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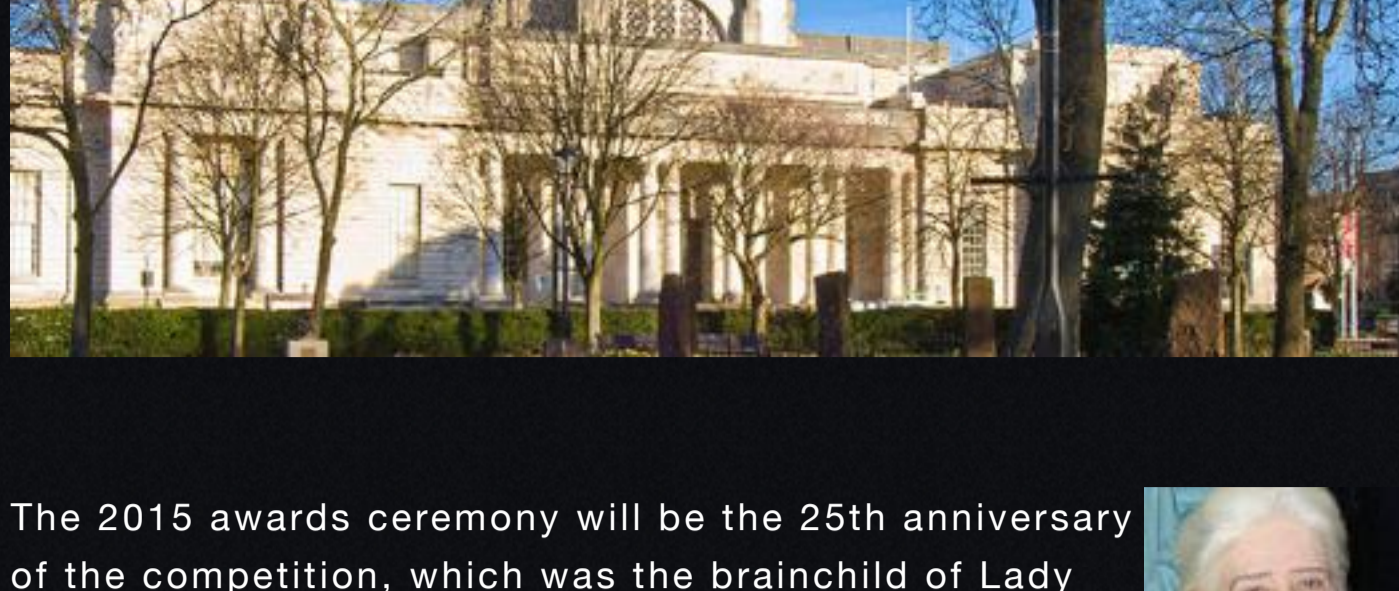
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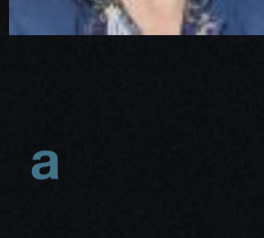


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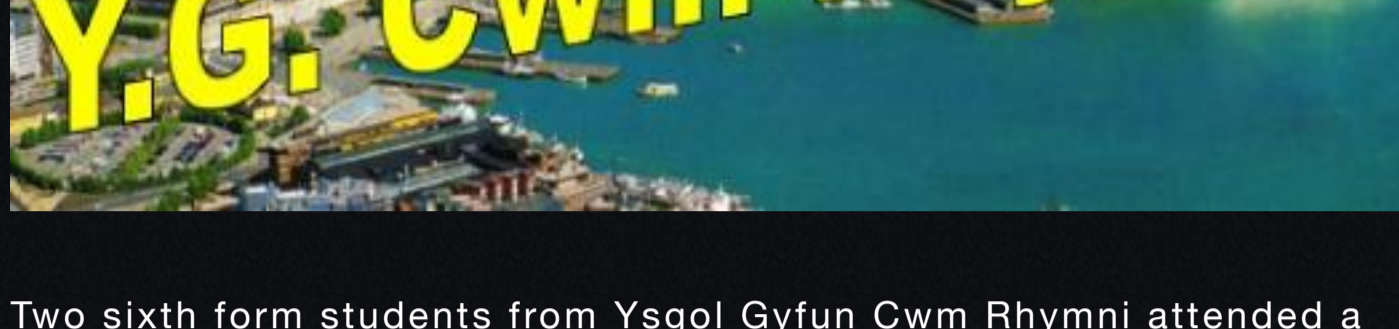
Presentation of prizes/awards on Friday 10th July, 2015 - Reardon-Smith Theatre, National Museum Cardiff.



The 2015 awards ceremony will be the 25th anniversary of the competition, which was the brainchild of Lady Trotman Dickenson, the current Life President of the WHSI.

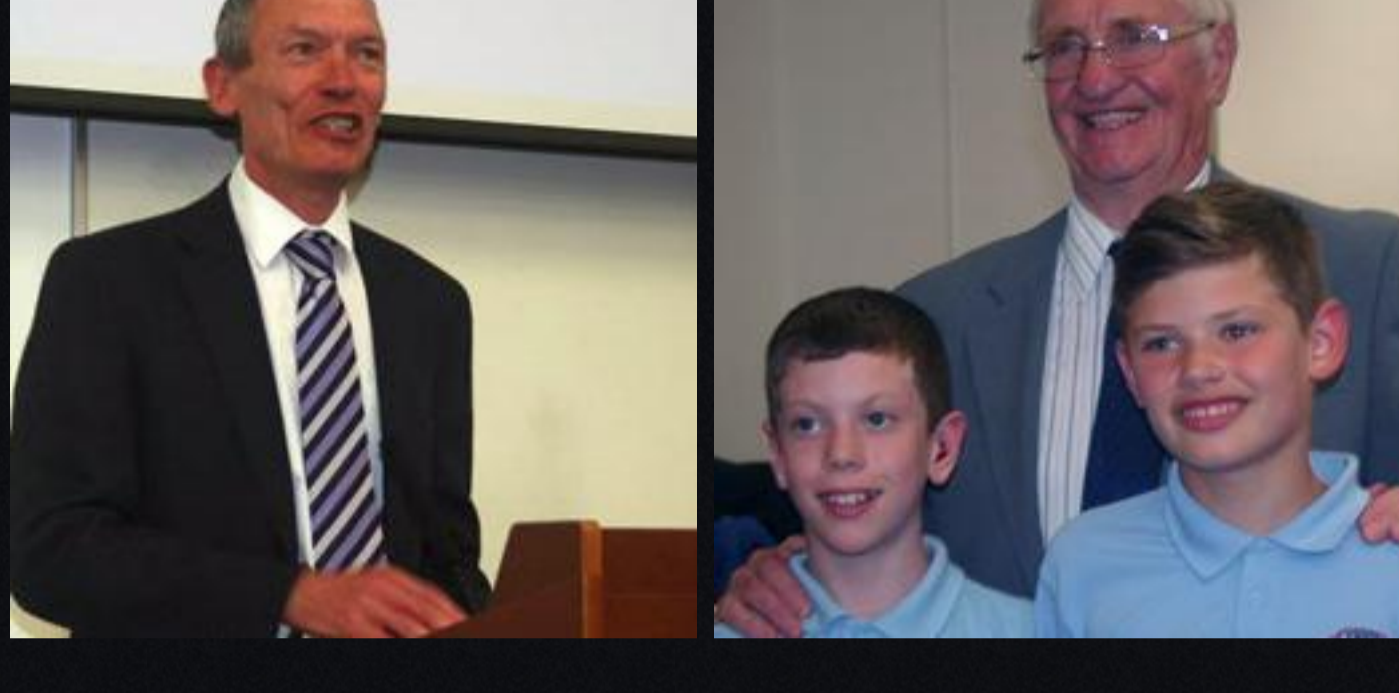


Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni attended a European Conference in Oslo



Two sixth form students from Ysgol Gyfun Cwm Rhymni attended a European Conference in Oslo in September 2014. They won this opportunity following their work on the centenary of the Senhenydd Mining disaster.

The 2014 WHSI Awards at the Caerleon Campus of the University of South Wales



Left: Former Minister for Culture, John Griffiths, addressing the prizewinners. Right: Walter Jones, Treasurer of the WHSI with two prize winners.

Minister's Speech - 2014

Rydwi'n hapus iawn i gael wahoddiad yma heddiw, i ymuno â chi yn y digwyddiad blynyddol i ddathlu'r astudiaeth sydd wedi cymryd le ar dreftadaeth Cymru gan plant a phobl ifanc o bob rhan o'r Wlad.

I am delighted to have been invited here today, to join you at this annual event which celebrates the study of Wales's heritage by children and young people from all over Wales.

The historic environment of Wales offers a richness and diversity which makes it a pleasure and a privilege to live in Wales. We are fortunate to live in what is one of the most beautiful countries in the world. And what makes Wales so beautiful and so interesting? Its coast, its mountains, its castles and historic places, and its cultural heritage.

The traces of our past in our landscapes, townscapes and collective memory make Wales distinctive. And they are everywhere - there are just over 30,000 listed buildings, 4,000 scheduled ancient monuments and 3 World Heritage Sites in Wales. There is a wealth of cultural material including poetry, myths, and legends, often expressed through our own language, one of the oldest in Europe. Wales has also been at the forefront of technology at key moments in the past, and was the world's first industrial nation.

These historic and cultural assets provide stimulating and meaningful opportunities for young people to study the heritage of Wales, to develop skills and confidence through active participation in learning about heritage in their locality, and sharing that learning with their communities.

While the heritage fabric itself is historically important and aesthetically pleasing, engaging people in the historic environment is vital to securing a vibrant future for it - I want people to be inspired by and care for the historic environment.

Creative activity, such as researching an aspect of heritage to present to a local community audience as part of a competition entry, is a great way to switch young people on to history.

The Welsh Heritage Schools Initiative set up in 1990 to promote interest in and the study of heritage in Wales is now itself part of the history of our nation. This annual competition has attracted over a thousand entries over the last 24 years, and these entries represent many hours of study by over 39,000 young people.

Pupils have been inspired by and investigated a diverse range of topics, including: what life was like for children in the 1960s and during the second world war; the history of nursery rhymes; the Victorians, Tudors, Romans and Celts; Wales's industrial, mining and seafaring heritage; churches, castles, gardens; place names, transport, religion; important historical figures, the daily lives of ordinary people; education, immigration and emigration; and more.

Whilst working on their projects and competition entries, the children involved in these projects have learnt about their local history and the histories of localities across Wales. They have been brought into contact with their roots, and gained a real sense of place. Whilst studying their local heritage, young people have also gained research, communication, literacy, numeracy, IT and presentation skills, which will stand them in good stead for the future.

Many of the projects have an intergenerational community element, which brings communities together and adds to the cohesiveness of society at a local level.

The projects entered into the competition over the years represent best practice in researching and learning about local and national Welsh heritage in our schools and colleges, and their research has been shared with their local communities. It would be very gratifying to see such inspirational practice disseminated and cascaded further so that more young people can benefit from such positive experiences.

There are many opportunities afforded by digital technology, to provide a wealth of means for learners of all ages to explore, delve into, enjoy, and share the stories and historic places of Wales. Perhaps schools which enter this competition could also upload their projects to the People's Collection so that people from all over the world can read about the heritage they have uncovered?

As a nation, we value and use our historic assets in many ways. We conserve buildings and make them accessible, and promote them to visitors from near and far. We celebrate our cultural traditions in local and national Eisteddfodau.

We preserve iconic artefacts and documents in our national museums and library. We want our children and young people to value these assets and hold them safely for their own children.

Young people not only learn and develop as a result of their involvement with heritage, but heritage can benefit from the energy, imagination and new perspectives young people can bring as a result of their studies.

Young people can and should be involved in charting the future of their historic environment and this competition stimulates interest in heritage amongst young people, who will be the custodians of our heritage in the future.

The Welsh Heritage Schools Initiative plays a significant part in that process of engaging and involving young people across Wales, and I am sure that the 25th competition next year will be a fitting celebration, showcasing yet again the excellent work of our young people on what their heritage means to them.

I congratulate you all today.
Diolch am wrando.

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CATRIN STEVENS, Chairperson



Writer, teacher and researcher Catrin Stevens has dedicated most of her life to interpreting Welsh history and culture for children, students and the general readership. This passion is fuelled by an interest in the lives of ordinary Welsh women and men - in their many perspectives. She has broadcast widely in Welsh and English on radio and television.

During her period as a researcher at **St Fagan's National History Museum** she studied rites of passage, especially death and courting customs. The latter topic proved a popular lecture and after-dinner topic for many years.

As **Head of History at Trinity College Carmarthen** she promoted the teaching of world and European history, as well as Welsh history, through the medium of Welsh. During this period she was commissioned to write educational materials for primary schools. To date, she has authored over 50 books, most recently the Hanes Atgas series (with English adaptations entitled Wicked Wales), which aim to make history fun and enjoyable to children. Several of these books have been nominated for the Tir Na'n Og prize.

Catrin is heavily involved with **Archif Menywod Cymru / Women's Archive of Wales** and she presently is co-ordinating its exciting 'Voices from the Factory Floor' project, to record the oral histories of women who worked in the manufacturing industries in Wales, 1945- 1975. This will complement the huge oral history project she directed among Merched y Wawr members when she was National President of the movement.

Catrin has been **National Chair of Mudiad Meithrin**, she serves on the Executive Board of the National Eisteddfod and is a school governor, a trustee of Cronfa Glyndŵr and county treasure of Rhag (Parents for Welsh-medium education).

Her leisure time is spent walking, gardening, reading, watching noir drama and enjoying the company of her family.