

## Time Travel Tuesday: Spring into Sculpture Tuesday 14 April 2020

Welcome to Travel Back in Time Tuesday: Spring into Sculpture – sharing our heritage from Bruce Castle Museum & Archive.

Here's a message from one of our vintage adverts of December 1915 ....



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.... looking at our art collection and public art in Haringey, as a pick-me-up!

After the long-weekend bank holiday and our continued stay-cation, we thought today we would share more about our local art and focus specifically on our sculpture collections at Bruce Castle and around the borough as well.

We will home in on a few items from our sculpture collections that were added online to Art UK in 2019. We have selected a few sculptures to tell you about, added some activities and compiled a quiz for you – but we will start by asking what connects Alice in Wonderland, The Beatles and an Irish poet?

Let's find out ...

If we travelled back in time to 1950s Bruce Castle Museum, amongst the objects and art in the galleries you would have seen models and [dioramas](#), created to teach us something about history or culture. One highlight for schoolchildren visiting the museum were the series of Alice in Wonderland sculptural scenes. Each one was a work of art in their own right.

Nowadays, two of the frequently asked questions from visitors at Bruce Castle is whether the Alice in Wonderland models or the Egyptian mummies are still on

display. Unlike the Egyptian mummies (that used to scare local youngsters ... but have now moved on), we can certainly show visitors some of the menagerie of creatures and magical characters in Alice's adventures, taken from two of the most famous, translated, and quoted Victorian books in the world.

Today in our *Toys in the Past* case, you can see at the museum the scene below of the Walrus and the Carpenter:



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Our collection of models are 3-D scenes based on Sir John Tenniel's original illustrations for '[Alice's Adventures in Wonderland](#)' (1865) or '[Through the Looking Glass](#)' (1871) by Lewis Carroll. '[The Walrus and the Carpenter](#)' (above) are the eponymous characters in the poem recited by Tweedledum and Tweedledee to Alice. Walking on a beach one night when both sun and moon are visible, the Walrus and Carpenter come across an offshore bed of oysters.

The poem is probably a good example of 'nonsense literature' – where things that make sense are combined deliberately with those that do not. Children's stories and nursery rhymes are often filled with nonsense as we explore fantastical and imaginative worlds. We see eggs falling off of walls – as below when [Alice meets Humpty Dumpty](#).



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The magic of Humpty Dumpty and Alice seem to be as popular with young children today as it was in the 1950s or 1870s, if we judge by how many costumes inspired by Alice's adventures for World Book Day are worn by children at schools or at themed children's parties. Our museum model (above) frequently comes out too for our Family Art and Craft Activities on Sundays – much missed this Easter school holidays.

Attached is one of the Activities for children and families about Humpty Dumpty – please share the PDF with your families and have a bit of fun!

Lewis Carroll's stories about Alice and her adventures were brought to life by the artist [Sir John Tenniel](#), an artist best known for his political cartoons, humour and being Chief illustrator for Punch magazine. (This year – 2020 - happens to be the [200<sup>th</sup> anniversary](#) of Tenniel's birth.) Tenniel also brought to life through his [illustrations](#) the republished '[Lalla Rookh](#)' in 1861, the work of the Irish poet [Thomas Moore](#), who had lived at a house in Muswell Hill (pictured below) in 1817 when his book was first published. The house became known as 'Lalla Rookh' until it was demolished after 1912 to make way for the building of the [Rookfield Estate](#) off Muswell Hill by [W. J. Collins](#) and the new road [Etheldene Avenue](#) off Park Road.



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This series of Alice in Wonderland models may be based on Tenniel's work but the artist was in fact Sir Frank Crisp (1872-1937), who doesn't seem to have had anything to do with Haringey. His father (also [Sir Frank Crisp, 1843 - 1919](#)) was a lawyer and microscopist, a portrait artist and an eccentric and extravagant garden designer who created a [fantastical garden](#) at Friar's Park in Henley - maybe some of you have heard of the house and garden as it eventually became the home and recording studio in 1970 of [George Harrison of The Beatles](#), inspiring the song '[Ballad of Sir Frankie Crisp \(Let It Roll\)](#)'.

After that slight digression, we can see it was no wonder then that the younger Sir Frank wished to recreate (on a more manageable scale) the fantastical scenes from Alice's adventures. Highly skilled, Sir Frank had intricately crafted them from wood, wax and plaster. We have learnt from family members who have got in touch with us in 2019 that they still have the sketches drawn by him for the making of these models. The Museum had only acquired the models by chance in May 1938, when Sir Frank Crisp's executor had tried to give them to the V&A, but they suggested instead Bruce Castle (this was at a time when museums did not always have specific and agreed areas of collecting as they do nowadays). But however they got to be at Bruce Castle, what memories and pleasure these little scenes have brought for several generations of our young visitors - who count them as being part of their childhood and still come back to see them.

The Art UK website resource has the catalogue records for our Alice in Wonderland models (some are temporarily without their accompanying photographs at the moment), as well as a number of other sculptures from [our collections](#) which were amongst the first in the country to go online. There are a few outside sculptures in the grounds of Bruce Castle in the park included which heralds plans for all of the public sculptures in Haringey to be photographed in due course by Art UK. You can read more about the Sculpture Project generally [here](#), which in a year has added over 17,000 sculptures from around the country now to the website.

Being part of the Art UK project has brought new partnerships for the benefit of our residents. We are involved with [Vocal Eyes](#) to broaden our engagement with

our audiences. Together we are developing touch, handling and art workshops using some of our sculpture to work with local people with visual impairments (the planning of the programme of course is currently on hold but we hope to take this forward in the autumn).

Below are a few other highlights from our collections that you can also explore online:

Some of you might remember local sculptor [Al Johnson](#) who had a sculpture installation and exhibition at Bruce Castle in 2018 to commemorate the lives of Haringey conscientious objectors during the First World War. Another of her works - [Shelley](#) - was created to challenge views of women and their involvement in warfare.

We've got to thank Jack Zhang for helping us with the interpretation of the delicate silver Chinese model below. Jack has been a long-time researcher, volunteer and friend at Bruce Castle. Whilst he was studying for his MA in Chinese Cultural Management at [Ming Ai \(London\)](#) in Bounds Green, he assisted in looking at our collections during his work experience placement. He kindly translated for us the writing on the tiny flags and banners that the figures are carrying in the scene. 清道 (qingdao) means: to ask people to make way for the passage of royalty or VIP; 翰林院 (pinyin: *Hànlín Yuàn*) means: Hanlin Academy or Imperial Academy. You can read how we then interpreted the scene [here](#).



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Other favourites include this bronze sculpture of 1893 of a [Young Girl](#) that used to stand in the grounds of Bruce Castle:



© Bruce Castle Museum (Haringey Archive and Museum Service)

Another favourite is [Stir Gently](#) by [Sadie Lee](#):



© The artist: Sadie Lee. From the collections of Bruce Castle Museum & Archive

And a work by [Beatrice Offor](#) (1864 – 1920), of Bruce Grove, Tottenham – whose centenary exhibition will be at Bruce Castle later this year - a sculpture of a woman's hand, warts and all:



© Bruce Castle Museum (Haringey Archive and Museum Service)

If you are keeping an eye on your own health and well-being in what is becoming a very long stay-cation, then get yourself busy with some activities. Perhaps you can try either Art UK's own [Great British Art Quiz](#) or, a bit closer to home, our own **Sensational Spring Sculpture Quiz for Haringey** (below).

Before you try our quiz, here's some more inspiration from photographer Matt Salusbury who undertook a project to document the surprising number of sculptural heads to be found gazing from houses and doorframes from around the borough. His blog [here](#) shows a selection of his images; he also had an exhibition of these photographs at Bruce Castle from July-September 2013.

Below you can find our quiz questions. There are 25 questions in all – you can find the answers through searching amongst our collections on Art UK, online generally, using StreetView perhaps or simply by having a chat - ask friends and family (we will give the answers in next Monday's post!):

### **Sensational Spring Sculpture Quiz for Haringey**

1. Name three sculptures past and present that you might find now or used to find in Bruce Castle Park – (CLUE: one of them is now in the museum)
2. Who is the artist who created the statue outside Hornsey Library?
3. If you walk along the Parkland Walk, what is the name of the magical figure you will find on the way?
4. Haringey's most recent statue was unveiled in October 2019 – who does it depict and where is it?
5. What creature can be found in sculptural form on The Broadway, Muswell Hill?

6. Which school in Stroud Green has a statue positioned up high?
7. What animal carving can be found in the playground in Highgate Wood?
8. Name three animals that can be found on the sculptural gates on Railway Fields in Harringay.
9. What sculptural form can you find on the pediment above Dunn's the bakers in Crouch End?
10. Name three 'motifs' to be found on the sculpted gates at Coombes Croft Library.
11. If you look to the north of Highgate, what are the row of statues called holding up the Grade 1 listed building?
12. Which park has a sculptural interpretation of Picasso's Bull?
13. What is represented above Alexandra Palace's Rose Window?
14. What is the name of the artist who sculpted 'Embracing Forms' along Tottenham High Road?
15. Who is remembered on the roundel on Crouch End's clocktower?
16. What small creature can be found up high on a lamppost on White Hart Lane near to where the road merges with Creighton Avenue?
17. What topiary animal can be found in one street of cottages in Stroud Green – it's been there for years (CLUE: road not far from the Old Dairy)?
18. Name the three people commemorated in the sculpture in Downhills Park.
19. What tiny little sculpture remarkably survives in Tottenham Lane, above the parade of shops (opposite Hornsey Historical Society's HQ)?
20. What is the sculpture in Chestnuts Park? Who made it, what is it made of and what inspired it?
21. Picture question: In which Tottenham park can you find these two sculptures?





22. What is the sculpture in the wall near to the entrance to Harringay Green Lanes station (it faces towards the retail park and is sited on the wall very near to the main road and the bridge?)

23. What statue can be found near to the boating lake at Alexandra Palace? Who was the artist?

24. Who was the artist of the series of panels on the one-time Hornsey Gas Company building, in Crouch End?

25. Who was the artist of the Grade II listed memorial sculpture at Tottenham Green?

And if you want more to explore, why not try out your own sculptural talents, be imaginative and make your own art from whatever scraps or materials you might find at home:

- **Sculpted People in Foil** - using tin foil and pipe cleaners (or even just using foil twisting it round), create your own bendy sculptural figures
- **Dancing Sculptures** – make you own installation of a decorative hanging sculpture using wool, straws, pencils, string, bottle tops, buttons or beads.

You can take a photograph of your new sculpture artwork, send it in to us and we can add it to our online gallery. Remember to do the Humpty Dumpty egg activity too!

We hope this sets a challenge, gets you inspired and active – and is enjoyable too!

Have fun – stay indoors, keep well and stay safe. Until tomorrow,  
Best wishes

From us all at Bruce Castle

**Deborah Hedgecock**  
**Curator**

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