

Stroud District (Cowle) Museum Collections Development Policy

The Stroud District (Cowle) Museum has a lengthy and detailed Collections Development policy which can be seen on request. Highlights of the policy are detailed here.

Current Collecting Priorities

The museum collects material related to all periods of the human & natural history of the area administered by Stroud District Council. The museum collects objects relating to each of the subject areas described below. The general aim is to collect evidence of the special character of the landscapes & townscapes of the Stroud District and the lives & achievements of its people. The priority will be to collect objects which:

- are unique to, distinctive or typical of the Stroud District
- fill gaps in the existing collection
- have clear potential for permanent or temporary exhibition, educational, outreach or research use

The Museum's current collecting priorities are:

1. Geology:

- a. Systematically collected and well documented assemblages of local rocks, fossils & minerals
- b. High quality material for exhibition
- c. Specimens suitable for handling & educational use
- d. Manuscripts, published works, maps, plans, drawings, prints, photographs and equipment formerly used in the collection or study of local geology
- e. Personalalia of geologists having strong links with the District and existing collections

2. Other natural history

- a. Systematically and well documented collections of natural history specimens
- b. High quality material for exhibition
- c. Specimens suitable for handling & educational use
- d. Manuscripts, published works, maps, plans, drawings, prints, photographs and equipment formerly used in the collection or study of local natural history
- e. Personalalia of naturalists having strong links with the District and existing collections

3. Archaeology

- a. Objects & archives from all periods of human activity
- b. Systematically collected and documented antiquarian collections of archaeological material
- c. Manuscripts, published works, maps, plans, drawings, prints, photographs and equipment formerly used in the collection or study of local archaeology
- d. Personalalia of amateur & professional archaeologists & antiquarians having strong links with the District and existing collections
- e. Archaeological archives from Developer Funded Archaeology
- f. Surface finds, providing that the museum is satisfied that:
 - I. The depositor can demonstrate good title
 - II. The circumstances of recovery were legal and ethical
 - III. A precise find spot (preferably an 8 figure grid reference) can be provided

4. Social History

- a. Material which:
 - I. captures a sense of the people and the place of the Stroud District

- II. provides evidence of the lives and achievements of the people of the area, the special identity of the area, the townscapes and landscape
 - III. demonstrates changes/ trends in the social and economic life which have had a significant impact locally
 - IV. maintains the relevance of the collections to modern audiences
- b. Corporate Life
- I. material relating to local hospitals, clinics and medical centres
 - II. sheet music, recordings, posters etc relating to local music and musicians and performers
 - III. the works of local writers, artists and photographers
 - IV. small items relating to transport and communication
 - V. material relating to elections & the democratic process
- c. Community Life
- I. clothing and equipment relating to local sports and leisure activities
 - II. material relating to local customs, festivals arts and entertainment
 - III. musical instruments
 - IV. material relating to Stratford Park after it became a public amenity
 - V. photographs
 - VI. material relating to local places of worship, religious belief & practice
 - VII. Material relating to education
- d. Domestic Life
- I. Objects relating to food preparation and cooking
 - II. table linen, everyday tableware and cutlery
 - III. items relating to gardening and local allotments
 - IV. domestic furniture (including soft furnishings) and fittings made and/ or used locally
 - V. material relating to the Stratford Park estate and its human history
- e. Personal Life
- I. shaving brushes, toothbrushes, shaving mugs, wig and hair accessories
 - II. clothing and accessories worn by local men women & children throughout history, especially:
 - occupational costume
 - utility and wartime clothing including 'made over'/ improvised garments
 - sports clothing - tennis, riding etc
 - children's clothes, including school and other uniforms
 - outdoor wear & shoes
 - night and underwear (especially *Chilproofe* underwear made at Cope-Chats until the 1940s)
 - baby clothes and accessories
 - dress-making and knitting patterns, particularly 1960s-30s
 - costume accessories: bags of all descriptions, earrings and watches, children's jewellery and accessories e.g. decorative handkerchiefs
 - III. toys and dolls used / owned or made locally (especially home made examples), past and present. Including late 20C dolls and popular classic toys
 - IV. children's books by local authors and the classics e.g. *Wind in the Willows*, *Water Babies*, *Peter Pan*, *Railway Children*, *Thomas the Tank Engine*, *Nursery Rhymes*, *Noddy & Big Ears*, *Famous Five* etc
 - V. Personal memorabilia, including photographs

- f. Working Life
 - I. material which reflects the diverse patterns of local working life, including farming and crafts traditions
 - II. material which illustrates the life and work of local inventors
 - III. local factory made clothing (e.g. Holloways)
 - IV. trades catalogues
 - V. locally made products e.g. tennis balls
 - VI. brick and tile moulds, roof tiles
 - VII. photographs of workers and workplaces

5.1 Fine Art

- a. Work depicting or inspired by the local area and its people (especially portraits)
- b. Work by professional artists, photographers and craftspeople living or working in the District

5.2 Decorative Arts

- a. Everyday tableware with local associations (particularly complete sets in good condition)
- b. Ceramics which are locally made (including the work of respected contemporary potters) or have local associations/ inscriptions
- c. Glass and metalwork of display quality, locally made or with well-documented local associations

6. Coins, tokens & medals

- a. Coins of archaeological significance with a Stroud District provenance
- b. Tokens and medals made in or for specific use in the Stroud District

7. World Cultures

- a. No further ethnographic material will be acquired, unless there is a direct connection with Stroud District (e.g. Tradecloth incorporated into artefacts)

8. Library

- a. Printed and manuscript material of historic importance will be accessioned into the permanent collections. In addition the museum will also acquire additional printed and manuscript material (published and unpublished) to support effective management of the collection and provision of public services. Such material will be held as part of the museum's library and will not form part of the permanent collections. Items relevant to the following classifications will be acquired:
 - I. Geology
 - II. Natural history
 - III. Archaeology
 - IV. Social history & local studies
 - V. Fine and decorative arts
 - VI. Coins, tokens and medals
 - VII. World cultures
 - VIII. Museum studies and general reference

Limitations on Collecting

The museum recognises its responsibility in acquiring additions to its collections, to ensure that care of collections, documentation arrangements and use of collections will meet the requirements of the Accreditation Standard. It will take into account limitations on collecting imposed by such factors as

staffing, storage and care of collection arrangements. There are a range of criteria by which the museum makes decisions about what not to collect. In addition the museum will take account of the collecting policies of other museums and other organisations collecting in the same or related areas or subject fields. It will consult with these organisations where conflicts of interest may arise or to define areas of specialism, in order to avoid unnecessary duplication and waste of resources.

The museum will not collect:

- a. Objects that were not found, made or used within the area administered by Stroud District Council
- b. Items that duplicate objects already represented in the collections
- c. Large objects, particularly large agricultural or industrial machinery
- d. Geological or other natural history type specimens or other scientifically important materials, unless specific arrangements for adequate ongoing specialist curatorial support can be put in place
- e. Birds eggs
- f. Human remains for which a licence from the Human Tissue Authority is required under the Human Tissues Act 2006
- g. Foreign coins, except those of archaeological significance (chance finds and material excavated from local archaeological contexts) or where there is a direct connection with the Stroud District
- h. Material from other cultures except where there is a direct connection with Stroud District (e.g. Objects incorporating Stroud Tradecloth)
- i. Comparative material from outside the District, except where there is a clearly identified benefit to the understanding & interpretation of the local collections
- j. Objects that present or appear to present a significant health and safety risk to museum staff (including volunteers) and service users