



Beyond Our First Decade

The Museum Education Service

The creation of the first education service at Beaulieu coincided almost exactly with the opening of the National Motor Museum.

The aims of the Educations Department are:

To offer a service to every teacher or student visiting the Museum.

To develop the educational potential of the Museum.

To encourage time spent there by school groups to be regarded as a serious educational visit, rather than simply a day out.

The educational services offered to both primary and secondary students fall into two categories, direct and indirect. Direct services involve the Museum Educations Officer in



The Trust's Education Officer teaching a class of visiting school children

personal contact with a visiting group. By prior booking, a party can take advantage of the following free services: guided tours; film and video shows; a demonstration lecture on Edwardian motoring, which can involve the children in dressing up in costumes; slide talks; and demonstration talks on how the car works. However, due to the limited manpower available, direct services cannot be provided for every school group visiting the Museum, nor is such a service requested by every teacher.

To ensure that every group can make the most of its visit, indirect services are provided. These are publications devised to assist a visiting group in their preparation, work in the Museum, and follow up after a visit. These resources include workbooks; worksheets; a children's guide to the Museum; wallcharts a filmstrip and a booklet on the social history of motoring; a filmstrip on motor cycle history; a video tape and a teachers' topic book.

Other educational activities include annual 6th Form Seminars, a project enquiry service, competitions and participation in the production of a recent 10-part series on local BBC radio. Considerable liaison work goes on with teachers making preliminary visits and with Teacher's Centres and educational organisations. The Museum Education Officer is also

closely involved with the national Schools Traffic Education Programme. The Department is also responsible for display interpretation and it is intimately concerned in developing all new Museum displays.

The Museum Education Service has benefitted considerably from direct industrial sponsorship and the Department is particularly grateful to BP Oil for its generous grants and support. The National Motor Museum now has this country's leading education service for any independent museum, servicing the needs of some 20,000 teacher-accompanied school children every year.

The Future

Development of the Education Service will continue. One of the most important objectives for the future must be the provision of a new Education Centre. The present temporary Education Centre in the Museum basement has provided an interim service, but is very far from satisfactory and will, in any case, disappear before 1985 to meet future Museum display requirements. A new Centre is thus urgently required. This should include a large lecture room, a classroom/workroom, office space, a small reception area, storerooms and adequate reprographic facilities.

The Departmental objective will be to extend formal education services

to meet the needs of more advanced groups, so far as resources permit. There is also a need for the educational film service to be extended.

Social changes and the widening role of museum education generally will also create a need for Departmental developments in new directions. Long term unemployment creates a social need for educational activities for the adult unemployed and this Museum should be making a contribution. There are also opportunities for more liaison with existing Adult Education Institutes, the WEA and the new television and radio services, including the provision of information through CEEFAX and Prestel. Our own capacity to produce video programmes for schools use and our own closed circuit television facility for visiting parties should also be developed.

Another exciting trend in museum education which we must explore is the provision of educational activities for family groups.

One area which the Museum Education Service has not yet touched and which it must soon consider, is the development of computer-based activities. The potential benefits and opportunities here are enormous and range from the educational use of computers in the Museum and education centre, through a computer-based resource and information service to students and teachers, to the development of motoring history programmes for machines now widely in use in schools.