Charting the Journey

Winter 2018
The Canterbury Journey is now two years into the capital works and it’s exciting to be able to see some real progress with the project.

The new Visitor Centre, Viewing Gallery, Shop and Community Studio
The major demolition works and archaeological digs on site for the new Visitor Centre, Viewing Gallery, Shop and Community Studio were completed, with some structural underpinning of the existing buildings taking place, followed by the reinforced concrete slabs for the new buildings being poured towards the end of the year.

This allowed the next phase of works to be completed, with the erection of the main superstructure steels (right) for the new build elements on the site and then brickwork started going up, with roofing works well underway too.

The brickwork had to stop in December 2018 due to the temperature, whereby the use of Lime Mortar becomes too much of a risk, as it fails to cure below 3 Degrees Celsius. That brickwork will recommence in 2019 when the appropriate temperature is consistently reached.

Landscaping
Despite some delays following a change in the specification of the stone surface material, from a flamed surface finish (which gives the stone a premature aged look by a few years), to an unflamed surface finish (which will take a couple of years to weather in), work has begun in earnest on the new landscaping around the Precincts. The visible quality of the finish is there for all to see.
The Masons were very busy through 2018 working on multiple areas of the Cathedral, with the major corner and smaller intermediary pinnacles on both towers at the Western end of the Cathedral completed and unveiled, all looking amazing.

On the North West tower, the roof replacement was completed with minor timber repairs and the lead replaced. However, on the South West tower more extensive timber repairs were required and this work is not scheduled to be finished until early 2019.

Who doesn’t love a flying buttress? Work has been carried out the first of the flying buttresses on the Nave roof with further major repairs to flying buttresses to take place in 2019.

In November 2018, in advance of stone repairs and replacement to the South West tower, the clock dial was removed and taken off site for 18-24 months for major restoration.

At the same time, by funding received through The Friends, the clock movement, which was in the North West tower was also removed and will be fully restored to working order, as it had not worked for many decades. The clock dial was running off an electronic timer. The clock movement is the largest and best example of work by G. F. Vale, London and was manufactured in 1855, and we will restore it to full working order.

Did you know that Canterbury Cathedral has its own unique chime?
‘Suspended’ received positive press and comments when it was installed in the Nave from January to May 2018 and went on to Leicester Cathedral, where it opened on 20th June 2018; World Refugee Day. This was shortly followed by ‘Under an Equal Sky’ in May 2018, linking art to the subject of the centenary of the end of WWI. Talks by the artists were held for volunteers and staff so they were fully informed about the exhibition and could convey that successfully to the visiting public and others.

In addition to these two highly successful exhibitions The Canterbury War Horse (right) was installed for November 2018 to commemorate the centenary of the end of The First World War, working with students and staff from Canterbury School of Visual Arts at Canterbury College, led by Sculptor Clive Soord. They created a large-scale wooden horse for the Cathedral Precincts, with the horse’s head bowed in respect, facing oncoming visitors to the Cathedral.

The War Horse also became the focus point of a ‘Poppy’ making workshop during the Big Draw event at the end of October. Due to the popularity of the War Horse it will stay in situ into 2019 and therefore be enjoyed by many more visitors.

November saw the start of the Diaries of the Here and Now project. Small hand-made blank diaries were available for people to collect and use to make a diary on 11 November 2018. There are plans to showcase some of the responses later next year.
Visitors to the Cathedral were encouraged to have a go at stone carving during our May half term Stone Week. Under the tutelage of our stonemason apprentices, would be stonemasons were shown some of the traditional techniques and tools from medieval times still used by stonemasons today.

Our Cathedral guides provided free mini-talks about the stone here at the Cathedral which proved to be very popular. There was also an opportunity for younger visitors to engage with the theme with the return of our Explorer Backpacks.

Every Wednesday throughout August we held a series of Discovery Days teaching visitors about Cathedral life and its history. The first of these tied in with the Under and Equal Sky exhibition exploring all things nautical in the Cathedral including the Canterbury Bell and hidden graffiti boats. Other themes explored were animals, making the most of the menagerie of creatures found in the Cathedral, the lives of medieval monks - which included calligraphy and decorative illumination. The final event was the much anticipated launch of Gregory the Gargoyle, but more on him shortly.

At the end of August Paula the polar bear came to visit from Margate where she is spending the summer at the Turner Contemporary’s Animals & Us exhibition helping to promote discussion around climate change and how humans can co-exist with animals.
Gregory Gargoyle has landed!
After much anticipation Gregory Gargoyle has finally made his way down from the Cathedral roof, and he’s brought with him a little friend, Pippa the Pigeon. But Gregory is no ordinary Gargoyle. He’s lived high up on the roof of Canterbury Cathedral for hundreds of years sitting patiently watching over the City. He’s certainly got a tale or two to tell but the problem is he was SO high up nobody could ever hear him. Thanks to the big red lift that’s been installed for work on the Nave roof he’s been able to find his way down to play.

Gregory will be a key feature of the new media guides and trails being produced for 2020 so you will hopefully see more of him in the coming months.

Putting you in the picture
Two members of our Communications team have undertaken training at the University College London in Museum Photography.

Using new digital camera equipment, purchased for the digitisation of the Cathedral’s collections prior to them going on to display in 2019, they have learnt about best practice in conservation photography, reflectance transfer imaging (a process of capturing multiple images with the light source hitting the object from various angles allowing researcher’s to ‘explore’ the objects surface without touching the item) and some new techniques for capturing difficult surfaces such as glass and silver.

Towards the end of 2018 there was also an early experiment in 3D photogrammetry which will allow us to share some of the Cathedral’s collections in 3 dimensional form for the very first time. We look forward to seeing how this develops in the new year.
This time we’re finding out more about Philippa Mesiano.

**What’s your role?**
I’m the Collections Manager intern for The Canterbury Journey Project. I’m here to support the Collections Manager with her work. I will be managing the Graffiti project next year, mapping the findings and consolidating the research. I will also be helping with other aspects of Collections management and supporting on next years Conference.

**What did you do before coming to the Cathedral?**
I’ve been working on my PhD at the University of Kent. I am exploring the diplomatic relationship between Pope Alexander IV (1254-1261) and King Henry III of England (1216 - 1272).

**What’s your favourite part of the Cathedral?**
I’ve only been here a short time but it has to be the Eastern Crypt. There is so much graffiti down there and it’s a really interesting space with so much history. From graffiti and wall painting to Becket’s original resting place and the huge Reculver columns. It’s packed with the unseen history of Canterbury.

**What do you do to chill out in your spare time?**
In my chill out time I like to read, watch netflix and play piano. I sometimes also attempt to bake but with varying degrees of success...

**What do you prefer, mince pies or Christmas pudding?**
Mince pies. Because they go with anything and they taste just as good hot or cold.
The work on the new interpretation and exhibition display spaces in the Crypt Treasury, Water Tower/ Library Corridor, Library Undercroft and the Viewing Gallery continued so that many of the unique and precious objects from the Cathedral’s collections can go on display and be interpreted more fully and enjoyed by many more people. The enabling works for these new exhibition display spaces were well underway in the latter half of 2018 and will continue into 2019, with the exhibitions themselves open later in 2020.

Lots of research projects have been undertaken or are underway to further assess and look at the collections held by the Cathedral; investigating them further using volunteers, University students, leading experts and professionals. This will inform the interpretation displays, media guides and online resources.

Items from the Cathedral’s historic collection set off to the British Library in London for an exhibition of Anglo-Saxon life. Included amongst these was the tiny but beautiful Anglo-Saxon sundial (below) and an early 10th century Fonthill Letter, the earliest known example of a personal letter from a layman to the King of England.

From May to September The Turner Contemporary had their Animals...
& Us exhibition which explored artists’ reflections on the relationship between humans and other animals.

A selection of the Cathedral’s historic collections were sent on loan including:

- The 13th Century ‘Historia et Figurae animalium’ (A history of animals)
- Conrad Gessner’s 16th Century ‘Historiae animalium liber’ (History of the Animals)
- The snappily titled ‘A boke of drawing of the shapes and formes of divers beasts, foules, birds, fishes, monsters, serpentis, trees, herbes, plantes, and flowers, with diverse accidents of antiquities, and armoury, drawn by me William Burch’ by, well, William Burch.
- Two books by Maria Sibylla Merian featuring beautiful drawings of moths and butterflies which were among the first to be created from direct observations of nature.

Towards the end of 2018 we started the process of building a new collection of digital images from the objects going on display in 2019.

The first of these were the Oakaley model collection, 28 scale models created by Queen Victoria’s model maker William Gorringe in the mid 19th century (above). They were assessed by our Head of Book and Paper Conservation, Ariane Langreder and it was noted that some of the glass domes did not match or were damaged. New glass domes have been ordered and these are being custom made by a glass manufacturer in Germany. The entire collection will eventually be on display in the new Viewing Gallery.
The new project for volunteer research assistants began in April 2018 with an induction, run by the Collections intern. The volunteers working on this project are all students or recent graduates, most from the University of Kent’s MEMS Centre. The students are focusing on individual objects going on display to transcribe and translate some medieval documents or to provide context and interpretation information. The volunteers have uncovered important and exciting stories about the objects going on display, which will (and have already) informed the work we have been doing for the exhibitions. Their research will feed directly into The Canterbury Journey interpretation for exhibitions and into wider digital engagement.

July 2018 saw a new volunteer opportunity being advertised as part of The Canterbury Journey. Up to 12 Graffiti Research volunteers will be recruited in August and September, ready to begin the project in mid-September 2018. It has already proved a popular volunteering role, with 17 applicants in the first week of advertising.

The aim of the graffiti project is to:

• Record the historic graffiti at Canterbury Cathedral. It will create a catalogue of surviving graffiti to be lodged as part of the Cathedral historic collections; and

• To reach out and engage new, diverse and hard-to-reach audiences through a range of accessible learning, training and participating activities that focus on the graffiti and the discoveries made during recording.

Applications for Volunteer Graffiti Research roles (below) closed 7 August 2018. The response was
extraordinary, with over 50 people applying for the role.

Eight of the volunteers attended an induction on the 14 September 2018 where they were given a presentation on The Canterbury Journey, ID passes, volunteer paperwork, Health and Safety training and orientation. They were also given a lecture on the history of the Cathedral’s architecture from the Head of Conservation and a ‘how to’ session from the Public Relations Officer on how to use the iPad to take photographs.

The volunteers then embarked on a 3 day training session 17-19 September 2018, delivered by the Cathedral Archaeologist, Nathalie Cohen and a medieval graffiti specialist, Matt Champion.

The new Collections Management Intern, Philippa Mesanio, prepared for the start of the graffiti recording project in her first two weeks at the Cathedral. Four volunteers, Sue, Fiona, Lucy and Daniel started the recording process on the 30 October 2018 in the Eastern Crypt. Based on the volunteer’s feedback, Philippa assisted with adapting and amending procedures.

This pilot project is already proving to be very popular with visitors to the Cathedral, who frequently asked questions of the volunteers during the recording sessions in the Eastern Crypt. Five recording sessions have been booked into the Cathedral diary for November 2018.

Our target for 2018 therefore was 18 new recruits. A total 67 volunteers have been recruited overall and breaks down as follows:

Collections volunteers: 9 graffiti researchers, 3 silver condition reporting, 3 textiles condition reporting, 6 MEMS student research volunteers = 21

Learning volunteers: 17 community engagement, 22 explorer backpacks, 7 oral histories = 46
Here is what will be taking place over the next year of The Canterbury Journey...

- Phase 2 of the landscaping works will begin and the new gargoyles will be installed.
- The re-roofing works on the Nave aisles will continue.
- Construction of the Visitor Centre and Community Studio will continue.
- Crypt Treasury exhibition space work begins.
- Object selection and interpretation script writing is ongoing.
- Work begins on the new media guides.
- The Cathedral’s second Collections and Learning Conference will be announced.
- Outreach and community engagement activities can be found in the What’s On guide - the next issue is out at the end of December.

As more work gets underway, your continued support is hugely appreciated. If you have questions about The Canterbury Journey and want to find out more, please don’t hesitate to get in touch.

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