



Volunteer Newsletter

Spring 2020

Start of year and Coronavirus Updates



by [Eloise Chapman](#), March 2020

As you're all aware, following a promising start to the year, life for everyone has come to an abrupt halt as we deal with Covid-19. At the beginning of March the Museum took the decision to close until 24 March. The situation quickly escalated and the Museum is currently closed indefinitely until it is safe and sensible to reopen. At this point in time we are not aware of anyone associated with the Museum who has caught the virus. We hope that you are all staying safe and well, and hope to see you all back as soon as possible.

As you all know we rely heavily on income from ticket sales, so we are using our social media to maintain our presence in the community and request donations to keep us going.

If you follow us on Facebook, Twitter or Instagram please share and do what you can to encourage our community to help out, if they can.

Now here is a round up of what's happened at the Museum since Christmas to provide a little distraction from current events.



‘Forged in Wales: Five Welsh Actors’ opened by Eva Griffith

This new exhibition, created by Mark from his own collections, looking at the lives and careers of five of the country's most iconic actors – Richard Burton, Anthony Hopkins, Stanley Baker, Michael Sheen and Tenby born actor and documentary maker Kenneth Griffith. The material on display, which includes original film posters, lobby cards, press books and photographs, is mainly from Mark's own collection. It is supported by the Museum's Kenneth Griffiths collection, and the exhibition was opened by Griffiths daughter Eva Griffiths. Although a very cold and stormy Friday evening prevented many people from turning out to the opening, lots of dedicated volunteers, trustees and friends helped to make it a success. The exhibition will be on display throughout the year.



Mick Armson - Drawn from the Edge

This very successful exhibition of work by Mick Armson, opened on Saturday 8 February and closed on the 7th March. Included were the paintings and drawings that Mick produces on location and the prints, etchings and monotypes that he creates back at his studios, inspired by these works. Armson has been producing pieces inspired by the Pembrokeshire coastline for the last 30 years. A good number of sales were made during the exhibition's run, including a particularly high number of card and postcard sales in the shop.



Sian McGill - Into the Blue

Unfortunately, Sian McGill's exhibition had only just been installed when the decision had to be made to close the Museum, and the opening was postponed. This striking collection of works of the Pembrokeshire coast has been made available to view and for sale via the Museum website.



Phil Okwedy - Half Term Storytelling

February half-term saw the return of Phil Okwedy for a story-telling session titled 'Myths, Legends and Folktales'. A steady stream of families dropped-in throughout the morning to enjoy Phil's always engaging local tales.



Caves & Bones with the Young Archaeologists Club

On Saturday March 7th sixteen members of the Young Archaeologists Club based at the National Botanic Gardens visited the Museum for a special 'Caves & Bones' workshop. The group of 7-17 year olds learnt all about the famous Palaeolithic cave sites along the Tenby coast concentrating on Hoyles Mouth. The morning included handling sessions with the animal and human bones excavated by Rev. Smith and Edward Laws in the 1800s and

behind the scenes tours of the offices and stores. A noisy but fun time was had by everyone and the plan is to make it a regular event.

The staff from the Botanic Gardens donated the day's subs to the Museum for the event and have also offered a behind the scenes tour of the Gardens for our staff and volunteers in return. As soon as life gets back to normal we will arrange to take them up on the offer!

AIM Conservation Audit

In January our conservation audit, paid for by a grant from the Association of Independent Museums was carried out by ??? and the final report arrived in February. The process has been hugely useful as we worked with the conservator to create a list of 10 priorities to immediately improve conservation in the Museum. As we had already predicted there were very few concerns about the conditions in our galleries (apart from the Antiquarians Study obviously!). The main areas we need to address are our stores.

Now that we have had the audit, we are now eligible to apply for funding from the AIM Collections Care Fund for the 10 priorities laid out in the report. Of course there are likely to be delays now in carrying out the work, but hopefully the grant application will be completed soon and we will wait to hear.

AIM Hallmark Awards

The Museum has been awarded a grant of £5000 towards the cost of a complete redesign of the Museum website, including an online collections catalogue. Our current site uses a website platform that is no longer supported, which means it can no longer be updated. The new website will be easier for staff to update, mobile friendly and more user friendly in general. We are commissioning new images and drone footage of the Museum to make it look more modern and exciting! There will also be new content for schools and the ability for greater feedback from our audiences. We hoped to have the website launched before the summer holidays and Mark is still working on this from home. It should be a great way of creating a more accurate representation of what the Museum has to offer and driving more visits once it is up and running.

Exciting Acquisition

The week before the Museum closed Eloise received a photocall from a gentleman wanting to find out what school his mother went to when she was evacuated to Tenby during the war. He was planning a visit and wanted to go on a tour of the places she spent time when she was here. I asked him to email me some more details and I would try and find out. Only when he emailed did he tell me that his mother was actually Mary Quant! Of course it is legendary in Tenby that Mary went to Greenhill and so I immediately emailed back to let

him know and he said he would drop in when he visited. Unfortunately, I was on sick leave when he came in that Friday to give us an original drawing by Mary Quant of one of her iconic designs and a large black and white photograph. What a create addition to the collection, and hopefully we can work some more with the family in the future!

Volunteer Projects

Barbara and Vicky continue to bravely tackle the Lyons shell collection! They have completed cataloguing the shells and are now working to have them correctly packed and stored. Barbara has also started to help Eloise to condition check, catalogue, label and repack the textile collection. So far this has mainly involved labelling and photographing lots of lovely souvenir hankies. Lesley has taken on the challenge of transcribing the Museum's early minute books, which contain a huge amount of useful and fascinating information on how the collection was established, and the work of the first curators. Monica is diligently repacking the contents of the Bygone Boxes. Lynne continues her excellent work cataloguing the geology collection. Thank you to everyone who has continued to turn up and keep the Museum going throughout the winter - no matter how cold, wet and quiet it was!

New Volunteer



Please welcome new volunteer Peter Chapman who will be helping with research, Modes and photographing the collection. Pete has a background working in statistics and an interest in digital photography, the natural sciences and history.

That's All.....For Now!

Finally we just want to say that we hope everyone is safe and well. Mark and Eloise are still picking up emails if you want to get in touch at all. You can also keep up to date with what we're doing via the Museum's Facebook page where Mark is regularly posting content at the moment including creative writing ideas, colouring pages and call outs for local oral history subjects. While I am enjoying writing this from the back garden with the sun shining, birds singing and the dog snoozing by my feet; I am looking forward to sharing a cup of tea, a cheeky biscuit and a natter with you all back at the Museum as soon as possible.

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