

Aber^rNEWS

ISSUE 11 - February 2013

Aberystwyth...one of the best places in the world to be a student



L to R: Professors Nigel Scollan and Richard Marggraf Turley

Innovative new posts

Recognising the vital role the wider community plays in university life, Aberystwyth University has created two new leading roles which will encourage dialogue with members of the public.

Following a high level appointment process, the University has appointed Professor Nigel Scollan as Professor of Public Engagement with Science and Professor Richard Marggraf Turley as Professor of Engagement with the Public Imagination.

Both roles will focus on encouraging public participation in all aspects of University activities – from leading research to policy development, discussion on how the University works and active participation in knowledge exchange.

The Professors will lead the University's drive to encourage greater involvement in University events and assist in developing an Open Day for people in Ceredigion.

Professor Nigel Scollan joined the Institute of Grassland and Environmental Research in 1993 and subsequently Aberystwyth University in 2008. He holds the Waitrose Chair of Food and Farming at the University's Institute of Biological, Environmental and Rural Sciences (IBERS).

Professor Scollan heads up a research group on Animal Systems and is leading the University's role in the creation of a unique industry and academia initiative to help support farming in the UK, the Centre of Excellence for UK Farming.

Commenting on his appointment, Professor Scollan said: "This is an excellent opportunity to build on the brilliant work the University does in research and teaching and examine innovative and creative ways of working more closely with the public".

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NEWS

SMB at Downing St

On 4 December Professor Andrew St George, representing the School of Management and Business, visited 10 Downing Street to meet directors of the GREAT Campaign.

The GREAT Campaign aims to promote and enhance Britain's reputation abroad. It centres on areas of British excellence, focusing on reasons to invest in and visit Britain, including technology and innovation, creativity, knowledge, environment, heritage, sport, shopping, music and countryside.

The campaign invites the world to take a fresh look at everything Britain has to offer, and aims to send out a clear message that Britain is one of the very best places to visit, live, work, study, invest and do business.

The British government is encouraging links between universities and enterprise, helping to turn great research into commercial opportunities. The GREAT Campaign has adopted *Royal Navy Way of Leadership* (Random House 2012) written by Andrew St George, as a practical example of applied knowledge.

For more information visit: www.fco.gov.uk/en/about-us/what-we-do/public-diplomacy/great-campaign/

Churchill Archive

The University Library has subscribed to the Churchill Archive until the end of 2013.

This digital library includes more than 800,000 pages of original documents relating to Winston Churchill, ranging from items of personal correspondence to official letters documenting his communication with international leaders.

To take a look and for more information see aberssel.blogspot.co.uk/2012/10/sources-for-courses-churchill-archive_16.html

Innovative new posts - Continued from page 1

Professor Richard Marggraf Turley from the Department of English and Creative Writing is Co-Director of the University's Centre for Romantic Studies, and the winner of the 2007 Keats-Shelley Prize for poetry.

On being appointed as the first ever Professor of Engagement with the Public Imagination, he said: "Aberystwyth has seized the initiative for creating a genuinely vibrant public connection." He added that his new title was "the coolest in academia, and a fantastic platform."

Vice-Chancellor Professor April McMahon said: "I am very pleased that we have been able to appoint both Richard and Nigel to these important roles. Public engagement is vital to our University. We recognise the valuable contribution our local and global communities make to the development of our institution, ensuring our research makes a difference, our policies are fit for purpose and our services meet their needs. We are fortunate to have some excellent examples of highly innovative engagement work going on already, and I'm sure both Richard's and Nigel's wealth of experience in public engagement and research will help us build on these initiatives."

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VICE CHANCELLOR'S COLUMN

On 17 December (which, after a fabulous and very restful Christmas break, now feels like a long time ago in another country) we launched our Strategic Plan for Aberystwyth University 2012-17. Many thanks to all of you who came along to the launch event and collected your bookmarks listing our aims or values; I fully expect these to be coveted collectors' items before long!



Developing the Strategic Plan was one of our major achievements for 2012; but now that it's in place, we need to move into the delivery phase. Our Plan tells us where we're going, but we have to figure out exactly how to get there. Some of those targets are intentionally ambitious, because that's what you asked us to be. They are stretch targets. However, throughout the process we have taken the view that it's better to aim for really ambitious targets even if we sometimes end up falling just short, than to aim for something that doesn't really push us and get there comfortably.

Let's take the example of our postgraduate numbers. At the moment, compared to the usual universities we benchmark our achievements against, we are off the pace for postgraduates – and that matters. It isn't just that figures are lower than we'd like for the Research Excellence Framework. It's about renewing the academic profession, and providing highly skilled researchers to contribute to the economy and advance knowledge and understanding in a whole range of other fields. We've got a great record in teaching, and outstanding achievements in research, but without enough postgrads we lack the glue that binds those two areas of activity together. And we know there is demand – many Aber graduates go away to do postgraduate courses elsewhere because we just don't offer sufficiently attractive choices, though they tell us they'd love to stay.

So, we have committed in the Strategic Plan to increase our postgraduate numbers by 250% by 2017. We have only four more complete academic years to hit or even beat that target. So we can't be starting 2013 by thinking vaguely about how we will deliver this aspiration. We need to be doing it already.

The brilliant news is that we already are. Virtually all our academic departments, with tremendous help from professional support

colleagues in the Academic Office, Marketing and elsewhere, have stepped forward with plans for new Postgraduate Taught programmes, to come on stream in 2013 or 2014. Right now, more than 30 new or substantially restructured programmes are under consideration. They cover options like Applied Translation in European Languages, Documentary Practice in TFTS, and Creative Writing in Welsh; interdisciplinary offerings showcasing our approaches to global challenges, such as Climate Change; our first Masters degrees in Psychology and Criminology; and a range of innovative programmes including Digital Marketing, International Business Law and the Environment, Information Management and Leadership and War Studies. Many will be delivered here in Aber, while some build on our expertise in distance learning. We have developed faster ways of working to allow these to be approved and validated swiftly, while still carefully assuring quality and ensuring we have external experts commenting on the new schemes. For some of these programmes, we're virtually ready to go now, recruiting students for next year.

As I talk to colleagues and visit departments, I'm really impressed by the energy and enthusiasm for broadening our postgraduate offerings and developing attractive new programmes that play to our strengths. There's a real recognition that we need to provide choice for our own excellent graduates, but also to build up options which will bring new postgrads in from elsewhere in Wales, the UK, and around the world. I look forward to seeing the next set of proposals, including from those few departments that haven't yet made suggestions for new postgraduate taught programmes, as we work together to start delivering the targets in our new Strategic Plan during 2013.

Professor April McMahon, Vice-Chancellor



Pictured are staff and student representatives launching the Strategic Plan on 17 December 2012.

NEWS

On location

The filming of a major new detective drama is underway at Plas Gogerddan. The mansion has been transformed into a police station, complete with incident, interrogation and interview rooms, and cast and crew will be on location until May.

Hinterland (Mathias in Welsh) is being filmed simultaneously in Welsh and English for broadcast on S4C and BBC4. Dubbed the new Nordic noir, the series will also be shown by Danish broadcaster DR Denmark, the broadcaster behind *The Killing*. The series will make its TV debut on S4C in the autumn.

In partnership with the University, TV production company Fiction Factory is providing unique opportunities for students from the Department of Theatre, Film and Television Studies (TFTS) to undertake work experience with the production team, working in sound, camera, costume, editing, designing, make-up and production.

Ed Thomas, executive producer and co-creator of *Hinterland*, and an Honorary Professor in TFTS, explained:

“It’s rare that students get the chance to experience this type of work first hand, especially in their local area. During our time working in Aberystwyth, it was important for us to set up a good relationship with the University and we look forward to welcoming more enthusiastic students to the set between now and the end of filming in May.”



A scene from *Hinterland* being filmed at Plas Gogerddan.

The University’s BA (Hons) Film and Television Studies degree programme and its equivalent course, which is taught through the medium of Welsh, were both recently awarded the Creative Skillset Tick following a rigorous assessment process by experts working in the creative industries. The Creative Skillset Tick, the industry kitemark of quality, is awarded to practice-based courses which best prepare students for a career in the industry.

Cobweb

Researchers in the Centre for Catchment and Coastal Research, and the River Basin Dynamics & Hydrology / Earth Observation research groups, are set to use information collected on smart phones by people living in the area around the Dyfi estuary to improve flood prediction models and record changes to habitats.

The work forms part of COBWEB (Citizen OBServatory WEB), a new four year £8.5m European Union funded project to develop an “observatory framework” that will make it easier for citizens to collect environmental data suitable for use in research, decision making and policy formation.

Led by the University of Edinburgh, COBWEB consists of thirteen partners from five European member states: UK, Germany, Greece, The Netherlands and Ireland.

£1.7m of the project’s funding will focus on four organisations working on the UNESCO-designated Dyfi Biosphere (www.biosfferdyfi.org.uk); EcoDyfi, Aberystwyth based company Environment Systems, Welsh Government and the University.

The infrastructure developed will explore the possibilities of crowd sourcing techniques around the concept of “people as sensors”, particularly the use of mobile devices for data collection and geographic information.

The Aberystwyth researchers will be using COBWEB to improve flood prediction models and to classify the changes in important habitats in the Dyfi Biosphere.

Art collection resources

Two new resources for the University’s collections of fine and decorative art are now available online.

The updated museum website (museum.aber.ac.uk) now features a new facility to search the collections of the School of Art Gallery and Museum, including watercolours, drawings, oil paintings, photographs and the large and important collection of fine art prints. This searchable catalogue will be of value to researchers and students in the University and beyond.

In addition to the online database, over 200 of the University’s paintings are now available to view on the BBC *Your Paintings* website as part of the Public Catalogue Foundation’s campaign to record all the oil paintings in public collections across Britain. For more information, visit: www.bbc.co.uk/arts/yourpaintings/galleries/locations/aberystwyth-university-art-collection-school-of-art-6836



Credit: Public Catalogue Foundation
Oil painting by Thomas Brigstocke (1809-1881), *Moses with arms supported by Aaron and Hur*

NEWS

Pig genome sequenced

Dr Denis Larkin, a lecturer in Animal Genomics at IBERS, has played a leading role in an international consortium of scientists that recently completed the sequencing of the pig genome.

Dr Larkin led the Pig Chromosome Evolution Analysis Group and was one of the primary authors of a paper published in *Nature* in November 2012.

This is the first time that differences between the genomes of pig and other mammals have been revealed and analysed at whole genome level.

According to Dr Larkin, pig chromosomes were significantly rearranged after pigs and humans split from a common ancestor about 90 million years ago.

IBERS graduate student, Jitendra Narayan, aligned pig chromosomes to the sequences of nine other mammals, including mice, dogs, horses and cattle and detected over 100 evolutionary rearrangements that distinguish pig chromosomes.

“It is amazing to see ancient rearrangements in the DNA of contemporary species. A whole evolutionary history of an organism can be read from its DNA”, he said.

Dr Larkin’s group found that pigs have fewer taste genes than



Dr Denis Larkin

humans and mice, and he argues that this may well be the reason why pigs can eat food not suitable for humans.

“Pigs were domesticated and became an important agricultural species because they could transform food which was not suitable for humans into meat, a rich source of protein. Humans and pigs do not compete for food. Now it is clear that this feature is encoded in pig genes and chromosome structure.”

www.aber.ac.uk/en/news/archive/2012/11/title-123627-en.html

Probing the dark side of life on Arctic glaciers

Researchers from IGES and IBERS have measured the “microbial budget” of a glacier surface for the first time and discovered how bacteria may help melt glaciers.

Dr Tristram Irvine-Fynn, Dr Sara Rassner and Dr Arwyn Edwards have published the first seasonal budget of tiny microbial life forms

at the surface of a glacier in the Norwegian High-Arctic archipelago of Svalbard.

Their findings suggest that a fine dust on the ice surface, otherwise known as cryoconite, can increase the rate at which glaciers melt.

Resembling potting compost, cryoconite is made from a combination of small rock particles from surrounding mountains, dust, microbes and even wildfire soot which are blown onto the glacier or deposited in rain and snowfall.

The team calculated how much microbial carbon left the glacier and how much was

retained: the export is dwarfed by the volume delivered to, and retained within the ice surface.

This phenomenon they call ‘biological darkening’ which is amplified when the active microbes glue together the dust, carbon and tiny rock particles and darken the ice surface, increasing the amount of the sun’s energy that melts the glacier.

The study was funded by Climate Change Consortium of Wales (C3W) and the Natural Environment Research Council (NERC) and the findings published in *Environmental Microbiology*.



Dr Tristram Irvine-Fynn (right) and Dr Arwyn Edwards look at a significant volume of cryoconite exposed on a Svalbard glacier’s surface

Higher Education Academy Grant Success for SMB

The School of Management and Business has been awarded a research grant from The Higher Education Academy for Teaching Development.

The grant, £30,000 over 15 months, is for Teaching, Learning and Measuring Leadership Skills, and was a result of a highly competitive tender.

The project research team, which includes Professor Andrew St George and Dr Nishikant Mishra, will produce a tool that quantifies leadership qualities and can be applied in the commercial, charities and government sectors.

Measuring soft skills is a new discipline which will have an impact on the way that recruitment, head-hunting and employment agencies assess and present their candidates to employers; it will also change the ways in which small and medium sized enterprises can assess their leaders (internal and potential); and help larger organisations manage career progression and succession planning.

ABER Research



As the new Strategic Plan for 2012-17 was approved by Council on 5 November, it seems appropriate for this editorial to focus on the research aims of that plan and outline the support the Research Office can give to help deliver these ambitious targets.

The Research Office has responded to the Strategic Plan's aims for research by establishing grant capture targets for each department over the next five years, to deliver the uplift from £20M to £30M in research income. Departments will soon be revising their research strategies to develop research and impact strategies and implementation plans. The latter is the most important and the most challenging. As an academic or researcher, you should expect your Director of Research to be in contact with you, and as part of their planning for the department, they will be establishing: where you are in your research career; where you are in the grant capture cycle; and what continuing professional development you may need to move to the next stage in your career. Opportunities such as the Welsh Crucible and other research leadership courses are available and you are encouraged to identify courses through CDSAP and organisations such as Vitae (www.vitae.ac.uk) that will progress your career. This is probably a good moment to re-iterate the point made by Professor Martin Jones, PVC for Research, Enterprise and Engagement, at the launch of the new Research Café Programme. All staff whose contract enables them to apply for research grants are expected to do so; with the changing funding landscape, and in particular the impact of the new undergraduate fees, the expectation is that we should be moving towards *funded* research-led teaching. If you are thinking about applying for a research grant, please contact your Research Development Officer, who will help you through the process.

If you have run a grant in the past, but are cautious about running another one because you found the post-award management cumbersome, please think again, as the Research Office has recently introduced a number of new initiatives. These include the 'Top Tips for Running your Research Grant Training'; the Project Initiation & Management File (PIMF); meetings with the Research Development Officer and Research Finance at the start of your project to ensure you are aware of the requirements as a Principal Investigator, and what support is available; monthly finance reports and expenditure statements; and quarterly review meetings with a Research Finance Officer to ensure everything is on track. The feedback on these new initiatives is extremely positive.

For any research development needs, please contact your Research Development Officer in the first instance. (See the contacts table on page 7).

Gary Reed, Head of the Research Office

10th ESRC Festival of Social Science – 'Negotiating Climate Change' event



The Research Office contributed to the 10th ESRC (Economic and Social Research Council) Festival of Social Science, 3-10 November 2012, by organising a mock climate change summit for local Year 12 students.

On 6 November the University welcomed 45 students from Penglais, Penweddig, and Bro Ddyfi schools, and Coleg Ceredigion, who took on the roles of some of the world's most important and influential negotiators and provided live social media coverage of the debate.

Leading the students through the debate was a multi-disciplinary team of academics: Dr Mark Whitehead

(Geography and Earth Sciences), Dr Carl Death (International Politics) and Sara Penrhyn Jones (Theatre, Film and Television Studies). For more information about the event see: www.aber.ac.uk/en/research/esrc-festival/ or contact Dr Jenny Deaville, Research Development Officer for Social Science jfd@aber.ac.uk.

Mostyn Cultural Engagement Award

The Mostyn Project has been selected for an Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) funded Cultural Engagement Award to develop research into the history and creation of Llandudno.

Founded in 2007 by Dr Elisabeth Salter under the auspices of IMEMS (Institute for Medieval and Early Modern Studies), which is part of the Aberystwyth/Bangor Research and Enterprise Partnership, the aim of the Mostyn Project is to study the vast archive of the Mostyn family, one of the major landholding families of north Wales, from around 1400 to the present.

The project funds four PhD studentships, one of which has been generously funded by Mostyn Estates Ltd.

AHRC Cultural Engagement Awards last for 3 months and provide an opportunity for early career researchers to work with a company partner in order to develop ways for their research to engage with the wider community.

Keeping in close contact with the Research Office, and particularly Dr Dafydd Roberts, the Research Development Officer for Arts and Humanities, was crucial to the success of the grant bid, and it represents an example of how academics and Research Office staff can work very fruitfully together in the process of filtering calls for funding, identifying possible projects, and pitching applications.

Research support contacts

Name	Position	Email	Extension
Research Office			
Gary Reed	Head of Research Office	gar	1789
Hannah Payne	REF and Research Monitoring Officer	hep	8490
Dafydd Roberts	Faculty of Arts and Humanities - Research Support Officer	dir	8787
Jenny Deaville	Faculty of Social Sciences - Research Support Officer	jfd	1616
Joanne Walker	Faculty of Science - Research Support Officer (incl. IBERS responsive model)	jnw	2947
Huw Merfyn Hughes	European Development Manager	hnh	8742
Anne Howells	European Development Officer	nsh	4127
IBERS			
Tim Williams	IBERS Research Fund Development Manager	tdw	8754
Vacant	IBERS Research Fund Development Manager		
Research Finance			
Peter Botwood	Central contact point	peb16	8485

Further Research Support can be found in the Research Grants Application Toolkit at www.aber.ac.uk/en/research

Mock REF

As part of the University's preparation for the REF2014 a full mock-REF submission of outputs on PURE, the University's new current research information system, will be conducted during February for review with individual departments (Units of Assessments) in March/April. This submission will include all elements of the REF return.

The main purpose of the exercise is to collate all information for the REF submission in one place in order to determine what areas of the final submission require further development. This will also give us the opportunity to fully test the PURE REF module and its interaction with the REF submission system.

Details of the specific information that will be required for each area of the submission will be circulated to departments and will be made available via the Research Office website (www.aber.ac.uk/en/research).

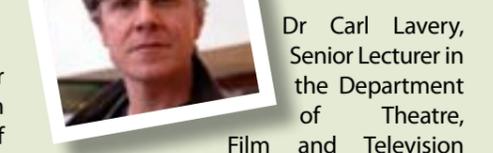
Research networking

Pictured at the New Staff Research and Networking Day held on 22 October, are new research staff with Vice Chancellor, Professor April McMahon, and PVC for Research, Enterprise and Engagement, Professor Martin Jones.

The event gave attendees an insight into the hugely varied research at AU, and provided an opportunity to take part in a networking session around the inter-disciplinary themes: Global Security, Environment, Health and Wellbeing, and Digital Economy.



AHRC success



Dr Carl Lavery, Senior Lecturer in the Department of Theatre, Film and Television Studies, has been successful in two recent applications to the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC).

In the first award, Dr Lavery will collaborate, as co-investigator, with Professor Karen Henwood in the School of Social Sciences at Cardiff University, on an AHRC Network Grant (£40,000) researching sustainable place-making in Wales. The project is called 'Homing in: sense, sense-making and sustainable making' and aims to set up a cross-disciplinary network combining the arts and humanities with the social sciences for exploring how we 'become at home'.

The second award is an AHRC Follow-Up Grant (£15,000), and is called 'Creative Resilience Through Community Imaginings'. It provides seed-funding to develop a large research grant bid with a cross-disciplinary team of scholars in design, sustainable development, sociology, environmental studies, and politics. The aim of the project is to produce a fundable proposal which will research resilience in the face of environmental challenges and opportunities.

Exchange



In this edition of Exchange we're highlighting some of the opportunities currently available for local companies to work with the University through the Strategic Insight Programme and WISE Network project. Long-running schemes such as KESS and Access to Masters are also still available, and in addition we can access a range of Government funds which support Knowledge Exchange between universities and business. If you know of companies who'd like to work with the University but who aren't sure what to do next, please encourage them to contact CCS and we'll help them find the right support from the range of mechanisms available.

CCS and the Research Office are now co-located on the first floor and the lower ground floor of the Visualisation Centre, and this move heralds closer working between the teams. Between us we help the University to deliver many of the targets in the new Strategic Plan, such as creating new partnerships with industry, increasing research income, increasing PG student numbers, encouraging more collaborative research, and increasing the amount of Continuing Professional Development training offered to industry. If you have project ideas you'd like to discuss with us, please don't hesitate to get in contact.

Liz Flint

Director, Commercialisation and Consultancy Services

WISE Network

The WISE (Welsh Institute of Sustainable Environments) Network project team are pleased to announce that the official launch of the project, sponsored by Edwina Hart, MBE, OStJ, AM, the Minister for Business, Enterprise, Technology and Science, will take place on the 15 May 2013 at the Senedd in Cardiff.

WISE Network (www.wisenetwork.org) is part funded by the European Regional Development Fund Programme through the Welsh Government and provides a unique opportunity for business to work in partnership with Aberystwyth, Bangor and Swansea Universities. Through the facilities and expertise available within both Welsh industry and the academic institutions it seeks to embed sustainability at the heart of all businesses.

Collaboration with WISE Network will help businesses to thrive and grow in an increasingly resource-efficient environment. In addition those businesses operating in the environmental sector will be equipped to take full advantage of the opportunities presented by the current growth in green industries.

WISE Network will create a culture of confident business people that use research, expertise, technology and innovation capacity as an essential component in their future development.

Contact: Lia Tseki, WISE Network Business Development Officer, evt3@aber.ac.uk / 01970 621943



Building collaborative partnerships

Dr Marco Odello, Senior Lecturer in the Department of Law and Criminology, is undertaking a work placement with the Legal Directorate of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) in London, funded by the Strategic Insight Programme (SIP). The placement is a great example of a rewarding, strategic partnership likely to yield important collaborative cooperation between Government and higher education.

The initial purpose of the placement was for Dr Odello to gain an insight into the structure and functioning of the FCO and, by meeting with experts in different fields, to understand academic needs and possible areas for collaboration such as research, consultancy and training.

The placement promoted mutual understanding between Government and academia, and a number of positive outcomes were developed. These include plans for a workshop or conference focusing on an area of foreign policy of current topical interest, and guest lectures by FCO officials which would inform students about possible career development and placement opportunities.

Strategic Insight Programme Year 2

Funding now available, for staff to spend time with external organisations investigating potential collaborative projects: - research, consultancy, employability, training.

For further information or to apply visit www.aber.ac.uk/en/ccs/staff-students/funding/sip/ Alternatively contact Adrian Harvery avh@aber.ac.uk - 01970622368

Closing date for applications – March 2013

International patent application filed

The University's technology transfer team have recently filed an international patent application on a novel method of producing the carbon based material graphene.

This invention harnesses the combined strengths of materials science and instrumentation in IMAPS via a project led by Professor Andrew Evans. Graphene is considered by many to be the potential wonder material of the 21st Century and, since its discovery in 2004, companies and research institutes have been racing to file patents on inventions concerning its production and use. The technology transfer team is now working with Professor Evans to build industrial links that will see the method developed and trialled with new devices.

Given the projected value of products containing graphene over the coming years it is extremely positive that the University has registered intellectual property in this field. The graphene patent application brings the total number of patents currently held by the University to nine. These patent applications all offer the potential to achieve impact and revenue through licensing to companies interested to exploit them in novel products and services.

The technology transfer team is able to support academic staff through the process of filing patents and securing funding and commercial partners for further development. We are therefore keen to hear from any academic researcher who considers they may have conceived a patentable invention.

Contact: Dr James Hudson, Technology Transfer Manager, jmh@aber.ac.uk / 01970 628504

New additions to the WISE team

We are delighted to announce that the WISE Network (Welsh Institute for Sustainable Environments) team are now fully in place.

Janice Tedaldi rejoined CCS in November 2012 as Project Secretary and will offer secretarial and administrative support for all Universities involved in the WISE Network project (Aberystwyth, Bangor & Swansea). Janice works part-time on this project alongside studying for her MBA in Business Administration.

Linda Cook, Finance Administrator, is responsible for the monitoring of costs and budget submissions for the project. Prior to joining the team, Linda worked on the Welsh Government's fuel poverty programmes for 11 years and also within SWALEC's energy efficiency department ensuring their licence obligations were achieved.

Evangelia (Lia) Tseki is the Business Development Officer for the project and is the primary point of contact between the commercial sector and Aberystwyth University. Lia has extensive experience in business development and project management, gathered through various roles in the private and public sector, both as an employee and a self-employed consultant. Most recently she has worked for Southwark Council in London for the economic development team.

We'd like to take this opportunity to welcome Janice, Linda and Lia to the CCS team.

CADARN Skills Centre

Building on the foundations laid by the Aber-Bangor Skills Centre, the CADARN Skills Centre is a new wider partnership which aims to champion the wealth of professional development training available from the regional Higher Education Institutions in Mid and North Wales (Aberystwyth, Bangor, Glyndŵr and The Open University Wales).

To external organisations, the project aim is to provide a one stop shop for addressing their skills needs to ensure that they are able to succeed in an increasingly competitive economy.

For University staff, we aim to provide guidance and support for those seeking to maximise the value of their knowledge content by developing materials for different audiences and exploring potential collaborations.

Our position as the interface between academia and industry provides a unique opportunity to impact on the employability agenda, ensuring that students benefit from each partner institution having greater clarity on the skills that will be required of graduates now and in the future.

A regional approach to addressing the skills needs of Wales means that we are able to pool areas of expertise to ensure that training and learning has impact and is completely relevant to the needs of learners and the Mid and North Wales economy.

To find out more about the CADARN Skills Centre visit – cadarnskillscentre.ac.uk or contact Adrian Harvey, Skills and Enterprise Officer on avh@aber.ac.uk / 01970 622368



From left to right: Linda Cook, Ruth Fowler, Janice Tedaldi, Lia Tseki and Lesley Langstaff.

COMMERCIALISATION and CONSULTANCY SERVICES

For information or support relating to knowledge exchange opportunities drop us a line, or call into our offices on the first floor of the Visualisation Centre.

CCS central enquiry service: ccservices@aber.ac.uk – ext 2385 - www.aber.ac.uk/ccs

FEATURE

'As revolutionary as a whirlwind': Aberystwyth and the roots of student activism



Dr Robin Chapman, lecturer in the Department of Welsh, looks back across half a century to the civil disobedience of the 1960s and its presence in Aberystwyth.

After a famously severe winter, the weather thawed in the second week of February 1963, allowing Aberystwyth Rag Week to proceed. Raising money for the Freedom from Hunger campaign, students hauled a scale model of the Queen Mary from Alexandra Hall to Vicarage Field; teams from the History and Economics departments took part in a 48-hour tiddlywinks marathon; the College lorry tackled the snowbound lanes around Eglwysfach to help farmers deliver fodder to stranded animals and an intrepid group took part in a sponsored hitchhike to Great Yarmouth, promising to raise £2 a head. The week ended with a performance of *The Pirates of Penzance* at the King's Hall, and the naming of Eirlys Rees of Pennant as Rag Queen.

A week earlier, on Saturday 2 February, Aberystwyth students were involved in what that week's *Cambrian News*, on page 3, called "a rather good-humoured rag-like demonstration [which] degenerated into ugly scenes". Between the end of the Chatterley ban and the Beatles' first LP, the Welsh Language Society held its first mass protest.

The scenes that Saturday afternoon were farcical. Eager to force the authorities to issue them with summonses and then demand that they be issued in Welsh, the protestors set off from the Home Café on Pier Street to plaster posters on the Post Office in Great Darkgate Street and telephone boxes outside the station. They then offered themselves for arrest. The police would not respond to what the *Western Mail* the following Monday called the 'law-baiters', even when the nominal leader of the action, Welsh lecturer Teddy Millward, chased an inspector along the street to draw his attention to the damage to Crown property.

The decision to occupy Trefechan Bridge was a desperate last act, taken on a show of hands. Sixty students from Aberystwyth and supporters from Bangor, south Wales and further afield blocked the traffic by sitting five-deep across the road. The *Cambrian News* reported that the police, "puzzled and baffled", stood by as passers-by shouted insults and motorists either tried to force their way through or left their vehicles to remonstrate. "A burly lorry-driver and his mate joined the free-for-all", the paper delighted in telling its readers. No arrests were made.

Campaigns to promote the official status of the language were nothing new. In 1885, another, very different, Welsh Language Society, founded by a Glamorgan schools' inspector, Dan Isaac Davies, had lobbied the Royal Commission on Elementary Education to use Welsh as a medium, but the enterprise died with him two years later. A petition of 250,000 names was presented to Parliament in 1938, asking for Welsh to

be allowed parity in the courts system, leading to the Welsh Courts Act 1942 and limited rights. Trefor and Eileen Beasley in Llangennech fought an eight-year campaign for a bilingual rates bill throughout the 1950s, facing the bailiffs three times.

Trefechan was different. What played out there was confrontational, disruptive, simultaneously principled and impudent, serious and ridiculous, physically hazardous and immediate. It was a demand rather than a request. Crucially, too, it could not have happened without the University.

Aberystwyth, accessible from both south and north, even in the depth of winter, was a laboratory where dissent discovered the power of youthful energy and precociousness, the potential of financial and family independence, and the serendipity of people thrown together to enact personal and private convictions together in public.

Writing to the *Western Mail* five days later, with more passion than concern for felicity of expression, a "proud Welshman" from Carmarthen declared himself "quite sick at the way Aberystwyth University (sic) students tackle the problem of having the Welsh language used in legal court actions ... I certainly would not clap my hands in joy at the way our learned students are behaving in their futile attempt to thrust the Welsh point of view down the throats of all and sundry."

Rhiannon Silyn Roberts, who had travelled from London to attend the event, looked beyond it to something less tangible but more significant. In the weekly *Baner ac Amserau Cymru* on the same day, she wrote that she had witnessed a new and thrilling identity emerge in Aberystwyth: "avant-garde, dangerous and audacious, perhaps, and brutally impatient, but as creative as spring and as revolutionary as a whirlwind."

On Trefechan Bridge - two years before protestors gathered outside the American Embassy in Grosvenor Square and held teach-ins in Oxford and the LSE to oppose the Vietnam War - student activism and civil disobedience reached Britain.

The result of the tiddlywinks competition is not recorded.

STUDENT NEWS

Carys Ann Thomas, Welsh Affairs and UMCA President, provides an update on the work of UMCA, Aberystwyth's Welsh Students' Union:



The autumn term proved to be a busy period for UMCA, with almost 250 Welsh students joining the Union. One of the main developments during the term was the increase in UMCA's status within the Union. At the beginning of the term, for the first time, UMCA's Freshers Fayre was held in the Union in order to spread UMCA's message to all Aber students, rather than only to Pantycelyn students, and to show that Aber's Welsh students are a crucial part of the Students' Union.

UMCA's voice was also strengthened within the Students' Union when the President was allocated a permanent office in the Union which has helped to further facilitate co-operation between the President and the other officers. This means that the voice and the opinions of Aber's Welsh students have even more influence on the Union's daily decisions that affect students.

One of UMCA's main annual events is the Inter-college Dance. This year the dance was held on Saturday, 10 November. Over 350 Welsh students from other Welsh universities and beyond joined Aberystwyth's Welsh students for the weekend. UMCA also offers Welsh Lessons for Learners and during the last term 30 students attended. But, unlike previous years, this year's lessons are provided at different levels in order to enable the learners to reach the best possible level that they can achieve in the language.

As UMCA looks forward to this term, we can see that we have a busy and exciting period ahead of us. During this period decisions will be made concerning the development of a new hall of residence, and considering that a new Pantycelyn is part of these plans it will be a very important time for UMCA. We will need to make sure that the voice and the opinion of the Welsh students are heard in order to make sure that the new halls will have the appropriate facilities and space for them.

We also have some exciting plans in mind in conjunction with Aberystwyth's Welsh Societies and the University for St David's Day celebrations that will include a day full of celebrations of Welsh culture in the Students' Union. Also on the weekend of 1 March

many members of UMCA will travel to Carmarthen to compete in the Inter-college Eisteddfod that will be held at Trinity Saint David University.



Carys Ann Thomas - Welsh Affairs and UMCA President

Also, as I'm sure many will be aware, UMCA will be celebrating the 40th anniversary of the Union and as a result, during this term, forums and meetings will be held so that the members and friends of UMCA can contribute their ideas about the way we can celebrate the story of our Union during this period.

John Warren beats the brains

IBERS lecturer Dr John Warren has 'beaten the brains' on *Brain of Britain*, BBC Radio 4's radio general knowledge quiz.

The contestants on the show, broadcast on Monday 21 January, failed to correctly answer the questions that Dr Warren submitted, winning him a book token.

Would you have been able to answer Dr Warren's questions? The answers can be found on p.16.

1. Theobroma cacao is the Latin name for the cocoa tree - what does Theobroma mean?
2. Theobroma cacao is in the family Sterculiaceae named after the Roman god Sterculius. Of what was Sterculius god of?

NEWS

Human Resources Policies Standby Policy

The University has issued a new policy on recognising and rewarding employees who are placed on a formal standby system.

The purpose of the policy is to ensure that key University services can be adequately supported out of normal working hours, to deal with the failure of any critical systems, and to deal with any circumstances which could have a significant risk to health and safety or the environment, attract news and media attention, or pose a threat to continued operations or business.

The Standby Policy is available at: www.aber.ac.uk/en/hr/employment-information

Paternity Policy

The University has reviewed and revised its Paternity Policy in order to comply with changes in legislation.

The revised Paternity Policy is available at: www.aber.ac.uk/en/hr/employment-information

Springing into spring

Rather than the usual post-Christmas 'Walk the World' challenge for staff, this year we have an entirely new challenge.

We have thrown down the gauntlet (or should that be pedometer?) to Bangor University to see which University has the most active staff and can travel the furthest over 7 weeks.

'Springing into spring' will start at the end of February/beginning of March. We will need everyone to log your steps, cycles and swims. Even if you think you only do a small amount of exercise, every step will count towards our total and you'll be increasing your fitness ready for the summer.

For more information, visit: www.aber.ac.uk/en/hse



The University thanks long serving staff

The hard work and commitment of staff was celebrated at a special event on Tuesday 29 January 2013.

The evening, held at the University's conference centre, recognised 123 members of staff who have worked at the University for a combined total of 4071 years!

Vice-Chancellor, Professor April McMahon presented each member of staff who has worked for the University for over 25 years with a personal letter and University lovespoon to thank them for their hard work.

Professor McMahon said: "It is extremely important to recognise the individual and collective contribution of our staff and I am particularly pleased that we were able to celebrate the loyalty of a number of our staff to our University."

"When I arrived in Aberystwyth, it quickly became apparent that the loyalty of many of our students and staff to the institution is one of our greatest strengths. What makes Aberystwyth University really special is its people and I'm glad we have had the opportunity to say thank you."

It is proposed that this should become an annual event, and next year it will include all those who have worked for the University for between 20 and 25 years, and those who have reached their 30th, 40th and 50th anniversaries.

Currently, the longest serving member of University staff is Gill Parry, a member of the Design and Print team, an employee of the University for over 50 years.

Gill Parry began her career at the University in 1962, working in the Arts Faculty Typing Pool for Music and Romance Languages. She later moved over to work part time for the Music Department,



Gill Parry being presented with commemorative lovespoon to mark her long service. L to R: Marketing Manager, Dr Russell Davies; Vice Chancellor, Professor April McMahon, and Gill Parry

and part time in the Typesetting Room of the Registry. Then in the late 1980s she transferred to what is today known as Design and Print Service.

During her long career, Gill has worked under no fewer than seven Vice Chancellors. When asked how working at the University has changed during her 50 years, Gill said "Well it was all typewriters when I started which meant a lot of retyping if an article had to be amended! Though sometimes you could get away with a 'cut and paste' job!"

ABER PEOPLE

University Council appointments

There have been a number of appointments made to the University Council.

LAY MEMBERS



Mick Buckley has had a highly successful career in broadcast media, having been the President and CEO of CNBC EMEA (Europe, the Middle East and Africa), and UK Managing Director of Turner Broadcasting. An Aberystwyth graduate, he is a member of the University's Development Advisory Board, a fellow of the Royal Society of Arts and a board member of the International Telecommunication Union.



Ian MacEachern. Following a successful career in the Royal Air Force, Ian held the post of Head of Business Planning at HM Land Registry before developing a non-executive director portfolio. An Aberystwyth graduate, he is a Trustee of the Chartered Management Institute, a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts and a member of the University's Development Advisory Board.

ELECTED BY THE SENATE



Professor Neil Glasser joined the Institute of Geography and Earth Sciences in April 1999 as a Lecturer, and was appointed a Professor in 2006. Neil also serves as Dean of the Faculty of Science.



Professor Kate Bullen has been Head of the Department of Psychology since it was established in 2008. She was recently appointed Director of the new Institute of Human Sciences.



Carys Ann Thomas graduated from the Institute of Geography and Earth Sciences in 2012, and has since taken up the role of UMCA President within the AU Students' Union.



Shân Mumford has been appointed as International Student Advisor. Shân previously worked at the Department of Work and Pensions, the UK Border Agency, and with the Prince's Trust on a voluntary basis as Development Coach. Shân has family connections in the Ceredigion area and she has recently relocated to Aberystwyth from the Wirral.



Toby Schubert has been appointed as Graduate International Recruitment and Marketing Assistant, based in the Study Abroad Office. Toby graduated from Aberystwyth University in 2012 with an MSc in Remote Sensing and Geographic Information System (GIS). He also studied for BSc Geography at the University of Southampton.

Appointments

INTERNATIONAL OFFICE



Ruth Owen Lewis has been appointed as International Partnerships Manager. Ruth graduated from Warwickshire Agricultural College with a degree in Equine Studies and Business Management and holds a postgraduate certificate in Management and Marketing from AU. Ruth has previously held the posts of International Officer, and Job Link Manager at the University's Careers Service. Ruth also line manages the Study Abroad Office.



Marian Gray has been appointed to the position of International Officer. Marian graduated from Durham University with a degree in English Literature and enjoyed an interesting and varied career across many sectors before joining AU. She was previously a Careers Adviser in the AU Careers Service.



Catrin Lewis has joined the International Office as Compliance Officer, responsible for ensuring AU's compliance with the UK Border Agency's Immigration policies and legislation. Catrin is a graduate of Cardiff University where she completed an LLB and the Postgraduate Diploma in Legal Practice. She was previously the University's Contracts Officer in Commercialisation and Consultancy Services.

CLIMATE CHANGE CONSORTIUM OF WALES

Vince Jones recently joined the Climate Change Consortium of Wales as Media Outreach Officer. He is a professional photographer and film maker and was previously a communications lecturer. Vince's new role is to raise the profile of the work of Welsh climate scientists.



ABERYSTWYTH UNIVERSITY STUDENTS UNION

John Glasby has been appointed as Commercial Services Director for AU Students' Union. John is an economics graduate from Essex University, and was previously Head of Food & Beverage and Retail Divisions for Bluestone Resorts Ltd. John started in post on 22 October 2012.

ABER PEOPLE

Obituaries

Mr John Hefin (1941-2012)

John Hefin was a Teaching Fellow in Film at the Department of Theatre, Film and Television Studies from 1994 until 2002. A former Head of Drama at BBC Wales, John was responsible for establishing *Pobl y Cwm* and produced and directed a number of dramas including *The Life and Times of David Lloyd George* and the film *Grand Slam*. He received an MBE for his services to film in Wales in 2009, an award from Cyfrwng for his contribution to the media in Wales; and in October 2012 a BAFTA Cymru Special Award for Outstanding Contribution to Television Drama. John Hefin earned respect and admiration for his contribution to the nation as a talented director and producer, and inspirational lecturer.



Credit: BAFTA Cymru

Mrs Gillian Price (1949-2012)

Mrs Gillian Price graduated from AU in Computer Science in 1986. She joined the University as a member of staff in 1991, and worked in Information Services for many years, before transferring to Student Support Services where she supported disabled students from 2009-11. She subsequently returned to the Department of Computer Science until she became seriously ill in summer 2012.



All who worked with Gill were struck by her commitment to delivering the very best experience to our students. Never one to walk past inefficiency, she would work to improve process and practice with a smile, and wherever she worked benefited from her dedication and professionalism. She cared deeply about the University, its students and her colleagues and friends.

Aberystwyth 10k Charity Run

On Sunday 9 December, a team of 21 from the School of Management and Business ran in the Aberystwyth 10k Charity Run.

The team, consisting of a mix of staff and students along with an accompanying dog, won 'The Dolphin Shield' for the 1st Business Team to cross the line, breaking the six year stranglehold of the National Library of Wales.

The first to cross the line from the SMB team, completing the 10k in 38:51, was undergraduate student **Aston Nicholls**.



Photograph courtesy of the Cambrian News, www.cambrian-news.co.uk

Retirement

PLANNING OFFICE

Kath Stevens, who joined the University in 2004, retired at the end of October. Kath worked in the University's Planning Office for five years, and prior to that in the Department of English and Creative Writing. Friends and colleagues wish Kath a long and happy retirement.



Photography bug

A first year IBERS student has scooped a prestigious award for his amazing close-up photographs of insects.

Francis Prior, who is studying Zoology, specialises in micro-photography - capturing the minuscule features of insects in extraordinary detail.

Francis, 18, was named Young Photographer of the Year at the RSPCA awards in December 2012. The winning photograph was Francis' striking macro image of the eyes of a common household spider.

As part of his prize, Francis will spend three days on a specialist wildlife photography course. He also wins £400 worth of photography equipment.



The winning photograph, 'Through the Looking Glass'. Courtesy of Francis Prior.

COMMUNICATIONS and PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Have you got news for us?

If you have any personal success stories for AberNEWS, please send them to:

communications@aber.ac.uk

Aberystwyth Book Festival 2012

Aberystwyth Book Festival 2012, which took place on Monday 10 December, was a celebration of all things reading, writing, publishing and libraries.

Co-organised by Aberystwyth University's Information Services, students from the Department of Welsh and Ceredigion Library, the event included workshops, talks, creative writing sessions and a host of other book-related fun for the whole family.

The Book Festival's 'Twitter Tales' competition invited entries which took the form of an opening or closing line or a title, with a maximum of 140 characters. The first prize of a 7" Android Tablet PC was won by **Jack Clarke**, for the book title tweet: 'The Lamentation of Skye's Past'. The second place prize of a signed copy of 'How to be a Woman' by Caitlin Moran, was won by **David Smith** for the book title tweet: 'Sailing the Specific Ocean: The Untold Adventures of That Time When Things Happened'.

For the 'Flash Fiction 500' competition, entries of up to 500 words could take the form of an entire story, a synopsis or a chapter. **Christopher Jenkins** won a 7" Android Tablet PC for a piece entitled 'The Worm'. In second place, **Branwen Hughes** won a book token donated by the Welsh Books Council for 'Y Digrif yn y Digrif', and in third place, **Danny Clues** piece 'Why?' won him a one year subscription to *Planet* magazine, donated by the publisher.



Dr Simon Garrett (IBERS) with sons Bertie, aged 7, and Oli, aged 4½, enjoying the Book Festival.

Making history Movember fundraising



At just 19 years old, **Dave Webber**, a second year human geography student, has become the youngest first team manager of a senior football team in the history of British football. Dave has been made manager of Dolgellau Athletic, which plays in Spar Mid Wales Division One.

November may be the darkest month but chefs at Aberystwyth University's Residential and Hospitality team provided some light relief as they set about growing moustaches as part of Movember.

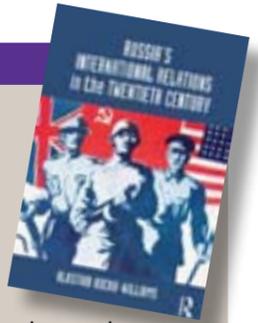
Pictured left to right are Yassine Benamor, Gareth Jones, Simon James, Gary Davies, Iestyn Jones, Martyna Chwaszczewska, Graham Sayer and Manuel Ferreira who raised over £125 for good causes.



Bookshelf

Russia's International Relations in the Twentieth Century

Russia has long been a major player in the international relations arena, but only by examining the whole century can Russian foreign policy be properly understood, and the key questions as to the impact of war, revolution, collapse, the emergence of the Cold War and Russia's post-Soviet development be addressed. This book by Alastair Kocho-Williams, senior lecturer in the Department of History and Welsh History, surveys the whole century and provides an overview and narrative, with analysis, that will serve as an introduction and resource for those seeking to understand the development of modern Russia in an international context.



Claiming the Streets: Processions and Urban Culture in South Wales c. 1830-1880

In Wales during the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries an enormous number of public processions were held by benefit societies. This dense network of organisations paraded the streets during festivals and bank holidays to demonstrate their respectability, orderliness, and sobriety. This volume by Paul O'Leary, from the Department of History and Welsh History, examines these processions, and provides an invaluable key to unlock the secrets of the urban culture during the period.



New book published

Tim Morgan, Porter in the AU Students Union, has published a book. *Oid - The First Bit*, published under pseudonym Rob Shengy, is available for the Amazon Kindle, and is the biography of a fictional character.



WHAT'S ON

Wales Festival of Architecture

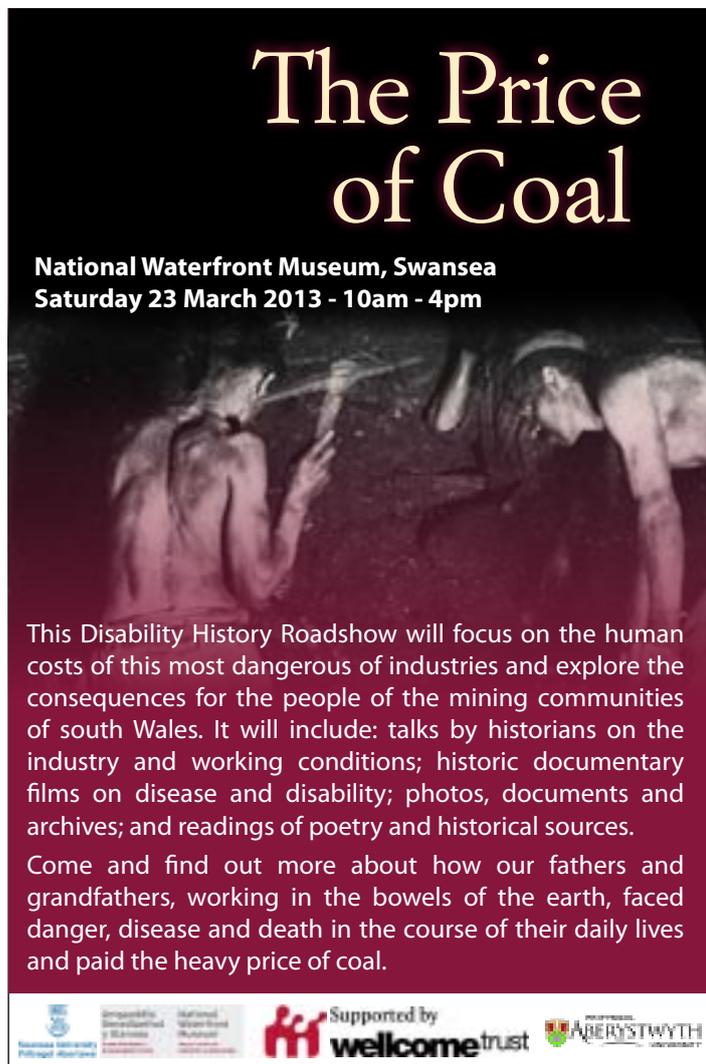
Saturday 23 March – Saturday 4 May
Aberystwyth Arts Centre

Aberystwyth Arts Centre is working with the Royal Society of Architects in Wales on a new festival which aims to stimulate discussion about architecture. The focus is to provide an opportunity to demonstrate and discuss the wide range of economic, social and environmental benefits that well-designed buildings can bring to a community. The Festival will provide a forum for architects, planners and other professionals and the public to share views and knowledge about the built environment.

The programme includes:

- talks and films ranging from a documentary of Charles Correa's work in deprived areas of India, to the 2010 film *How much does your building weigh, Mr Foster?*
- Discussions with a strong local dimension which look at the impact that development has on local distinctiveness
- Design workshops available for local secondary school pupils
- Linking in with the exhibition *Bathing Beauties* in Gallery 1, activities for families will include workshops to build your own beach hut!

Information will be posted on the Arts Centre's website as details are confirmed – if you would like to get involved please contact Alan Hewson aeh@aber.ac.uk



The Price of Coal

National Waterfront Museum, Swansea
Saturday 23 March 2013 - 10am - 4pm

This Disability History Roadshow will focus on the human costs of this most dangerous of industries and explore the consequences for the people of the mining communities of south Wales. It will include: talks by historians on the industry and working conditions; historic documentary films on disease and disability; photos, documents and archives; and readings of poetry and historical sources.

Come and find out more about how our fathers and grandfathers, working in the bowels of the earth, faced danger, disease and death in the course of their daily lives and paid the heavy price of coal.

Supported by **welcomes trust** and **ABERYSTWYTH**

Annie Williams: watercolours & prints

Monday 18 February – Thursday 28 March
School of Art Gallery

Annie Williams RWS RE was born in London in 1942 but grew up in Wales. She trained and worked as a nurse before achieving her diploma in Fine Art from City and Guilds of London Art School in the late 1960s. She is a Member of the Royal Watercolour Society and a senior fellow of the Royal Society of Painter-Printmakers. In 2009 she won the Turner Watercolour Award.



Annie Williams, *After a Visit to the Tate*

Most of her recent work employs still-life subject matter, usually arrangements of ceramics, against backgrounds constructed from textiles, newspapers and unfinished paintings. In this way she sets the familiar against the abstract in playful arrangements of shape, pattern and colour.

Côr Cymru 2013

S4C's exciting choral competition will once again be filmed at Aberystwyth Arts Centre, as choirs from across the country compete for the title of best choir in Wales.

The semi-finals take place from 15 – 17 February, with categories for Youth Choirs, Female Choirs, Male Choirs, Children's Choirs and Mixed Choirs.

Côr Aelwyd Pantycelyn (Pantycelyn Hall Choir) is one of the Youth Choirs to have reached the semi-finals.

The winners of each of the categories go forward to the Live Final on Sunday 14 April. Tickets to be in the audience can be obtained by calling 029 2022 3456 or emailing corcymru@rondomedia.co.uk and priority for the final will be given to people who booked tickets for the Semi-Final rounds.



Credit: S4C