

Press Release – 05.03.2021

Rishi Sunak shares the joy with a lockdown ‘exhibition opening in a box’ experience from North Yorkshire museum



**Kiplin Hall
& Gardens**

Kiplin Hall and Gardens, a 400-year-old historic house museum located between Northallerton and Richmond, celebrates ahead of the easing of lockdown restrictions with an ‘exhibition opening in a box’ experience for guests at a virtual event.

A new exhibition ‘Introducing the Annie Marchant Kitchen and Dairy Collection’ was due to open along with the rest of the hall on Friday 5th March, with a VIP launch event the day before. Although the grand opening could not go ahead due to the lockdown, staff were determined to share their celebrations, giving the new collection the welcome it deserves.

In order to celebrate virtually a short film has been made about the making of the exhibition. It features The Rt Hon Rishi Sunak, MP for Richmond (Yorks) and Chancellor of the Exchequer, officially opening the exhibition, which will be ready to receive visitors as soon as lockdown restrictions allow. In the film Mr. Sunak speaks of his affection for Kiplin Hall & Gardens, a place he visits with his family, and congratulates the staff and volunteers at Kiplin for their efforts to bring the project to fruition under lockdown conditions.

Kiplin Hall is well known for its historic collection; the art, furniture and possessions of the four families who have lived at Kiplin over the last 400 years provide a fascinating window into the lives of social elites in the past. Annie Marchant’s collection has been newly acquired by the museum following Annie’s sad death at just 68 years old last year. This more domestic collection will allow the museum to explore the lives of the everyday people who lived and worked on the estate. A large kitchen and dairy on the site were unfortunately demolished in the 1970s.

This temporary exhibition is the first phase of the project to give the Annie Marchant Collection a new home. The exhibition explores how and why museums collect, and how those collections are cared for and preserved for future generations.

Project Officer, Alice Rose, explains why the virtual celebration was so important

“Annie Marchant was a lively and generous woman with a passion for the past. Her collection was entwined with her daily life and the things she cared about. Reuse and recycling, growing your own and preserving produce after harvest. She held much in common with the custodians of Kiplin Hall, past and present. As we open the exhibition, we wanted to share some of that spirit with our visitors especially during these hard times. So, we created a gift box for guests to enjoy during the virtual launch at home. Annie’s collection brought her great joy, and we want to share that with people, especially now.”

The gift boxes contain baking fresh from the Tea Room at Kiplin Hall. A Wensleydale cheese scone, Kentish apple chutney (a direct link to Annie’s home county), a savoury Victorian ginger biscuit, a Bakewell Tart scented candle from The Yorkshire Candle Company and a commemorative coaster with a Victorian recipe for jam fingers!

Last year Kiplin Hall and Gardens enjoyed record visitor numbers in July, August, September, and October as the public re-discovered destinations on their doorsteps. It is hoped this success will continue once lockdown is eased this year. This new exhibition is just one part of the developments taking place at the heritage attraction now, and in the future.

Director, James Etherington expands

“Along with the Annie Marchant exhibition inside the hall, we have made many improvements to the site over winter thanks to Heritage Lottery Funding. Expecting indoor visits to be problematic as lockdowns are eased visitors can get a flavour of the history of the house via newly installed outdoor displays in the gardens. We have 3 new bird hides being built allowing people to better observe wildlife in their habitats. A huge thank you to the players of the National Lottery for making that possible. Newly cut paths in the parkland also allow visitors to stretch their legs further around the site, taking in views from the Hambleton Hills across to Richmondshire.”

“Along with her collection Annie left a generous sum to the museum to care for it. This exhibition is just the first part of major plans to expand the displays at Kiplin and the visitor experience both in the Hall and Gardens in the next 5 to 10 years. We are very grateful to Annie for her generous gift which has kick started the funding process, and we hope that the public will enjoy the exhibition and developments to come in the future.”

Kiplin Hall and Gardens is set to reopen its grounds on Monday 29th March, with the museum opening just as soon as restrictions allow. (Always follow government advise on travel and visit the website www.kiplinhall.co.uk for the most up to date information on opening times as these may be subject to change at short notice.)

Images

1. Rishi Sunak, MP, speaks on film for virtual exhibition launch at Kiplin Hall and Gardens looking forward to reopening once restrictions allow.
2. Gift boxes were sent out in celebration of the exhibition opening virtually, including these Victorian recipe ginger biscuits from Kiplin’s award winning tea room.
3. Annie Marchant a ‘lively, talkative and strong-minded woman’ who has bequeathed her extensive collection of Victorian Kitchen and Dairy objects to Kiplin Hall and Gardens.
4. The exhibition at Kiplin Hall is in place, ready to welcome visitors once restrictions on museums are lifted. This section of the exhibition explains the detailed and careful work that goes into conserving the objects.
5. Kiplin Hall’s extensive grounds reopen to visitors on Monday 29 March, just in time for the easter holidays.
6. The ‘exhibition opening in a box’ gifts were sent to guest through the post to bring some joy during the lockdown
7. A curator’s desk display in the exhibition explains how and why museums make decisions about which objects they collect and why, committing to take care of those objects for generations to come.

Notes

Link to the film featuring Rishi Sunak <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1WuizsRIKGE>

For more information on Kiplin Hall and Gardens visit www.kiplinhall.co.uk

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