

# **Ffederasiwn Amgueddfeydd ac Oriolau Celf Cymru The Federation of Museums and Art Galleries of Wales Charity Registration No. 1102270**

**Annual General Meeting – Monday 20<sup>th</sup> November, 11.30am  
The Waterfront Museum, Swansea**

Following the formal part of the meeting, three presentations were given.

## **1. The role of the Development Officer for Wales by John Marjoram**

### **Why and how?**

Post CMW. The Federation's role became more proactive. A grant was obtained from CyMAL to appoint a Development Officer to further the activities of the Federation.

A partnership was made between the Federation and the Museums Association. The reason for this was practical – for assistance with administrative arrangements, but more importantly was a way to raise the profile of museums in Wales throughout the UK. A similar post in Scotland has recently been appointed.

The post is a P/T contract post for two years. (Still doing my consultancy work). The work is task based, reactive and proactive. The post began in September and since then I have been getting up to speed on areas where I need to e.g. AMA training.

## **ACTIVITIES**

### **For the Federation**

- Developing capacity for the Federation – develop new business plan (including capacity beyond 2008).
- Expanding (and retaining) membership
- General coordination role
- Work on Museum Strategy (with CyMAL) – proactive in advance of when CyMAL starts.
- Respond to consultations (e.g. CyMAL workforce strategy coming up),
- Other issues as they arise.
  
- Information gathering (both for Fed and MA)
- Organising relevant events (but not regional ad hoc meetings)
- Attend relevant meetings on behalf of Fed (and/or MA)

### **For the MA**

- A Welsh Dimension – 2 way process. Reporting MA issues to Wales but also ensuring Welsh issues are at forefront of MA.
- Developing local MA membership
- Encourage take up of Professional Development Programmes (AMA, CPD and CPD+)
- Look at workforce related development programmes in relation to Wales.  
Diversify  
Pay in Museums

## Entry to Museum workforce

Particularly important is the Collections for Future = Effective Collections programme. Disposal response and future initiatives - (better use of stored collections so liaise with NMGW re Sharing Treasures etc.). Possible use of Wales as one of the pilots.

- Organise events in Wales eg. Ethics, MA events (perhaps joint with Fed etc). Look at issues of attendance.

### Some Current Issues

- New MA president's piece in Museums Journal. (as example of what have to do to ensure Wales is understood)
- Beecham Report on Welsh public services
- New WAG Culture Strategy (2007)
- Labour manifesto (Suggestion of a Peoples History Museum)
- Advocacy WAG elections
- Development of a Wales Museum Strategy
- Squeeze on public (and independent) museum funds as ever.
- CyMAL satisfaction - should they be doing anything different?

And issues you can tell me about – collections work and training seem to be things of interest. Ensuring people are involved. MA seems to be more responsive through this and other work – at least willing to listen. I can be blunt in putting forward Wales' issues etc.

### Conclusion

- Lots of issues cross over so important that MA and Federation are working together to deliver programmes.
- Not taking over from either the Federation Committee or MA Councillor in Wales.
- Question of balance between Federation and MA work.
- **I need to know what is going on (to provide the support to the Fed committee) and what issues you feel are important for the Museum Profession in Wales that both the Fed and MA can help with, advocate for and against and generally support etc.– so let me know. Details will appear on Federation website and the Federation Yahoo email group can also be used.**

### Comments from the floor

- Jane Henderson said it would be useful if a couple of projects were put together which were specific to Wales.
- Gareth el Tawb said that it was important to raise the profile of all types of museums.
- Frank Olding outlined the situation in Blaenau Gwent where they have been able to access lots of funding streams but there is not an overarching body coordinating this. We should be considering whether we like this less formal system and whether the opportunity we have to be so close to government is a good thing.
- Susan Dalloe mentioned that money from the now disbanded body of MAGDA went to the Museums Association and this is an area John could look at to see if this is being used in Wales.

## **2. CyMAL - Update of activities by Huw Evans**

### **Grants**

Total funding for the Museums Grant Schemes have yet to be finalised, but this will not delay the timetable for applications. In late November / early December a letter will be sent alerting museums to that availability of the grant paperwork on the CyMAL website. Institutions that receive Current Awareness as a hard copy will receive grant paperwork in hard copy.

The only major change to the scheme for 2007-08 is that the small grants will open for applications on 2nd April and are aimed at emergencies and CPD etc. Applications are normally for grants over £200. Funding is up to 100%.

Funding of up to 100% is available under the Challenge grant for priority areas (75% for non priority areas). The question of problematic timings was raised but these are constrained by the Welsh Assembly Government timetable.

### **Museums and Galleries Month**

- Theme 2007 - 'People - who are we'.
- Grant applications for MGM should be submitted under the Challenge Grant Scheme and should be clearly marked so they can be turned around more quickly to assist museums in preparing for MGM.
- Theme 2008 - 'Ideas and Innovation' - applications could be made in this year's grant round for preparatory work for 2008.
- CyMAL would like Wales to become more involved as MGM is a good publicity opportunity. It was suggested that people were a little jaded with MGM.
- CyMAL would be interested to hear of other suggestions to develop MGM and make it more attractive for Welsh Museums. SMC for example is looking at different and innovative ways of promoting MGM.

### **2007 - Bicentenary of the Slave Trade**

A touring exhibition will be available which can be amended to suit individual museums. Anyone interested in hosting the exhibition should contact Lesley Ann Kerr, CyMAL.

### **Questionnaires**

These are key documents to provide key data in the development of a strategy for museums.

#### Diversity

Social justice is an important part of Welsh Assembly Government policy and it is essential to have comprehensive information available if for example funding opportunities are identified. Susan Dalloe is a member of the working party and she reported that the aim is to look at the results and then decide the best way to use it. Huw Evans will also provide further detail on the use of the surveys.

#### Spotlight

There has been criticism about the format of the form - it has been developed in line with the Welsh Language Policy. It was pointed out that

the long guidance notes give the impression that the form is perhaps more difficult to fill in than it actually is. Jane Henderson reported that the forms will provide a good picture of staffing in museums and how museums are working with NMGW. There was also a suggestion that a representative from military museums is invited onto the working group to give their unique perspective.

Huw Evans thanked museums for their excellent response to the Spotlight survey.

#### **Other matters**

\*7th December - A best practice event will be held at Llandrindodd Wells

\*The next edition of CyMAL magazine will feature articles on volunteers in museums. Can anyone with future articles please send them to Alison Tyler, Editor and also to Rachael Anderton, Editor of YMAG.

### **3. The National Waterfront Museum – Future Developments by Dr David Jenkins (Senior Curator) and Andrew Deathe (Gallery Author).**

Dai Jenkins outlined the history of NMGW which led to a museum of industry being built in Swansea. The specialist industries have previously been neglected, it hadn't been done before when the industry was actually happening and at St Fagans the focus was more on rural crafts than big industry. In 1959 the Department of Industry was established at NMGW. In 1977 the Museum of Industry, Transport and Maritime History opened in Cardiff. This closed in 1998. Other industrial museums were established through Wales – the Slate Museum in Llanberis, The Woollen Museum at Dre Fach, Felindre and Big Pit at Blaenavon. The Swansea Maritime Museum closed in 2001, making this an ideal area to establish a museum, which took an overview of industrial history.

Andrew Deathe outlined the story so far at The Waterfront Museum, Swansea.

This museum gives an overview of industry in Wales.

220,000 people visited in the first year. Information about visitors is being gathered by postal questionnaires and face to face interviews. Flow patterns are also being studied and adaptations based on these findings are already being carried out. The Gallery Authors are responsible for making changes to the permanent exhibition. Temporary exhibitions will be part of the programme, although there is not a specific temporary exhibition space.

Partnership is important to the museum. The museum itself has been established in partnership with Swansea City Council, who are represented on the museum board of trustees. Currently The Waterfront Museum is working on a slavery project with CyMAL and they would like to develop this idea by producing small scale touring exhibitions to extend their reach through Wales. They are looking to build up a network of exhibition partners.

Commercial operations are also being carried out. Some units are rented out, the café is franchised, they rent out space in the museums in evenings and for weddings etc. This works to bring in a different audience. Though the work they are carrying out is not particularly radical it is quite different to the way that NMGW has done things at other sites.

There are a lot of objects in the exhibitions although the technology does tend to overpower them. They are dealing with technical difficulties well. Most problems are sorted out within a day and they are working at 95% at any time. The gallery assistants are trained to help people with interactives. The museum is open 7 days a week so maintenance has to be done whilst the museum is open.

There is some consideration to sustainability with solar heating, toilets being flushed using rainwater and the water from the docks fuelling the air conditioning.

A priority now is to develop a permanent exhibition, which leads people to the other National Museum sites, which tell this story in more depth.