but also to understand the emotions of our students as we address difficult topics.

In particular, we use emotional evaluation as part of our Holocaust education programme. At different points during these workshops, students are asked to select the emotion they most strongly felt whilst taking part in a certain activity. Emotions were shown in both visual and text form, for ease and accessibility.

Over the past 6 months we piloted a digital method of collecting this data by using audience polling click pads. This enabled us to use an interactive approach to collect instant data.

The data from the emotional evaluation has shown us that students experience a range of emotions when learning about the Holocaust, and that the majority of students felt inspired by the testimony they heard and understood their role in standing up against racism and discrimination today.

Each workshop contains survivor testimony (in either a video or audio format) alongside other activities, such as object handling, a visit to the Museum galleries, exploring a piece of artwork, or creating a piece of artwork. We asked the students how they felt at the start of each workshop, again after hearing the testimony, and finally, at the end of the workshop. We also asked them to reflect on why they chose that particular emotion.



Happy



Angry



Sad



Inspired



Virtual Broadcasts

Virtual broadcasts are an important way to work with large numbers of students, who may not have the opportunity to visit the Museum in person. We delivered a series of free broadcasts for primary and secondary students throughout the autumn and winter.



IN OCTOBER WE DELIVERED A SUKKOT BROADCAST FOR PRIMARY STUDENTS. THIS WAS ATTENDED BY 366 STUDENTS FROM 6 SCHOOLS.



IN NOVEMBER WE DELIVERED A KINDERTRANSPORT BROADCAST FOR PRIMARY STUDENTS. THIS WAS ATTENDED BY 113 STUDENTS FROM 5 SCHOOLS.



IN DECEMBER WE DELIVERED OUR SECOND ANNUAL CHANUKAH BROADCAST FOR PRIMARY STUDENTS, WHICH WAS ATTENDED BY OVER 6,600 STUDENTS FROM 75 SCHOOLS ACROSS THE UK.



IN JANUARY WE DELIVERED OUR THIRD ANNUAL HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL DAY BROADCAST FOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS. THIS WAS ATTENDED BY 1,689 STUDENTS FROM 12 SCHOOLS ACROSS THE UK. WE EVEN HAD ONE INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL ATTEND FROM ROME, ITALY.

The 2023 Holocaust Memorial Day broadcast for Secondary Schools was in line with the theme of 'Ordinary People/Ordinary Objects'. Through a guided object talk, we looked closely at this green toothbrush from our collection to consider how ordinary objects take on new meaning as evidence of genocide. A live candle lighting and a minute's silence followed the object talk.



1,689 STUDENTS



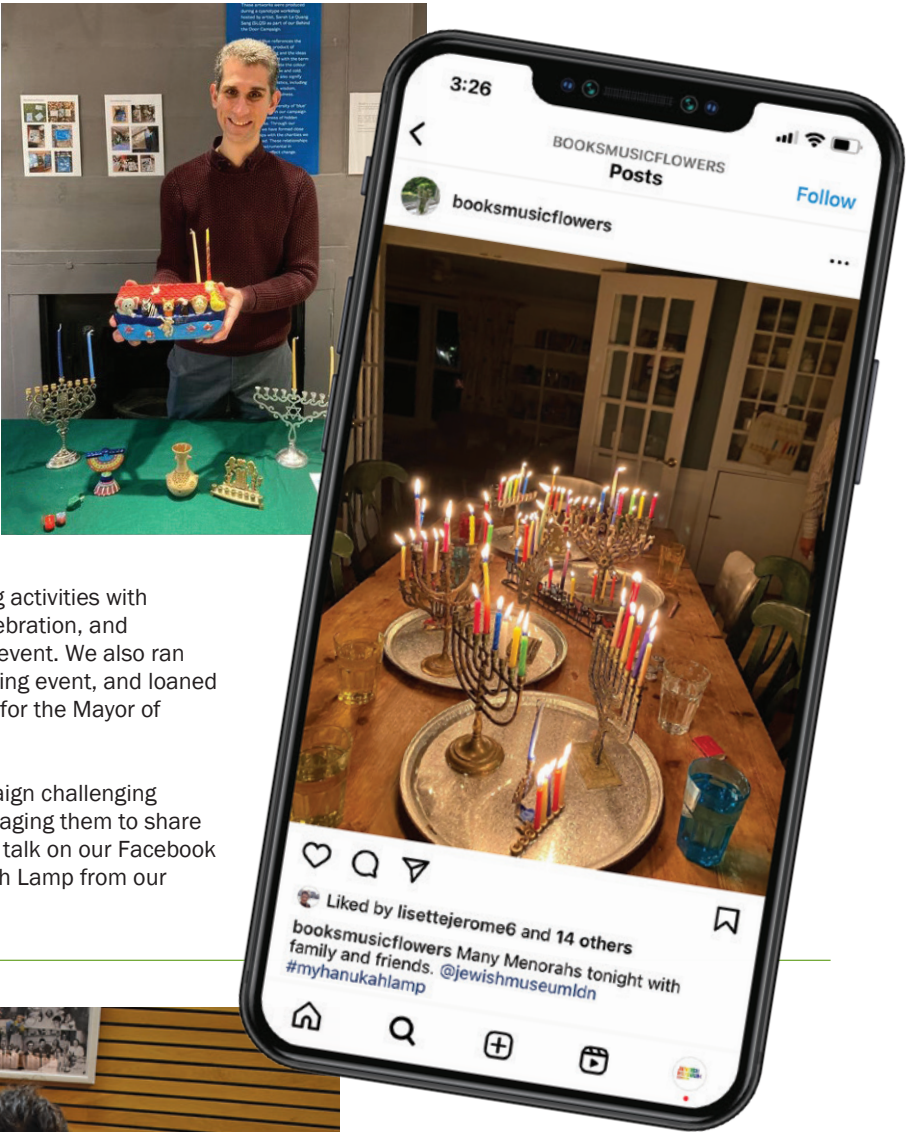
EVENTS

Chanukah Events at the Museum

The Museum coordinated many different activities for the festival of Chanukah, between 18th and 26th December 2022. These events took place in the Museum, digitally, and at external partner organisations, and reached engagement numbers of over 3,400.

In addition to holding a Family Day at the Museum, in partnership with Jewish Book Week, we also partnered with Chabad Islington, Museum of the Home and Lewisham Council. We facilitated object handling activities with Museum of the Home as part of their Family Celebration, and at Chabad Islington's Arsenal Emirates Stadium event. We also ran arts and crafts at Chabad Islington's candle lighting event, and loaned the Gruss Chanukah Lamp to Lewisham Council for the Mayor of Lewisham's Chanukah event in Catford.

Finally, we held a successful social media campaign challenging participants to a Chanukah #cookoff and encouraging them to share #MyChanukahLamp. We also released an object talk on our Facebook page looking at a Bukharan Soapstone Chanukah Lamp from our collection to celebrate this Festival of Lights.



Chanukah Family Day with Jewish Book Week

We partnered with Jewish Book Week to run our Chanukah Family Day. We ran doughnut baking, an interactive session looking at a Trench Art Chanukah Lamp, dreidel games and a candle lighting. Jewish Book Week ran a series of talks by Jewish authors.

Nearly 150 people joined us for this family day, making it our busiest Chanukah Family Day since before the Covid lockdown period.



Yiddish Theatre Event

In a long-standing collaboration between Queen Mary University of London (QMUL) and the Jewish Museum London, and as part of the Being Human and Tsitsit Festivals, the Museum hosted a theatrical production, ‘*Extracts of Yiddish Theatre*’, the first event of this kind since reopening after the Covid pandemic.

We welcomed a packed house that was entertained and delighted for over two hours, with music and performances produced by director, translator, historian of the Jewish East End, and QMUL Research Fellow Dr Vivi Lachs.

Described by one visitor as being a “fantastic production”, the evening featured six theatrical and music pieces dating from 1885–1947, including an excerpt of *The Merchant of Venice* and Yiddish music hall favourites. This production was the culmination of research supported by the Arts and Humanities Research Council.



Chocolate Week

The Jewish Museum London ran our first ever ‘Chocolate Week’ in February Half Term 2023. We ran a series of events in our Community Learning Kitchen, which celebrated the link between Jewish history and chocolate.

Our most popular event was our Valentine’s Day Challah Hearts workshops. Another popular session was our chocolate hamantaschen baking.

“All was perfect and pretty well organised.”

“Fun, lovely atmosphere, friendly staff.”



Purim Family Day

This March, to celebrate Purim, we held a ‘*Purim & Pride Family Festival*’. This festival explored the relationship between the Purim story and the modern-day LGBTQ+ community. Families attended the festival and participated in a range of activities, including baking rainbow-coloured hamantaschen in our Community Learning Kitchen. They also decorated their own masks and made puppets that celebrated their own identities and what made them special.

To end the festival, the families, complete with their new masks and noise-makers, listened to a telling of the Purim story. The festival was a brilliant opportunity to explore our Inclusive Judaism programme within a fun and educational environment.

Holocaust Memorial Day

To mark Holocaust Memorial Day, the Jewish Museum London led an evening event and a public candle lighting on 24th and 26th January, respectively.

Holocaust Memorial Day Event: Ordinary People

The Museum welcomed visitors to the first in-person Holocaust Memorial Day event since the pandemic. This event reflected on the theme ‘Ordinary People’ by hearing the testimonies of Elsa Shamash, a Kindertransport refugee, and Rahima Mahmut, Artist, activist and member of the Uyghur community. Through listening to our speakers’ experiences, we remembered the Holocaust and reflected on human rights violations in the world today, and how we can act to stand up against them.

This event was British Sign Language interpreted, courtesy of our partnership with Camden Council, and concluded with a candle lighting by the Mayor of Camden, Councillor Nasim Ali OBE.

“The two speakers were excellent and discussed different genocides, but were both very moving. They were also clear that the world had not learned, that we all need to act, and that we must all fight hatred.”

Public Candle Lighting: 26 January

Sue Shave, Acting Director, led a candle lighting for over 70 visitors, volunteers, and members of staff. Elsa Shamash, former Kindertransport refugee, was invited to light the candle. Our volunteer, Rabbi Geoffrey Shisler, sang the memorial prayer and said Kaddish before a minute’s silence.

A school group, who had been hearing Elsa’s testimony, also joined us for the candle lighting. After the candle lighting, visitors had the opportunity to join a new tour, created and led by Engagement Programme Manager, Emma, and our Museum Manager, Rhiannon. This tour explored objects in our collection that relate to the Holocaust, with a focus on the lives of those affected.



Black History Month Programming

As part of our commitment to the Board of Deputies’ ‘Commission on Racial Inclusivity in the Jewish Community’, we offered Jewish Leaders a complimentary space on our ‘*Race in Religion: Black History*’ Tour and organised a roundtable discussion for Jewish Leadership. These sessions were open to CEOs, Chairs, Trustees and Leaders in Jewish organisations.

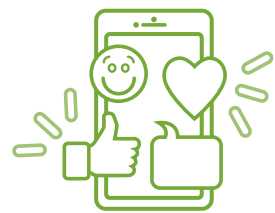
Led by Learning Programme Manager, Shereen Hunte, attendees got the opportunity to discover objects in our collection that reflect Black and Jewish history, exploring the role of ‘Blackness’ in religious texts, the impact of allyship between communities, the intersections of Black and Jewish identities and much more.

We were joined by Leaders from Keshet UK, the Board of Deputies of British Jews, the Council for Christians and Jews, and the Community Security Trust.



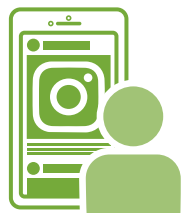
# ENGAGEMENT

## Social Media in Numbers



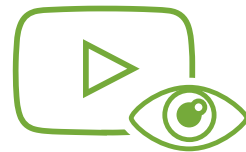
22,156

FACEBOOK PAGE REACH



17,331

INSTAGRAM REACH



59,582

YOUTUBE VIEWS



613,000

TWITTER IMPRESSIONS

Social media themes during this period included Black History Month, Jewish Heroes, and Holocaust Memorial Day.

## Social Media Campaign – #MyChanukahLamp

In the lead up to Chanukah 2022, the Museum ran a successful Chanukah social media campaign entitled #MyChanukahLamp. The campaign involved posting a variety of Instagram content including stories, pictures and videos. We also asked our followers to share their own Chanukah photos, use our hashtag and tag us. The online engagement during this period was excellent and we used this as an opportunity to branch into making Instagram reels to further showcase our collections.

In the lead up to this campaign we also ran a virtual cook off, collaborating with our Community Learning Kitchen programming. We posted a series of Chanukah recipes and challenged followers to try them out from home.



jewishmuseumlondon 20w

Today's #MyHanukahLamp is a bit special. This photo is from our our Head of Collections whose family celebrate both Christmas and Hanukah. Do you celebrate both? To all those that do we wish you both a Merry Christmas and a Happy Hanukah! Share with us your celebration pictures, tag us and use the hashtag #MyHanukahLamp

#celebration #Hanukah #Hanukahlamp #Jewish #community #family #culture #heritage #christmas #christmastree

preraphaelitesociety 20w



## Jewish Chronicle Partnership – The Jewish Museum in 100 Objects

During the Museum's post-Covid reopening period in the summer of 2021, we began a partnership with the Jewish Chronicle. This partnership gives us the opportunity to showcase 100 objects within the Jewish Museum London's extensive collection of Judaica and social history. Every three weeks we submit an article exploring one specific object in our collection of more than 40,000 objects, which is then published in the Jewish Chronicle.

These articles are written by our staff, volunteers, placements, and trustees and are a brilliant opportunity for the Museum to research an item from our archives, whilst also helping the public to learn about the incredible breadth of our work and our collection.

This project has given us the opportunity to take stock of the minutiae of our collection, whilst also exploring how our collection can interact with both historical and contemporary themes and experiences, and celebrating the history that we preserve.

So far we have provided over 30 articles, looking in detail at items we hold in the Museum. Some examples include: a Sephardi loom, a travel ticket for a Kindertransport refugee, a pair of boxing shorts from the 1932 Olympics, and an offertory book from the Great Synagogue.

We thank the Jewish Chronicle for their support, and for helping us to celebrate our incredible collection.



SO FAR WE HAVE PROVIDED OVER 30 ARTICLES, LOOKING IN DETAIL AT ITEMS WE HOLD IN THE MUSEUM

Minchah Daven with Tefillin, Tallit and Siddur



## Collecting Inclusive Stories and Teaching Inclusive Judaism

### Collecting Inclusive Stories

Through the generous funding from the Association of Independent Museums, the Jewish Museum London has travelled across England to collect a wide range of images that reflect the diversity of the Jewish Community. The *Collecting Inclusive Stories* programme has allowed the Jewish Museum London to build long-lasting relationships with a diversity of Jewish communities and individuals around the country. It has inspired connections, trust and relationships between the Museum and communities around the UK, from Sussex to Birmingham, and Hertfordshire to Leeds. It has provided the resources to carefully step into a variety of community spaces, from Orthodox to Progressive Synagogues, and Black Jewish networks to LGBTQIA+ Jewish Forums. This project has affirmed many people's confidence in the Museum as a space to authentically represent their unique, regional stories. So far, we have collected over 200 images.

### Inclusive Judaism: Teachers Empowerment

The Jewish Museum London is grateful to have received a second grant from the Culham St. Gabriel's Trust to further the dissemination of the Teaching Inclusive Judaism Project. We will continue to create and provide resources and training sessions to give teachers the tools to instil the importance of representing Judaism in all its diversity.



Sector Sharing

During this period the Jewish Museum London has represented our work within a number of sector-wide institutions and initiatives.

- In November our Senior Collections Engagement Manager joined the Curatorial Education Programme in Vienna, in collaboration with the Association of European Jewish Museums (AEJM).
- Also in November, our Senior Learning Manager attended the Museum Education Seminars and Training, also organised by AEJM.
- In March, our Operations Manager was interviewed for the Museums Association, giving tips for people working in the Museum sector.

Feedback from our Visitors

“I appreciated the visual content of the religious gallery including the ark. I also appreciated the main explanatory text panels in the religious gallery and the chronological history gallery.”

“Presentation and exhibitions were very interesting and informative and pitched at just the right level.”

“Very friendly and approachable staff, excellent facilities, a very inspiring experience.”

“Very friendly staff. Beautiful building and artefacts.”

Celebrating the 75th Anniversary of our Friends Membership Programme

12th February 2023 marked the 75th anniversary of the Friends of the Jewish Museum London. The Friends were first set up in 1948 to help the Museum reopen after the Second World War. To celebrate this anniversary we ran two fully-booked tours of our stores. We also ran a virtual session for Friends who were unable to visit in person.

We thank our Friends for their continued support of the Museum. To find out more about Friends Membership please visit our [website](#).

Curious Minds

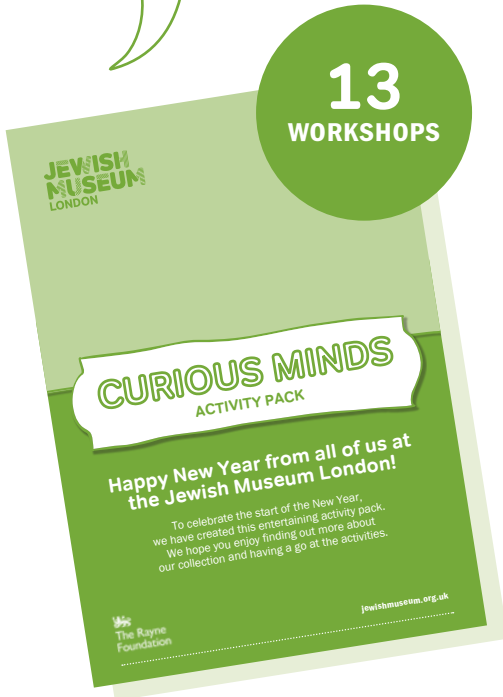
Our Curious Minds programme offers sessions for older people living with dementia, facing loneliness and/or other social needs.

These informal, fun and relaxed sessions are designed to spark conversation and reminiscence. These sessions are held in care homes, community centres and dementia cafes, with phone and virtual sessions also available. Groups can also visit our Museum for an in-person tour and object handling.

Between October 2022 and March 2023 we ran 13 Curious Minds workshops to 309 people. This included 5 phone tours, 2 zoom sessions and 6 outreach visits. Topics we have shared include the Jewish East End, School Days, and Hanukah.

“Excellent talk and exhibits which brought to life the history of Jewish life in the East End and elsewhere. Thank you for sharing your knowledge and enthusiasm.”

13 WORKSHOPS



CURATORIAL & COLLECTIONS

Collections in Numbers



OVERALL, THE COLLECTIONS DEPARTMENT RECEIVED 369 ENQUIRIES, COVERING RESEARCH REQUESTS, LOAN REQUESTS, IMAGE LICENCING AND DONATION OFFERS.



OVER 627 ITEMS HAVE BEEN DIGITISED BY VOLUNTEERS IN OUR RESEARCH CENTRE, INCLUDING LETTERS, MEDALS, AND MAGAZINES.



92 PEOPLE OFFERED ITEMS TO THE MUSEUM DURING THIS PERIOD. WE WERE ABLE TO ACCEPT 35 OF THESE OFFERS, ACCOUNTING FOR 229 INDIVIDUAL ITEMS.



WE ANSWERED 158 RESEARCH ENQUIRIES ABOUT SPECIFIC ITEMS IN THE COLLECTION.

£650 INCOME WAS RECEIVED THROUGH LICENCING IMAGES FROM OUR IMAGE LIBRARY



New Acquisitions

Between October 2022 and March 2023, over 200 items have been added to the collection, including cartoons, a football trophy, oral histories and a 1950s paper bag from Kossoff Bakery!

Highlights include over 30 contemporary images of Jewish people donated as part of the Collecting Inclusive Judaism programme. These range from wedding photographs, interfaith images, and LGBT+ representation.

Another important acquisition was a set of lino cuts by the artist Ruth Collett. Collett was the daughter of Nina and Redcliffe Salaman and her work was displayed in our New Acquisitions display, close to the portraits of her parents, which hang in our gallery.

Our newly established Acquisitions Committee review every offer the Museum receives, and considers items for their research, educational, and display potential.





Loans In and Loans Out

The Museum is pleased to support a range of organisations by loaning items from our collection for exhibitions, displays, and events.

In December 2022 we loaned 7 items to the Chabad Islington, for the duration of Chanukah. This included sharing the items with local residents from Islington's community for an event at Arsenal's Emirates Stadium. A chanukiah, bequeathed by Betty and Leo Gruss, was borrowed by the Mayor of Lewisham for the borough's lighting event for the second night of Chanukah.

Items loaned into the collection during this period include award winning photographer Manon Ouimet's Purim mask and dress, which previously featured in our Welcome Gallery 'Pitch Up' exhibition, and a 12th Century silver penny, struck by moneyer Isaac of York.



WE LOANED 7 ITEMS  
TO THE CHABAD ISLINGTON,  
FOR THE DURATION OF CHANUKAH



Welcome Gallery Exhibition –  
Pitch Up: Community Voices

'Pitch Up: Community Voices', a co-curated set of display stalls in our Welcome Gallery, hosted its fourth round of residencies from December 2022, all themed around food and drink.

These include kosher seals and labels from the London Board of Shechita; Israeli wines selected by wine ambassador Tal Sunderland-Cohen; exploring the historical relationship between Jews and chocolate, Michael Leventhal displayed cocoa beans alongside objects associated with chocolate production for his stall; and a range of colour coded kitchen products from supermarket Kosher Kingdom, were displayed alongside jars of their pick and mix.

A popular stall included wood and a sprouting potato from Sadeh Farm, the latter of which featured on our social as 'potato watch', as the roots grew daily. The final stall presented our own Community Learning Kitchen, showcasing the ingredients that we use each week when baking challah bread with our visitors.

Digitisation and Collection Care

The digitisation of the Jewish Museum's collection is transforming the way we access the information in our collection and the way in which research is done. From October 2022 to March 2023, we have digitised over 700 items, including newspaper articles, magazines, and medals. The biggest project saw a team of volunteers scanning and transcribing hundreds of letters to reveal the personal stories of the individuals who wrote them and the society they lived in. We hope these will soon be made available on our website for people to research specific individuals and organisations, or simply to read the personal correspondence of a friend to a friend.

Digitisation is not only aimed at increasing public engagement with our collection, it is also a great way to look after the objects, prioritising the care of the collection at every stage. Recent collection care projects have included repackaging buttons and button cards to facilitate access and improve storage.

This work would have never been possible without the help of our dedicated team of volunteers, who represent an invaluable asset to the Curatorial Team, from helping deciphering handwritten letters, to carefully handling items before being stored.



The Conversation Room

To continue dialogue with and between our visitors, the Jewish Museum created a new initiative, *The Conversation Room*. This re-imagined space explores contemporary issues through an object in our collection, using multiple lenses and narratives. Visitors are encouraged to offer their personal responses on a postcard, which is then added to a living wall of commentary, designed to look like a page from the Talmud, the primary source of Jewish law, containing Rabbinic commentary chronologically spiralling around the central text.

Our most recent display focuses on the tragic events in Ukraine. We presented three Ukrainian spice boxes used in the Havdalah ceremony, marking the end of the Jewish Sabbath and the beginning of a new week. Havdalah means 'separation' in Hebrew, and marked our first theme.

The Museum hosted a panel event with three guests, each considering how museums could and do respond to separation, specifically separation as a result of war and conflict. Reflecting the rationale underpinning the Conversation Room, the aim was to spark conversation and discussion between the panel and the audience. Conversations and themes explored included the refugee and migrant experiences, the ethics of representing these experiences, and approaches to collecting objects and stories during periods of forced displacement.

The next Conversation Room display will address the theme 'Strikes'.



Collections Audit and the  
Introduction of Axiell

In 2021, the Jewish Museum London started an exciting full audit of the collection of over 40,000 items. This project has involved checking objects for accurate measurements, conditions, and locations, amongst other things. It has also involved a review and update of our standard terminology and language within the collection.

As part of the audit, the system used to manage the collection has also been upgraded from Adlib to Axiell Collections. This exciting new management system has improved access to the collection and its use within the Museum. A smooth transition from one to the other means that staff and volunteers are now fully trained in using the new system.

Better access to the collection also means more curiosities are being found during the audit, by staff researching the collection. Our Collections Advisory Network, composed of experts from across academic disciplines, continues to play a crucial part in this project. When faced with these objects, often there are no concrete answers to the questions raised. However, the committee brings us new knowledge and different perspectives allowing us to carry on researching their importance within the Museum and wider community. To reflect some of the topics discussed, two display cases in our Research Centre are now dedicated to some of the items that were looked at.



# BEHIND THE SCENES

## New Acting Director



I am very proud to have been appointed Acting Director at the Jewish Museum London from November 2022. I have been working

in the heritage sector for the past 32 years in independent museums all over the country including York, West Sussex, Devon, Buckinghamshire, and Birmingham in visitor services, learning and engagement and leadership roles. I have been a Museum Director for 3 museums over 20 years, including Coldharbour Mill in Devon, Chiltern Open Air Museum in Buckinghamshire, and Discover Bucks Museum in Buckinghamshire. At Discover Bucks I raised £1.2 million for the creation of the stunning new Discover Bucks galleries, telling the story of Buckinghamshire's people and landscapes for 200 million years. This regeneration enabled the change of name, logo, branding and web site, which has transformed the Museum for the future.

I became a heritage consultant in 2022, alongside a new LGBTQ Champion role with the National Lottery Heritage Fund. I was keen to apply for the interim Director role due to a family interest in Judaism, and the excellent reputation of the Jewish Museum London within the Museum and Heritage sector.

I have been so impressed with the breadth of activity and the standards of excellence at the Museum. From the impressive 40,000 objects in the Designated Collections at the heart of everything the Museum does, to the learning and engagement programme reaching over 20,000 students around the country, and the family festivals and events. It is a privilege to be part of an organisation that challenges prejudice and antisemitism, and that has such an enormous impact on our society. I am very grateful to our amazing staff and volunteers, funders and donors who support the Museum and contribute to the excellence of our work.

## Arts Council England – National Portfolio Organisation

In November, the Museum received the news that our application to join National Portfolio Organisation (NPO) status as part of Arts Council England's (ACE) 2023-2026 investment round was successful. This is a huge achievement for the Museum, and will be a brilliant opportunity to showcase and strengthen the incredible work that we do. We are one of 77 Museums in the UK, and one of only 8 museums in London to receive this prestigious funding award. This recognition from ACE is an incredible show of confidence in the work that we do, and the communities that we serve.

The Museum's ambitious NPO programme will include access for young academic researchers, a lending library with national reach, and a versatile programme based around our Community Learning Kitchen. The NPO programme will be embedded into every department, and will guide the way we use our skills and resources for the next three years.

We are incredibly grateful to ACE for recognising the Jewish Museum London, and we look forward to embarking on this project.



## Awards for our Volunteers

All our volunteers have made an incredible contribution to our Museum over the past six months. A number of our volunteers were nominated for awards for their impactful support of the Museum. At the London Heritage Volunteer Awards some volunteers were Highly Commended in the 'Bringing Innovation' category and another won the 'Going the Extra Mile Category'. We were also nominated for the Jewish Volunteer Network's annual awards. We are grateful for the contribution of all our volunteers.

## Continued Professional Development at the Museum

Every year the Museum provides an annual programme of staff training, not only to guarantee that all statutory staff training requirements are met, but also to ensure that all staff members have the opportunity to develop their skills, outside of their immediate role requirements. The training sessions can relate to skills development, topic knowledge, or legal requirements.

### During this period our CPD sessions included:

Unconscious Bias Training, a Friday Night Shabbat Experience, and Access Training, focusing on Autism.

## Placements at the Museum

Every year the Jewish Museum London welcomes placement volunteers across both the Learning and Curatorial teams. We support these placement volunteers in accessing sector-specific skills, and supporting their academic or career development. Recent Learning Placements Volunteers Zoe and Chloe told us a little about their experiences at the Museum.

### What have you enjoyed most about your placement?

The most rewarding aspect of my learning placement has been the opportunity to assist with the 'Every Object Tells a Story' workshops. These sessions explore the run-up to the Holocaust, but focus on everyday people and the objects that were precious to them. It has been wonderful to see how engaged Year 6 and Year 7 students are, particularly whilst listening to Kindertransport refugee, Elsa Shamash, tell her story.

I have also enjoyed leading the gallery sessions, where I have developed an interactive introduction to the story of Kindertransport refugee Ethel Rothschild through looking closely at her favourite doll. These sessions have pushed me to develop my public speaking skills and I have greatly benefited from knowledge sharing with other incredible volunteers.

– Learning Placement Volunteer, Zoe

### What projects have you worked on at the Museum?

During my time as a Learning Placement Volunteer at the Jewish Museum London, I have had the opportunity to observe, get involved with, and support several aspects of the Museum's work. I have particularly enjoyed supporting the *Inclusive Judaism* project, which aims to diversify the representation of British Judaism within the Museum's collection. This included supporting one of the *Collecting Inclusive Stories* workshops at the St Albans Masorti Synagogue. The workshop involved introducing members of the Synagogue to the work of the Museum, sharing images that are already in the collection and inviting them to share what Judaism means to them. At the end, they were asked to share images that they would like to donate to the project. Some members had brought objects, which I photographed. A selection of these photos have gone on to become part of the Inclusive Judaism collection and Image Library. Additional support I have provided to the project includes assisting with the organisation and naming of the images, updating the Inclusive Judaism table in the Museum and promoting the project within a blog about LGBTQ+ objects in the collection. It has been very rewarding to learn about, and contribute towards, a more diverse representation of Jewish people.

– Learning Placement Volunteer, Chloe

## New Tenancy – Jewish Book Council

The Jewish Museum London welcomed a new organisation into the building in the autumn of 2022. Jewish Book Council, responsible for organising the incredible Jewish Book Week every March, took up residence in what was previously the Learning Office. The Operations Team was responsible for transforming the space, creating two offices by installing a new wall, with new furniture and carpeting. The re-model was a part of the Museum's autumn Change Plan, which saw the re-development of the staff offices, moving all staff into one side of the building, creating a new kitchen and break space, and installing new office furniture, carpeting and blinds.

We are so pleased to have the lovely staff at Jewish Book Council join us in the Museum, collaborating on family days and other public programming. We are looking forward to many more programmes that this partnership will create.

## Office Remodel

As part of the autumn Change Plan, the Operations Team were tasked with renovating both the Parkway and Albert Street offices, with the aim to move all staff into one office and rent the other space out to new tenants.

All staff had to clear paperwork, files and folders to be able to work remotely from other parts of the Museum. Most staff worked for a month in the Research Centre, whilst the renovation works were underway. The Albert Street Office was converted into two separate offices to welcome our new tenants, the Jewish Book Council. All Museum staff were moved into the Parkway office, and a new break space was created with a brand new kitchen, to give staff that well deserved space away from desks to enjoy their lunch hour.

The works took around two months to complete and the offices look brand new! The creation of a kitchen and break space has helped staff wellbeing and a change in carpet has definitely helped to maintain a clean and hygienic working environment.





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