Museum of Lancashire opens doors to hundreds of visitors

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Nearly 700 people of all ages came to enjoy the eight fantastic new family-friendly galleries at the museum on Stanley Street, Preston over the opening weekend.

Charlotte Steels, Lancashire County Council's museum manager at the MoL, said: "We're off to a great start and we really couldn't be happier. The visitor numbers are outstanding and we're thrilled by all of the positive comments we've received. Judging by what they tell us, visitors think the new-look museum is amazing – so all our hard work has been worthwhile."

The celebrations began on Friday 25 November with an official ceremony to mark the completion of the £1.7m regeneration project.

County Councillor Geoffrey Roper, Chairman of Lancashire County Council, welcomed more than 150 distinguished guests from across the county. Among them were Lord and Lady Shuttleworth, county councillors, representatives of the Heritage Lottery Fund, trustees of the Duke of Lancaster's Regiment Infantry Museum; and Tracy and Charlotte Dawson, wife and daughter of the late comedian Les Dawson.

Councillor Roper said: "The Museum of Lancashire is a gateway to the county’s wonderful countryside, its heritage and its many other visitor attractions. It is a place of enjoyment, learning, relaxation and community focus. We hope it will be busy, bustling and lively - and we wish it every success in the future."

Susan Williams, chair of the North West Committee of the Heritage Lottery Fund, added:"We are proud to be able to support such a brilliant project where the physical improvements and the strong emphasis on learning and fun will combine to unlock the museum’s rich store of artefacts for a much wider audience of Lancastrians. People of all ages and in all communities will now find something to inform, amuse and enlighten them as they unearth the fascinating stories about the place they are so proud to call home."

County Councillor Mike Calvert, cabinet member for adult and community services, presented awards to the winners and runners-up of the 'My Lancashire' photography competition for pupils from local schools.

The winners were Jade Baxter (over 12s) from Corpus Christi Catholic Sports College, Fulwood, and Liam Brandwood (under 11s) from Shakespeare Primary School, Fleetwood. They each received £50 in vouchers to spend in Wilkinson Camera shops and a museum Xplorer ticket worth £20.

The winning two images form part of a commemorative plaque that was unveiled at the end of reopening ceremony.

The runners-up were Lucy Smith (over 12s) a pupil at Unity College, Burnley, and Eliesha Spore (under 11s) from Shakespeare Primary School, Fleetwood. They each received a £20 voucher to spend in Wilkinson Camera shops together with a £20 Xplorer ticket.

Further information

Contact the MOL, on 01772 534 075 or Greg Bowen on 01772 536 757 email greg.bowen@lancashire.gov.uk or museumoflancashire@lancashire.gov.uk. Alternatively, please visit the museum website.