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# Press Release

**For immediate release**

## **Dylan's Notebooks**

RARE notebooks and manuscripts written by Dylan Thomas are now on display in his home city of Swansea for the very first time.

The documents, which have arrived on loan from the University of Buffalo in the USA, are available for the public to see at the city's Dylan Thomas Centre from Saturday May 31 to Sunday August 31.

The exhibition is made up of four poetry notebooks and a red prose notebook written between 1930 and 1934. Supporting material includes extracts from letters that refer to the poems and the processes involved in their writing and a self-portrait in coloured pencil that Dylan drew on the back of a letter to the writer, Pamela Hansford Johnson. Also included are drawings of his friends from the Glynn Vivian Art Gallery's collection.

It's the first time the collection has returned to Swansea since its sale in the 1940s.

Swansea Council and the National Library of Wales are responsible for bringing the items back to the UK.

Cllr Nick Bradley, Swansea Council's Cabinet Member for Regeneration, said: "This is a major coup for Swansea at a time when the Dylan Thomas 2014 Festival to mark the centenary of his birth is ongoing. These notebooks contain Dylan's early poems written in Swansea between the ages of 15 and 19 as well as early drafts of some of his most famous works. They tell us so much about Dylan's creative process and the extraordinary talent he was lucky enough to have at such a young age.

"We're fast developing a reputation as Wales's city of culture and the arrival of these rare notebooks and manuscripts will help strengthen that status. The permanent Dylan Thomas exhibition at the Dylan Thomas Centre already attracts visitors from all over the world but we expect the addition of the notebook exhibition to further put Swansea on the international map as the birthplace of one of the world's greatest ever wordsmiths."

Aled Gruffydd Jones, National Library of Wales Chief Executive, said: "We're thrilled to have played our part in bringing these items back to Wales for the centenary celebrations. The Library is proud to be the major repository and research centre for Dylan Thomas material and, by working in partnership with the Dylan Thomas Centre and displaying the loaned items at our base in Aberystwyth as well as in Swansea, we're making these iconic pieces available to a far bigger and wider audience."

The notebooks exhibition is part of DT100, a high-profile festival to mark the centenary of Dylan Thomas' birth in 2014. The Welsh Government is leading the co-ordination of activity in Wales along with its partners – the Arts Council of Wales; the British Council; Carmarthenshire Council; Ceredigionshire Council, Swansea Council and Cadw. The aim of all partners is to ensure the festival delivers educational, cultural and tourism benefits before, during and after 2014.

Jennifer Stewart, Head of the Heritage Lottery Fund in Wales, said: "Dylan Thomas is not only an iconic Welsh figure, he is also recognised as one of the world's greatest literary figures whose life and works play a central part in our national consciousness. During a year of festivities marking his life, the Heritage Lottery Fund is thrilled to be able to play a part in the anniversary celebrations by ensuring that his legacy is secured and revived."

Swansea Council staff will be running talks, workshops and guided tours based on the notebooks exhibition.

The Council has also successfully applied to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) for money that will see the Dylan Thomas Centre's permanent exhibition refreshed and a community education programme put in place. The permanent exhibition room, temporary exhibition room and education room at the centre will be refurbished in time for the annual Dylan Thomas Festival and the poet's birthday in late October.

Have a look at [www.dylanthomas.com](http://www.dylanthomas.com) for more information or call 01792 463980.