Ever seen something of interest in a museum but never uncovered what it was? By using this trail we want you to stop and ‘Look Twice’ to discover some hidden facts and features that are often missed at the Black Country Living Museum.

How to use the trail:
Look out for symbols like this one on the map with a highlighted area and match it up with the fact and question around the edge. Answer the question on the back page.
The Tollhouse
The grey brick humps on the front of the house are known as ‘Rolling Buttresses’, they were used to stop male road users from using the corners of the house as a toilet when they had stopped to pay their toll. Hence the local phrase; “I’m off to splash me boots”, when visiting the toilet.

How many Rolling Buttresses can you see on the front of the house?

Three Faced Liar Clock
The “Three Faced Liar” clock acquired its nickname from the local people due to all the faces falling out of sync and telling different times. Stand in front of the middle clock face, then take a look at the clock face round to the right. What time does it show?

Sunken Boats
Head down to the end of the canal. You will see some sunken barges. It is believed that by sinking barges owners were able to avoid paying duty on them in the winter. This also stops them from being stolen when not in use. The reason the Museum has left them underwater is because the water helps to preserve them. If they were to be pulled out of the water they would oxidise and crumble.

How many sunken barges can you see?

The Bottle and Glass Inn
In the beer garden through the gate on the right of the pub, you will see cellar doors. In Victorian times, like today, dead bodies were kept in morgues. In small villages where morgues were unavailable, pub cellars such as this one would be used to store the bodies, to better preserve them until burial.

How many hinges can you see on the cellar doors?

The Webb Patent Sewer Gas Lamp
This lamp post in front of St. James’s School was one of many invented by Joseph Webb in the 1890s. This very lamp used the gas produced from sewers to light the streets but they were mainly invented to destroy smells, germs and prevent an explosion from the build up of gas. The name of the city where it was manufactured is at the bottom of the lamp.

What is the name of the city?

The Cast Iron House
Take a look in the back garden and you will see a small mock up of the house. How many cast iron panels make up the Cast Iron House? 60, 600 or 6,000.

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Tar Sprayer
By 1900 the increasing volume of motor traffic had made rough road surfaces an issue. The response was the development of a road surface of finely crushed blast furnace slag, a waste product of iron smelting, which this machine then coated with liquid tar.

What is the number on the front of the machine?

Racecourse Colliery
The museum has more than 40 old mine shafts on its site. These have largely been lost, filled, collapsed, stabilised or capped. The Siskil Coal Cutters were originally operated by compressed air (1901). However electrically operated drills like this one were introduced in the mid 1920’s. The cutter’s arm extended out from the front and cut in an arc through the coal seam, which allowed the coal to drop in big lumps.

Examine the metal plate at the rear of the drill. What is the RPM (Revolutions Per Minute) of the motor?

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Canal Bridge
The scored marks under the bridge are caused by the rubbing of cotton towlines between horse and boat when boats used to be drawn under the bridge. The lines picked up dirt and gravel from the towpaths, making them rough and slowly cut into the bridge.

How many score marks can you see, from the bottom up to the first crack?

J Wiltshire’s Pawnbrokers
If you look above the shop window you will see Golden Spheres suspended from a bar. This is a traditional symbol of a Pawnbrokers. The Spheres were once ‘Bezants’ which is a Medieval term for large gold coins, however they were later converted to spheres to attract better attention. Pawnbrokers joke that the spheres mean “Two to one, you won’t get your stuff back”.

How many spheres are hanging from the bar?
The Tilted Cottage ‘Jerushah’
The Cottage was tilting because the ground underneath was slowly but surely sinking into the mines. The Cottage was moved brick by brick and carefully reconstructed at the Museum on solid foundations but with all the tilts and leans it once had.

Why not take a look inside.

Laundry room
Walk down the white walled entry to the Glass Cutter’s, on the outside wall of the first building, and take a look at the brickwork under the red framed window. You will see that there is a handprint in one of the bricks. Brick works employed mainly women and children. Over 200 locations in the Black Country have been a brick works. Is your hand bigger or smaller than the hand print?

Limestone
This wall of the limekiln is made up of limestone; the stone takes thousands of years to form, it contains skeletal fragments of marine organisms. Look closely at this section and you will see some fossils.

The Mushroom Anchor
These domed headed anchors allowed Lightships to circle their anchor position. The shape meant that it scooped up more silt into the bowl and therefore the ship stayed roughly where it should be.

The Limelight Cinema
The true silent films projected at 18 FPS (Frames Per Second) and sound was made from a Gramophone. Today the films are played at 24 FPS to be able to include the sound (on the edge of the film reel) and for smoother movement on the screen. Perhaps go and catch a showing; the time slots for these are 1pm, 2pm and 3pm.

Canal Boat Dock
Boat Docks were like scrap yards as it was common to break down wooden boats, salvaging the iron parts. Nothing on the boat dock was wasted and most of these buildings are made from old boat timbers. You should see an upturned end of a canal boat with a door. This was once the toilet for dock workers.

Canal Boat Dock
From this point you will be able to see a curved line of timber along the edge of the towpath. This is actually a sunken barge that was used when the Museum redirected the canal.

Write your answers here:

1. 4. 7. 10:
2. 5. 8. 11:
3. 6. 9. 12:

Do you want to find out more? Take a look at these websites.

YouTube: Mine cutting and machine operators.
http://goo.gl/4ecbE

Joseph Webb Sewer gas lamps in Sheffield.
http://goo.gl/cRpS8

John Wornham Penfold and his pillar box.
http://goo.gl/PnTcA

YouTube: Mega Movers - Incredible church move 1928.
http://goo.gl/Sh0sS

How fossils form and discovering them.
http://goo.gl/r62r4

Black Country Living Museums YouTube page.
http://goo.gl/kexDy

ANSWERS