

## Appendix R

### Caroline Barrie-Smith- Community Participation and Learning Officer- Boathouse 4

Danielle Newman: For the record, could you please state your name?

Caroline Barrie-Smith: My name is Caroline Barrie-Smith.

#### Q1

DN: Does the challenge of provision of access dictate how you design maritime heritage programmes?

CBS: For me, it doesn't dictate it at all. If I start thinking about it from that way or in that position then immediately you are putting up barriers to access. So you start thinking "Oh, this is quite intellectual, maybe we shouldn't do this for an outreach project" or you think something is a bit too high brow or difficult to access then immediately you are coming from a bottom up approach. Whereas I take a top down approach so it doesn't actually matter what the issues are or what the problems could be, I want to resolve it and I want to get passed it. So, I don't look at anything that's a problem or something that is difficult to access.

#### Q2

DN: So do you believe that access to maritime heritage is, or even can be, provided at the same level as access to terrestrial heritage.

CBS: Absolutely. If I took it from the other angle, then again it stifles your creativity. It stifles your enthusiasm for being able to do something and it stifles your blue sky thinking to be able to make something more interactive and engaging and fun and new...modern and fresh. So absolutely, I believe that I could interpret ice to eskimos, it doesn't really matter what the subject is. And that's the same with maritime archaeology, we can make it just as fun and interesting and interactive and informative as land archaeology.

#### Q3

DN: What is the perceived effect of the public's fascination with treasure hunting on the perception of archaeology?

CBS: Partly it's a media thing, and it's how you grew up. So a lot of people, from a tiny age, when you read about history and stories from history there is a lot treasure hunting and pirates and adventure and so from a very early age people embrace the excitement of that, the treasure and the treasure hunt. So that gives people different angles, for good or bad. It's one of those things that's ingrained in our childhood. It's also ingrained in our popular culture, when you see stuff on TV like Deep Wreck Mysteries. So all the clichéd words come out, all the clichéd sayings. And words like treasure do come out a lot.

#### Q4

DN: Do you think it's important to engage with those ideas or not.

CBS: Well, you can't deny them there are there! If they are in a public psyche then there is no getting away from them so you have to face them and look at them. You also, I think, have to understand that people see artefacts in certain ways. Even on this dockyard here, we have items that the antique dealer sells. Which I would personally archaeology and shouldn't be sold. But he considers and antique. He's coming from a very different direction and it's the same with peoples perceptions, and their perception of treasure, on how this artefacts should be cared for and interpreted. How they should be sold or displayed for the public interest, it's just different perceptions and we have the accept that people come from these different angles.

#### Q5

DN: What do you believe is the most effective way to change the public's perception through engagement?

CBS: The most effective way is first of all understanding that they are coming from these different angles and they are coming from different perceptions in the first place. So we can never tell someone that their thought is wrong or their way is wrong. It's not wrong, it's just their perception. People have options, and you can say "Well, that's just how some people believe and how people think. However, we've got this interpretation and this is how we treat a wreck site and because we treat a wreck site in this particular way, in this archaeology way, we can do XYZ and get so much out of it." It's not damning or putting down anyone else's option but just showing the advantages of what we do. And maybe it's a bit of a smug view or maybe it's a bit of a take your ball and go home view, but it's just showing the products of what we can do with our methods of working with heritage.

#### Q6

DN: How do you think the messages being delivered by public access initiatives are being received?

CBS: It depends on where you go. It's so varied. Some places, some museums, have got some really old interpretations and it's dated. Super dated. But, some of it works very well. Sometimes it's a case of if it's aint broke, don't fix it. Some interpretation is really good, and the basic things you see again and again. Knot tying and pulley systems, there is nothing that really can trump it. There is no AV interpretation that can trump it. Some museums can have this amazing AV experience, one I would probably say is the Titanic museum in Belfast where they don't have a single artefact. So without artefacts, they have to make it all zingy and pazzazzy. So there are so many ways that maritime heritage is being interpreted, and they all have their good points. And they all have their bad points. But together as a group they do their job. It's whether the public gets to see all these interpretations together that's the issue.

#### Q7

DN: What do you think of when I say the term: Heritage models?

CBS: Ugh, I immediately switch off (laughter). I immediately switch off because I find that it means, for me, something that is static. A heritage model to me seems like something someone has created as a standard that you should do your heritage or your interpretation too. Like is said with museums, you can have really old interpretation and really modern interpretation that fits the fashion, and you can really see that fashion through the 80's, 90's, 00's and now teens. There is a different style of interpretation. So that means there is no model that actually can work constantly throughout all these decades of interpretation. So when I see something called a heritage model, the first thing I want to see is the date that model came from. I'd be interested in it, but that's a static model that can't be taken as viable for your exhibition. Because things are constantly changing.

#### Q8

DN: So, how do you think that current theoretical models stack up in comparison to the design and delivery of public access? Do you think they are remotely still appropriate? Is it still relevant to look at them?

CBS: They are relevant to look at, but every exhibition, every site, every artefact is different. So they are good but they have got to sit with a flexible outcome. Because we have a flexible audience and a flexible space to be working with. So they are fine, but quite a few of them work in the ideal situation, where you have a ton of funding and a beautiful dry space and volunteers that don't argue and a collection that's all stable. So a lot of them don't really address the reality, they look at a utopian world of how you should do your interpretation. They are nice, they can be inspiring, but they are not a practical guide.

DN: It is quite difficult to quantify heritage engagement, because what works for one really won't work for anyone else, truthfully.

#### Q9

DN: So, how do you design engagement initiatives?

CBS: First of all, I look at the environment I'm in and what message we are trying to say. Because, at the end of the day whatever heritage organization I'm working for they've got a message to get across and I'm paid to get that message across. So, for example, when I worked for the National Trust on Stonehenge landscape the message we were getting across had nothing to do with the stones themselves. That was English Heritage's remit. So for the National Trust it was the 80 hectares around the world heritage site itself. And, you know, I had a boss and they wanted me to look at butterflies and chalk, which isn't a lot to do with archaeology but that's what they wanted me to do so that's how we did it. And then if I wanted to bring in a historical element to that then I'd get to bring it in. But all of it, everything I've done, I've tried to employ learning by stealth, which is someone having a good time and doing something and through their actions they are learning. If you have a classroom of teenagers and say "Right kids, we are going to do trigonometry" they are all going to sigh and go "Ugh", but if you lay out a shipwreck on the classroom floor and teach

them how to survey it they don't realise they are doing Trigonometry, but that is essentially what they are doing. So they are not only doing something but they are learning by stealth and seeing the product of why they are doing it. Most kids would go "Well, I'm never going to use trigonometry again in the future so what's the point in doing it" but you are actually giving them the product and an idea of how they can be used in the future.

#### Q10

DN: How do you feel that the practicalities of things like having target audiences, the funding and the staffing and things like the national interest is affecting the aims and deliveries of programming?

CBS: In terms of fashion, it can be quite directed at what's going on on TV. So, for example, in my national trust days they used to do a "go and hunt the frogs" so you had to go and look for the frogs and they had one family come one year and then David Attenborough did "Life in Cold Blood" and they had 40 families show up the next year. So there is a fashion, and if it's in the public mind then people are going to go for it and they're going to be reminded and see about things that they've seen on TV. So in terms of maritime archaeology and archaeology itself, things like "Time Team" had a massive impact on the fashion of that subject. And then an impact, subsequently, at an engagement level. In terms of funding, again it can be quite fickle depending on whatever fashion is in at the moment the big buzz word is "Apprenticeships". If you've got apprenticeships and sustainability, those are the two words to really put into your funding bids. And also the words "Young" and "Deprived" come up a lot. That's been a problem here because we offer bursaries to people but the bursaries we are giving are to the age group 16-25, and the bursaries are to people who are from a young, poor, deprived background. A particular target audience was people with drug and drug rehabilitation, alcohol rehabilitation. However, when you are 16-23 you are too busy becoming an alcoholic or drug addict to actually appreciate what we are doing. It's actually people in their 30's and 40's, who are effectively career changers, who don't want to be drug addicts anymore. They are going to their AA meetings and they really appreciate the opportunity they are getting through their funding source. Also, with young people right now I find there are so many funding streams out there for young people and there is actually quite a small pool of young people to grab for our activities. So yeah, with funding and our audience fashion is very, very important to how we capture that group.

#### Q11

DN: How do you evaluate your engagement initiatives?

CBS: You take it from several angles. First of all we evaluate from staff and volunteer input, both financially, and time and effort and enjoyment. Looking at all those things together. Because if we don't have those, making something sustainable, making, for example, a project sustainable if you are putting on paid staff which is costing you a fortune because

your volunteers can't do it. Then it doesn't matter how amazing your activity is if you can't run it and you can't sustain the delivery then there is no point. So we look at that side first and that is basically through observation, feedback, reports and meetings. In terms of public evaluation, we have two angles really. First of all is the actual participants themselves. Maybe using on an iPad something like SurveyMonkey or you've got a couple of pots with happy face and sad face on them. There are various different ways for different age groups to give feedback on that's directed at the activity they are doing. One thing I am painfully aware of is that we are slowly becoming a society of feedback forms and feedback fatigue. So whatever I do, whatever workshop I do, I have to get out the blumming feedback form. So I'm painfully aware that feedback fatigue is coming in and now whatever we do we make sure that that public feedback is done in a very, non-intrusive and quick way. And hopefully with a quick response we'll get a more honest response rather than someone who has to think about it and then fill out a form. The third part of the evaluation is actually the public response and perception. So if we do an activity with a group of kids no one else knows about it, it doesn't go into the news or on TV, and no one else knows about it then that's something we need to think about. Especially if that's something we wanted to be a high publicity event. Why wasn't it? And if it was, what's the response been? Is our phone ringing because people want to book onto this event or are there more people on the dockyards? So those are the three angles we are taking things from.

#### Q12

DN: What do you think makes engagement successful? Or a failure? Either way \*laughter\*

CBS: For me, partly, I would look at the initial marketing strategy that we had in the first place because it doesn't matter how good it is if we can't get people through the door then our marketing wasn't successful in the first place. Or even if the way we've built the activity wasn't successful or if no one wants to do that activity. Or no one wants to engage with that kind of heritage. If no one is interested in boats it doesn't matter how much we do. So we look at, first of all, foot fall and interest. That will be a marker of our success and then then the next marker will, hopefully, we reported in the feedback. Whether someone has walked away with that key message we wanted to give to them. At the moment, the key message is that we want people to come away thinking "Oh, working with wood is kinda cool. You could build a boat out of it and lots of people build old boats still and there is a career in it. And that's the simple message, but I'd like people to come away with some sort of idea about what we do.

#### Q13

DN: Do you think that the most simple messages are the most effective ones?

CBS: I think they are the most memorable. So there might be other messages and people might learn other stuff, like the facts and figures about the boats, but they are easily lost bits of information. Whereas knowing that here, in Boathouse 4, they do boat building is a one sentence message but it's a message that they will pass on to other people. And they'll

get their families to come or they will revisit and see a bigger boat being built. So yeah, that's a key point in our third approach is to make sure that people revisit. To make sure that people want to come back and have a look again.

#### Q14

DN: Do you think that the public is generally interested in maritime heritage?

CBS: I don't think they know they are? Because they don't see it. Unlike land archaeology and the time team effect where it's all kind of happening in the public eye, maritime archaeology is often under water so you don't see it. So, in general, if you are going to go out on Sunday for a nice afternoon walk around the castle you see the castle physically, you can look at it. You can see the heritage and there might be an interpretation board or something. It's there in your face and there is minimal effort. Whereas, if you go for a walk along the beach the maritime heritage is a lot more hidden and you have to go to and effort. If you are lucky, some group has made an app that you can hold against the water and then find out information about the shipwreck. That's all very good, but there is an extra level of work to go to it and get that information. They want to know that information will be there and to have that information and not have to have an iPhone in the first place. So I think maritime heritage is a lot harder to get across just because it's not as accessible.

#### Q15

DN: How do you believe your background has helped you prepare to deliver engagement programming?

CBS: First of all, my background is teaching and if you can't get your message across then you can't really do the job. So teaching really helps that, with thinking fast and on my feet and working with lots of different audiences. Teaching in both Japan and the UK has helped a hell of a lot. Having an interest helps, because you have got to be enthusiastic about it if you have to repeat and lesson plan again and again and again sixty times over for a year. You have to deliver it with just as much happy smiley face and bouncing around as you did on the first lesson at the very end of the year. That's a standard that I have and every other staff that does what I do has to have. We all have to deliver it in the same way. I'm capable of it so they have to be capable of it. So my teaching background really helps, the enthusiasm really helps, for teaching in general and just getting the point across. I'm local to the area and I'm south coast born and bred so I like the heritage of the area and I like talking about the area. I think because I grew it and lived it I'm very proud of it so having a background in it from just being born here really helps. I think also my whole background of volunteering before I started being paid to do this job I really voluntarily did it and it's doing that that helped me realise just how much I enjoyed doing it and if you enjoy your job then you deliver it with gusto.

#### Q16

DN: How do you think engagement programming has changed since you became involved in it?

CBS: So I started doing this for the National Trust in 2007 and since then, engagement and museums have become a lot more techy. There are a lot more apps and a lot more ways to try and get a collection out to an audience. It's become more than just having stuff behind a glass panel and museums and exhibitions who have only 10% of what they have out and are trying to figure out how to get the rest of it out to the public. So it's been a lot of change using QR codes and AV's. Also, making things a lot more visual. Now it's big displays and looking at how to make text more interesting. Certainly, I think interpretation boards have changed a lot with less text on them and a lot more pictures. But I think the biggest change, and it's still changing, is the audio visual element particularly.

#### Q17

DN: Do you think these changes have been for the better or for the worse?

CBS: Sometimes I think that people are too reliant on it, on tech. And a lot of museums can't keep up with the World of Warcraft/Call of Duty generation. They want fast acting, really nice tech. So when you get some really rubbish game at a museum that's slow and the touch screen is not that good it just doesn't compete. And so sometimes, it's actually better for museums to take a step backwards and back to an older style of interpretation that's hands on. Because it can be just as good, and I think that some museums got blinded to the idea that it's all got to be touch screen and that kids don't want to play and adults don't want to pick up a piece of rope and learn. They see a knot on a board and a piece of rope and they want to do it, there are certain things you can't do on a touch screen. So it's good, but only to a certain extent and it doesn't actually fulfil the proper learning environment that's needed for some learners. For example, I am a very heavy kinaesthetic learner so you put the touch screen in front of me and I cannot be asked to look through it to find the right sections. But, if you put an activity in front of it then I'll physically do it. So touch screens and modern tech doesn't necessarily appeal to someone who is maybe a learner who reacts to smells and sound rather than what they see on a screen.

#### Q18

DN: What do you believe your role is in heritage management?

CBS: I would consider my role to be responsible for a good, sound message. I'm not a curator, I'm not a collections manager, and I never have been. Although I've had those kinds of roles within previous jobs. So, for Sunken Secrets when I worked for the Maritime Archaeology Trust, I did have to look after the collection but that wasn't my primary role. My primary role was to be responsible for getting a good message across and just making sure that what we've got is being responsibly looked after. I think a message is really important to get right, especially with this current exhibition I'm really hot on the facts. If

we get one fact wrong or we get one sentence with bad grammar in it or a spelling mistake we can blow the integrity of an entire exhibition. So if there is, for example, some really bad punctuation on an interpretation board you lose the trust of your audience regarding the facts on the board. The facts might be great, but because the punctuation is awful, people don't trust you and they don't trust what you say on the board. And like I say, that can blow the integrity of the exhibition. Also, if we've got any facts wrong on the board or any facts that are actually hearsay we can blow the business that we have on the ground floor of this project. If we don't know the facts on our own boat, how can we restore and renovate the ones outside our collection. If we don't know the facts.

#### Q19

DN: Do you consider yourself as working in heritage or working in education?

CBS: Ohhh...I would consider myself as working in education. And that's because what's I've done is get the message out to the public. So, National Trust was learning and education officer, so it was very public facing. Next one was Education Officer for Maritime Archaeology Trust, which was all about getting it out. Then it was Archaeology Tutor for Benham College (sp?) and now it's community learning and support so I've always had the public facing role in all my jobs to do with heritage and archaeology. So I would consider mine education and the fact that it's shipwrecks or archaeology or heritage or boats is almost incidental. You can apply things to all those bits, but the role I have is really to get things out to the public.

#### Q20

DN: Do you believe your work is for the benefit of heritage or the public?

CBS: I think that the job I do is really for the benefit of heritage, and to give heritage a better public perception. Without that better public perception then the heritage dies, the funding doesn't come in and there is less love for certain places. You get more planning permissions for buildings to be knocked down because people don't have a love for the heritage. Because if you can't get that love for the heritage then it doesn't matter about the public, if they are watching or not.

#### Q21

DN: How do you think we've arrived at this point in heritage engagement?

CBS: That's an interesting part of what I've seen in engagement and collections management and museums is the change that we have now that we have the HLF. It's pumped literally millions into Portsmouth Historic Dockyard. All the jobs that I've had have been HLF funded, so I've lasted the last seven years on people buying lottery tickets. There have been so many initiatives that have been directly down to HLF funding, and that wouldn't have happened without it. I don't know if there would have been as much public engagement and saving of heritage without that funding because it's a massive pot. With

the HLF it's very community and public focused, so it's not just about capital works projects and looking after something, it's very strongly about getting it out to the public. I think that's pushed the heritage industry to make public engagement activities and more community outreach.

## Q22

DN: If you could design a public access initiative with no concern over any mitigating issues like funding or location what would you design?

CBS: That's the same question I asked you once for a job interview. Now the tables have turned! (Laughter). First of all, like I said, when I think of any initiative I like to think of a top down approach rather than a bottom up. So I always think of a blue sky idea and then we figure out the health and safety and the constraints after that. One bit that I find, and I've not seen anyone do it successfully, would be a diving or under water experience that would get the public under water without getting them wet. And it would be lovely to see a massive demonstration tank, like one of the big ones that sits in a shop in Dubai. There, people can go dive amongst the fish and the sharks. It would be so cool to have a "shipwreck" set up for people to dive. Or, actually, you could have some real conservation work going on. Have that work going on live in a massive fish tank. So you can have your volunteer team doing their work and demos going on and the public could stand around and watch it all. There are lots of things that can happen with that. You can have people on the outside looking in, drawing stuff or doing stuff, and you can also have actual conservation stuff going on. I remember seeing the Terracotta warriors, and there you have your trench in the middle and all the scientists working on bits and pieces and then all the public on the outside with tour guides and information. And some members of the public get to walk amongst the Terracotta Warriors themselves. It's a real work space, and that's what we've got here at Boathouse 4. We plan on making a real working space and that's one thing that land archaeologists can do more easily. You can go to an open day and see actual real archaeologists working away. But it's very difficult to see real maritime archaeologists at work and I think that would be great outreach, to be able to capture maritime archaeologists doing their job, which is something you can't normally see.

## Q23

DN: What do you think needs to change in order for an initiative like that to happen?

CBS: It just...nothing is impossible, it can all be done, it just needs a driving team with enough enthusiasm to be able to work on it. Once you've got that then you can find the funding and you can find the appropriate tank. So, for example, with the Qatar World Cup going on, there is a lot of money going into the presentation of their heritage and what they are doing at the moment. So if they've got a fish tank like the one in Dubai, could some things go down into the bottom of their fish tank? And things go on related to maritime archaeology while millions of people from around the world are watching on TV cameras plus all the thousands of visitors walking around that tank. So there is nothing that is

impossible, it's just where you go and how you do it. You need an enthusiastic team that can really make it happen.