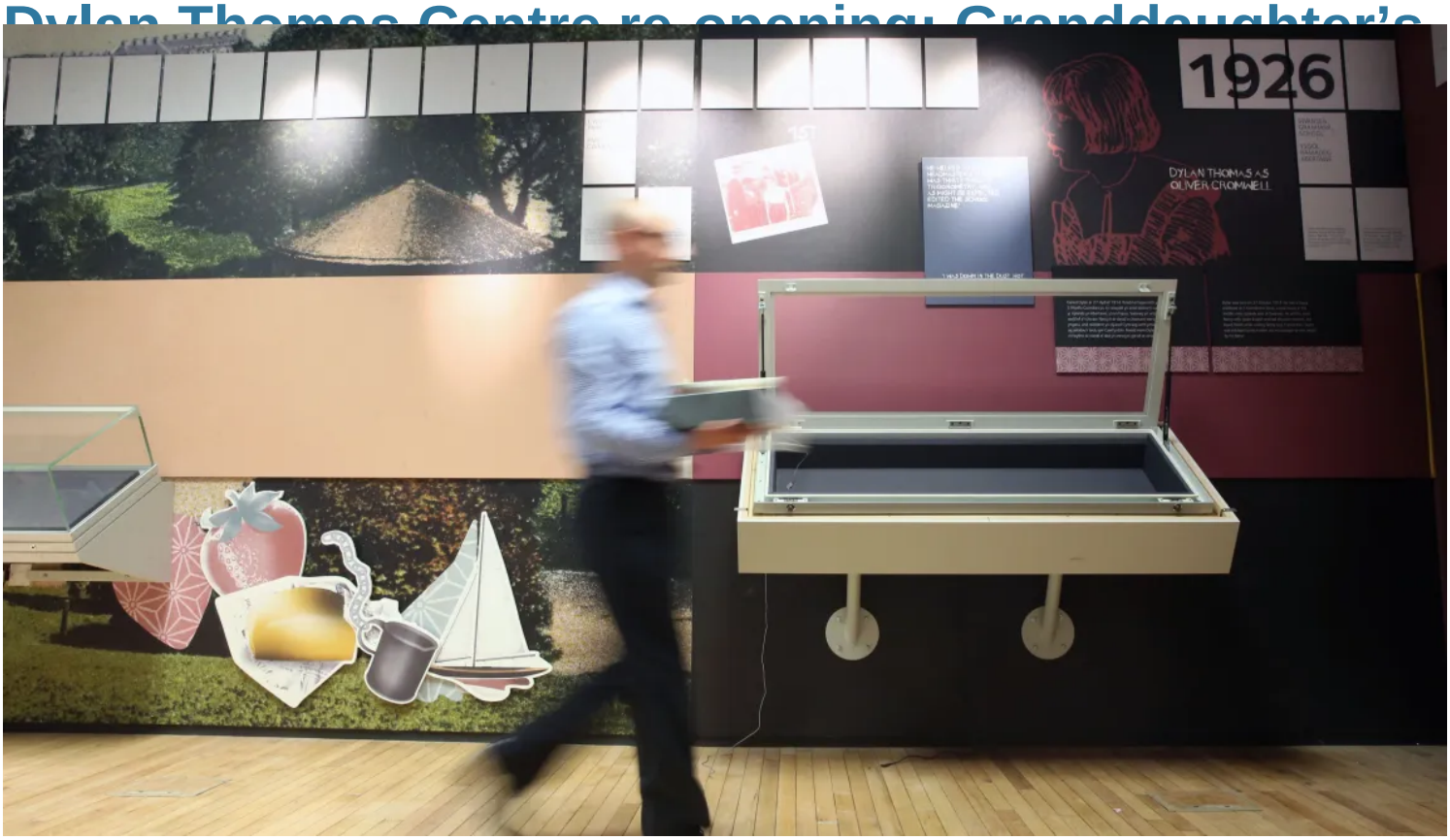
Dylan Thomas Centre re-opening: Granddaughter’s



Speaking about the significance of the centre, Hannah Ellis said: “The redevelopment of the Dylan Thomas Centre exhibition is potentially one of the biggest legacy projects to have emerged in this centenary year of my grandfather’s birth and it is extremely important to me that the City and County of Swansea safeguards this legacy and makes the most of this generous investment from the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF). I’m expecting this project to really engage the local community, as well as the wider 'Dylan Thomas community', through their new education and outreach programme and really play a central role in ensuring that future generations are inspired by my grandfather’s literary successes and I’m happy to support this in any way that I can.”

Awarded £935,700 by HLF earlier this year, the Dylan Thomas Exhibition has now been redeveloped, allowing for unique memorabilia previously kept in archives to be placed on display including a shopping list prepared ahead of a family trip to America in 1953. Some items include "Coat for Cat”, “Dark Suit for Dylan” and “Llewelyn's School Fees” as well as costings and possible income from articles as “£60 - 3 articles (if I write 'em); £40, if I'm lucky”.

Key to the exhibition is the development of educational facilities. The new learning and outreach officers have already started work with local schools and community groups, some of whom attended the preview of the new exhibition yesterday where Hannah Ellis provided a reading of the some of her grandfather’s most famous works.

Dr Manon Antoniazzi, Chair of the HLF Committee for Wales, said: “We’re thrilled that HLF funding has played such a central role in ensuring this essential Dylan Thomas treasure trove has been safeguarded for the future. As the international focal point for all things Dylan Thomas, it was vitally important that the exhibition was re-invigorated for modern audiences and this funding has ensured that the exhibition will be open again for key centenary celebrations and the forthcoming Dylan Thomas Festival. We look forward to seeing thousands of Dylan Thomas fans, new and old, visiting the exhibition.”

Legacy project

The new-look, expanded exhibition boasts a learning space, a temporary exhibition facility and a touring exhibition. An interactive, 3D timeline explores the life and work of the Swansea-born poet, and includes an interactive trail for children, and a ‘People Trail’ placing Dylan in a wider cultural context. A deconstructed shed installation focuses on Dylan the writer, exploring his methods of composition and his creative relationships. Another structure explores Dylan as an actor and performer, and includes an AV installation in which Dylan and others – from Bryn Terfel to Benjamin Zephaniah, Richard Burton to Prince Charles - perform lines from Dylan’s work.

New touchscreens focus on Dylan’s poetic technique, using *Do not go gentle into that good night* as an example, another explores the notebooks he wrote in Swansea between the ages of 15 and 19, and a third interactive focuses on the circumstances around, and aftermath of, Dylan’s death.

Councillor Robert Francis-Davies, Cabinet Member for Enterprise, Development and Regeneration, said: “Dylan Thomas is Swansea’s most famous son. He was the people’s poet who went onto become a favourite of presidents. His enduring popularity and relevance means he’s still responsible for attracting thousands of visitors from across the UK and the rest of the World to Swansea every year. This is why it’s important we do all we can to celebrate our links with him.

“Our investment alongside the substantial grant from HLF to refurbish the permanent Dylan Thomas exhibition will lead to a visitor experience that befits the aspirations of 21st-century visitors. The investment in the project has also led to an education and outreach programme that’s engaging with people of all ages and backgrounds right across Swansea. This project is a fantastic opportunity to preserve and promote Dylan’s rich legacy far beyond his centenary year. On behalf of Swansea Council, I’d like to extend our thanks to the HLF for making this project possible.”

The First Minister of Wales, Carwyn Jones, commented on the importance of securing Dylan Thomas’ legacy through the centre’s work: “It is vitally important that young people have the opportunity to learn about Dylan Thomas, his work and his significance to Wales’ literary heritage. As one of Swansea’s most famous sons and one of the most well-known poets in the English language, I welcome the re-opening of the exhibition in time for the plethora of centenary celebrations in the coming weeks.”

Culture Minister Ed Vaizey said: “Dylan Thomas was a gigantic figure in 20th-century literature, and one who did a huge amount to bring Welsh writing to wider international notice. This project will preserve and protect his legacy for many generations to come. I welcome HLF’s continued commitment to marking key anniversaries and as we look forward to celebrating 100 years since Dylan Thomas’ birth, the re-opening of the centre is to be warmly welcomed.”

Notes to editors

To arrange an interview with Hannah Ellis, please contact Naomi Williams.

Further information

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Dylan Thomas Centre, Swansea



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Dylan Thomas Centre re-opening: Granddaughter’s preview of new-look exhibition

Dylan Thomas Centre set to become a world-class exhibition for learning