

Pupil of Humberview School, Ontario, Canada visiting the Exhibition

2014 was the year the world celebrated the life and work of one of Wales' most famous poets and Swansea's most famous son, Dylan Thomas, one hundred years on from his birth.

In April 2014, we ensured that National Lottery players' money played a key part in the celebrations when we funded the £1million makeover of the Dylan Thomas Exhibition in Swansea. As we mark the first International Dylan Day today, we take a look at how far the exhibition has come since then and how National Lottery funding has changed it for the better.

[quote=Nicola Kelly, Learning Officer]"Visitor numbers have gone through the roof!"[/quote]

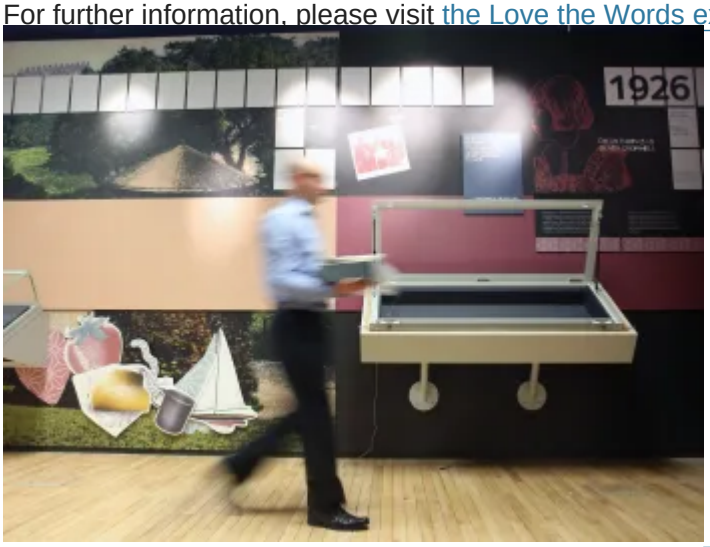
After opening its doors in 1995, with the help of life-long Dylan Thomas fan, President Jimmy Carter, the Dylan Thomas Centre has become a mecca for his fans. The focus of the centre was the Man and Myth exhibition. However some years on, the exhibition was in need of a facelift and in October 2014 the new Love the Words exhibition brought this treasure trove for all-things Dylan Thomas into the 21st century.

So, how have things changed a year on?

"It's really, really busy", says Nicola Kelly, the new Learning Officer at the centre, one of three new posts created as a direct result of our investment. The combination of the new-look exhibition, with its 3D timelines of Dylan Thomas' life and engaging interactive trails, along with the new education centre has proven to be a hit with tourists, local schools, community groups and families and according to Nicola, "visitor numbers have gone through the roof!"

Guided visits of the exhibition and creative workshops have gone from strength to strength with over 140 people turning up to one of the popular family workshops and at least three workshops planned for the half term break. “Fascinating”, “brilliant” and “beautiful exhibition” are just some of the hundreds of comments left by Dylan’s fans from all over the world, including South Korea, Canada, USA, South Africa and New Zealand, reflecting his international popularity. “People from as far away as America have returned to the exhibition for the second time, with their first visit over 10 years ago, and they’ve had such a positive experience this time around”, says Nicola, “and it’s all because of the funding and what we’ve been able to do with it.”

For further information, please visit the Love the Words exhibition website.



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