

## INTERVIEW OF STEPHEN PALMER

INTERVIEWERS: ABI OBENE and SHARYN HEDGE  
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[NOTE: Interview in 3 Parts]

**0:00:01.4 Abi Obene: So, we are here at the Ilfracombe Museum on the 29<sup>th</sup> of August 2024, having a chat with Stephen, who's very kindly agreed to talk with us at the *Telling Our Stories, Finding Our Roots* project. We're also joined by Sharon, who is one of the volunteers for the project, and myself, Abi Obene. I'm the project coordinator for the *Finding Our Roots* project. The project itself is run by Devon Development Education, based in Exeter, and is funded by the National Lottery. If you notice any background noises, that is because we are doing the interview, as I said, literally in the Museum itself. We might want to move around from room to room as we go. First of all, thank you so much, Stephen.**

0:00:52.0 Stephen Palmer: You're welcome. It's a pleasure.

**0:00:54.3 Abi: Yes, lovely, so Stephen has very kindly agreed to talk to us. He is the son of the, well, originator of Ilfracombe Museum.**

0:01:04.4 Stephen: He was the founder, yes. He was the founder, he was the instigator, if you like, and of course he was also made first curator by the Museum committee.

**0:01:15.0 Abi: When was it that he founded the Museum?**

0:01:19.2 Stephen: Well, he retired to Ilfracombe in the early 1930s. He wasn't very old to retire, but he visited Ilfracombe as a young man, he had family connections here so he retired here. He soon realised that there was no museum - and nor in fact was there a public library - so he set about founding both. One of his great interests was telling people, particularly in a small town like Ilfracombe, what was in the rest of the world. He'd spent many years out in Central and South America exploring, collecting. He wanted people to know what was out there. Ilfracombe, even in the 1930s, was still a very small parochial town. Several, obviously, had been away to fight in the First World War, but a lot of the

population had probably never even been as far as Barnstable - which sounds crazy to us nowadays - but they just did not move about a great deal, even though there was a massive influx of tourists and holidaymakers.

0:02:41.6 But he wanted also somewhere to display his collection. Well, they were taking over his home so he needed somewhere for it to go. A museum seemed to be the obvious choice as there wasn't one. So, he got a committee of like-minded people together. They managed to persuade the council to let them lease this building that we're in - which used to be the laundry for the Ilfracombe Hotel, which the council owned. He was able to start us up. That's an original story.

**0:03:28.4 Abi: Fantastic, and so the Museum started in 1932?**

0:03:33.6 Stephen: Yes.

**0:03:34.4 Abi: How old was he when he...**

0:03:38.1 Stephen: When he was...

**0:03:39.2 Abi: ...founded it?**

0:03:40.1 Stephen: He went out to South America at the age of 22 originally in 1904, or Central America I should say; Nicaragua he went. He was born in 1888 so he would've been, hang on, 52 something.

**0:04:01.6 Abi: Fifty-two, yes, that sounds about right.**

0:04:03.3 Stephen: Yes, about 50 odd, yes, 50 something, 54, thereabouts - which is a nice early time to retire. It seemed that presumably, he'd had enough wandering.

**0:04:18.0 Abi: Very much so. Did he start out as somebody who wandered about, or did he have a different career before?**

0:04:24.1 Stephen: No, his first actual job was as a chemist in a cement factory in Kent. He took his chemistry qualifications and he was a... Yes, he was a chemist and then in 1904,

according to the notice that we have here, 'The lust to wander overtook me' and off he went on his own. Packed up everything into trunks and took a trip to Nicaragua - which was a completely unexplored, virtually unknown territory in the early 1900s. It would've been peopled by head-hunters. There were no roads. He went everywhere either on foot or horseback or by canoe. He spent several years out there discovering I think it's upwards of 60 species previously unknown to science.

0:05:24.6 He was collecting pottery, local artefacts. I don't think he was stealing them. He learned to speak fluent Spanish so he was able to converse with the local tribes. He also learned I think it was six indigenous languages. He would've been able to speak to the people and get their permission to take artefacts and send them back to the UK. A lot of them were for the Rothschild banking family, who were great collectors, but he was also supplying to other museums in the UK - but obviously not to Ilfracombe Museum, because it didn't exist then.

0:06:16.1 Abi: At the moment, we're in the Palmer Room of the Ilfracombe Museum, which has all sorts of items from - mostly from Africa that have been collected. The Museum itself became a bit of a - would you say it became a bit of a home for all sorts of oddities? It's not just his collection here, is it? It's sort of...

0:06:39.2 Stephen: Other stuff, but mainly donations. Of course, what happened when the Museum opened the - he, my father and the committee, said to the townspeople, 'Look, if you've got anything interesting, bring it in. We'll put it on display. We've got all this space.' So, of course, the first thing that happens, the wife says to the husband, 'That in the corner of the room has been there for 30 years. Get it out,' and of course that's what happened - which is where the majority of our collection has come from, is from donations. A certain amount would've been collected by father when he was in South America and also bought at auction, just to fill space - though a lot of the taxidermy that we have would've been bought in to have something to display.

**0:07:43.4 Abi: Did he originally come from Ilfracombe? Was that his...**

0:07:46.4 Stephen: No, he was a Londoner, yes.

**0:07:48.0 Abi: Was there a particular - do you know if there was a particular reason he came to Ilfracombe at the time?**

0:07:53.1 Stephen: Well, he'd already visited as a young man, in the late 1890s; in the very early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. He'd visited here. He'd been on walking trips, keeping diaries, making maps. He'd been coming around with a few friends. They would stay in a local hotel or something like that, and they would explore around and about. He kept several diaries telling of his adventures. He also had family connections here as well. There were other members of his previous family around and about, so he knew the town - which is why he chose to retire.

**0:08:41.7 Abi: Lovely. Did you want to ask him a question, or is it...**

0:08:50.4 Sharon: Well, as Stephen knows, I volunteer here. One of the things I'm doing at the moment with Lindsay, the Museum manager, is preparing a funding application to get your father's manuscript stuff digitised. That includes the - his travels in Colombia. The reason I want to talk to you about him, what I know from him of that is that I was just absolutely astonished when I read that manuscript because it completely changed my view of him. I had thought, from the chemistry and the cement bit, that he was a dry old stick. But in fact, the character that shines through in that manuscript is quite astonishing. He was a true Renaissance man, wasn't he? What he was looking at in Colombia, it was natural history, it was archaeology. There were three different kinds of people there: there were the descendants of the Spanish, there were descendants of enslaved Africans and there were the indigenous people.

0:10:04.2 He interacted with all of them. He was a very gregarious man. He interacted with all of them. He was a real people person - and he needed to be because he needed the help of all these people to get around. His interest, linguistics, he studied the language. He really was interested. He wrote so lyrically about the landscape, and it was the landscape - and he described the transition of the landscape because there were trains being built, railway lines being built through. He described the festivals, the homes. He just covered absolutely everything - and clearly, he was a very popular person.

0:10:48.3 That character that came - that comes through in that manuscript, gave me a much better understanding of how he came to do this, because he was driven but in a relaxed kind of way because he was constantly nearly being killed. Nothing fazed him but he

was really driven. He was hugely energetic, including physically, and going up and down mountains, hacking through jungles, going across the rapids. I was just stunned. What I wanted to ask... As I said, that gave me a completely different view of the character of the person who started this, and a much more vivid and comprehensive view of the Museum that he created. I know that you were very young when your father died, so you probably don't have many personal memories of him. But do you have any memories from your mother, for example that actually you can see his character reflected in what he did?

0:11:59.3 Stephen: The things I do remember, he was... He would make wooden models for my brother and I. He was still doing that up until - pretty much up until the day he died. I was three-and-a-half; as you say, I was very young so I barely knew him. But I know he was making model trains and things like that. Even right towards the end of his life, he was making these things. He loved doing that, he loved making that. But like you say, I was very young so I have very, very little memory of him himself. The photograph that we have of him on the wall there is about all I can remember of him as an older man - although he wasn't that old when he died, of course. Unfortunately, it was lung cancer that finished him off, but yes, that's the enduring memory such as it is - which is a bit weak but that's...

**0:13:09.0 Sharon Hedge: He was so young, yes. Have you read that the Colombia...**

0:13:13.5 Stephen: No, I haven't.

**0:13:13.5 Sharon: Oh, you really should.**

0:13:14.5 Stephen: I have read the others, but not for a long, long time. They're pretty hefty books. They are quite...

**0:13:22.4 Sharon: Yes, it took me ages to go through them, if I'm really honest.**

0:13:24.6 Stephen: They are quite extensive, yes.

**0:13:27.2 Sharon: Colombia, well, we are... As I said, Lindsay and I are working on getting as much of your father's stuff that is in manuscript form and visual stuff digitised. Once it's digitised, you really must read it because it gives us a stunning**

picture of him. As I said, it just totally overturned my view of this person I thought was a dry old stick. He's just so gifted, so enthusiastic, so energetic. As I told you earlier, we have - we're getting so much more interest in him from academics, not just on the natural history side, but the archaeology side. Lindsay has been sent a draft by Professor Warwick Bray, professor emeritus at UCL, about his - the archaeology he did when he was in Colombia. He did natural history, he did archaeology, he did linguistics. It was so comprehensive, what he did, and he just really...

0:14:30.1 Stephen: He was a proper old-fashioned polymath.

**0:14:33.0 Sharon: He was, and he really engaged with the country and with the people, the three different kinds of people. For example, he went and met with an indigenous tribe that hardly anyone, hardly any of the Spanish people had - virtually no one else had had contact with. He had just such a comprehensive picture of the country - but such a wonderful picture of him. So, Lindsay and I can't wait to get that out to the [board 0:15:07.2]. Professor Bray - I'm paraphrasing here - said he is an unsung hero. People do know about the natural history. Some people do. They don't know so much about all the other things. What this project - the digitising project - is aimed at is getting him to be a sung hero rather than an unsung hero.**

0:15:31.2 Stephen: Excellent.

0:15:33.3 Abi: Yes, sung louder. Here at Ilfracombe Museum, there are 28,000 plus objects - obviously, not all of them collected by your father. That would be something unheard of, I think. But the very eclectic nature of the Museum is perhaps down to his... Would you say it's down to his very varied range of interests?

0:15:58.2 Stephen: Yes. Well, that would've been his original intention. His legacy was, something for everyone. Not just the history of the town, but the history of the world, if you like, in one space. That was one of his main requirements, I think - which is why, of course, we've got things from all over the world.

**0:16:32.4 Sharon: It's why people love the Museum so much.**

0:16:34.4 Stephen: Yes.

**0:16:35.2 Abi: Yes, everything from butterfly collections to two-headed kittens to artefacts from South America and Africa, and then a lot of things from around here. Some of our most important collections, almost, are things like the herbaria collection. It's really important for biodiversity and for everywhere, from the National Trust, understanding what plant life that perhaps no longer is here, should be here, and what's happening for reintroduction and with the rewilding project and all sorts of things. As we say, it's really eclectic, really varied; the world in the palm of your hand in a single building.**

0:17:20.8 Stephen: Yes.

**0:17:21.3 Sharon: It means people really engage with it. In no other museum than I've been in have people really engaged not just their minds, but their emotions.**

**0:17:30.2 Abi: Yes, it's lovely.**

0:17:32.2 Stephen: Of course, it wasn't just a museum. He was a member - I'm not sure whether he actually founded - but he was certainly a member of the Ilfracombe Field Club. They would do walks round and about. They produced a book on Ilfracombe fauna and flora. Father edited the section, or produced the section, on butterflies. Other members produced different parts. He also was involved in producing a little booklet called *Standing Stones of the Ilfracombe District*. They went round and about. He was discovering ancient standing stones - dolmens, if you like - that were actually being used as farm gateposts, field gates and things like that, but were several-thousands-of-years-old boundary markers and things like that they discovered.

0:18:39.3 He was also in charge of looking after Spreacombe Woods, which is out towards Braunton. In fact, I think it's now an RSPB reserve. There was an old church out there and he would look after that, so he was going around all over the place in the 1930s and 1940s, yes, not just the Museum. He was around about, he was all over the place.

**0:19:17.3 Abi: Do you ever find that there are people who, throughout your life, had encountered your father and had stories of him that they told you that were surprising, or did you ever...**

0:19:30.2 Stephen: I haven't really, no. One memory I do have, which is a little bit of a tangent, it's not so much somebody... Well, it's somebody who knew him. I remember being taken as a small child down to the Royal Britannia Hotel, where I was introduced to the author of *Tarka the Otter*, yes, Henry Williamson. I remember I would've perhaps been about two-and-a-half or three years old, something like that. All I remember is this huge, great, tall gaunt fellow - because of course Henry Williamson had a little cottage just around the corner. He used to go and drink in the Brit. I remember father taking me in there, yes - just.

**0:20:25.4 Abi: Lovely, yes, some really good memories there so I'll just do this.**

[Part 2]

**0:00:00.2 Abi: So, we have moved to a different room in the Museum, to the Ilfracombe - well, the Ilfracombe section of the Ilfracombe Gallery, where you might be able to hear some sounds of a train in the background - which is the video showing a comparison between the 1885 view and the modern view of where the railway line used to be that would head between Barnstaple and Ilfracombe. You might also be able to hear the Morse code machine in the back.**

0:00:32.2 Stephen: Ship-to-shore radio.

**0:00:33.7 Abi: Ship-to-shore radio, apologies. It's always good to describe it as a Morse code machine to kids, they love that.**

0:00:39.6 Stephen: Yes, but its official title...

**0:00:40.0 Abi: But it is, yes.**

0:00:41.5 Stephen: That is Ilfracombe Radio, which is its call sign.



**0:00:44.4 Abi: The tripod we're using for the interview now is actually one of Mervyn Palmer's walking sticks, which Stephen brought with him, which he kindly took apart, took the horn handle off. We were able to screw the microphone into the top of the recording device.**

0:01:03.4 Stephen: I don't know, what sort of age is your microphone? A couple of years old?

**0:01:09.3 Abi: Oh, it's two... I think it's two... It might be a bit older. It might be 2006.**

0:01:15.0 Stephen: Well, anyway it's modern. It's 21st century.

**0:01:19.5 Abi: Yes, much more modern.**

0:01:20.3 Stephen: The tripod that it's quite happily mounted on, was made in about 1920.

**0:01:27.1 Abi: Yes.**

0:01:28.2 Stephen: Thereabouts.

**0:01:29.1 Abi: Very good. What I thought is we could potentially pick your brain a bit about the - well, Ilfracombe history and, given that we're in this room, the Ilfracombe Railway - which was incredibly important to the town's history and obviously would've also impacted the work and livelihood here of your father as well. So, could you tell us a bit about the railway at Ilfracombe?**

0:01:54.4 Stephen: Well, the original requirement for a railway was brought up in about the 1850s, 1860s but it took a long, long time and a lot of hard work to get it to fruition. It opened in 1874, so it took a long, long time. There was a lot of controversy. Well, certainly most of Ilfracombe people wanted the railway to come from Barnstaple, through Braunton and then finishing off at Ilfracombe. Of course, the Braunton people wanted that because it would obviously have helped their village. But there was, out at Heanton Court, overlooking the River Taw, there was a stately home which was owned by an absentee landlord. He actually

lived in Cornwall and he did not want the railway passing his property and he was very much against it.

0:03:09.5 When railways were being built at the height of railway mania, they would've had - the proposers would've had to have got an Act of Parliament in order to build their railway. The main proponents who wanted the line through Braunton, got an Act, got - working through committees in Parliament. But they were thwarted by the owner of Heanton Court and his supporters. That then got turned down, and the owner of Heanton Court and his supporters stayed in London. The Ilfracombe man came to - back to Ilfracombe to tell the townspeople that unfortunately, the Act had failed. It had been thrown out by Parliament.

0:04:10.2 He stood in one of the hotels in the high street and told everybody this. This would've been in the evening - I can't remember the date - but in the evening, and the townspeople got very angry. They wanted their railway. They wanted the prosperity that it would bring, tourism, trade everything else. They realised that despite the fact that the anti-Braunton people were still in London, their houses and families were in Ilfracombe and they got really angry. They got very heated and a riot started; the Ilfracombe Riot. They went round the families with their children. I mean, it must've been terrifying for them. They started throwing stones at the door and they started smashing the windows in.

0:05:09.3 The local policeman, or one of them, had to get the magistrate - whose name was Nathaniel [?Vine 0:05:19.7] - to come and literally read the Riot Act, which told the people - the rioters - that if they did not disperse, there was a good chance they would go to prison, if not hang. I think it was about half-past-two in the morning that the riot dispersed. It was quite a strange thing, researching for a television programme that I was involved with a few years ago, and I found out about the Ilfracombe Riot. It's not generally known, I think.

**0:05:53.2 Sharon: May I ask a question? How many people were actually involved in the rioting? Was it...**

0:05:56.8 Stephen: I think it was about 250. I think it was that sort of number.

**0:06:02.1 Sharon: That's a lot of people in a small town.**

0:06:04.1 Stephen: Yes, in the late 1860s, but eventually common sense prevailed. The Heanton Court brigade wanted the railway to run out right up through the back woods out in the middle of nowhere. There were virtually no settlements out there; it would've been a

complete and utter waste of time, so common sense prevailed and the Act was passed, the railway was built and opened in 1874.

**0:06:40.4 Abi: What effect did the railway have on Ilfracombe?**

0:06:45.5 Stephen: Well, it had a massive tourism effect. Tourism was just really taking off. Very few people had - well, there was some public transport but it would've been a long stagecoach trip from London. But on the train, you could get from London to Ilfracombe in probably about - I think it was about nine hours, which seems horrendous today, but in the 1870s that was quick. Trade, of course. North Devon was a big farming area. The farmers were able to ship livestock, milk and that sort of stuff - which would've been taken off to the big cities. It was a great influx, but mainly of tourists who weren't - not necessarily... Not day trippers; probably not even for a week or a fortnight. You would have gentry who would come and stay for the season, the summer season.

0:07:57.1 They would take one of the new villas that were being built around the edge of town, bring their servants and they would stay for the season. So, that brought a lot of money into the town, then. Their names would be published in the local paper so that people knew who all these bigwigs were that were coming along.

**0:08:22.1 Abi: Lovely, and then initially, as you say, it was gentry and then over time, the tourism industry changed and those villas gradually became converted into smaller apartments and hotels.**

0:08:34.6 Stephen: Yes.

**0:08:35.7 Abi: It became more of - almost more of a popular thing. I think...**

0:08:39.1 Stephen: Hotels and guesthouses, lodging houses would've sprung up all over the place, dozens and dozens of them. A little old lady who had a spare room, she'd put a sign out, 'room to rent' sort of thing, and that's what would've happened. That is how father and his friends would've come to Ilfracombe. They would've come down on the train from London and they would've stayed in a lodging house and then done various walks and adventures round and about. That would've been a huge boost to the town, huge. Then, of course, when the Ilfracombe Hotel was built, a Victorian place, that brought the real toffs, yes.

**0:09:36.5 Sharon: Ruskin stayed there.**

0:09:37.1 Stephen: Yes.

**0:09:38.3 Abi: Yes, all sorts, and then the Ilfracombe Hotel and the Ilfracombe Railway, both of them started to take a bit of a downwards turn eventually, didn't they, much later on.**

0:09:52.2 Stephen: Well, in the 1950s.

**0:09:53.1 Abi: Yes, 1950s.**

0:09:54.4 Stephen: The town was still very, very busy in the 1950s and 1960s, but of course after a while, road transport rather than rail transport started to become more and more important. Private cars were becoming more common - still not as common as today, obviously - but they were becoming more common. Charabancs, coaches, motor coaches, motor buses, they were becoming more common and you were getting different tourists. You were getting day trippers, you were getting weekenders. You were getting people who would come on holiday just for a week or a fortnight rather than staying for three months.

0:10:41.6 So, the tourism was changing slowly, but the town was still busy in the '60s. Then, of course in the 1970s all of a sudden, foreign package holidays: you jet off to the sun, guaranteed sunshine. You can't guarantee sun in Ilfracombe - even though it was one of the sunniest places in the country. They had a sun recorder on top of Capstone, a big glass ball that would have a paper strip around the back of it, and that would be... The paper would be burned by the sun shining through the glass ball. They would publish the details; the local tourism group would publish the details of how many hours of sunshine there had been in Ilfracombe the previous day or previous week. Eventually, the ball started being stolen by gypsies so they did away with it.

**0:11:47.3 Sharon: What were they stealing it for?**

0:11:48.8 Stephen: A crystal ball.

**0:11:50.4 Sharon: Oh right.**

0:11:51.3 Stephen: It was a glass ball. Yes, it was a glass ball.

**0:11:55.0 Sharon: Well, that's very interesting, actually.**

0:11:57.0 Stephen: I'm pretty sure it was taken two or three times, even though there was a fence around it - which I think is actually still on top of Capstone. The ball would've been stolen and then replaced by the council, but after a while they got fed up with replacing it so they did away with it altogether.

**0:12:17.0 Abi: Then was it in '77 the railway was shut down?**

0:12:21.0 Stephen: No, 1970.

**0:12:23.0 Abi: 1970, right.**

0:12:23.5 Stephen: 1970, yes, so much earlier than that. Yes, 1970 it closed. As far as I am aware, everybody blames poor old Beeching. Doctor Beeching basically was doing what the government of the day wanted him to do, which was prune the railways, but I think it was railway politics. This is my opinion; it was railway politics that killed it off. Nationalisation in 1948, all lines west of Exeter were put in the hands of the southern region, which used to be - the grouping was the Southern Railway but that was the southern region. Then later on, that was of course including the Exeter to Barnstaple to Ilfracombe line. Later on, for reasons I do not understand, the government of the day or British Railways decided to change everything and put all these southern lines in the hands of the Western region. Now, the Western region still really thought of themselves as the Great Western Railway. They...

[Part 3]

0:00:00.3 Stephen: Yes, the western region - as far as they were concerned - was still God's wonderful railway that still had Brunel in charge, even though he'd been dead for donkeys' years. They hated all things southern. They got rid of all the southern locomotives. They imported western locomotives. We had diesel hydraulics, which were an unknown

everywhere - anywhere else apart from in the western region. Nobody else used diesel hydraulics. They wanted to get rid of as many little baby branch lines as they could. I think what they did, they looked at ticket sales; that's a good indicator of how busy a railway station is, how many tickets do they sell? They looked at Ilfracombe and said, 'They don't sell many tickets in Ilfracombe.' That was because all the passengers had return tickets that had been bought in London, Birmingham, Manchester. Very few tickets sold in Ilfracombe. Thousands and thousands of people who came by train, had return tickets bought somewhere else. That was the end of the railway.

**0:01:19.8 Sharon: Do you think that was deliberate, they deliberately chose to do that?**

0:01:23.3 Stephen: Oh, I'm absolutely certain. Yes, I'm absolutely certain, without prejudice, Your Honour. Yes.

**0:01:31.4 Abi: Yes, and that was about the time that - because it cut off a lot of tourism to Ilfracombe, despite the increase of private cars at that point.**

0:01:40.5 Stephen: Yes.

**0:01:41.3 Abi: It still cut off a huge amount of people who were coming in and...**

0:01:44.5 Stephen: That's right, yes, and even in 1970 a lot of people still used the trains. They still do now, obviously, but people would go on holiday with the trains, not just for commuting.

**0:01:56.1 Abi: Yes, and then as a tourist town, that caused a downward...**

0:01:59.2 Stephen: It did.

**0:01:59.8 Abi: A downward spiral, almost.**

0:02:02.1 0:02:01.4 Stephen: Yes, it did.

**0:02:05.2 Abi: Which is, I'd say, something that you can arguably see in all sorts of various other places in and around town, so the hotels, the...**

0:02:10.4 Stephen: Not just here, yes.

**0:02:15.3 Sharon: It's all around the coast.**

0:02:15.4 Stephen: Yes.

**0:02:16.3 Sharon: In Hastings, where I used to live, the same.**

0:02:16.7 Stephen: Pretty much any coastal town, unless it's a big thriving port or something like that - which Ilfracombe was back in the day, of course. But any coastal town, unless there's some other reason for it. Something like Plymouth or what have you, yes, fine. They were big enough to survive, but poor little Ilfracombe struggled. It certainly did. Fortunately, it seems to be going back up again. It seems to be getting better. I've noticed improvements.

**0:02:49.4 Abi: Yes, certainly. Over the past 20 years or so, I've certainly seen a general upward tick.**



[Part 4]

**0:00:01.2 Abi: Okay, well, thank you so much for agreeing to come in and talk to us.**

0:00:05.7 Stephen: You're welcome.

**0:00:05.8 Abi: Or for us to come down, rather, because we are at the Museum - which is where, to varying degrees, we all seem to live it feels like. But yes, I just wanted to, I suppose, end on asking with: do you think that your father would be proud and happy with how everything is going at the Museum?**

0:00:26.2 Stephen: I am absolutely certain he would have been amazed at what has been achieved since his death. He really, really would. He would be so proud of what the people - the various people over the years have managed to get in here and how much stuff, how much interest there is - excuse me - how much enthusiasm there is for the entire collection. He would be delighted.

**0:01:00.2 Abi: Lovely. Well, that's very, very lovely. Very gratifying to hear. Well, thank you very much. Thank you to Sharon. Thank you to everyone who's listening, and we'll end it there.**

**[END OF TRANSCRIPT]**