

Make Your Own Mini Museum

While the museum is temporarily closed, we thought you might like to make one of your own at home!

A museum is simply a collection of interesting things, displayed so that people can enjoy looking at them and finding out about them. Nowadays the Museum in

the Park collects objects from across the Stroud District which tell many stories about how people used to live in the area and how the landscape developed.



Collectors in the Past

Early collectors would bring things from their travels to study at home and to show to their friends. Sometimes they would put these objects in a display cupboard called a *Cabinet of Curiosities*.

Some private collections got bigger and bigger and eventually were turned into public museums for everyone to see. The Museum in the Park has many collections that were donated to it, either by the original collector, or by their descendants. It has a whole room called **The Collectors' Room** to show us some of the objects they collected and to remind us of their lives. Sometimes the objects have nothing to do with this area and it is the collectors themselves who are connected to it.

What did they Collect?

A great variety of things! Here are some of the objects you can see if you visit The Collectors' Room (Room 7) at the Museum in the Park:



This is an English **Blunderbuss** dated 1730-40 with walnut stock, an iron barrel and iron decoration and furniture – it is one from a collection of 34 guns put together by **William Palling** of Brownhill in the mid-18th century.

This is a **coin of the Emperor Carausius** who was a Belgic Gaul who rose to become a military commander of the Roman Empire in the 3rd century. He declared himself to be the emperor of Britain and Northern Gaul in 286, during the Carausian Revolt. From the Coin Collection of solicitor **John Francillon** of Dursley



Haematite from the mineral collection of **Vernon Parry Kitchin** an archaeologist who lived in Painswick in the 1950s. [Haematite is an important iron ore, or source of iron]

Stone Age flint **hand axe**, Rickmansworth. From the **VP Kitchin** collections.



The **Burge** Collection comprises almost 6000 **stamps** from all around the world, on the theme of Science. The collection was put together by Professor Burge of Painswick who donated it to the museum in the early 21st century.

What sort of things make a good collection?

All sorts of things! As long as they interest you.

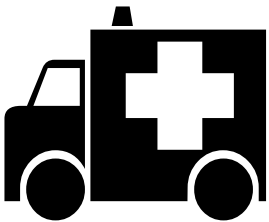
Here are some ideas to get you thinking:

- Things you might find on a walk or in the garden: stones, fossils, leaves, twigs, cones, seeds, bits of pottery or metal objects...
- Souvenirs you have brought back from days out, or holidays: sea shells, trinkets, post cards, objects washed up on a beach, tickets, leaflets...
- Small things like buttons (there are so many different sorts once you start looking), coins, postage stamps, model animals and birds, small toys, odd socks...
- Artworks: Paintings, sculptures, models that you've made or you have found or been given...
- Inventions you have made...

- Photographs you have taken...
- Poems that you like by yourself and other people...
- Musical instruments—any thing that makes sounds you like...
- Recordings of songs or performances by you or other people...
- Mystery objects—things that intrigue you...
- Things from your life with a story attached to them: *the plaster I had when I cut my knee; the tray we used as a sledge when it snowed; a tent peg from a camping trip...*
- The oldest things in your house...
- When deciding what to collect, you might want to think about how easy the objects will be to store and to look after...

Looking After Your Collection

You will need somewhere to keep your collection safely, out of reach of small children or pets, who might damage the objects and themselves!



It might be:

- A shelf
- A cardboard box or boxes
- Biscuit or sweet tins
- An empty cupboard or drawer

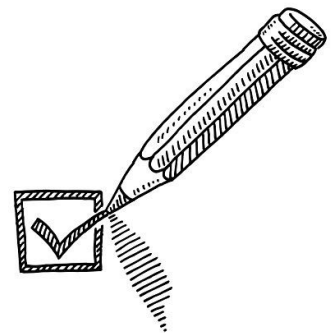
If your objects are delicate you may need tissue paper, or something soft, to protect them. Paintings and old photographs should not be kept on a sunny window ledge, because the sun will gradually fade them.

Objects from nature (*Natural History*) can be tricky. Rocks and fossils, sticks and stones, bits of bone, pine cones, nuts and seeds, fallen feathers—these are all quite easy to keep. But plants, fruits and flowers will soon dry up or go mouldy; butterflies and bugs will die. With living things, it is usually best to look at them carefully in their natural surroundings and to collect drawings or photographs of them instead.

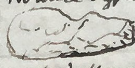
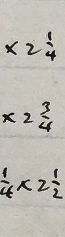
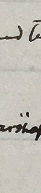
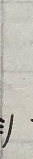
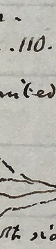
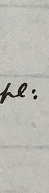
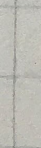
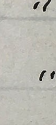
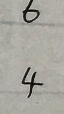
Start a Collector's Notebook

Serious collectors will usually keep notes on objects they add to their collection, so they have a record of:

- When they got it
- Where they found it
- What it looks like (This could be a sketch or photo or written description. Measurements might be useful)
- What it is—if they know
- How old it is
- Who made it
- Any other interesting facts or stories about it



Below is a page from one of VP Kitchin's notebooks, where he has kept records of his stone age tool collection.

locality	NR	Size	Type	Material	Further description	Where procured	age	Price
Reikmanswold	126	3 x 1 1/2	Flake-Knife spear-shaped (RE)	Chert	Pointed - ridged & worked.	Nearby in pit	P	2?
"	127	2 1/2 x 2 1/4	scraper	Flint	Roughly made. Crusty Round butt. Point re-chipped.	"	P	2?
"	128	5 1/2 x 3 1/2	hand-tool tongue shaped	"	Nodule type - chisel end. v. fine.	"	P	4?
"	129	5 3/4 x 3 1/4	"	"	 worked all over. gave this to R. Elliott.	"	P	2/6
"	130	4 x 2 3/4	oval tool	"	tongue shaped - flat butt	"	P	1/-
"	131	3 1/2 x 2 1/2	hand tool	"	rough	"	P	1/-
"	132	5 x 3	"	"	"	"	P	8?
"	133	4 1/2 x 2 3/4	"	"	 see 143 rough.	"	P	8?
"	134	4 x 2	"	"	Pointed. One side flat Shoe shape	"	P	6
"	135	4 1/2 x 2	hand tool	"	 Quadrilateral. Pointed Rounded butt.	"	P	6
"	136	4 x 2 1/4	"	"	One side flat.	"	P	6
"	137	3 3/4 x 2 1/2	"	"	 much as above (137)	"	P	6
"	138	4 1/2 x 2 1/4	"	"	shoe shape - v. like .110.	"	P	6
"	139	4 x 2 1/4	hand tool	"	rough pointed. infl:	"	P	4
"	140	5 x 2 3/4	spear-shaped (RE)	"	"	"	P	3
"	142	4 1/4 x 2 1/2	oval	"	 worked both sides.	"	P	2
"	141	3 x 2	"	"	"	"	P	2
"	143	4 x 2	"	"	 ridge in middle. see .133	"	P	2
"	144	3 x 2	muller & rough infl:	"	 rough infl:	"	P	2
"	145	3 x 3	"	"	flake infl: 	"	P	3
"	146	3 x 2 1/4	"	"	small rough pointed infl:	"	P	2
"	147		"	"	rough hollow scrapers.	"	P	2
"	148		"	"	"	"	P	2
"	149	3 x 2	Knife	"	 Knife	"	P	2
"	150	4 x 3	hollow scraper	"	large flat pebble split in 1/2 & made into hollow scraper found by self	"	E	—
"	151	2 x 1 1/2	"	"	"	"	P	—
"	152	3 x 1 3/4	saw or knife	"	shoe shaped. v. small	"	P	—
"	153	1 3/4 x 1	"	"	Knob of nodule worked.	"	P	—

all found on March 7th 1906
nearby v. near the chalk.

Displaying some or all of your Collection—be a Curator!

A curator organises a collection, selects objects from it to be displayed and decides on the best way of displaying them.

Helping Other People to Understand Your Collection

You can show them the display yourself and tell them about every object (perhaps using your notebook to help you remember). In museums and galleries the things on display often have labels next to them, so that visitors can read about the objects for themselves, if they want to.

What is it?...
What's it made of?
How old is it?
Where did you get it? And when?
Other interesting details?



You can cut out your own labels from paper or cardboard and write on them.

Or use luggage labels, if you have any.

Or design and print labels on a computer.

It's best not to stick labels onto the objects themselves because it might spoil them.

Magnetic Compass in a brass case
1960s

My grandmother gave it to me in May 2020.
She used it on walking holidays in the Lake District and Scotland during her gap year.

Let Other People Know about your Museum

Make a leaflet or a poster to tell people about your museum or put up a post on social media:

- Does your mini-museum have a name?
- What sort of collection is it?
- What makes it interesting? Why would people want to see it?
- Where is it? How do you get there?
- When is it open?



We'd love to see your Mini Museum ...

email a photo or video-clip to museum@stroud.gov.uk by **1st September**

The best entries will win prizes and be shown on our website :)