



Information for Applicants for the post of Collections Care & Documentation Officer

Full-time, permanent post. Salary £22,000

Introduction

Thank you for your interest in Brooklands Museum and the role of Collections Care & Documentation Officer. This is a new role for the Collections Department and will be central to support the care and management of Brooklands Museum's extensive collection. It is an exciting time to be joining the Museum as we build on the success of the Award-Winning Brooklands Aircraft Factory and Flight Shed which opened in November 2017. In 2018, Brooklands Museum was also shortlisted as one of the five final finalists for the Art Fund Museum of the Year Award.

Brooklands Museum, located in Weybridge, Surrey, is on the site of the world's first purpose-built motor racing circuit and the most productive aircraft factories in Europe in the twentieth century. The stories of motor sport and aviation at this site are bound together from the beginning and share key themes of inventiveness, adventure, ambition and engineering innovation. These themes are reflected in Brooklands Museum's vision:

Inspiring people to shape their futures through inventiveness, expertise and a sense of adventure.

Our vision is at the core of what we do as an organisation, including how we use our collection. We believe that, where possible, it is important to use our collection to bring the story of Brooklands to life for our visitors which provides an authentic window into our past. This presents both opportunities and challenges to look after such a dynamic collection. We are looking for someone who can relate to our vision and see it applied to this role, who is motivated and likes working collaboratively, as well as having a background in working with collections to join the team.

To apply:

Please send a covering letter of no more than three pages, describing your interest in the role and how you meet the person specification. Please also include in the same file a CV of up to two pages. Please email the one file with your name in its title, to Alex Patterson apatterson@brooklandsmuseum.com

The deadline for applications is Sunday 13 January 2019. Interviews will be held on Monday 28 January.

A brief history of Brooklands

Motorsport and Cycling



Brooklands, the world's first purpose-built motor racing circuit, was built by local landowner Hugh Locke King on 360 acres of farm and woodland on his estate at Weybridge in Surrey. Hugh and his wife Ethel had family connections with aristocracy across the nation, and they also socialised with the leading motoring and aviation pioneers of their day. Work commenced in late 1906 and this outstanding feat of engineering was built in only nine months. Many local families were employed in its construction together with workers from other Locke King family estates. Before the first race was run, Brooklands was the venue for a dramatic speed record attempt by motor-racing pioneer, Selwyn Francis Edge, who used the Track for establishing a 24-hour record, covering 1,581 miles at an average speed of almost 66 miles an hour. Three World Land Speed Records were broken on the Track by 1914 and, in 1913, the first man to drive over 100 miles in one hour, did so on the circuit. In August 1926 the RAC organised the first-ever British Grand Prix, with a second British Grand Prix held at Brooklands in 1927.

The British Racing Drivers Club (BRDC), founded in 1927, held their first event at Brooklands in 1929 – the 500 Miles Race - destined to become the fastest long-distance race in the world. In the 1930s, Brooklands, which was still the preserve of the wealthy amateur, became a fashionable venue on the sporting calendar along with Henley, Wimbledon and Ascot. The Brooklands Automobile Racing Club, which had organised popular race meetings since 1907, held its last ever meeting at Brooklands on 7th August 1939. With the outbreak of World War Two, the whole site was requisitioned by the Government and devoted to the production of aircraft.

Motorcycle racing started at Brooklands in 1908 and the British Motor Cycle Racing Club was founded here in 1909. This opened up the possibility of competing in motorsport events at Brooklands to those who were previously prohibited by the expense. Sidecar outfits joined the solo machines for racing and record breaking from 1912. When the track re-opened after the First World War, Brooklands was to witness the golden age of motorcycling when the British racing motorcycle was the best and fastest in the world.

The showcase long distance races such as the Hutchinson 100 and the Brooklands 500 Miles Race were the highlights of the racing calendar, whilst the growth of 'Clubman' racing saw many more people being able to take up the sport. The first ladies motorcycle race was held in 1928. As workshops sprang up around the paddock, Brooklands became the home of many motorcycle riders including Eric Fernihough, Michael McEvoy, Noel Pope, Francis Beart, and Bert Denly. Denly, one of the most successful riders of them all, started out as a Byfleet butcher's delivery boy, and Fernihough went on to claim the Motorcycle Land Speed Record.



In September 1907, a 100-mile massed start cycle race was held at the Brooklands Track, the first of its kind, as, at this time, even cycle racing was illegal on the open roads. The Track proved to be a safe haven for cyclists as it had for the motor car and the 1907 race was a precursor to the massed-start cycle races that were frequently held at the Track during the 1930s. Brooklands became a prime venue for dozens of regional cycling clubs across the country and a training ground for Britain's Olympic cyclists.

Aviation

Brooklands was a major centre for aircraft design, construction and flight testing for most of the 20th century. Attempts to fly at Brooklands began almost as soon as the motor racing circuit opened. An airfield was laid out in 1909 and populated by rows of simple wooden sheds in which experimental aircraft were built. Here many of the greatest early pioneers of British aviation came together, including Aliott Verdon Roe, Tommy Sopwith, Harry Hawker, Hilda Hewlett, Louis Bleriot, and Howard Pixton. Hawker and Sopwith both learnt to fly here, and Hilda Hewlett became the first woman to gain a British pilot's licence. In 1911 the world's first Flight Ticket Office was built in what soon became known as the Brooklands Flying Village.

From A V Roe's first trials here in 1907-08, through many decades of manufacture by such companies as BAC, Bleriot, British Aerospace, Hawker, Sopwith and Vickers, no other place in Britain, possibly even in the world, has seen such achievements. Over 18,600 new aircraft of nearly 250 types were first flown, manufactured or assembled at Brooklands. Brooklands fliers, in Brooklands-built machines, would cross the globe and even the Atlantic – most notably Alcock and Brown whose Vickers Vimy was the first aircraft to cross the Atlantic non-stop, in June 1919.

Brooklands also has a unique history of flying training – not only were some of the very first flying schools in Britain formed here from 1910 onwards, but this was also the principal centre for British flying training up to the start of World War One. In the 1920s and '30s hundreds more men and women learned to fly here too – notably with the Brooklands School of Flying and the Brooklands Flying Club.

Brooklands factories built thousands of outstanding aircraft including the Hurricane, Viscount, Wellington and Valiant. Indeed, in the 1930s, 80 per cent of the entire strength of the RAF (Royal Air Force) was Brooklands-built. Hawker having moved out in 1942, Vickers became the sole occupant, and in 1946 purchased the whole site from the Brooklands Track Company for £330,000.

In the second half of the twentieth century Brooklands saw the development of some of the world's leading civil airliners from the Vickers Viking to the Viscount, Vanguard and VC10. This culminated in Concorde, with more of the World's only supersonic aircraft to enter full service being built at Brooklands than anywhere else. At its height, the factory at Weybridge employed over 14,00 people many of whose parents and grandparents had worked here before them. Apprenticeship schemes kept many traditional skills alive as well as pioneering new technologies. Life in the local towns and villages was shaped by the families that populated the area, from the swarms of cyclists that poured in and out of the factory gates every day, to the local sports and social events organised on an often-grand scale by the Company directors.



The Museum and Collections

In 1977, Weybridge Museum staged an exhibition 'Wings over Brooklands', which highlighted the uniquely important role that Brooklands had played in the history of international aviation and motoring and, following its success, a move was led to establish a museum dedicated to the history of Brooklands. Following British Aerospace's announcement that it was going to sell off the most historic 40 acres of the original Brooklands Motor Racing Circuit, a 99-year lease was entered into by Elmbridge Borough Council and Gallaher Ltd in 1984 for 30 of the 40 acres of the site, for the purpose of founding a museum at Brooklands.

Refurbishment began and the collections grew rapidly. Already, in 1985, the Vickers Wellington bomber 'R for Robert' which had been rescued from Loch Ness that year, was donated to the Museum for restoration. In June 1987 the Brooklands Museum Trust was launched and just one month later The Sultan of Oman's VC10 landed, the first of a unique collection of Brooklands-built commercial airliners. Many major features of the site were restored or recreated, with Test Hill re-opened and Members' Bridge reconstructed in 1988. the end of that year seeing the final closure of the British Aerospace factory at Brooklands. Throughout the 1980s and '90s the collection of Vickers and Hawker aircraft continued to grow and significant vehicles such as the Whitney Straight Duesenberg and the Locke King family Siddeley were acquired together with important collections of associated memorabilia such as trophies, costume, photographs, drawings, posters and programmes

In April 1989 HRH Prince Michael of Kent became Royal Patron and the Museum was formally opened to the public in 1991. Over the next few years new exhibitions in restored buildings surrounding the already refurbished Clubhouse, were opened including the Malcolm Campbell and ERA Sheds, the Jackson and McEvoy Sheds, and the BP and Shell Pagodas. These buildings tell the stories of the community of drivers, engineers, mechanics and officials that helped to make Brooklands what it was. In 1997 the Museum acquired the iconic 1933 ex-John Cobb Brooklands-built Napier-Railton with the aid of National Heritage Memorial Fund.

Brooklands Museum has continued to develop its collections, exhibitions and activities. One of the most significant acquisitions in the Museum's history, in 2003, was Concorde G-BBDG which, after extensive restoration, was opened to the public in 2006 and has since welcomed over 400,000 visitors to the half hour Concorde Experience.

The replica Vickers Vimy, which had re-enacted the first Trans- Atlantic flight, and long-distance flights to Australia and South Africa, was donated in 2009, and the Concorde Simulator was opened which had once been used to train the pilots that flew Concorde's in its heyday.

The freehold of the Museum site was gifted to Brooklands Museum Trust by Japan Tobacco International in January 2010 and in August 2011 the new London Bus Museum, which is run by an independent trust, was opened on the site.

Further significant acquisitions were made in 2012 and 2013, including the 1926 Delage Grand Prix racing car and the last Vickers VC10 built at Brooklands ZA150.

In 2013 the restored Barnes-Wallis Stratosphere Chamber, Control Room and Aero-engine display were officially opened. The “Stratosphere Chamber” was built in 1946 to investigate high-speed flight at very high altitudes. It was restored and re-interpreted using a grant of £120,000 from the Association of Independent Museums (AIM) Biffa Award Scheme, with a new exhibition highlighting Wallis’ research work for the Vickers aircraft company after 1946.



The Balloon Hangar which once formed part of the Vickers High Speed Wind Tunnel was refurbished in 2014 and a 4-D Theatre was opened with the Napier-Railton Experience. This was filmed partly at the Museum and partly at Montlhéry, and now gives visitors a chance to experience the thrill of driving around the Brooklands Track. The theatre now also offers RAF Red Arrows and Le Mans Jaguar experiences.

The Museum’s collections continue to grow on a daily basis, so it is all the more important that relevance to the stories that Brooklands tells is key and that the quality and interpretation of the collections grow to reflect the high standards that Brooklands aspired to historically.

For more information about the incredibly rich history of motorsport and aviation at Brooklands, visit: www.brooklandsmuseum.com/explore/our-history

Brooklands Museum

Structure and governance

Brooklands Museum is an independent charitable trust, established in 1987, whose aim is to conserve, protect and interpret the unique heritage of the Brooklands site. The Trust has a wholly-owned subsidiary trading company, Brooklands Limited, and the Brooklands Trust Members organisation also functions as a wholly owned activity of the Trust. The museum generates all its own income to support its running costs and developments. There is a staff team of around 50 people and over 800 active volunteers.

Volunteers

The Museum is fortunate to have around 800 active volunteers. Volunteers at Brooklands fulfil many roles such as stewarding the Museum buildings and displays, working on restoration and project teams, working with school and adult groups, helping with administration and site maintenance and marshalling at Museum events. The volunteer teams reporting to the Collections Department have a great deal of expertise in engineering, preservation of our artefacts, research, archives and other relevant areas. In 2016 Brooklands Museum volunteers were awarded the prestigious Queen’s Award for Voluntary Service. A key part of the Collections Care and Documentation Officer role will be working with volunteers to support the work of the department and caring for the collection.

Learning and research

Brooklands Museum strives to be educationally excellent, and looks to achieve this by instilling traditional museum values of scholarship and research into modern interpretation and continuing to develop its successful schools and college programme which explores STEM subjects with children and young people from pre-school age upwards.

There is an urgent need in the UK to encourage young people in STEM subjects so as to meet the skills shortage, particularly in the engineering sector for both young men and, even more so, young women. Through the museum's exhibitions and activities, Brooklands Museum aims to build on its amazing legacy of expertise and adventure to inspire future generations to develop these skills and shape their world.



The learning programme at Brooklands hosts over 13,000 school children and students on curriculum-based visits every year. The learning programme covers early years and Key Stages 1 to 4 through to higher education, with the inspiration of young people in the STEM subjects being at the heart of what the Museum does.

Family activities are provided at many of the Museum's larger events and during school holidays, including the ever-popular car rides on the Brooklands banking. There is a 4-D theatre and a kids version of the popular Concorde Experience. For adults there is an exciting programme of activities themed around its collections which have been specially designed to engage adult learners, including talks, courses, and tours.

The Brooklands Museum collection contains a large amount of material useful to researchers and historians of all levels, from records of the cars and drivers that raced on the circuit to technical drawings and manuals for the aircraft that were built here. The collection also includes photographic records of all aspects of the people and cars, motorcycles or bicycles that raced at Brooklands alongside the aircraft that were built or flew from here and the people that worked on them. The archives, Library and reserve collection are accessible to the public by appointment.

Events

Events help bring Brooklands alive for visitors. The Museum organises many events each year, typically attracting between 1500 and 6500 visitors per day. They range from themed car displays such as Italian Car Day and Autumn Motorsport Day, through general gatherings such as its New Year's Day Classic Gathering (the largest of its type in the country) to social history events such as 1940s Day and Great War Day. In conjunction with the Vintage Sports Car Club, it keeps active motorsport alive on the site, with the annual Brooklands Double Twelve Motorsport Festival and Winter Driving Tests, and it also organises an annual charity kart race in conjunction with the Henry Surtees Foundation.

As a department, the Collections team help support these events through the running of key exhibits and are central to help bringing the site to life.