

Keeping the Local Heritage Bonds Alive

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Narberth Museum continues to inspire

Almost three years since it's re-opening, Narberth Museum is thriving and continues to showcase the local heritage of the West Wales market town. A former nominee of the Art Fund Prize for Museum of the year, we take a look at how the museum has grown and continues to tell the story of this town and its residents.

With help from HLF, a group of local volunteers helped restore the town's 'Bonded Store'. This was a once closed-off building within Narberth; locked to the local community and a former store of kegs full of duty-free whisky, brandy and rum, only accessible with the opening of double locks on the door. But now, its doors are wide open, providing a home for Narberth's history and "encouraging people to engage with and learn about their heritage", says museum curator Pauline Griffiths.

[quote= Pauline Griffiths, museum curator]"The re-establishment of the museum has had a significant impact on the local community"[/quote]

The once-derelict building now provides a focal point and facilities for a wealth of activities and events, with dedicated spaces for community groups and research, history enthusiasts can delve into their own past. "The re-establishment of the museum has had a significant impact on the local community", according to Pauline, with the contribution of local residents playing a key part in the museums success. Research undertaken by members, talks, workshops for all ages and being able to contribute by sharing memories, artefacts and photographs of their own to archives has allowed people to play an active role in the life of the museum.

[Narberth Museum](#) continues to inspire and encourage creative ideas to capture the town's past. The success of [the Letters from the Front: Learning from the past exhibition](#), funded through our First World War: Then and Now programme, displayed letters from local soldier William Bowen Stephens, depicting his time on the Front Line along with medals, photographs and uniforms. A new partnership was forged through the exhibition, bringing together the museum and the Narberth Youth Theatre. Together, they've hosted productions of *The Pals Battalion*, which paid homage to those that fought in the First World War by dramatising letters by local soldiers and their loved ones, as well as the more recent conflict in Afghanistan.

"We're proud of what we've achieved here in the past three years", says Pauline and that they were now looking to the future and "to developing 'The Bond' as a cultural and historic hub for local people and visitors."



[William Bowen Stephens was a resident of Narberth and his letters describe his experiences on the frontline.](#)

[Letters from the Front - Lottery Funding for Narberth Museum](#)