

Anrhydeddus Gymdeithas
Y Cymmrodorion

Sefydlwyd 1751



The Honourable Society
Of Cymmrodorion

Founded 1751

NODDWR/PATRON: EI UCHELDER BRENHINOL TYWYSOG CYMRU/ HRH THE PRINCE OF WALES

**ANNUAL REPORT OF THE COUNCIL FOR 2014
PRESENTED TO THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
ON 12 MAY 2015**

Ten lectures were held during the course of the calendar year 2014. These included the annual June Gruffydd Memorial lecture held jointly with the Montgomeryshire Society and the annual lecture in Welsh supported by the Welsh Government. All lectures took place in London apart from the one delivered at the National Eisteddfod held in Llanelli.

Tuesday 14 January 2014

Llewellyn Wyn Griffith and the Great War – one hundred years on,

Lt General Jonathan Riley

In the chair: Geraint Evans

Wednesday 5 February 2014 (jointly with the Montgomeryshire Society)

Re-thinking 13th Century Powys

Dr David Stephenson

In the chair: Michael Gibbon QC

Tuesday 11 March 2014

The Business of Empire: Welsh Nabobs and the Making of Money in the British Empire c 1760-1830

Professor Huw Bowen

In the chair: Jenkin Thomas

Tuesday 15 April 2014

Dylan Marlais Thomas: What's in a middle name?

Professor M Wynn Thomas

In the chair: Professor Stuart Cole CBE

Tuesday 13 May 2014 (in association with Wales in London)

Wales's First Radical – the Life of Dr William Price

Dean Powell

In the chair: Robert John

Tuesday 4 June 2014 (supported by the Welsh Government)

TH Parry-Williams a Helynt y Gadair Gymraeg yn Aberystwyth yn 1919-20

Bleddyn Owen Huws

In the chair: Dr Adrian Morgan

Thursday 7 August 2014 at the National Eisteddfod

Cymry Cock Lane a'u Cenedwri

Huw Edwards

In the chair: Professor Prys Morgan

Tuesday 23 September 2014

A Picture of the Past and a Mirror of the Present? Creating a National History Museum at St Fagans

Dr Beth Thomas and Nia Williams

In the chair: Robert John

Wednesday 22 October 2014

Constitutional Change: the Work of the Commission on Devolution in Wales

Professor Noel Lloyd CBE

In the chair: Professor Stuart Cole CBE

Tuesday 18 November 2014

1922: A Year in the Remarkable Life of Lady Rhondda

Angela V John

In the chair: Gwenda Sippings

The Council wishes to thank both those who accepted its invitation to deliver lectures, - particularly Wynn Thomas who stepped in at very short notice - and those who chaired the meetings. The quality of these contributions to the programme has been acknowledged while attendance has been good - even in February 2014 when a large number defied the industrial action on London Underground- on all occasions. The Council would wish to thank the staff of the Medical Society of London in whose premises all but one of its London lectures were held and those of the Welsh Government Office in Victoria Street which provided the venue for the annual lecture in Welsh. It is also grateful for assistance provided at the National Eisteddfod in Llanelli and would wish to thank all those members of the Society who have represented the Society on the various public bodies in Wales during 2014.

The 2014 edition of the *Transactions* was published and a copy sent to each of the individuals and institutions in the United Kingdom and overseas listed on the database. The Council wishes to thank all the contributors and to put on record its appreciation of the work undertaken by the Honorary Editor. While acknowledging, once again, the difficulty sometimes experienced of translating lectures with a significant pictorial element into written articles, the Council has agreed there should be regular liaison between those devising the programme and the Honorary Editor to ensure a reasonable balance is achieved in future editions, between material emanating from the lecture programme and commissioned articles.

In acknowledging that as all copies of the *Transactions* published since 2009 are being digitised and that the National Library of Wales would have in store all copies published before 2005, Council accepted that it would be necessary to store only hard copies covering the period 2005 to 2009 until the process of digitisation had been completed. It has been accepted that if open access were to be allowed to current editions there might be little incentive to obtain hard copies through membership of the Society and that this might have a negative impact on recruitment, Council has, therefore, agreed that the entire volume should be open to access in two years' time, subject to a review of the whole model of availability and to any restrictions imposed by the right of individual authors to exercise copyright and ownership.

Following the decision in 2013 to respond positively to the proposal made by the University of Wales' Centre for Advanced Welsh and Celtic Studies (CAWCS) and the National Library of Wales (NLW) that as part of a long-term project Professor Dafydd Johnston and Dr Aled Gruffydd Jones should become joint editors of the Dictionary of Welsh Biography with NLW continuing to host the Welsh Biography Online website and with CAWCS staff being responsible for content and editorial standards, the Council has continued discussions on how best it might assist. It has re-affirmed its wish to lend its name to the project and to retain ownership and has made an initial contribution of £5,000 to the running costs for one year together with an indication that it might provide some assistance in the following two years. It has, however, been emphasised that any future involvement will be dependent on the finances of the Society.

For the second consecutive year the Society was pleased to be able to award its Medal. At a well-attended ceremony on 15 February held in Y Drwm in Aberystwyth and arranged in cooperation with the National Library of Wales, Professor R Geraint Gruffydd was presented with the medal by Professor Dafydd Johnston, the current director of the Centre for Advanced Welsh and Celtic Studies. A former holder of the Chair of Welsh language and literature at Aberystwyth, a previous Librarian of the National Library and later the Director of the Centre for Advanced Welsh and Celtic Studies, Professor Gruffydd was awarded the medal in recognition of his notable contribution to learning and scholarship and to Wales.

Having received a list of memorials, testimonial funds and commemoration papers for which the Society has a responsibility, Council agreed that efforts should be made to attach addresses to the list, possibly through the National Library of Wales, and that a contribution should be made towards the renovation of the memorial to Goronwy Owen, strongly

associated with the roots of the Society, in St Mary's, Northolt where he was a curate in the eighteenth century. The Council also agreed to contribute to the costs of an event at Gray's Inn in June to launch a publication of essays and reminiscences celebrating the life of the late Lord Hooson, a former Vice-President of the Society.

Cordial relations have been maintained with other organisations in London, notably with Wales in London and with the London Welsh Centre. In the case of the latter the President was pleased to accept an invitation to open the London Welsh Literary Festival in October with a half hour lecture, while it has been agreed that with effect from 1 August 2014 the official address of the Society should be 157-163 Gray's Inn Road, London WC1X 8UE, thus removing the need to access a PO Box facility, currently costing £250 per annum. The Centre has also allowed the Society to store some of its archive documents on the premises and this in turn has lessened the Society's need to retain a dedicated storage space in commercial premises. Council was also invited to comment on the plans to re-develop the Centre and has agreed to endorse and publicise them at an appropriate stage.

Following an earlier decision to devote resources to funding a project to enquire into the present state and possible improvement of Welsh education, the author commissioned to write a report, Professor Gareth Rees of the Wales Institute of Social and Economic Research, Data and Methods (WISERD) of Cardiff University, has agreed to make a presentation to the Society in May 2015 and to contribute an article to a future edition of the *Transactions*.

In line with its commitment to improve communications and to highlight to a wider public the activities of the Society, Council agreed early in the year to commission a new website. With the work almost complete it is clear that the finished product will provide a fresher more modern outlook with a greater capacity to update material and, principally through the facility for GoCardless direct debit payment, speed up the process for the payment of subscriptions and thereby serve to increase membership. With some work still being necessary on the content and editorial aspect of the site and on raising awareness of the changes, Council has agreed to explore the use of flyers, cards and bookmarks for advertising purposes and to look in greater detail at the possibilities of advertising on Facebook and in the press.

As will be clear from the report of the Honorary Treasurer, an increase in the surplus was achieved principally because a significant gift had been received and two substantial bills relating to expenditure in 2014 had not yet been received during the accounting period. Subject to 'abnormal' items, the accounts were in line with initial forecasting and took into account a grant made towards the cost of the DWB: the investment in the new website; and the costs of repair to the memorial to Goronwy Owen in Northolt. The Council is satisfied that it lives well within its means on a year-to-year basis, with income being comfortably in excess of expenditure, and that there is no immediate case for an increase in the level of subscriptions.

The Council was saddened to learn of the death in September of Douglas Brooks, a member of the Society for over thirty years and of Council for twenty. He served with distinction as Chair of the Medal Committee and as the Society's representative on the Campaign for the Protection of Rural Wales.

It would also wish to place on record its appreciation of Brynley Roberts, who has decided not to seek re-election to the Council, for the considerable contribution he has made to the Society over many years, notably in his capacity as the Editor of the Dictionary of Welsh Biography

At the Annual General Meeting in 2014 Professor Prys Morgan was re-elected President and all current Vice-Presidents were re-elected.

The following Council members were elected for a period of three years: Professor Thomas Charles Edwards, Professor Helen Fulton, Professor John Elliott, Gwenda Sippings, Professor Gruffydd Aled Williams and Huw Wynne-Griffith.

Peter Jeffreys
Honorary Secretary
April 2015