

Dame Tanni at NLW

Green Dragon

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Kyffin's Last Oil Painting

Library Seals Affection

Meet Anwen Pierce

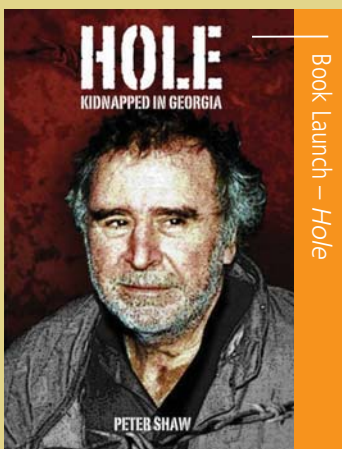


Torpedo filming their series about the Library

Book Launch

There can be few worse fates than being held captive in a foreign land. That was the unfortunate experience of Peter Shaw, the Cardiff banker who was kidnapped in the Caucasian republic of Georgia in 2002.

Hole, a story of the terrible ordeal, is published by Accent Press and was launched at The National Library on 10 November before an eager audience. The event was one of many book launches held at the Library this year.



Book launch – *Hole*

A Century – Not Out!

Are you ready to celebrate The National Library's centenary? Many events have already been organised and more will follow.

Among the activities held early in the year is the lecture on Friday evening, **26 January**. The Librarian, Andrew Green, will deliver the lecture 'National Libraries and Archives of the Future' in the Drwm. **The following day** the Library will continue its celebrations with an open day in the company of the poet, Gwyneth Lewis, who will conduct a workshop for children aged between eight and ten. There will also be an opportunity to hear a reading of her two new poems of greeting to the Library, as well as her other compositions and works by various poets.

During **February** a new television series about the Library presented by Trevor Fishlock will be broadcast on BBC Wales. This will be an unique opportunity to see some of the Library's rarest treasures and to learn a little about their history and origin.

The end of **March** sees the opening of the centenary's principal exhibition **Yn Y Lle Hwn / In This Place.**

This will be the most important exhibition ever to be prepared by The Library and will trace the history of Wales through the Library's collections. It will be possible to see iconic Welsh items ranging from the Black Book of Carmarthen and the White Book of Rhydderch to pictures by JMW Turner, Kyffin Williams and David Jones.

Thursday **1 March** is St David's Day and also World Book Day 2007. Dr Rhidian Griffiths will deliver a lecture about the Library and its history, 'Dinas a osodir ar fryn' (A city built on a hill) at 5.00pm the University of Wales Centre for Advanced Welsh and Celtic Studies, which is the building next to the Library.

The original Royal Charter was presented to the Library on **19 March 1907** and to commemorate this important day The Library will send greetings in the form of Gwyneth Lewis's centenary poems to libraries across the world.

Many more activities have been organised throughout the year to celebrate this milestone. Visit our website for further details: **www.llgc.org.uk/100**



Tanni signs the Visitors Book with the Librarian



The National Library is the ideal place for researchers

Dame Tanni at NLW

The Olympic athlete Dame Tanni Grey-Thompson paid her first ever visit to the Library in October as the presenter of a forthcoming television series. The programme, by Green Bay productions of Cardiff, chronicles the life and times of women in Wales and will be broadcast by the BBC in the near future.

Green Dragon

The National Library of Wales has the responsibility of safeguarding our intellectual life but is now also taking seriously its duty to safeguard the environment.

Since the beginning of 2006 the Library has undertaken to implement the Welsh Assembly Government's Green Dragon scheme for improving the environment by reducing resources and energy use.

In October the Library was awarded Grade Two of the Green Dragon Award for its commitment to saving energy.

'Everyone has a part to play in conserving energy and creating a more environmentally friendly workplace. The Library is no exception and we intend to play our part,' said Mark Mainwaring, Director of Corporate Affairs.

Listening and Responding

The Library is grateful to over 1,600 readers and visitors who have taken the trouble to complete and return our questionnaire since it was launched in its present format in April 2003.

'The results were generally very positive and demonstrate a high degree of satisfaction with the services provided. We will continue to conduct these surveys and endeavour to improve our services on the basis of the feedback received,' said Richard E. Huws, Head of Reader Services. Responses to some of the points most frequently raised were:

Parking/Driveway The Library has taken measures to address its parking problem with the opening of an extension to the main car park in November 2005, providing 60 additional spaces. The driveway was re-surfaced in December 2005, and traffic-calming measures were introduced at the same time.

Admission of Schoolchildren Procedures have been introduced to allow young children to accompany adults into the Reading Rooms. The minimum age for obtaining a reader's ticket has also been reduced from 18 years to 16 years.

Assistance to Readers As a result of several requests for one-to-one assistance with family history research and use of the catalogues, the Library introduced weekly 'reader surgeries' as a pilot project for three months at the beginning of 2006. These were very well received and are now offered to new and existing readers every Wednesday.

Confusing catalogues Many have commented that the present online catalogues are complex and confusing. The Library is currently implementing its new information management system which includes a single integrated catalogue searching across all print-based, archive and graphic formats. The first phase should come into operation at the end of January 2007.

Self-copiers for microforms This much-sought facility was introduced in the new South Reading Room and has been well received. Consideration is now being given to the installation of a second machine.

Printing Facilities It is envisaged that facilities to print from the Library's catalogues and electronic resources will be introduced during the forthcoming year.

Digital Cameras Frequent requests are made to allow digital photography in our Reading Rooms. This is a complex issue, owing to copyright restrictions on the wide range of documents the Library holds, and the Library is currently undertaking a wide-ranging review to ascertain how comparable institutions are responding to similar demands.

Laptop/Wireless facilities The number of power laptop points in the North Reading Room has been substantially increased. Finance has also been allocated to refurbish the Room in 2007-08, when it is hoped that wireless access to both the North and South Reading Rooms can also be introduced.



Art nouveau building in Riga. Photo by Sara Branch



Minister Alun Pugh unveils Kyffin's last oil painting

For Wales, see Latvia

The Library's relationship with the Baltic states has taken another step forward with an exciting new photographic exhibition.

Building on the success of a number of staff exchanges that have taken place between the National Libraries of Wales and Latvia, *Clic: Visualising Wales* is the first formal collaborative project to be developed between the two libraries, and will be launched in Riga on 5 April 2007.

The project comprises of an exhibition of photographs of Wales and the Welsh people taken by four members

of the Library's staff – Sara Branch, Mark Davey, Simon Evans and Gareth Lloyd Hughes. The photographs will be exhibited in Latvia and Wales with accompanying Welsh, English and Latvian texts.



Mural of Latvian town crests
Photo by Sara Branch

Kyffin's Last Oil Painting

'Sunset over Anglesey', was the last oil painting completed by Wales's best known artist of the 20th century, Kyffin Williams, before his death on 1 September.

Sir Kyffin is reported to have insisted on finishing this one last work, remarking, 'I have this painting to do.'

'Sunset over Anglesey' is only the most recent of some 300 paintings and sketches made by Kyffin Williams which are in the National Library of Wales's collection. Following his death, the Library received between 600 and 700 items through his bequest.

Library Seals Affection

Born in Newport, Gwent, brought up in the Sinai desert and England, national service in Germany and the first post-War Anglican priest in Warsaw: the Rev Dr David H Williams has led a varied life.



Siôn Jobbins of Dalen talks to David H Williams

Such is David Williams's affection for the Library that he still has his first reader's ticket which was issued in 1955. He is also working on a book about his great passion – the seals on documents at the National Library.

'Seals are fascinating – they're a reflection of Welsh history. The seals in the National Library range from the 12th century to the 21st and include the seals of Llywelyn the Great and most of the English monarchs as well as early railway and canal companies. They reflect the change in politics and even dress over the centuries,' said David, whose lifetime aim, he admits, is to list all the Library's seals.

David Williams is one of those rare and special readers whom the National Library is so lucky to have. Not only does he research the Library's collection for his own delight and interest but his countless hours of research have fed into the Library's own cataloguing. Dr Williams has catalogued the Penrice and Margam Charters and is now working on the Badminton collection. His interest in seals developed from his research into the Cistercian Order in Wales.



David inspects one of the Library's seals

And his favourite seals of the countless thousands he's catalogued?

'It's so difficult to choose, but I think it would have to be a 17th century bishop's seal displaying the shipwreck of St Paul in Malta.'

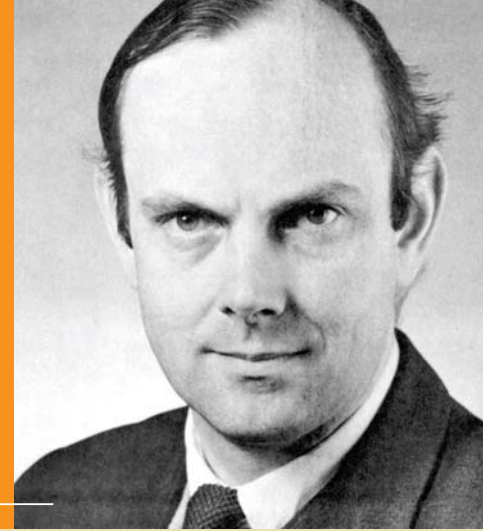


Anwen Pierce, Head of Enquiries

Library Fact

Employees: during the 1950s The National Library of Wales employed some 60 members of staff. Today, it employs 296 people. The range of occupations in the Library has also increased considerably and now includes film restorers, digitisers and web archivists.

Nicholas Edwards



Meet the staff – Anwen Pierce

1. What's your job title... and what does it mean? I'm Head of Enquiries at the Library. I'm responsible for checking daily which enquiries have arrived at the Library, either by post, email or fax. The vast majority come by email these days. I disseminate the enquiries among my team and make sure they're answered effectively and by the deadline. I'm lucky to have a good team who are not shy of work!

2. What's the most common enquiry? Family history is the most popular subject at the moment; searching your family tree has become very popular and trendy because of programmes such as the BBC's 'Who do you think you are'. Enquirers ask for copies of old wills, information from the Census and old parish registers and copies of tithe maps. Television companies and publishers also keep us busy enquiring for

material from our collections for their programmes and publications.

3. Do you receive any unusual enquiries? Some unusual enquiries do arrive here from time to time. Two enquiries stay in the mind. One gentleman asked us over the phone if we could suggest a suitable name for his dog and a lady asked for the recipe for bara brith! Several enquirers ask us to prove that they're related to Owain Glyndŵr or to the royal family. Other more common questions are if the Library only stocks Welsh language books and if people need to be able to speak Welsh to visit us (the answer to both is 'no').

4. How many enquiries do you receive annually? We receive enquiries from all over the world – they total about 8,000 every year and that number continues to rise.

5. What is your favourite kind of book? It depends on my mood! I'm fond of fiction in either Welsh or English. It's very rarely that I read factual books or biographies.

Political Archive Lecture

Possibly one of the the most important politicians in Wales during the 1980s, the Conservative Member of Parliament, Nicholas Edwards, was the guest speaker at the 2006 Welsh Political Archive lecture on 3 November.

Nicholas Edwards, now Lord Crickhowell, was Secretary for State for Wales from 1979 to 1987. During his lecture, *The Conservative Party in Wales 1888 – 1998* he chronicled some of his party's contributions to Welsh economic and cultural life in the 20th century.

Next year's speaker at the Welsh Political Archive lecture will be David Jenkins, former General Secretary of TUC Wales.

The Welsh Political Archive was set up in 1983 to co-ordinate the collection of documentary evidence of all kinds about politics in Wales. As 2007 is an election year for the National Assembly for Wales, the Archive will be very busy collecting leaflets, correspondence and literature from all candidates.

Call in!

The National Library welcomes new readers and visitors – why not call in?

Library Opening Hours:

- 9.30am – 6.00 Monday to Friday
- 9.30am – 5.00pm Saturday
- 10.00am – 4.00pm on selected public holidays

Pen Dinas restaurant and the Library Shop are open to all readers and visitors. To arrange group visits, phone Angharad Jones on 01970 632801 or e-mail her on amj@llgc.org.uk

For further information about the Library and its activities:

Telephone: 01970 632800
E-mail: holi@llgc.org.uk
Website: www.llgc.org.uk

Friends of Film

Everyone is preparing for the Library's centenary celebrations in 2007.

To mark this important event a special campaign was launched to raise money towards an item for the Library as a gift from the Friends of The National Library of Wales. It was agreed that the money should be contributed towards the making of a short film to be used as an introduction for readers and visitors to the Library.

The response to this campaign has been staggering and at present the fund is approaching £8,500. If readers of Dalen would like to contribute to this resource that will be used within the Library and on tour to promote its wealth of collections, please contact the Friends Co-ordinator, Rhain Williams.

New members are always welcome, so if you are eager to join and participate in Friends events, please contact with Rhain Williams, on rnj@llgc.org.uk or 01970 632585.