Every object tells a story: seeing the collection through our volunteers’ eyes

1. “My Saturday night entertainment started around 11 o’clock when I would be woken by the sound of my Grandfather and Uncle arriving home fighting drunk. My Grandmother dealt with them by striking out with whatever came to hand. Her weapon of choice was a stone pig.”
   Glynis

2. “This clock reminded me of my Grandfather who used to set his ‘grandfather clock’ half an hour and five minutes fast just for pure devilment and a bit of fun for people visiting.”
   George

3. “I gave up smoking in 1993, as my new husband was a non-smoker. The money I would have spent on cigarettes was saved to buy new clothes as I gained weight after getting my taste buds and appetite back after giving up.”
   Cheryl

4. “I have chosen this partly because it’s a beautiful piece of Victoriana, with its japanned metal case and its fine brass fittings. One can easily imagine it being used for the children’s Christmas party at Middleton Hall, but more of the time it would be used for work.”
   Alexei

5. “I started learning to touch type in the 1970s. I subsequently moved on to electronic typewriters and then dedicated word processors before progressing via a whole range of keyboards integrated into computers to a keyboard I access through my smartphone touch screen. How times have changed - I wonder what will be next!”
   Kathy

6. “To me this telescope embodies both scientific curiosity and the surprising interconnectedness of the 19th century. It is inspiring that at a time when travel to Australia took more than two months, intrepid travellers such as Thomas Thornton took on such journeys and returned to West Lothian.”
   Mark

7. “This watch was presented to G. Hamilton, in 1959, to mark 41 years service with the British Petroleum Group. I have an identical watch presented to John Doherty, my wife’s uncle, in 1959 on completion of 33 years service with the British Petroleum Group.”
   Joe
Every object tells a story: seeing the collection through our volunteers’ eyes

Every object tells a story, sometimes many stories. Every story has people at its centre. An object provides information about its maker, the individual who used it, the place it was manufactured or the culture behind its creation. Storytelling allows us to draw links between the past, present and future and bring to life the human presence behind any object.

These stories are usually researched and written by curators, but it is important to understand that each visitor will view an exhibition through their own experiences, memories, knowledge and understanding. Everyone tells stories about themselves and use stories to understand the world around them.

This exhibition has been co-curated with our team of volunteers. Each volunteer has selected an object from our museum store that inspired them or conjured up a long forgotten memory. So rather than tell the history of the object and its relation to the shale oil industry, they used the shale oil industry objects to share some of their own history.

By sharing their personal stories about some of our collection items, they have brought these objects to life and proved that everyone’s story matters.

Everyone has the capacity to tell stories.

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1 Stone Pig, c1950s, Museum Collection
2 Mantle Clock, c1928, Museum Collection: LVSAV2014.011
3 Ashtry, c1950s, Museum Collection
4 Magic Lantern, c1890, Museum Collection: LVSAV2008.015
5 Remington Typewriter, c1922, Museum Collection: EF0473
6 Telescope, c1840-1870, Museum Collection: LVSAV2011.118
7 Watch, 1959, Museum Collection: LVSAV2017.024

Many thanks to our volunteers:
Joe
Alexei
Glynis
Cheryl
Kathy
George
and Mark
for their continued support and hard work on this exhibition. Thank you.
Every object tells a story: seeing the collection through our eyes

Every object tells a story, sometimes many stories. Every story has people at its centre. An object provides information about its maker, the place it was manufactured or the culture behind it. Something allows us to draw links between the past, present and future and bring life to the human presence behind any object.

These stories are usually researched and written by curators, but it’s important to understand that the past will also be shaped by our experiences, memories, and knowledge. Everyone tells stories about themselves, and we can use these stories to understand the world around us.

The exhibition has been co-ordinated with our team of volunteers. Each volunteer has selected objects from our collection, each providing a long-forgotten memory rather than telling the history of the silent objects or the story of the industry they used to service. Our volunteers see to it that everyone’s stories are told.

Everyone has the capacity to tell stories.

Tell stories to our volunteers.

Thank you.