



## Guide for Teachers and Group Leaders

The Museum shows the development of a community at Eyam, highlighting the fascinating local geology, prehistory and developments, both social and industrial, to modern times. The Museum's focus is of course the outbreak of bubonic plague in the 17<sup>th</sup> century; its devastating impact on the community, the foresighted measures to control its spread and the community's subsequent recovery.

The story starts in the entrance lobby where a mural, painted exclusively for Eyam Museum by a local artist, portrays the events unfolding in London in 1665. The mural depicts, amongst other things, the religious fervour surrounding the plague, an infected person being treated, guards on duty and removal of the dead.

At the ground floor entrance are panels describing the plague's biological and geographical origins, from its first recorded outbreak in the 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> centuries around the Mediterranean, its arrival in Europe in the 12<sup>th</sup> century and finally to England in 1348. The story of the plague at Eyam is described on many panels, the first showing facsimiles from the Parish Register, wills and other relevant documents. A 3-dimensional display depicts the release of the fleas carrying the plague bacilli from a tailor's cloth. Further displays describe the impact of the plague on local families.

The story continues through an archway into the 'Eyam Connections Room' where there are displays on 17<sup>th</sup> century medicine, local archaeology, an explanation of the name 'Eyam' (*'place between streams'*), the local geology that has produced water and mineral supplies, and a commemoration of the Great War. Pamphlets and books are available to expound on these themes.

A series of panels along the stairs to the first floor show both the dreadful symptoms of the plague and various remedies of the time. Further details and anecdotes of the plague at Eyam are located on the first floor. The rectors Stanley and Mompesson are displayed in the study of the old rectory with some of its actual furniture. A further scene depicts the last hours of a plague victim. The prudent quarantining of Eyam by the rectors, preventing wholesale infection of the surrounding communities, is described with an indication of the known survival and death tolls. A chart shows the households known to have suffered plague deaths and their kinships. The story of bubonic plague after 1666, mercifully less distressing, is depicted on the final panels on the first floor.

The second staircase at the rear leads back to the ground floor, where you will see a series of displays devoted to the growth and decline of local mining, cotton, flax, silk and shoe industries. The very interesting local geology is described and includes a model of an early 19<sup>th</sup> century lead mine.

Various books (also about the plague), samples of rocks and minerals, and many more items are available from the Museum Shop.