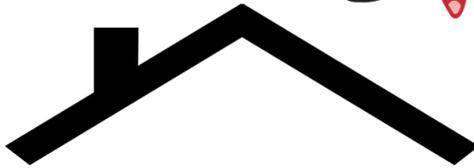




Volunteer Newsletter

Christmas 2020

2020 is finally drawing to a close. What a year it has been. We hope that you and all your loved ones are healthy and safe and that 2021 will bring brighter times for everyone. Despite remaining closed, Museum staff and trustees have remained busy. We hope you enjoy this update on what we've been up to!



New Roof!

Hopefully those of you who live locally have had a chance to wander around Castle Hill and admire our beautiful brand new roof!



A couple of weeks in and the building is feeling dry and warm, there is no longer a giant puddle outside the Antiquarian Study and all damp patches are disappearing.

There is now work to be done to replaster and repaint. By the time we reopen we should be looking lovely and shiny for our visitors.



Our most popular post so far has been the above cheeky fellow from Tenby Cycle Club!

Museum from Home

As I write this Mark has now completed Day 235 of the #MuseumFromHome project on Facebook. Since lockdown no.1 Mark has uploaded a new story from the collection to Facebook everyday (until recently when he started giving himself the weekend off).

The response has been amazing with some posts being read by over 6,000 people. The project was also featured by the Museums Association as an example of how to reach visitors during the pandemic. People can also donate through the website.



OUR CONNECTIONS WITH AFRICA
A series of online 'in conversation' events with

Musician and singer songwriter Molar
Story teller Phil Okwedy
Poet Eric Ngalle Charles

Explore Welsh connections with the continent of Africa. Through storytelling, poetry, song and more. Contribute to a collaborative poem about Home and Hope.

Workshop Dates:
Thursday 15th October 6 - 7pm
Thursday 22nd October 6 - 7pm
Thursday 29th October 6 - 7pm

Live screening of "This is Not a Poem"
Friday 16th October - 7pm
A film-poem exploring issues of diversity and race, and celebrating tolerance and understanding followed by a post-screening Q&A with Eric Ngalle Charles.

As part of Black History Month

Booking essential - limited spaces 16+

www.span-arts.org.uk
Tel: 01834 869 323
@SpanArts facebook.com/spanarts

Logos for Cymdeithas yr Iaith Gymraeg, Arddeddi Gŵyl Loteri Ffoneddi, and other funders.

Black History Month Workshops

For this October's Black History Month, Mark worked with Span Arts to produce a series of online events. The workshops were run by singer and arts practitioner Molar, storyteller (and Museum trustee) Phil Okwedy and poet Eric Ngalle Charles, explored Wales' connections with Africa.

Although the turn-out was not as high as we hoped, it was a hugely positive experience and an interesting foray into online events. Something we will be learning from for the future.



Grants & Fundraising

As we are not currently making any income through visitors and the shop, applying for grants has become a major part of Mark's job (with occasional help from Kathy and Eloise). He has done an amazing job, and that has enabled the Museum to take its time to reopen while taking the opportunity to make improvements and think carefully about the Museum's future. The funding is paying for wages, bills, becoming Covid-19 compliant and carrying out an options appraisal.

So far we have been awarded significant funding from the following organisations:

- Welsh Museums Federation Grant
- Welsh Government Emergency Fund
- PCC Resilience Fund
- National Lottery Heritage Emergency Fund
- Culture Recovery Fund
- AIM Collections Care Fund



We are still waiting to hear about an application to the Esmee Fairbairn Collections Fund for over £50,000 for a project to help document, increase access to and raise awareness of our early collections.



Artisan Avenue Refugee Project

Mark has been speaking to local arts charity Artisan Avenue this year about potential joint projects. Recently they have been working with the refugees currently staying at Penally Army Camp, helping them use drawing to tell their stories.

The Museum has been sharing the resulting images on Facebook. They provide a fascinating and sometimes heartbreaking insight into their personal journeys.

Mark also created a video for them of footage showing the workshops and interviews with some of the participants. You can find the video on the Museum's and Artisan Avenue's Facebook pages.



Drawing of Penally Camp created by Raman. The colour represents all that he loves about the place; the trees, the art room, the library, the classroom and the training hall.



Podcasts

Local community partnership organization, Planed, supported Mark to create two podcasts from home on local heritage earlier this year. One is on Dylan Thomas (with the help of Emma!) and the other on Augustus John. The hope is to produce more in the future.

They make for a lovely listen on these cold winter days (especially if you are missing Mark's dulcet tones). You can find them on the Museum website in the Blog section.

You can also find the Planed podcast online, where they interview local people working with the community (Mark might pop up there again!).



Museum of Memories

During the first lockdown in spring the Museum launched a project to document the extraordinary moment in history we have lived through this year. The aim was to collect people's personal experiences and response to the lockdown through any medium they wanted. So far responses have included journals, sculptures, photographs and drawings. There will be a display in The Story of Tenby Gallery when we reopen.



Collections and Storage

While Mark has been busy keeping the Museum going and providing content for our supporters, Eloise has been trying to make sure the collection stays in one piece!

On returning to work after being furloughed for several months the first job was to install wi-fi dataloggers. These were funded by the Heritage Emergency fund and allow us to monitor the temperature and humidity of the galleries and stores via the internet and an app on our phones.

Second was to deal with the dirt and damp and pests that had built up. Luckily Sue came off furlough and did an amazing job thoroughly cleaning everywhere. Eloise cleared out the Antiquarian Store which was slowly disappearing under a puddle of water and helped to start cleaning clutter above cupboards and under desks that was gathering damp as well.

We were both then chucked out of the building while the roof was repaired and have just returned. We have started to clean the stores and need to carry out conservation cleaning on all the objects on open storage. So plenty to get on with!



AIM Collections Care Grant

Just before being furloughed, Eloise applied to the Association of Independent Museums for funding to reorganize the Museum's stores. We were awarded a grant of £5000 that will pay for new shelves, boxes, plan chest, a conservation vacuum cleaner and a skip, along with some extra help from the Friends.

As soon as the making good has been completed following the roof replacement we will get to work! Hopefully some of our lovely volunteers will be able to return and help with the project during 2021.



So when are we reopening?

Currently, we are working towards reopening in May. There is a lot that needs to be done before then to make the Museum safe for staff and visitors. These plans are completely dependent on what happens in the New Year and how quickly we can carry out the work needed to reopen. We will keep in touch with updates as they happen. In the meantime we hope you all have a very Merry Christmas and here's to a more positive New Year!

