



**Title of meeting:** Culture, Leisure & Sport Decision Meeting

**Date of meeting:** 14 December 2012

**Subject:** The Arthur Conan Doyle Collection

**Report by:** Head of City Development & Cultural Services

**Wards affected:** All wards

6

---

## 1. Summary

- 1.1 This report sets out to inform the Cabinet Member of the significant progress on Arthur Conan Doyle Collection and to inform members of the potential forthcoming direction the collection may take.

## 2. Purpose of the report

- 2.1 To update the Cabinet Member that cataloguing of the main Conan Doyle sections of the Collection is now completed. The last part of the archive section of the Collection to be catalogued will be the complex area of Richard Lancelyn Green's papers. Work has been initiated on this area but will take longer than some other areas due to the legal complexity of the papers.
- 2.2 To update the Cabinet Member on a recent funding application to the Heritage Lottery Fund, to continue widening access to The Arthur Conan Doyle Collection - Lancelyn Green Bequest.
- 2.3 To highlight the essential work which continues to be carried out by the volunteers on this Collection.
- 2.4 To inform members that an allocation of £10,000 from within existing cash limits will be ring fenced as a contribution towards the Heritage Lottery bid should the bid be successful as part of the funding contribution needed for the proposed project.

## 3. Background

- 3.1 The Arthur Conan Doyle Collection - Lancelyn Green Bequest is the tangible result of Richard Lancelyn Green's lifelong interest in Conan Doyle and his work. The Collection testifies to the worldwide interest in Arthur Conan Doyle and Sherlock Holmes over the last century and to the wide range of Conan Doyle's interests.

- 3.2 The archive section of the Collection is being sorted and documented by a team of volunteers with great enthusiasm and commitment. As it becomes accessible by this process, it is immediately being used by researchers, with groups, and in response to written enquiries. Currently 73% of the archive can now be searched via the CALM archive program. The last section of the archives, Richard Lancelyn Green's correspondence and working papers, is now being catalogued, and it is now anticipated that this will be completed by the end of April 2013.
- 3.3 Previous reports to the Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure have highlighted both the progress and the challenges that have faced the collection and this report summarises this work during the last 12 months. A range of the events and activities carried out in 2011/12 is contained in Appendix 1.
- 3.4 The Conan Doyle Collection relocation to Portsmouth History Centre has proved popular with researchers across the world, with six international researchers visiting the Collection in the last 12 months as well as more UK based researchers.
- 3.5 We would like to take the opportunity this report provides to again highlight the progress on the Collection since its receipt which has fundamentally been due to volunteer support and working on the Collection. We have estimated that the significant average annual volunteer hours contribution of 2242 hours per annum is the equivalent to one 30 hour a week post per year. Without doubt the Collection could not have reached this important cataloguing point without their time, effort and support.

#### **4. Future funding**

- 4.1 Over the summer a Heritage Lottery Fund application for £90,000 was submitted which if successful, will result in ten small scale school and community exhibitions being devised and installed around various community buildings across Portsmouth. Community and school groups will curate these exhibitions as well as give their own creative response to them. Alongside these temporary exhibitions, a team of 20 volunteers will be recruited to help devise study packs and handling boxes for use in schools and community settings. The main aim of this funding is to reach further audiences across Portsmouth.
- 4.2 The Collection is gaining a positive reputation both locally and internationally. However To make it more widely accessible now that it has been catalogued, external investment is needed to develop a series of exhibitions, handling boxes and study packs for schools. This has all been requested as part of the Heritage Lottery Fund bid, and we hope to be able to update members at the Briefing meeting of the outcome of the bid.
- 4.3 Other funding streams such as NESTA (National Endowment for Science, Technology & the Arts) are being explored with a view to further developing the Collection by working towards an innovative online exhibition that would further attract an international audience and potential researchers.

.....  
Signed by: **Stephen Baily**  
**Head of City Development & Cultural Services**

**Appendices:**

Appendix 1                      Conan Doyle Achievements 2011/2012

**Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972**

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

| <b>Title of document</b>  | <b>Location</b>   |
|---|---|
| 1 The Arthur Conan Doyle Collection: Richard Lancelyn Green Bequest – Report taken to Culture & Leisure 21 <sup>st</sup> January 2010   | <a href="http://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/media/cl20101021r5.pdf">http://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/media/cl20101021r5.pdf</a> |
| 2 The Arthur Conan Doyle Collection, Richard Lancelyn Green Bequest and University of Portsmouth partnership – Report taken to Cabinet Member for Culture and Leisure 22 <sup>nd</sup> January 2009 | <a href="http://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/media/cl20090122r3.pdf">http://www.portsmouth.gov.uk/media/cl20090122r3.pdf</a> |

## Appendix 1

---

### The Arthur Conan Doyle, Lancelyn Green Bequest 2011/2012 Achievements

#### **Raising awareness of the collection at the following events:**

Staff and volunteers held stalls and took handling items to a number of events, including those described below, talking to staff and members of the public, and raising awareness of the Collection.

#### **‘Policing Through the Ages’ event**

This event at Gunwharf highlighted the central place of Sherlock Holmes among fictional detectives and the way he continues to be a role model for would-be sleuths today. It was also an opportunity to publicise the Collection and Conan Doyle’s links with Portsmouth.

#### **Archive Interest Group**

The Archive Interest Group, created as part of the Dickens Community Archive Project, provided another opportunity to introduce the Collection to other and to explore Conan Doyle’s time in Portsmouth.

#### **Alumni Fair (at Portsmouth University) and the Opportunities Fair (in the Guildhall)**

Our stands at these events promoted the Collection and the volunteering opportunities available both in the documentation of the archives and in outreach and education.

#### **Magnifying Sherlock**

Through external funding from Hampshire and Solent Museum Alliance in October 2011, a navigational tour by the theatre company Periplum was commissioned, situated in the City Museum. The tour consists of factual information about Conan Doyle portrayed theatrically. After the initial funding, Hampshire and Solent Museum Alliance bought four iPod’s for the City Museum to use. Periplum worked within a short timeframe with three local youth groups to produce the tour, and held two public tours with actors in December 2011.

#### **Portsmouth Writers app**

This funding also enabled the production of the app, Portsmouth Writers, which contains information about Dickens, Doyle and other literary information. Periplum’s navigational tour is available to download from this app too.

#### **Manga Artist Ilya**

As a part of the funding from Hampshire Solent and Museum Alliance, Comic artist Ilya was commissioned to devise some contemporary graphics and cartoon style characters from Doyle books

that would then be used in future publicity to attract a younger audience. Sherlock Holmes, Brigadier Gerard and Professor Challenger feature in live sized banners to publicise the collection at events. As a part of this, local artist Matt Howarth devised a visual key to the archive collection.

### **The Lost Hour: The Lost World events**

As a part of The Lost Hour event, a Dinosaur Egg Hunt was held, celebrating 100 year anniversary of The Lost World publications. Arts group Borbonesa were commissioned to devise a trail around Cumberland House, and facilitate the making of work with Fernhurst Junior School. Visitor numbers tripled at this event.

Also as part of this event, there was a double bill showing of both The Lost World films (1925 and 1960) at the D Day Museum.

### **Spiritualism Exhibition**

To reach a wider audience, Dr Patti Gaal-Holmes was asked to devise an exhibition showcasing the Spiritualism section of the collection. Catching the Unseen Exhibition held a Private View as well as a talk, attracting a large and varied audience to the exhibition and talk.

### **Other exhibitions**

Two small exhibitions were held at the Kings Theatre through 2012, supporting Sherlockian plays and films. A digital exhibition has been sent to Haifa, Israel, for exhibition in November. We lent several items and images from the Collection for an exhibition at Haslemere Museum re Conan Doyle's time in the area. We have also been approached by a team devising an exhibition about Sherlock Holmes, 'The Science of Deduction' that will tour venues in USA.

### **Sherlock Day**

24<sup>th</sup> June 2012 was the 130<sup>th</sup> anniversary since Conan Doyle first came to live in Portsmouth. To celebrate, a number of small events across the City were devised. A Deerstalker Hat template was made, and sent to every Primary School in Portsmouth for teachers to make with pupils. Writer in Residence Steve Tasane ran a Doylian workshop in the City Museum on the 24<sup>th</sup> June.

As a part of these celebrations, artist Ilya researched and devised six postcards and each postcard has been launched on the 24<sup>th</sup> of the month, up until 24<sup>th</sup> November, in community venues across Portsmouth. From December, it is anticipated that the six postcards will be sold to raise awareness of the collection. It is hoped that revenue will cover the cost of production.

### **Talks to groups**

Throughout the year, a total of 10 groups have been given to various groups in the City and beyond, from local library talks to a presentation given to passengers on the P & O Ferry.

### **Schools**

There has been various talks and workshops with schools – three exchange groups from the Interreg funded 'Mysteries of Our Neighbours Culture', working with six schools (three Portsmouth based and

three from Caen.) Talks have been given to Portsmouth Grammar School, and many conversations and letters of interest have been received to support the Heritage Lottery bid.

### **Visits and researchers**

#### **Visit by Bulgarian Ambassador**

In October 2011 the Bulgarian ambassador (who had been invited to Portsmouth by the Portsmouth University Bulgarian Students' Association) visited the Central Library and was shown a selection of items from the Conan Doyle Collection.

#### **Researchers**

Researchers have visited the Collection from UK, Sweden and USA, to research subjects such as dramatizations of Sherlock Holmes, Spiritualism, Lancelyn Green's life and work, and the lives of Conan Doyle's sons Denis and Adrian.