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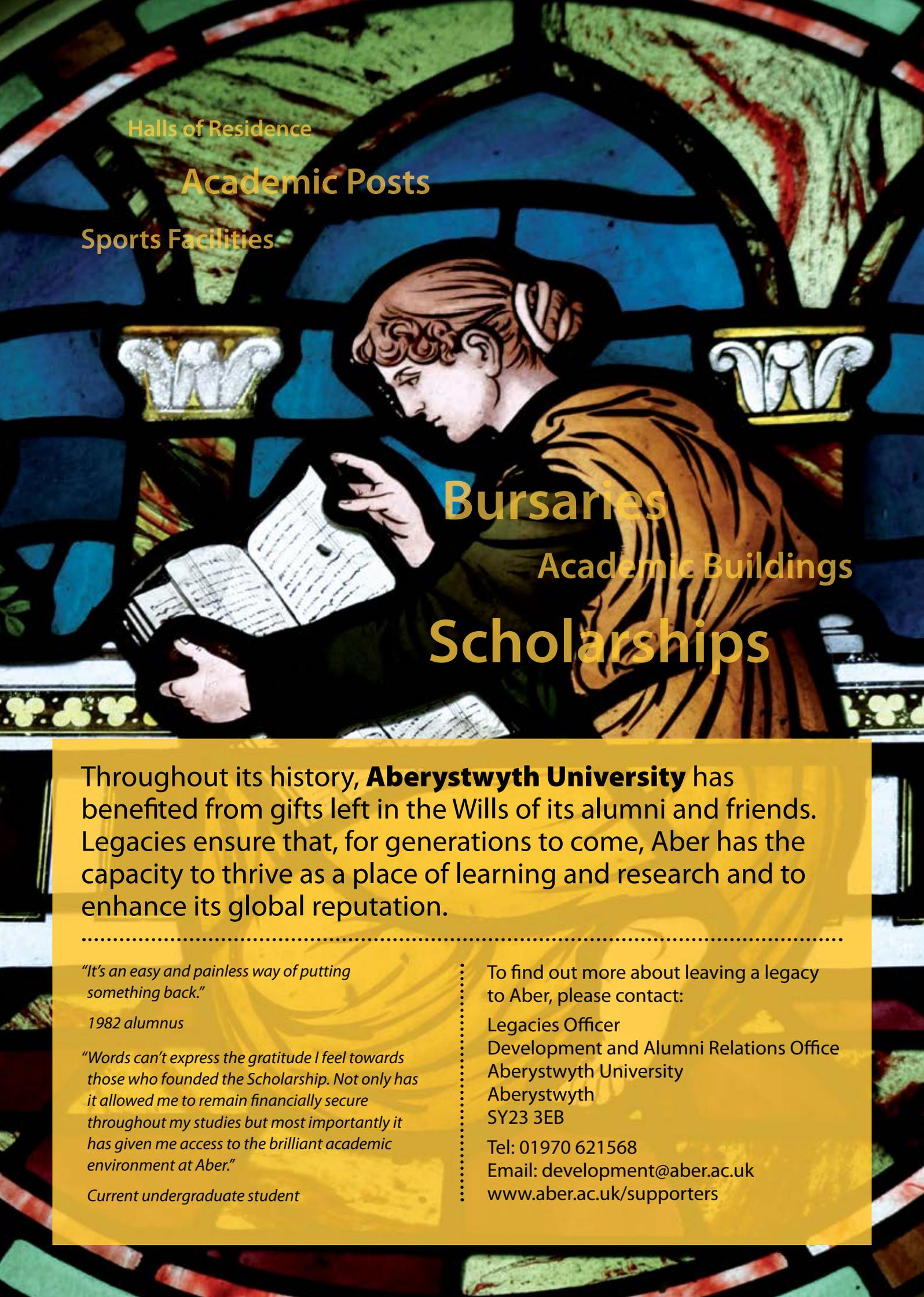
**Global Renaissance
Woman**

Internet Freedom

T H Parry Williams

Ethical Landscape

Fifty Shades of Green



Halls of Residence

Academic Posts

Sports Facilities

Bursaries

Academic Buildings

Scholarships

Throughout its history, **Aberystwyth University** has benefited from gifts left in the Wills of its alumni and friends. Legacies ensure that, for generations to come, Aber has the capacity to thrive as a place of learning and research and to enhance its global reputation.

.....
"It's an easy and painless way of putting something back."

1982 alumnus

"Words can't express the gratitude I feel towards those who founded the Scholarship. Not only has it allowed me to remain financially secure throughout my studies but most importantly it has given me access to the brilliant academic environment at Aber."

Current undergraduate student

.....
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CONTENTS

FEATURES

10



GLOBAL RENAISSANCE WOMAN

Maya Angelou

14



INTERNET FREEDOM

What are we fighting for?

18



FIST BUMPS

A study on disease transmission goes viral

20



UNDERGRADUATE TO PROFESSOR IN A DAY

T H Parry-Williams and the Chair of Welsh

28



FIFTY SHADES OF GREEN

Why we eat the things we do

COLUMNS

4.....	Vice-Chancellor
23.....	My Aber: Penglais Woods
28.....	Interview: An Ethical Landscape
38.....	Old Students' Association
45.....	Obituaries
49.....	Home from Home
50.....	Kicking the Bar

NEWS

6.....	Developments in Development and Alumni Relations
13.....	Aberystwyth Space Mission
22.....	Aber abroad
24.....	Diolch: Thank you
34.....	Graduation and Fellows 2014
40.....	Appointments and Achievements
43.....	Bookshelf

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Keep up to date with regular alumni news from Aberystwyth University by updating your current email address on www.aber.ac.uk/alumni/update, following us on Twitter or joining Aber Connect or our groups on Facebook and LinkedIn. See www.aber.ac.uk/alumni for links.



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CAUSE FOR CELEBRATION

Here in Aber, we are celebrating a number of important announcements and events from the end of 2014.

First, you may have read the excellent news that our proposed Aberystwyth Innovation and Enterprise Campus is the first flagship project for the next tranche of European funding to Wales, receiving £20m to add to the £12m already pledged by the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council. Taking into account our own contribution, this will mean an investment of £40m at our Gogerddan campus, bringing much-needed jobs and growth to West Wales, and a big boost to the University's links with businesses. Local spin-outs, UK wide operations, and major multi-nationals all have research and development needs, and can benefit from the expertise, equipment and resolute seeking after solutions to research questions which are to be found in a research-led university like Aberystwyth.

December also brought the outcome of the Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2014. The REF (previously the RAE, much the same sport but played under slightly different rules) takes place around every 6 years, with all UK universities submitting the work of their researchers to be evaluated by specialist panels. It's a massive enterprise and a very high stakes game, which is especially important to us given the trend towards concentration of research funding in a select few, often very big, players. It's important to take into account the overall quality of research and its impact (the difference it actually makes); but also the proportion of eligible researchers who were submitted. All this together measures 'research power', and is vital in my view because some universities submitted just a small number of research stars, whereas a very substantial 76% of our eligible staff have contributed to our good results. Based on that research power calculation, I'm proud to say that Aber has conclusively broken into the UK top 50 for REF 2014, with a *Times Higher Education* ranking of 46 – and a massive 95% of our research falls into the top three categories, as internationally recognised or better, compared with 85% in 2008. There are particularly strong performances by International Politics, Geography and Agriculture, all of which can lay claim to top 10 positions in the UK – with a special mention for Computer Science, number 11 in the UK on that research power table. All this shows the real quality of our researchers; and current and future students can be confident they are being taught by colleagues who are doing that important research first-hand, not just reporting on other people's work.

So all in all, a great way to end 2014, and we celebrated at a superb event in the Old College, launching our Honorary Fellow Mary Lloyd Jones's twin exhibitions held in the Old College Quad and the Arts Centre, in her 80th birthday year.

You can read elsewhere in PROM about the new injection of vitality brought by our Director of DARO, Louise Jagger. I'm delighted to be working alongside Louise as we try to connect better with alumni, and develop a new focus on giving, as we did through our partnership with the Community Foundation in Wales for Philanthropy Week. I'm also part of a Universities UK group of Vice-Chancellor 'champions' of philanthropy, and am thoroughly enjoying working with Steve Lawrence, the current OSA President, and other OSA colleagues. It was a privilege to travel with Steve and Louise to Malaysia in November, where we have such a strong alumni presence, and we're hoping to repeat the experience in May in the US. At a time when we are working towards opening our first Aberystwyth University branch campus in Mauritius, contemplating graduation ceremonies in Malaysia, and have just opened offices in Shanghai and Dubai, you should expect a renewed focus on the international agenda in future PROMs and at alumni events – at which I look forward to meeting you or seeing you again, wherever in the world they might be held.



**Professor April McMahon,
Vice-Chancellor**



THEN AND NOW;

REFLECTIONS ON 25 YEARS OF DEVELOPMENT AND ALUMNI RELATIONS AT ABER

Steve Lawrence, Old Students' Association (OSA) President and Aber's first Director of External Affairs and Louise Jagger, the current Director of Development and Alumni Relations (DARO) share their reflections the importance of alumni to Aber's future.



THE HISTORY

Steve:

It is incredible to think that it was 24 years ago when I started a new job at Aberystwyth. It is even more startling, to look at my comparatively young face staring out from the very first edition of **PROM**, in the autumn of 1991!

In my introduction to that first edition I said:

'UCW's new Development Office opened its doors on 1 October 1990 with a wide-ranging brief to promote the University and to help address the new financial climate and challenges facing higher education into the twenty first century. In part this means broadcasting the good news about Aber's distinguished academic achievements and exciting on-going research programmes but with the specific goal of encouraging inward, independent investment... It also means identifying the opportunities available to the Institution during the coming decade as UCW looks forward to a significant expansion in student numbers – importantly, we want to create a climate where College alumni and friends will want to take a positive stake in the future of their *alma mater*'.

In many ways, these sentiments are as relevant today as they were then and, as this year's President of the OSA, I am enormously proud of the outstanding contribution the

Association has made, since its founding in 1892, to the life of the 'College'.

Louise:

I too am proud to be an Aber alumna, and to work with the OSA and all our supporters to help further the ambitions of the University to give our students the best possible experience here and in the future as alumni.

There is a unique bond between Aber alumni and a distinguishing quality to the Aber alumni experience. I can't say it any better than a 1980s OSA Vice-President, Siobhan White: 'I adored it with an intensity and passion that will never leave my soul'. (From the OSA's centenary publication of 1992).

I am very conscious that this deep-rooted affection for the University dates back to the crucial support from ordinary Welsh families who put pennies in chapel collection plates because they wanted there to be a university in Wales and for Wales. Larger gifts played their part too, one of the most significant being the 87 acres of Penglais Farm bought and donated to the College by alumnus Joseph Davies Bryan in 1929.

The OSA continues to play a major role in University life and I have enjoyed meeting many members. **PROM** gives me

an opportunity to keep in touch with those I haven't met, and invite feedback on our plans and activities.

Our alumni give generously of their knowledge, influence and networks, and this is incredibly important as we move into a competitive market for students and funds in the Higher Education sector.

GLOBAL REACH

Steve:

Aber has been fortunate in having students from around the world almost since its inception, making us more cosmopolitan and culturally richer. In turn, generations of international students have recognised Aberystwyth as a safe and welcoming scholarly centre of excellence; it is not the least of Aber's assets that staff and local residents enjoy a marvellous reputation for extending a warm reception to people from other lands.

Within the OSA we have been especially lucky to have maintained strong ties with alumni in many countries. Perhaps the exemplar of this is Malaysia – the OSA branch in Kuala Lumpur is large, energetic, creative, and committed to passing on the message that Aberystwyth is a wonderful place to study.

Louise

It is wonderful that we were both in Malaysia in November to celebrate the conferment of an Honorary Fellowship to alumnus HRH Tuanku Muhriz and attend a dinner in his honour organised by the Malaysian Alumni Association. *(More about this on page 22)*

The diversity of our alumni is a huge strength and a cause for celebration. I know that you did much to develop our international alumni relations and this remains a high priority for DARO today. In 2014 we have held alumni events in the USA, China, Ireland, Mauritius, Canada, Taiwan and Brunei. I am also very grateful to the alumni who volunteer as country representatives to help us keep in touch with over 10,000 alumni in 90 countries and support Aber staff on international visits.

PHILANTHROPY

Steve:

The OSA has played a significant part in fundraising over the past 100 years. The first major effort began in 1918 when the Association started to raise money to celebrate the Jubilee of the College in 1922. Over £5,000 was raised (a huge sum in those days) and in September 1921 the OSA announced that, as a joint memorial to the founders of the College and to students who fell during the First World War, it had decided to buy the Assembly Rooms for use as a students' union.

More campaigns followed and significant sums were donated to assist in the preparation of the Penglais Campus and the construction of the first Sports Hall on the new site. More recently, the OSA was able to pay for a new language laboratory, and local branches have supported student scholarships over many years. Add to this the individual benefaction of OSA members (including a number of substantial bequests) then you can see that the Association has every reason to be proud of its support of Aber.

Louise:

As a charity, the University of course has a moral purpose and legal obligation to raise funds for the benefit of current and future students and for the wider community. I am conscious of the huge debt we owe our donors and constantly delighted at the level of support shown by our 50,000 alumni and friends though an increasing range of fundraising activities, including our Annual Fund which raises over £100,000 each year for scholarships, welfare and special projects. It was especially rewarding this year to have our long history of philanthropic support recognised by the Community Foundation in Wales, an influential body promoting and growing philanthropy across Wales.

Thanks to the generosity of our alumni and supporters, the University has continued to lead initiatives to widen access and participation in higher education in Wales, building on its history as one of the first institutions to admit female students. Philanthropic support has provided Aber with one of the best scholarship and bursary programmes in the UK, which has recently grown significantly thanks to two generous bequests.

FUTURE NEEDS

Steve:

Many of us were fortuitous in the timing of our higher education, when grants were readily available. Future Aberystwyth students deserve to have the best opportunities possible and to enjoy the same sense of community and collegiality that their predecessors benefitted from.

When current students graduate they will be welcomed most warmly into the OSA. In turn, the Association will continue to support the University in the same enthusiastic and productive way it has done since 1892, and, in doing so, it will help to ensure that the student experience today is as outstanding as it has been in the past!

Louise:

In working closely with colleagues and alumni in Wales, the UK and around the world, I am very aware that there is no divide between alumni and the University in terms of ambition, passion and determination to drive Aber on.

This has helped us to shape our initial thinking on the largest philanthropic campaign we will have undertaken since our early days, namely development of Old College as an international educational and cultural resource with socio-economic significance to the wider community.

We will also be launching a number of volunteering and fundraising initiatives in 2015 and looking ahead to celebrating 100 years of Geography at Aber in 2017 and the centenary of the first department of International Politics in the world in 2019.

I am keen to hear the views of alumni on all aspects of the University's work and to learn how we can build on our activities. It has never been easier to be in touch, whether you are an avid user of social media or you prefer to meet us in Aber, or when we are in Cardiff and London as well as around the world. Steve and I are keen to make the 2015 OSA Reunion a very special one, so do let us know if you can come on the weekend of 27 June 2015. 📍

lmj23@aber.ac.uk

MAURITIUS CAMPUS

In March 2014 the University announced its ambition to open a new campus in Mauritius. The new campus will begin to teach students from 16 October 2015, 143 years to the day after the very first students started their studies at Aberystwyth. Dean of the Mauritius campus is Dr David Poyton who is already well-known to many international Law alumni. The first courses will be in Management and Business, with courses in Law and Computer Science being developed for the future.

Students at the University's Mauritius campus will enjoy the same status as their counterparts at Aberystwyth, and they will receive Aberystwyth University degrees on completion of their studies. There will also be scope in the future for students studying in Aber to spend time at the Mauritius campus if they wish to do so.

The campus is being constructed at Quartier Militaire, 12km inland from the capital Port Louis and will include student residences. By establishing a branch campus in Mauritius, Aberystwyth University will become the highest-ranking overseas university to operate in the country.



An artist's impression of the planned residential campus at Quartier Militaire

ABERYSTWYTH AMONGST WORLD'S ELITE

Aberystwyth University features amongst the world's top 200 institutions in 4 of the 30 subjects featured in the fourth QS World University Rankings by Subject this year.

The list combines information from global academic and employer reputation surveys and citations per paper; 2,838 universities were evaluated, 689 institutions ranked, 130 million citation attributions analysed and the provision of 10,639 programs verified.

The results put Geography into the top 100 in the world (from top 150 in 2013) and Politics, Agriculture and English in the top 150.

Professor Neil Glasser, Director of the Institute of Geography, History, Politics and Psychology commented: "I am delighted that the efforts of colleagues in both the Department of Geography and Earth Sciences, and the Department of International Politics, have been recognised and commended within this prestigious ranking of universities from across the globe."

Professor John Grattan, Pro Vice-Chancellor for International and Student Experience, said: "We are extremely proud of the standard of research and teaching at Aberystwyth University and that the QR World Rankings confirms our position amongst global leaders. It is particularly pleasing to note that Aberystwyth is holding its own and improving its standing as an internationally important institution."

The results have been published on www.topuniversities.com.

TACKLING CRIME IN RURAL COMMUNITIES

The Department of Law and Criminology is working with Dyfed-Powys Police to develop a new Centre for Rural Policing and Justice.

The project will work with universities and other partners to look at the particular needs of the rural villages and towns, and how they can be policed.

Head of the Department Professor John Williams, explains:

"Rural policing is a neglected area of research. Very often assumptions are made about crime in rural areas, not least that crime does not happen in peaceful rural Wales. Rural areas are not all idyllic and crime does take place in rural communities."

"Urban policing models do not necessarily fit neatly into rural areas, although most models of policing are based on urban areas. An evidence base is needed to ensure that rurality is factored into policing models.

"The Centre will have an important role to play in providing such evidence and the Department looks forward to working with it in raising the profile of rural policing."

Full story: www.aber.ac.uk/en/news/archive/2014/01/title-145241-en.html



Professor John Williams

MAPPING CLIMATE CHANGE

Over the next century, plants and animals will need to adapt or shift locations to track their ideal climate in response to continued global warming.

In research published in the journal *Nature*, Aberystwyth academic Dr Pippa Moore, along with an international team of scientists, drew up global maps that show how fast and in which direction local climates are shifting.

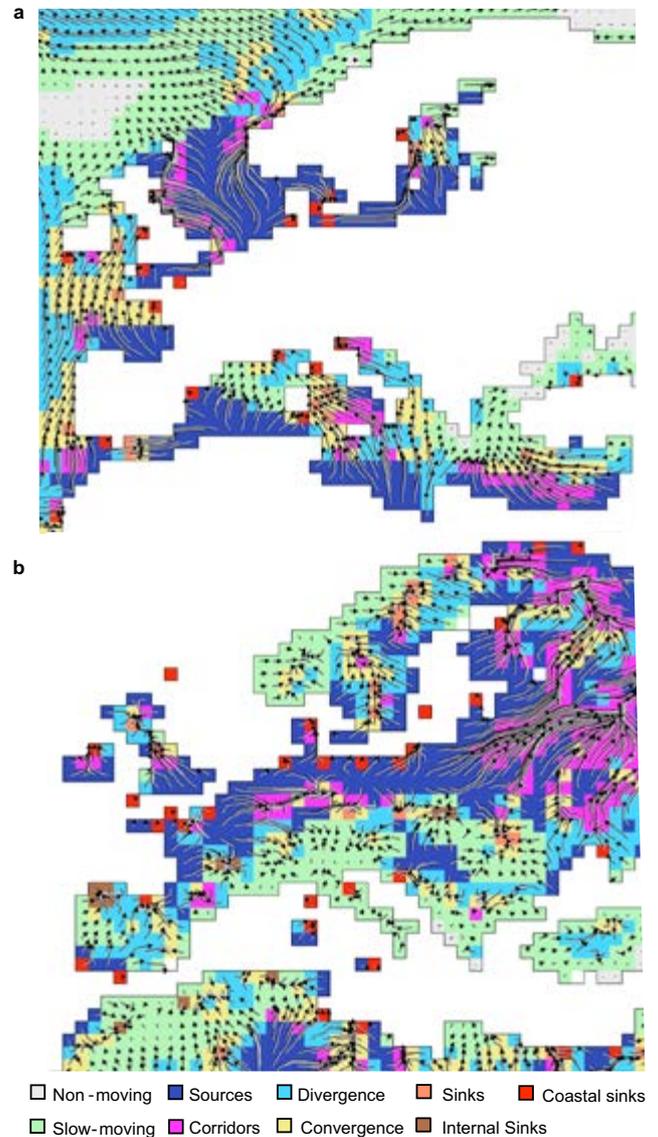
This new study points to a simpler way of looking at climatic changes and their likely effects on biodiversity.

“The maps show us where plants and animals will have to move to stay within their existing thermal niches and thereby track climate change,” says Dr Pippa Moore from IBERS.

“Across the UK and Wales, species are already responding to warmer temperatures by shifting their ranges. Our results suggest that in UK and European waters thermal niches will aggregate in some areas, for example along the north coast of Wales and Liverpool Bay, potentially resulting in short-term increases in the biodiversity of climate migrants. In contrast, thermal niches will disappear in areas such as the North Sea, which means species susceptible to climate warming will have to adapt or move, and potentially leading to reduced biodiversity and ecosystem reorganisation,” says Dr Moore.

To see what’s happening in your backyard download the Google Earth files here: www.sams.ac.uk/michael-burrows

A map of Europe showing how fast and in which direction local climates are shifting



HIGH TEMPERATURES AFFECT MALE FERTILITY IN PLANTS



Nucleus of a cell undergoing meiosis at high temperature

Scientists at IBERS have identified a protein essential for male fertility in plants that grow in high temperatures.

In human males the temperature of reproductive organs can have an adverse effect on fertility, and in this study the same appears to be true in plants. A relatively small change in temperature can strongly affect the ability of many crops to produce seed.

The research has potentially significant implications in the race to provide enough food for a growing population in the light of climate change.

Full story: www.aber.ac.uk/en/news/archive/2014/02/title-145848-en.html

THE POWER OF THE PLACEBO

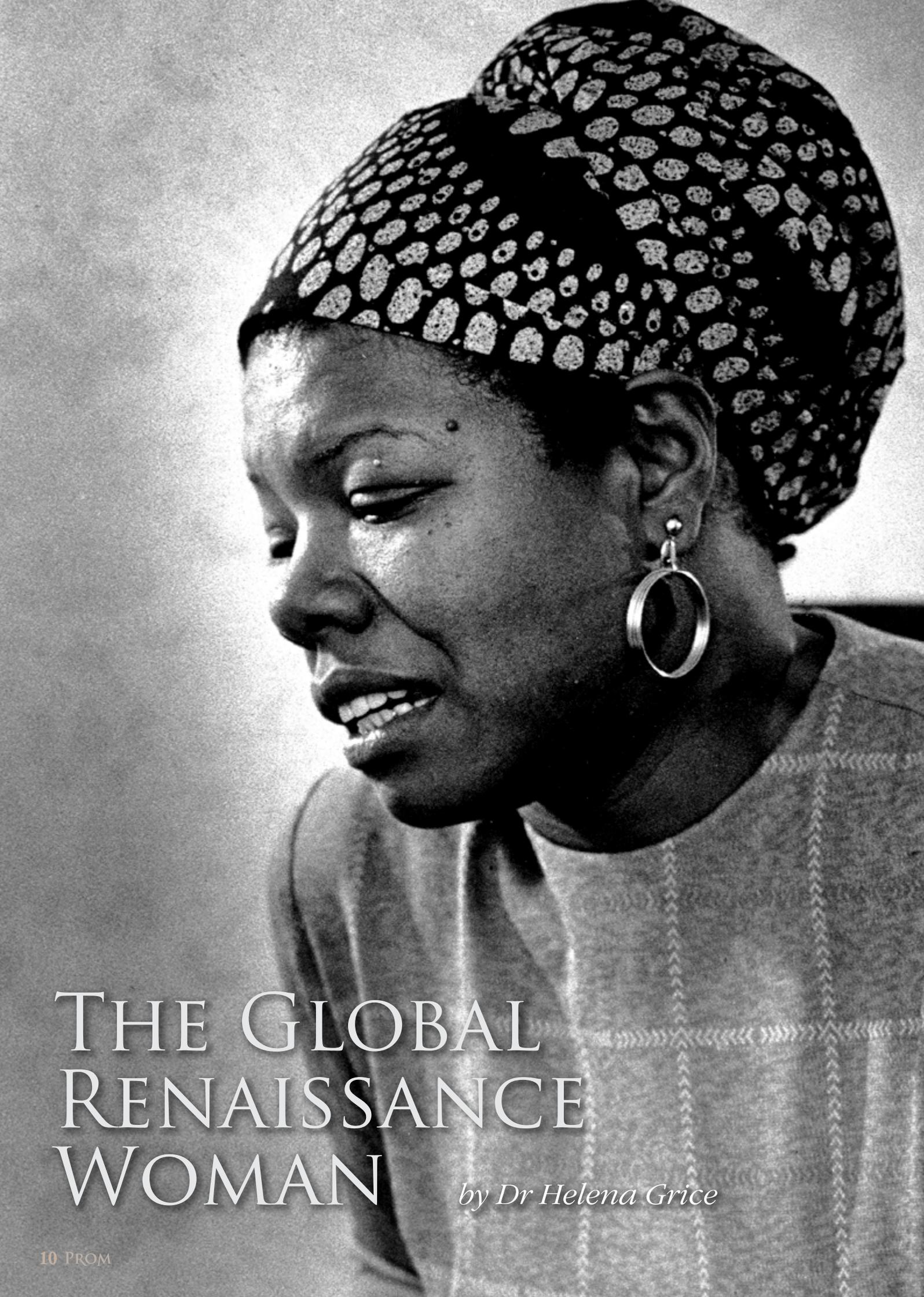
Dr Chris Beedie, Reader in Sport & Exercise Psychology, illustrated how placebos can improve sporting performance on the BBC’s long standing science programme *Horizon*. *The Power of the Placebo* was broadcast on BBC2 in February 2014.



Dr Chris Beedie

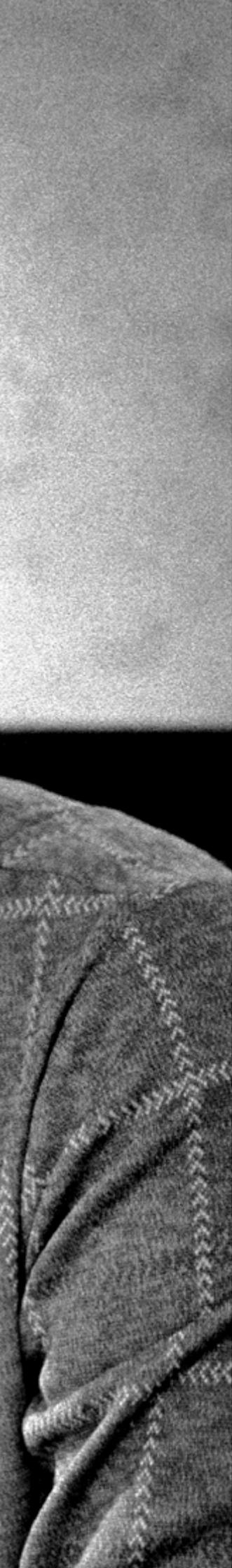
Dr Beedie’s research examines the role of emotions and beliefs in human behaviour. “Our research findings suggest that performance levels similar to those resulting from drugs can be achieved through a placebo,” said Dr Beedie, “In short, the mind is at play as much as the body when an athlete uses drugs.”

Full story: www.aber.ac.uk/en/news/archive/2014/02/title-146509-en.html



THE GLOBAL RENAISSANCE WOMAN

by Dr Helena Grice



Dr Maya Angelou, Presidential poet laureate, Lincoln Medal awardee, triple Grammy award holder, veteran civil rights activist, “global renaissance woman” (her own phrase), and author of more than 30 best-selling books, hit our newspaper front pages twice in May 2014. On 28 May, her son Guy announced via her website that she had died in her sleep at home at the age of 86, following a short illness. Amongst those who paid tribute to her were Presidents Obama and Clinton, TV presenter Oprah Winfrey, authors Toni Morrison and Wole Soyinka, and gospel singer Shirley Caesar. President Clinton and Michelle Obama were amongst the mourners at her funeral, which was streamed live around the world.

Maya earned her political stripes in the feverish days of the Civil Rights struggles in the American South of the 1960s, alongside two giants of the US civil rights movement. She helped Malcolm X found his activist Organization of African American Unity in 1964, and worked with him until he was assassinated. She served as Martin Luther King’s northern coordinator for his activist body, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, until Martin Luther King’s assassination in 1968, and she marched alongside both. Her political conviction, absolute activist commitment, abiding belief in the transformative power of stories, and resilience in the wake of adversity, whether personal or political, were life-long. Maya’s powerfully inspirational poem, *Still I Rise* quintessentially expresses this credo and also attempts to offer succour and strength to those who read it. She was a talented and prolific poet as well as autobiographer. She read her own especially composed poem, *On the Pulse of Morning* at President Bill Clinton’s inauguration in 1993.

She is best known for her multi-volume autobiography, which includes the remarkable first volume, *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* (1970), written with the encouragement of her friend and literary mentor, James Baldwin (author of his own fictionalised autobiography *Go Tell It on the Mountain*). A coming of age story set in the viciously racist milieu of the pre-War Deep South, in Stamps, Arkansas, in her narrative Angelou calmly confronts difficult topics including racism, poverty, sexual abuse, sexuality and prolonged illness. *Caged Bird* remained on *The New York Times* bestseller list for more than two years following its first publication, has gone through 52 reprintings (several of half a million copies at once), and was named by *Time* magazine in the top 100 most influential books in 2011. Several of the volumes in her life-writing cycle, notably *Caged Bird* and *Gather Together in My Name* (1974), have been used by US educators and social workers to teach strategies of recovery and resilience to children who have suffered racial or sexual abuse. Most recent in her autobiography cycle was *Mom and Me and Mom*, published in 2013, in which Maya returned to the theme of motherhood, first broached in *Caged Bird*.

Each of the seven volumes corresponds roughly to a decade of Maya’s life. It is hard not to wonder if the completion of her story cycle with *Mom and Me and Mom* one year before her death might be in some manner significant, since the books truly were her life’s work, as well as her life in work. She had a remarkable ability to overcome and move on from the many traumatic events which punctuated her life - her rape at the hands of her step-father-to-be at the age of seven, her traumatised retreat into muteness, years of struggling single motherhood, a spell in prostitution - experiences which were marked by a series of name changes: born “Marguerite Johnson” but known as “Ritie”, she became “My” and ultimately “Maya”.

Life's challenges transformed via the pen of Maya Angelou into magical literary moments. Characteristic of this positive perspective, and ever the poet, was her answer when I asked her in 2002 at the Hay Festival how she was feeling. Already a lady of quite advanced age, she cocked her head to one side and replied rather coyly, "I'm fine as wine in the summertime".

I discussed her impact with my former student, Jessica Shivji, who graduated with a first class BA in English Literature in 2012. Jess recalls: "My first interaction with Dr Maya Angelou was a happy accident; one of my best friends bought me a copy of *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* for my twentieth birthday. I spent the summer of 2011 travelling backwards and forwards to Aberystwyth with Angelou in my bag, unable to stop reading her fascinating story. By the time I attended Dr Helena Grice's Post-war Women's Life Writing module, I was well versed in the first volume of Angelou's life and already planning to write my dissertation about her".

I have taught Angelou's words here at Aberystwyth since my appointment in 1998. Her work is a perennially popular topic, but more than that, the experience of reading *Caged Bird*

often has a very profound effect upon young people encountering it for the first time. More than simply inspirational, students have told me that at times reading her story has proved personally therapeutic.

Reading a book like *Caged Bird* can promote a stronger sense of self-identity, or can even prod an individual towards overcoming their own psychological difficulties or personal struggles. Jess again:

"To say that Angelou inspired me is an understatement; her resilience in the face of poverty, sexual abuse and racism to become the voice of a generation humbles me. On a very personal level the young Angelou's inability to see herself as beautiful due to the colour of her

skin was something that resonated with the little mixed race girl I used to be, a girl growing up far away from the Deep South, but recognising that alienation and pain in the narrative of another".

So, it is lamentable that the recently enforced alterations to school curricula will exclude *I Know Why The Caged Bird Sings*. Maya Angelou's other appearance in national newspapers in May occurred just one day after the announcement of her death, when it was reported on 29 May that, in a widely condemned move, along with Harper Lee (author of *To Kill a Mockingbird*) and John Steinbeck (author of *Of Mice and Men*) Maya Angelou was to be dropped from English GCSE syllabi, in a rumoured effort by education secretary Michael Gove to anglicise literary study in schools. Amongst the many prominent figures subsequently voicing their dismay was Nobel Prize-winning author and fellow African American Toni Morrison, who told an audience at the Hay Festival that same day that she expected Mr Gove to regret his decision. Jess explained why she thought it was so valuable for young people to read *Caged Bird*.

"Ultimately, the story of Dr Maya Angelou is one of survival. Her unshakable faith in humanity after so much suffering is a lesson that the most privileged among us who so often dwell on the negatives of our lives, would do well to remember. Angelou's resilience and phenomenal wisdom should remain on the curriculum for generations to come to inspire and humble us, reminding us of how lucky we are and just what we are capable of."

Such controversies would not be surprising to Maya herself though, since *Caged Bird* has long held the dubious status as one of the most banned books in the United States. Complaints have centred upon the book's unflinching portrayal of sexual abuse, and sometimes, its perceived advocacy of homosexuality. Perhaps we should let Dr Angelou have the last word, in a comment made in 2011:

"I'm always sorry that people ban my books... many times my books are banned by people who never read two sentences. I feel sorry for the young person who never gets to read them".

I'm fine as wine in the summertime

Dr Helena Grice is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of English and Creative Writing. Her research interests include ethnic American literatures, women's writing, auto/biography, and feminist theory. Helena is on the Editorial Boards of *Textual Practice* and *Minerva: Women and War*, and is an Advisory Board Member of *Melus*. She regularly reviews for the *Journal of American Studies*, *English and Melus* and has discussed her work as an invited guest on Radio 4's *Woman's Hour*.



ABERYSTWYTH SPACE MISSION

Dr Mark Neal, robotics expert from the Institute of Mathematics, Physics and Computer Science, helped pupils at Ysgol Gymraeg Aberystwyth to launch their very own space mission from their playground in June 2014.

Technology for the mission developed by Dr Neal involved a helium-filled weather balloon suspending a polystyrene capsule fitted with two cameras, two GPS trackers and a small homemade computer that measured altitude, temperature and the motion of the balloon and transmitted the information back to earth via a wireless link.

Reaching an altitude of over 30,000 metres, the equipment provided stunning time-lapse images, as the balloon climbed to the very edge of the earth's atmosphere.



© Mark Neal, Aberystwyth University

AMBA ACCREDITATION FOR MASTERS IN MANAGEMENT

Four Masters postgraduate programmes at Aberystwyth University's School of Management and Business have been given the stamp of approval and full accreditation by AMBA, the Association of MBAs. A further four SMB Masters programmes at the University have had their accreditation renewed.



Professor Steven McGuire, Director of School of Management and Business at Aberystwyth said: "With so many MSc and MBA degrees on offer, quality has become essential. The AMBA accolade represents a stamp of quality for the School, the University, its programmes, teaching, facilities and research. This accreditation provides graduates with an internationally recognised qualification, greatly enhancing the value of their degree and their future as professional managers and practitioners."

The AMBA accreditation represents the highest standard of achievement in postgraduate business education.

The School earned several commendations from the AMBA panel, notably in relation to the quality and dedication of the academic and administrative staff, and for the facilities on the Llanbadarn campus. The panel also noted with approval the significant investment made in support for international students, new teaching equipment and the establishment of an Advisory Board of successful and influential alumni.

AMBA accredits programmes at over 200 business schools in more than 80 countries. AMBA accreditation represents the highest standard of achievement in postgraduate business education, and gives business schools international credibility and status.

Aberystwyth is the only Welsh University to have received accreditation.

HIGH SATISFACTION RATINGS

The latest research undertaken by i-Graduate reveals that the University enjoys very high satisfaction ratings amongst our international and European Union students.

Students ranked Aberystwyth University 1st in the world for "Managing research", 7th in the world for "Personal tutors" (95.4%), 4th in the UK for "Financial support" and in the top 10 in the world for "safety".





INTERNET FREEDOM

– WHAT ARE WE FIGHTING FOR?

by Dr Madeline Carr

Three years ago this summer, the United Nations declared Internet Freedom a universal human right. It's also an important component of the foreign policies of the US, the UK, Australia, Canada and the EU. Despite this, there is still considerable debate about Internet Freedom globally – and it's not as simple as objections from authoritarian countries where freedom of speech is restricted. In fact, contemplating Internet Freedom throws up a whole lot of fascinating and complex questions about how we think the Internet should be incorporated into our social, political, economic and private lives.

FREEDOM TO DO WHAT, EXACTLY?

Internet Freedom is one of those terms that can be quite difficult to critique. Like ‘peace’ or ‘democracy’ it’s hard to imagine what could be wrong or contested with Internet Freedom. In practice though, the term means different things depending on who uses it. In a colloquial sense, when people talk about Internet Freedom, they often mean the right to access information on the Internet free from censorship or filtering, and the right to do so in private – without government surveillance, at least (the corporate collection of our data seems to be less of a concern).

When governments refer to Internet Freedom in their foreign policy documents, they tend to focus on the ways in which it can promote greater political freedom and transparency in states that are less democratic and open than they are. They emphasise the human rights element but they also see it fundamentally as a mechanism to politically transform states from the bottom up by empowering ordinary people. This interpretation obviously meets with some resistance from governments that interpret the promotion of Internet Freedom as meddling in their internal politics.

The UN’s own interpretation is quite limited. It defines Internet Freedom as upholding the same rights online that are available offline. So if certain kinds of free expression or political protest are a right in the physical world, states have an obligation to ensure that their citizens can practice that online as well. The implication here is if freedom of expression is not afforded to people offline, that limitation is part of a bigger problem that needs to be addressed – perhaps independently of Internet technology.

In addition, the UN’s interpretation of Internet Freedom stipulates that governments need to promote access. This has been controversial because some people suggest that Internet access as a human right comes a long way after access to other necessities like clean water and medical care. Of course it does, but access to the Internet has implications for so many other human rights like education and political awareness that it has more significance than might be immediately apparent.

BUT WAIT: IT’S COMPLICATED...

Even allowing for these different ideas about what Internet Freedom actually means, putting it into practice is a tricky business. In large part, this is because the world has been organised around countries with (usually) clear borders. A central premise of international relations has been that within those borders, the government of that country makes decisions about what is legal or permissible and apart from extenuating circumstances (like genocide), other countries don’t interfere with those decisions and rulings. In the

course of globalisation where we’ve seen movements and interactions across borders intensify, those clear distinctions have become increasingly blurred.

Other communications technologies like the telephone system have required a significant level of international cooperation and coordination between governments. Everyone has to agree for example, that +44 will be the international dialling code for the UK – and for no other country. However, unlike the telephone, it’s the *content* that is the real problem for Internet Freedom. It presents a considerable problem for ideas about a global Internet and this notion of living within a territorial border. Some countries forbid certain content like offensive pornography, terrorist literature, pirated music or Nazi memorabilia. Others restrict content that may promote political, religious or ethnic tensions. The point is however, that different political communities have quite different ideas about what *kind* of content should be restricted and regulated. And to some extent at least, we expect to be able to make those decisions and to have our government enforce them.

For the businesses that provide online services like search engines (Google, Microsoft, Yahoo), social networking sites (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube) and storage (Dropbox), walking a line between adhering to national laws and upholding the principles of Internet Freedom is an essential but extremely difficult aspect of their business. This complexity is often reduced in the media to two simple future possibilities; a single, unified Internet that is the same experience for all users no matter which country they reside in, or a ‘Balkanised’ or fragmented Internet that is specific to each country. Clearly the former is preferable for businesses and avoids them having to tailor their services as they cross borders – an expensive practice.

But it goes deeper than that – participating in censorship strikes at the reputation of these firms and undermines their credentials as ‘open, libertarian and free’. So in a sense, they are stuck in the middle of our ambiguity about how we want information and privacy to be governed online. These companies are sometimes faced with a choice between breaking the law of the country they operate in or breaking with the expectations of a large number of their customers who expect them to uphold Internet Freedom principles wherever they sell their services.

Navigating between these two extremes is the day to day work of human rights activists, online service providers, lawyers, academics, multi-national corporations, governments and non-governmental organisations. But it should also be a process that involves ordinary people. Given the implications of the Internet penetrate our personal existence so profoundly, it’s really important that civil society plays a more assertive and engaged role in decisions about how this technology develops and is integrated in the future.

UNITED NATIONS INTERNET GOVERNANCE FORUM @ ABERYSTWYTH

In the midst of these competing and sometimes conflicting interests, one of the key avenues for discussion has been the United Nations Internet Governance Forum (UNIGF) – now in its ninth year. The United Nations Internet Governance Forum is an annual meeting that brings together policy makers, academics, civil society representatives, the private sector and the technical community to discuss how the Internet should be governed and developed. Within the Department of International Politics, we regard it as essential that we provide an education that explores these issues fully and in a way that allows students to challenge accepted positions and think critically about this. As part of our teaching program, we have established Aberystwyth University as a ‘remote hub’ for these meetings for the past two years. Via live web streaming, students have been able to interact with the participants and panel members at this global and very significant meeting by listening live and perhaps more importantly, by posing questions to the panel – just as they might if they were in the same room.

For people studying the complexities of global internet governance, few experiences can highlight the competing agendas, current debates and political manoeuvres as powerfully as actively participating in a meeting like this. By integrating the meeting into our teaching program we have been able to demonstrate to the students the possibilities that exist for their full participation in this incredibly important global conversation. Rather than passively reading about issues like Internet Freedom, governance and security, students involved in the UNIGF remote hub develop a sense of agency through participation. We’re educating people who we expect will be the next generation of decision makers in government, in the private sector and in non-governmental organisations that contribute to how the Internet grows and develops. The UNIGF has proven a highly effective way of engaging students in the subject matter and extending their comprehension and analysis of the issues surrounding Internet Freedom.

SO, WHAT ARE WE FIGHTING FOR?

Although technology is obviously fundamental to debates about the Internet, there are significant power dynamics at play in these global political debates about what is and is not acceptable on the Internet, about how governments are shaping Internet technology to their own ends and about the extent to which countries with different views about content in particular, must adjust to those who have the power to set the agenda on this. When governments integrate Internet Freedom into their foreign policies, they do so partially out of respect for universal human rights. But it’s impossible to ignore the deeply political benefits of imposing Western views about information access, content, privacy and security on states with different political structures, institutions and processes.

Therefore, when governments resist some elements of Internet Freedom, it is not always as simple as a human rights abuse. For example, by banning US social media firms like Facebook and YouTube, China has created the space for a hugely successful Chinese social media industry. TenCent, which provides a suite of services in China and increasingly in other countries, is now worth almost as much as Facebook globally. For China’s interests, that has to be regarded as a very good outcome and a recent Pew poll found that overwhelmingly, Chinese citizens do not mourn the removal of Google from their online landscape.

Essentially, we need to be prepared to look closely at the factors that cause friction around Internet Freedom and be willing to debate them in a balanced way. Even the use of the word ‘freedom’ here is telling. In fact, this isn’t simply a question of freedom, it’s a question of competing cultures, values, norms and ideas and it’s one that will considerably shape many aspects of our lives in the decade ahead. It’s important to be aware that far from being ‘invented’ and set in place, Internet technology, governance and security are all processes and practices that are constantly changing and evolving. The Internet is a work in progress and we owe it to ourselves to be informed and engaged about the decisions and practices that are being set in place right now – and the first step is being clear about what kind of Internet we want. ■



Dr Madeline Carr is a Lecturer in International Politics and the Cyber Dimension. She has previously taught at universities in Australia and Japan. Madeline has consulted on issues of cybersecurity and social networking technology to the Australian Army Joint Forces Command, Australian Senators and a number of private sector organisations. Madeline coordinates the Cyber Connectivity Research Centre at Aberystwyth, established to provide a focus for research into issues around International Politics and new technology.



FIST BUMP:

DON'T TOUCH OUR
HANDS OF DEATH...

*by Dave Whitworth
and Sara Mela*

*...or how one
small research
study on disease
transmission
went viral*

UNEASE ABOUT DISEASE

Transmissible diseases such as flu, HIV, Ebola and hospital superbugs are a significant global challenge. In the healthcare setting efforts are made to destroy the infectious agents wherever possible and reduce their spread, for instance by disinfection, barrier nursing and good hand hygiene. But transmissible disease is also important in society – community-acquired diseases kill more than 60,000 people yearly in the USA alone. However, despite the inherent risk of infection, we voluntarily wipe other people's germs all over our hands with every handshake.

A GERM OF AN IDEA

There are a variety of different physical contact greetings and we idly contemplated whether the nature of the greeting would affect germ transmission. To our surprise, there was nothing in the medical literature about alternative greetings. In fact, there were only a handful of papers about disease transmission via handshakes in total, balanced by papers highlighting the benefits of clinicians shaking the hands of their patients.

We therefore designed a series of experiments notable for their cost (approximately £5 of reagents and 35 man hours) and simplicity (the experiments could have been done safely in the most rudimentary of garage laboratories). Our main innovation was to create a laboratory model of contact greetings. Both of us gloved up, one glove was coated in bacteria, a greeting was exchanged and then the number of bacteria transferred were counted. As expected, we showed that fist bumps transmitted far fewer bacteria than handshakes, and that stronger, longer handshakes were worse for exchanging bugs.



THE MEDIA CONTAGION

We suspected that this subject might be of enough general interest to be picked up in the newspapers locally, so when our study was accepted for publication in the *American Journal of Infection Control* (AJIC), we immediately liaised with the Aberystwyth University media team. We put together a press release, and filmed a short movie about the study and its findings, and these were then circulated to the press under strict embargo until the study was published. Behind the scenes, the Aberystwyth and AJIC media teams started working their magic. And then it all went a bit bonkers.

Ahead of the embargo date we started getting interview requests from news agencies like Associated Press, followed swiftly by national and international newspapers and online news outlets (eg. *USA Today*, *The Daily Mail*, Al Jazeera, the BBC and CNN). The interviews were generally short phone calls with the journalists just trying to get the facts straight for their articles. Then came requests for live interviews on the radio, so that by the day the embargo lifted, we had a pretty packed schedule of interviews lined up.

That week the story spread like *Yersinia pestis* (the plague). We soon lost count of the interviews given, and the number of requests for verification of facts and quotes that we responded to. Some journalists were clearly playing an angle and fixated on particular aspects of the study, while all seemed to want us to speculate beyond what we were comfortable with. Despite that, only a couple of pieces in the press were sensationalist. Most gave a balanced view and took the study seriously – possibly more seriously than we had when undertaking the research.

By the time the dust had cleared, Google showed our study had been reported in a staggering number of countries and by numerous outlets in most countries. It still seems a bit weird to see yourself on the internet immediately below President Obama, and hearing yourself dubbed into French for TF1 is also somewhat disconcerting.

And then it all went a bit bonkers.

NOVEL VARIANTS EMERGE

As transmissible diseases spread they often mutate, and so did our story.

The requests became less frequent, and they were from weekly magazines, and then monthlies. The story was picked up by lifestyle and business magazines because of the importance of the handshake as a cultural construct. In addition, news articles were turning up with stories about responses to our initial study. For instance Nigeria banned handshakes in an attempt to curb the spread of Ebola.

Athletes in the Commonwealth games sports village came down with Norovirus, and we were interviewed about the likely involvement of handshaking as the vector.

We had a request from a primetime quiz show to verify a question that they wanted to ask contestants about our study, we had PR agencies enquiring about product endorsement, and several comments/queries from healthcare professionals and the lay public. People made movies about the issues and posted them on YouTube and blogs. Only a couple of items were antagonistic, which is amazing considering the worldwide reach of this story.

THE FEVER ABATES

Personal highlights were being interviewed for the controversial American DJ Howard Stern's show, and appearing on CBBC's *Newsround*. And it is still amazing to think that because of our simple study, people across the world were thinking about the spread of transmissible diseases. What could be better, impact and outreach – two words dear to the hearts of all university managers.

Thankfully the media attention hasn't gone to our heads. History may yet brand us as the pair who sounded the death knell of the handshake. We don't mind signing autographs, but please let us use our own pens.

Sara Mela begins her world lecture tour after completing her PhD thesis. Dave Whitworth can be seen most days in Aberystwyth's lecture theatres, just go to UCAS and sign up for a degree in Biochemistry at Aber. You know you want to. 

Dave Whitworth is Senior Lecturer in the Institute of Biological, Environmental and Rural Sciences. He joined Aberystwyth in 2008 after a first degree in Biochemistry from Oxford University and a PhD at the University of Warwick. His research focuses on communication between bacteria and understanding how an organism's behaviour is dictated by its genome.

Sara Mela graduated with a BSc in Zoology and Microbiology from Aberystwyth in 2011. She spent a year in industry between degrees, looking at human gut health and microbiota. Although currently working towards a PhD in insect behaviour, Sara retains a keen interest in microbiology.

UNDERGRADUATE TO PROFESSOR IN A DAY

T H Parry-Williams and the Chair of Welsh by Dr Bleddyn Huws



Thomas Herbert Parry-Williams (1887-1975) was the eldest of four sons of the headmaster of the elementary school at Rhyd-ddu, a small village at the foot of the western side of Mount Snowdon. After winning a scholarship to read Welsh at the University College of Wales Aberystwyth in 1905, in 1908 he became the first ever student to graduate with first class honours

in Welsh, followed by second class honours in Latin in 1909. A Meyrick scholarship took him to study Celtic at Jesus College Oxford under the renowned Celtic philologist Sir John Rhŷs. A further scholarship enabled him to study Celtic philology at the University of Freiburg, Germany, supervised by another prominent Celtic scholar, Rudolf Thurneysen. After Freiburg he held a University of Wales fellowship at the Sorbonne in Paris. Sir Edward Anwyl, his Welsh professor and mentor at Aberystwyth, then urged him to return to Aberystwyth to lecture under his supervision and support. However, in August 1914 Professor Anwyl died unexpectedly at the age of 48, and Parry-Williams joined his two colleagues in the Welsh Department, T Gwynn Jones and Timothy Lewis, as a temporary lecturer whose contract had to be renewed annually.

In addition to his brilliant academic career, Parry-Williams was also a renowned Welsh poet, becoming the first person ever to have twice won both the chair and crown competitions at the same National Eisteddfod – the aptly named ‘double-double’ feat – in 1912 at the Wrexham Eisteddfod and in 1915 at the Bangor Eisteddfod. He is considered today as one of the most prominent poets and writers of the twentieth-century Welsh literary renaissance. His first collection of essays, *Ysgrifau*, published in 1928, displays his analytical mind and also hints of his keen interest in psychology. One of the hallmarks of his style of writing is the combination of polished literary and classical language with his own spirited colloquial Welsh dialect. His poetry and prose contain an existentialist view of the

world, but Parry-Williams was also susceptible to life’s spiritual dimension: his work often reflects life’s ironic dualisms and paradoxes.

Although Parry-Williams had strong moral convictions and was a pacifist, it appears he lost his Christian faith during the early years of the Great War, partly because of the active involvement of many Nonconformist preachers in the war recruitment campaigns. His anguish during this difficult period in his life is displayed in some of the poems he published in the College magazines, *The Dragon* and *Y Wawr*. In an English sonnet entitled ‘Change’, which first appeared in the *Western Mail* in 1919, he reveals his ambition to court the courage and strength of the mountains of his native Snowdonia in their timeless steadfastness in order ‘...To stand the storm and brave the batterings / Of every thwarting chance, to face alone / The fateful forms of unawaited things...’. That ambition undoubtedly reflected his personal predicament at the time, because shortly after the Military Service Act came into force on 2 March 1916, Parry-Williams registered as a conscientious objector. He attended an Appeals Tribunal only to have his request for exemption turned down. After appealing against the decision he was granted conditional exemption because of his personal conviction as a pacifist, and because his work as a university lecturer was considered to be of national importance.

The chair of Welsh had been left vacant during the war years, but the generosity of the Davies family of Llandinam enabled the College authorities to advertise for a new professor of Welsh shortly after the war ended. David Davies MP, the College’s Vice-President, and his sisters Margaret and Gwendoline of Gregynog, had endowed the sum of £100,000 to the College to fill vacant chairs, and it was decided to create two chairs in Welsh, one in Welsh literature and another in the Welsh language. T Gwynn Jones was appointed to the chair in literature in August 1919, and a selection committee unanimously recommended that T H Parry-Williams be appointed to the language chair. However, when



the College Council met in September 1919 to formally appoint the second chair, letters had been received from John Owen, the Bishop of St David's, and from various branches of the Comrades of the Great War strongly objecting to the appointment of Parry-Williams because he had refused to volunteer for active service. A petition signed by a number of residents of Aberystwyth was also submitted to Council, voicing further objections to Parry-Williams because of his pacifist stance. They argued in favour of appointing Timothy Lewis who had volunteered and been wounded serving his King and country at the Somme and Ypres.

“ ... I have no love of that ‘conscience’ that refuses to defend the State that protects it, and is eager to snatch the bread out of the mouth of a better man who was first in occupation. ”

A vigorous campaign was launched against Parry-Williams in the press, and its two main instigators were J Gwenogvryn Evans and Beriah Gwynfe Evans. The former was a Celtic scholar who was a close friend of Timothy Lewis and also a member of the College Council, and the latter a well-known journalist who happened to be Timothy Lewis' father-in-law. In a scathing reference to Parry-Williams, Gwenogvryn noted in a letter published in *The Caernarvon and Denbigh Herald* in September 1919: I have no love of that ‘conscience’ that refuses to defend the State that protects it, and is eager to snatch the bread out of the mouth of a better man who was first in occupation.

Gwenogvryn believed that Timothy Lewis was a much superior scholar and welcomed the intervention of the Comrades of the Great War because he felt that they could assist in preventing Parry-Williams from being appointed. For Parry-Williams to be given precedence over Timothy Lewis was, in his opinion, scandalous.

But Parry-Williams also had his supporters, not least his father Henry and his three younger brothers who had volunteered. Oscar Parry-Williams had been a clerk in the office of the Registrar at UCW, Aberystwyth. He joined the Army Medical Corps in February 1916 and received great acclaim for his work as a clerk in the office of the director of the Medical Corps of the British Army in France. The two other brothers, Willie and Wynne, has also joined the forces. Willie had emigrated to America and served as a member of the American military fighting with the Allies in France, and Wynne was a member of the Royal Welsh Fusiliers.

Faced with what seemed to be an orchestrated campaign against his son in the press, Henry Parry-Williams was prompted to send letters in confidence to E Morgan Humphreys, the influential editor of two Caernarfon based newspapers, *Y Genedl Gymreig* and *The North Wales Observer and Express*, giving him information to put the record straight from T H Parry-Williams's point of view, and offering counter arguments to some of the misleading and often libellous comments published about him.

Morgan Humphreys used some of the facts provided by Henry Parry-Williams in the editorials he penned commenting on the whole affair. Henry Parry-Williams argued that his family had already made a notable contribution to the war effort by the service of three of his sons, and felt that his eldest son was entitled to his pacifist convictions without having to face the sort of prejudice and hatred displayed against him by his opponents. Although he must have felt bruised and saddened by the whole affair, there is no evidence that T H Parry-Williams himself responded to the hurtful comments made about him in the press.

In the face of such public anger and antagonism, the College authorities decided in September 1919 to postpone the appointment to the chair until June 1920. It was at that time Parry-Williams decided to relinquish his post as an assistant lecturer and register as a first year science student with the intention of entering the medical profession. He had first considered

training to become a doctor in 1915, and probably decided to alter the course of his career before it became too late to do so. Because UCW Aberystwyth was recognised by the General Medical Council as a teaching institution where a student could spend his preparatory year of scientific study, Parry-Williams remained at Aberystwyth before taking his University of London entry exam with the hope of eventually qualifying as a doctor at St Bartholomew's Hospital, London. He studied physics, chemistry, botany and zoology with considerable enthusiasm and excelled in his exams at the end of the session, coming top of his class and winning the Tom Jones Scholarship in Surgery worth £20. However, when the Chair of Welsh was re-advertised before the end of the 1919-20 academic session, Parry-Williams re-applied for the post and was finally appointed, despite continued opposition. As

he referred to the occasion later in life, 'One morning I was an undergraduate student and in the afternoon a Chaired Professor!' Even so, he kept a keen interest in scientific learning all his life, and in an essay he wrote many years later, he affectionately recalled his stimulating time as a fresher, referring to the year he spent as a science undergraduate as his *annus mirabilis*.

He remained Professor and Head of the Welsh Department until his retirement in 1952.

Timothy Lewis had also applied for a second time, and as a consolation prize, he was offered the post of Reader. A difficult and uncomfortable chapter in the career of T H Parry-Williams had ended, and although the medical profession had undoubtedly lost a very able student, Welsh literature gained one of its greatest luminaries. 🇬🇧



Dr Bleddyn Huws is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Welsh. In addition to teaching late medieval Welsh poetry, Welsh literature of the Renaissance period and professional Welsh, his research interests lie in the poetry of the Middle Ages; genres of the Cywyddwyr; Renaissance literature; twentieth century working class literature and modern Welsh literature. Bleddyn is joint editor of *Dwned*, a journal of medieval Welsh literature and history.

ABER ABROAD

Just as in previous years, 2014 has seen representatives of Aber jetting off all around the world to meet our international alumni and renew friendships.

One recent, and very notable, trip culminated in the conferment of an Honorary Fellowship on His Royal Highness Tuanku Muhriz ibni Almarhum Tuanku Munawir, the eleventh Yang di-Pertuan Besar of Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia, who graduated from Aberystwyth University in Law in 1970. Since leaving Aber he has made a huge contribution to the commercial

and business life of Malaysia, with his successes in the business world widely acknowledged in Malaysia and beyond.

In addition to his professional interests, His Royal Highness has also contributed greatly to charitable causes and is Royal Patron of the Aberystwyth University Alumni Club of Malaysia, one of the most vibrant and active Aber alumni clubs in the world. The Alumni Club celebrated His Royal Highness Tuanku Muhriz's Fellowship with a black tie dinner for around 300 alumni, the Aberystwyth University delegation and other distinguished guests. The Aberystwyth University Malaysian Students' Society also contributed to the festivities with a video of congratulations filmed in Aber, and Dato Sharil Tarmizi, 2014 President of the Malaysian Alumni Association recorded a video of greetings to current Malaysian students in return! On the



Brunei

following day the Aber delegation was treated to a reception at the royal palace, where Professor John Williams shared enjoyable memories of Aber with His Royal Highness.

There were also numerous successful alumni receptions held around the world in 2014, from Toronto, New York and Washington DC in North America all the way to Brunei and Taiwan in the Far East, with European visits to Dublin and Athens rounding out our tour.

There are more international trips being planned for 2015 and we would love to see as many of you as we can, so update your details through Aber Connect, our online database or by contacting us at development@aber.ac.uk so that we can invite you share a little of the Aber experience wherever you are. 🇬🇧



His Royal Highness Tuanku Muhriz ibni Almarhum Tuanku Munawir

MY ABER: PENGLAIS WOODS

International Politics graduate Harry Taylor reveals his favourite part of Aber



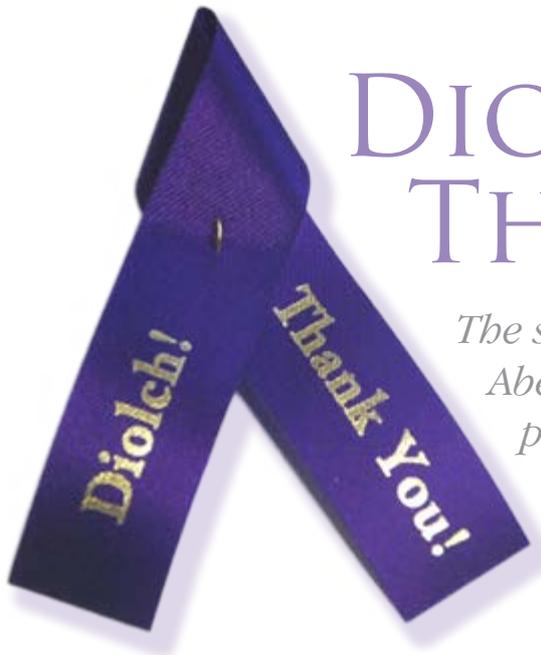
In so many ways, Penglais Woods is one of those very rare places, the type you only stumble over once or twice in your lifetime. My favourite part of Aber is one of the more simple places, a bench on the edge of the Penglais Nature Reserve, (no, I wasn't aware that such a thing even existed either!) accessed from the Heol-Y-Bryn Road, but it presents one of the most understated and yet awesome sights I have come across. The steeply raised bank upon which it sits perched high over Aberystwyth, allows an unrivalled panoramic view south down the Ceredigion coast, towards the National Library, over the town and, if you crane your neck well enough, you can just about spot the *camera obscura* on Constitution Hill. On this bench, nearly all of Aberystwyth is laid out in front of you, nearly everybody you know in Aberystwyth, have met, liked, disliked, loved or hated is in front of your very eyes. Having somewhere like that so near, but also feeling so far away, takes some getting used to.

I stumbled across this spot with friends in my second year, going up there at night and being amazed by the nightscape panorama presented before my eyes, the lights of the town illuminating Aber's landmarks, the Pier, Old College, Trefechan Bridge, the small towns down the coast glowing warmly in the distance, and the comparative almost brilliant white of the National Library just visible behind you. However it wasn't until I went back with a friend of mine, at the time Chairperson of Aberystwyth Student Media while I was Editor of *The Courier*, that the location took on so much personal importance.

One night, after a drink or two (how an unsurprising amount of Aberystwyth stories tend to start) I asked him if he wanted to see "a view". With some scepticism he agreed and within minutes of walking in the pitch black, we were up there. He was as blown away by it as I was, and from then on it became a metaphorical sounding post. On a nightly basis, the stresses and strains of running a newspaper and student media organisation whilst doing a degree and attempting to lead a balanced personal life were all expressed; problems were aired, problems were solved and such problems soon went away. The geography of the land meant we were literally stood on the edge, the precipice of both a fairly unpleasant drop and metaphorically between the last throes of studentship and adulthood. Everyone we ever took up there found the same reaction, in awe of the vista that awaited, whether by day or by night.

During the all-too familiar period of trying to kick start the serious research for my dissertation I would go and sit up there during Aber's infrequent but wonderful sunny days as spring turned to summer, spending hours there without ever realising that they had passed. Quite simply it provided the support for my third year, being able to sit and put the world to rights while the town lay beneath; being able to spend a few tranquil hours uninterrupted was invaluable. For somewhere that, regardless of a view, is still a bench in a nature reserve, it had a large effect on my year. The best bit? A year later I'm yet to trek up the slope that leads there and find somebody on "my" bench. Much like the Hogwarts' "Room of Requirement", it's always been there if I needed it, and long may that continue. 

DIOLCH: THANK YOU



The story of the founding of a university in Aberystwyth is one of the highlights of modern Welsh philanthropy which established a wonderful tradition of generosity towards the University and its students.

Wales celebrated philanthropy in all its forms during early November with a week of events and activities headed by the Community Foundation in Wales. Aber joined the celebrations by saying a big public “thank you” to all its benefactors, past and present, for their support. Students and staff who are supported in some way by philanthropy (bursaries, scholarships and funded teaching or research posts) wore a purple ribbon emblazoned with the words “Diolch! Thank You!” Other gifts were decked with ribbons and a thank you message; from Old College itself to the land of Penglais Campus, even the drains and groundworks of the new campus were funded by the Old Students’ Association before building had started.

All this activity highlighted to current students, staff and visitors the long and illustrious history of philanthropy at Aber, which has its roots in the generous support of rich and poor who worked tirelessly for the provision of a university in Wales. This tradition is continued today* with support from alumni and friends for a wide range of activities through the annual giving programme, individual gifts and bequests. Some notable recent philanthropic highlights are:

THE BEQUEST OF DR OWEN PRICE

Owen Price was the son of a Welsh farming family who came to study agricultural economics in Aberystwyth with the aim of working to improve the lives of agricultural communities such as his own. He worked towards this aim around the world with companies such as ICI and the World Bank and continued this mission after his death in 2012 with a major bequest to fund research opportunities at Aber. This year two PhD students, Ilse Skujina and Rhys Jones, are taking

his work forward with posts supported by the Owen Price Scholarship Fund to research into avian genomes and their link to longevity, and liver fluke and rumen fluke, a major issue in ruminant health.

Rhys said: “I am extremely grateful to be a recipient of the Owen Price scholarship. I will be looking at how liver and rumen fluke compete to infect an intermediate host snail, as well as looking at correlations between rumen fluke and liver fluke levels in Welsh farms. The data will be used to do some modelling on future prevalence of these parasites. I hope the work I undertake will result in findings that will contribute positively to Owen Price’s legacy.”

Ilse said: “The Owen Price Scholarship has not only enabled me to pursue my chosen career pathway and opened the doors on a whole new level of opportunities that a PhD offers, but it has the potential to influence the global science community by increasing general understanding of ageing. It might even provide us with new tools to combat age related degenerative diseases.”

Both Rhys and Ilse look forward to building on Owen Price’s international vision and ensuring that the work he promoted during his lifetime will continue to benefit agricultural communities around the world in the future.



Ilse Skujina

THE STUDENT HARDSHIP FUND

Thanks to the generosity of Aberystwyth's alumni to the Annual Fund, the University has been able to establish a Hardship Fund open to any Aber student, regardless of nationality or background, in the belief that a financial crisis should not prevent talented students from being able to complete their education at Aber. The Fund is administered by the Student Support Service and offers financial help to students who may find themselves in serious financial crisis through no fault of their own. The aim is to provide support to students in real hardship as a result of unforeseen factors, such as a change in personal circumstances or an emergency at home leading to a temporary suspension of financial support. The Hardship Fund continues to be the best supported of all our Annual Fund projects and George Jones, who works in Student Support Services with students who need help, says: "Cases in which we have assisted students in their situation speak for themselves. Without this fund many students would have had to withdraw from University for financial reasons, or may not have been able to return home to attend to unexpected family emergencies. The fund is a safety net for students who are faced with a problem that they would not be able to resolve without financial assistance."

OUR VOLUNTEERS

Philanthropy is often assumed to be financial in origin, but Aber is also grateful to supporters who donate their time, expertise and influence. Alumni and others are very much involved in our day-to-day activities, for example acting as mentors for current students and recent alumni; running workshops and visits for students to support their studies or better their career opportunities; hosting field trips; as active members of departmental advisory boards assisting with policies and giving the benefit of their knowledge, and as members of the University's Council, working to provide good governance for the institution. There is a wide variety of people involved in all these activities and more, but they are all characterised by having busy, successful lives into which they happily add voluntary efforts to ensure that Aber remains a wonderful, vibrant and successful place to study.

Aber is proud of, and grateful for, its long and continuing history of philanthropic support in all its forms, and we are delighted to take the opportunity to once again say "THANK YOU!" to all of our supporters.

* See the Annual Giving Report enclosed with this edition of *PROM* magazine for more details of this year's gifts to Aber. If you would like to know more about giving to Aber in all its forms, including the Aber Opportunities Network, please contact the Development and Alumni Relations Office, or see our web pages at www.aber.ac.uk/alumni

ABER OPPORTUNITIES NETWORK

THE E-MENTORING SCHEME AT ABER

The Aberystwyth eMentoring scheme forms part of the Aber Opportunities Network (AON) and is funded by the Annual Fund. eMentoring takes place on an online platform managed by the University that allows Aber alumni to offer career mentoring and guidance to current students and young graduates.

We want to say a big thank you to all who responded to our call for mentors in 2014. Your role in supporting our students through their studies is invaluable and we recognise there is much insight to be gained by our students from those who once walked in their shoes.

We are pleased to share with you the success of our first pilot of the scheme with students from the Institute of Geography, History, Politics and Psychology. We received some very positive feedback from the mentees and mentors who took part. The ability to connect, exchange, and in some instances meet with past Aber graduates was highlighted by students as the most positive aspect of the scheme.

Jim Poole (Head of UK Business Unit at Omnis Consulting Inc.) tells us: "I've really enjoyed it so far, having such a mentee who is so keen and enthusiastic about the process helps." He arranged a meeting for his mentee in the Cabinet Office to support her academic work; something she may have found difficult to arrange herself: "I think she has found some of the academic introductions I have made for her (particularly in the USA) useful too."

Sneha Dawda (International Politics Undergraduate) shares her experience with the eMentoring scheme: "I personally found it very beneficial to have a mentoring scheme as it cleared up many mysteries about potential careers and pathways. It's been extremely beneficial to my studies as I have now conducted primary research for my dissertation thanks to my mentor! So it would be great to see future undergrad students feel the benefits of the system."

We are now heading towards the full launch of the eMentoring scheme across various University departments and are working alongside the Careers Service to get more students and recent graduates engaging with the scheme.

If you would like to know more about the scheme or volunteer as a mentor please contact development@aber.ac.uk or visit www.aber.ac.uk/aon



Graduate Trainee Lilian Chuchu is working to expand the e-mentoring service through Careers and the Development and Alumni Relations Office.

BOTANICAL DELIGHTS

A minor flooding incident in a cellar last year led to the chance discovery of a collection of beautiful and fascinating hand-illustrated wallcharts, some around 120 years old, which highlight how the teaching of science has changed dramatically over the years. The image on this page is taken from one of them, as is the cover of this edition of *PROM*.





ETHICAL LANDSCAPE



On 1 August 2014, Professor Kate Bullen became Aberystwyth University's first Director of Ethics and Equality. John Gilbey talked to her about the role and her relationship to it.

by John Gilbey
(gilbey@bcs.org.uk)

Kate Bullen didn't take a straightforward route into academic life, and began her career by training in therapeutic radiology at Velindre Hospital in Cardiff. "I worked there briefly once I'd graduated, and then in a variety of places before ending up back in Wales. I started asking awkward questions like 'shouldn't we be doing more for the support of our patients?' I don't think I was actually using the term 'psychological support' then, but I was definitely saying shouldn't we be doing more to provide the sort of support that patients and families actually need?"

"I had an accident at work which put paid to my clinical career because I couldn't go back to heaving people around anymore, so I had to use my brain rather than my brawn! I went to Swansea and did my degree, and it was an absolute sanity saver. I fell in love with both philosophy and psychology, then in the final year of my degree I did a course on philosophical psychology – which was great. I got a first class honours degree and went on to take a PhD."

"I was just finishing my PhD, and I was already doing some teaching for the Psychology Department and in Medical Humanities as a teaching fellow. In 2000 a vacancy opened up in the research ethics committee for the local health authority, and I was asked if I would be interested in joining and I've been doing it ever since. I did that for ten years in Swansea and became vice-chair, and now sit as an expert

member on the Research Ethics Committee for Wales (Wales REC 3). It is very intellectually stimulating, and I thoroughly enjoy doing it."

How do you balance the possibility of improvements for the whole population with the needs of those involved with the trial?

"It is always a tricky one. You are balancing the costs and the benefits to people all the time. You are also weighing up the potential harms that could come because of engaging in that research process – and that applies not just in the medical environment, it applies to any piece of research. Here at the University we have a very wide ranging portfolio of research and every single piece of research that is done has an ethical consideration."

"Ethical considerations apply to all research activities, but don't apply in the same way. There are some aspects of ethical consideration we all have to think about: falsification of data; making sure that the public have access to our outcomes, that we disseminate it. That applies to absolutely everybody across the University, having integrity in what you are doing is a fundamentally ethical element that applies to everybody."

"We also have to think about the human participant, because you have to think about the person going into that research relationship. It is a gift relationship; they are giving something of themselves to you. It is an altruistic act; the

only reward people usually get is that warm, fuzzy feeling inside from having done something nice for somebody else. You have to think about this person entering the research 'bubble' as the participant. They should come out of that bubble as unharmed or as unchanged as they were when they went in. Ideally there should be a benefit, but at the very least there should be no harm done."

"We have to think about physical damage, psychological damage, and reputational risk for that individual. We also have to think what safeguarding there is for that person afterwards. Is anything I've done going to leave them with a feeling of discomfort? And that is particularly important when you are looking at qualitative work, for example a questionnaire about body image."

"University research ethics committees have to look at the potential harm to the researcher as well. It could be that you are going into a place that is dangerous to collect your data, and we also have to look at potential reputational harm for the university: 'Is this something we wish to be associated with? How could this play? If something went wrong, what are implications for the University?'"

Does this conflict at all with academic freedom? Isn't this quite a narrow line?

"Academics are very keen to protect their academic freedom, and quite rightly so. You have to push boundaries in order to generate new knowledge. That is, I think, absolutely the right thing to do. But you also have to be aware of the fact that there are consequences, and sometimes unintended consequences, from the work that researchers propose to undertake."

How is this managed in a university environment?

"An ethics committee has to have a range of expertise with additional lay representation. The lay members represent 'Joe or Jane Public', the person on the Clapham omnibus. They are incredibly important, because one of the key issues in research ethics is informed consent; people have to know what they are being asked to do. If it doesn't make sense to the committee members, and particularly the lay members, then you say to your researcher 'Sorry, you have to change this'".

"Ethics is very rarely black and white; it is usually shades of grey. Because research ethics has been dominated by the medical approach, what is important for us here at the University is to enable people to see that research ethics applies to everybody. It is not just about those people who collect human participants' data."

How do you see the research ethics 'umbrella' for Aberystwyth?

"The big issue for this university, because it has such a diverse range of research, is that it makes people aware that research ethics applies to them and that this is a facilitative process: I defy anyone to say that their piece of work is not enhanced or made better by the fact that they have sat down and thought about the ethical issues, because it really, really does make you think through exactly what you are doing and

why you are asking the questions you're asking."

Like peer review in the publication process?

"In many ways it is a pre-cursor or adjunct to peer review, quite specifically looking at the ethical issues which underpin the work. It is about developing ethical awareness and ethical literacy in everybody. And when I say 'everybody', I mean students too, because I think that is a big recruitment issue as well. If we can have as a core competency for all of our graduates that they are ethically aware, and that they are aware of professional integrity when they are going forward into the world of work. It is about cultural change: you will do better work because of this."

"Ethics is becoming an increasingly important part of the landscape of research. There is a concordat for research integrity which is an RCUK initiative and universities sign up to it. It puts certain duties and responsibilities on universities to have policies and procedures, mechanisms, for making these things happen, and we are compliant with these requirements. As well as the governance aspect, there is the principle that we should want to do this; that behaving in an ethical manner is the right thing to do."

Does the equality side of the role spin directly out of that? The 'rightness of equality'?

"Yes it does. The way I'd look at it is that ethics is the driver and equality is part of that. The new role is not just about research ethics, it is about how we are operating across the board as a university in terms of our ethical stance and our value set in all areas of operation. How we behave in terms of equality, not just in terms of compliance, what we are doing in a meaningful way with equality as one of our fundamental values."

"The role is to act as a central point of leadership within the University to look at all these issues. I think it is absolutely essential that this isn't seen as some kind of academic hobby horse – this is something that applies to all of us, because we are all part of this structure which is Aberystwyth University. This applies to everyone."

Are there Directors of Ethics in other UK universities?

"Not really, no. This one of the interesting things about what the University is doing, it is ground breaking in many ways. Other people have parts of the job located in different places, but as far as we are aware there isn't anyone who has both of these roles together in a specific, identified role. It is really an exciting and innovative thing that we are doing here."

"There is no part of your life that ethics doesn't touch in some shape or form. There is no part of the University's operation that isn't affected at some level by some sort of ethical engagement. As an organisation we should be ethically literate and ethically aware in all our operations. I am determined that all members of students and staff recognise the importance of ethical considerations within our community. My aim is that it becomes automatic for ethical implications to be considered as part of our daily activities." ❏

John Gilbey is a writer and photographer living and working in Aberystwyth. His work has appeared in the science journal *Nature*, *The Guardian*, *New Scientist*, *The Times Herald-Tribune*, *Times Higher Education* and a number of other titles.



FIFTY SHADES OF GREEN

Vanilla

The rather conventional sex lives of our crops and why we eat the things we do
by Professor John Warren

It is frequently but apocryphally claimed that Eskimos have 50 words to describe snow. Closer to reality, but almost never quoted is the observation that there are 45 words for shades of green in the Icelandic language. In fact in most languages there are many more words to differentiate shades of green than there are for any other colour. This is because we live on a planet dominated by the colour green, where the forces of natural selection have equipped our species with eyes that are particularly sensitive to light in the green sector of the spectrum. When offered photographs of landscapes, people prefer the more intensely green images. There are good biological reasons behind this bias and this biology is reflected in our electronic gadgets that capture or present coloured images. To be able to represent the world in a way that humans recognise, devices such as televisions and cameras need to include more green receptors or colour cells, than those for other shades.

You might not think so, but humans have evolved as botanists with acute abilities to differentiate plant species. The ability to differentiate between subtly different shades of green, and thus different species of plant, is a talent which greatly enhances your ability to survive in the wild. If you eat the wrong plant then you are poisoned. Conversely brighter shades of green tend to indicate elevated nutritional values. It is therefore no surprise that our crop plants tend to be particularly bright green, and agricultural fields are a brighter green than the wider countryside. It is not a coincidence that many of the wild relatives of our crops are found along coasts and in floodplains. These habitats are naturally highly fertile, as they are regularly supplied with nutrients courtesy of defecating seabirds or inundation by rich sediments. Wild cabbages, carrots, wild-beets, asparagus, peas, kale and various members of the spinach family all have maritime distributions, while many cereals are at home in fertile river valleys.

The fact that crop plants tend to be bright green and highly nutritious have not been the only factors in determining which species of plants our ancestors chose to domesticate. There are approximately 400,000 species of plant on earth. However, we regularly only eat about 200 of them, which equates to less than 1% of what is possible. So what makes our crop plants so special? The answer to the question why do we eat the plants we do appears to be related to their sex-lives rather than



Artichoke

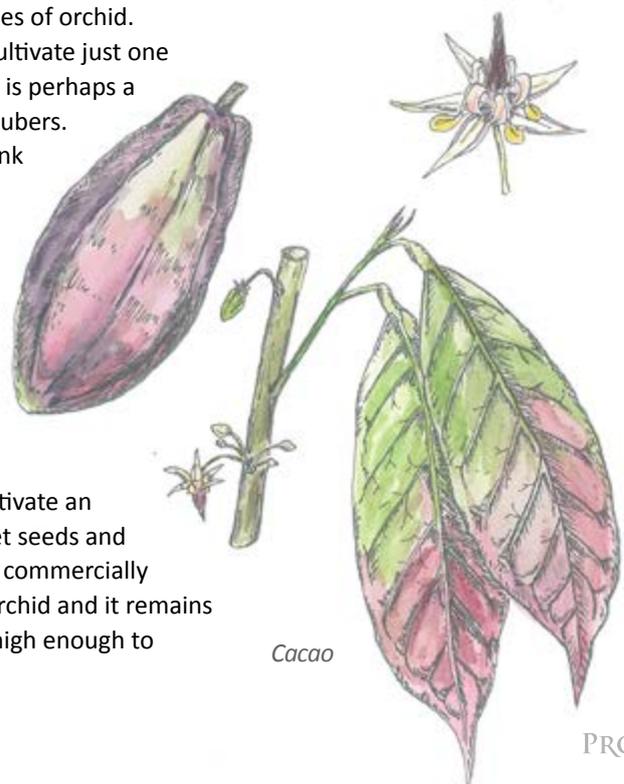


Professor John Warren working on one of his botanical illustrations which are featured on these pages

the more obvious – we avoid the poisonous ones. In fact many important crops contain toxic chemicals, classic examples being; potatoes, tomatoes, cassava, even wheat if you are gluten intolerant. The Jamaican national dish of *akees* regularly results in lethal poisoning of its citizens.

The most compelling evidence that a plant's sex-life limits its ability to be domesticated is provided by the orchids. There are 20,000 species of orchid. They are the most species-rich of all plant families and yet we cultivate just one of them for food. The fact that we don't exploit orchids for food is perhaps a little surprising given that many of them have starch filled root tubers. Historically wild orchid tubers were boiled to make a starchy drink called *salep*, which was a common street food in London and is still drunk in Turkey. *Salep* was thought to have aphrodisiac powers; this belief was linked to the fact that orchid tubers typically grow in pairs, which in turn is linked to the derivation of the word orchid from the Greek for testicles.

The reason we don't cultivate orchids as food crops is linked to their bizarre sex lives. Orchid flowers are highly complex and typically specialised for pollination by a single species of insect. Both orchid and insect species are interdependent on each other for their survival. If you try to cultivate an orchid away from its specially adapted pollinator, it will fail to set seeds and ultimately fail as a crop. The one species of orchid that is grown commercially therefore relies on hand pollination. This species is the vanilla orchid and it remains viable as a crop because natural vanilla pods command a price high enough to cover the cost incurred by hand pollination.

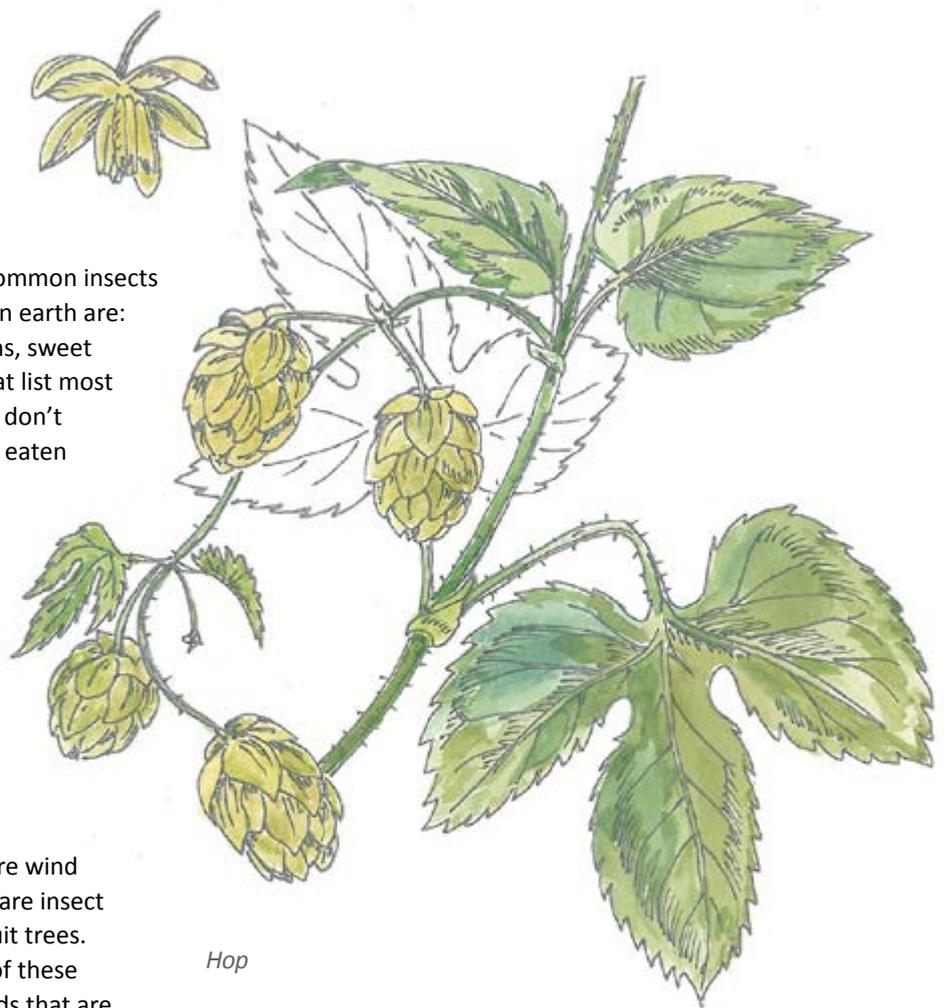


If crops are to be successfully grown over wide geographic ranges, then they need to have generalist pollination mechanisms that rely on either the wind or on the services of common insects such as bees. The ten most important crops on earth are: maize, wheat, rice, potatoes, cassava, soybeans, sweet potatoes, sorghum, yams and plantains. Of that list most are wind-pollinated cereals, or root crops that don't require insect pollinations. Plantains (bananas eaten as a vegetable) are fruits that don't contain seeds. From this list only soybean produces a seed crop that is not dependent on wind. However, soybeans tend to self-pollinate without the need for insects.

If the world's most important food crops are not dependent on insect pollination, why then does the UN claim, "seventy out of the top 100 human food crops, which supply about 90 percent of the world's nutrition, are pollinated by bees"?

Although the majority of our staple crops are wind pollinated, it is striking that many other crops are insect pollinated, including virtually all temperate fruit trees. This is particularly strange since the majority of these trees originally evolved in deciduous woodlands that are dominated by large wind pollinated species such as oak, ash and beech. In their natural habitats, the ancestors of apples, pears, cherries, almonds, peaches are never as abundant or as tall as the wind-pollinated species. There is a simple biological explanation responsible for this fact. Wind pollination is an effective mechanism to ensure fertilisation if you are abundant. But smaller, less common species cannot rely on such a random delivery method and have to utilise the more precise pollen delivery service operated by insects.

This observation begs the question - why are so many fruit crops derived from smaller, less abundant, insect pollinated species rather than the larger, more abundant, wind pollinated trees such as oaks, ash and beech? For example, why have we domesticated the almond rather than an acorn? Even without domestication, both of these species produce large nutritious nuts and as it happens both are naturally poisonous. Wild almonds are full of cyanide and acorns are full of bitter tannins. The answer is simple, if our ancestors had been lucky enough to find a tannin-free oak tree and tried to establish an edible acorn farm, then this new palatable variant would have quickly become swamped by pollen from the local oak forests and the next generation of oaks would revert to the bitter wild type. In contrast, if you stumble across a cyanide free almond tree, it's a relatively easy task to prevent it crossing with its poisonous wild



Hop

relatives, as in the wild these are much less common than oak trees. If you establish an almond orchard the chances of any of your trees crossing with a wild toxic almond is fairly remote.

It appears therefore that many of our fruit crops tend to have sex-lives that are less exotic than those of orchids but are less promiscuous than oak trees that throw caution to the wind. Unfortunately there is a very pressing reason behind this botanical voyeurism. Populations of many of the world's pollinating insects appear to be declining and this could have important implications for our food security. As we have seen our most important food crops are not dependent on insect pollination. So the good news is that we are unlikely to starve if bees become extinct. However, many of our fruit crops do require insect pollination. In the wild, these species tend to occur as scattered trees within the forest, so they are the focus of much insect activity. In contrast today, many of these crops are grown on an industrial scale in monocultures often outside the range of their native pollinators. Thus, even without the problems resulting from chemical pesticides, disease and climate change, insects are always going to struggle to pollinate all the flowers we need to maintain a well-balanced and interesting diet. 🍷

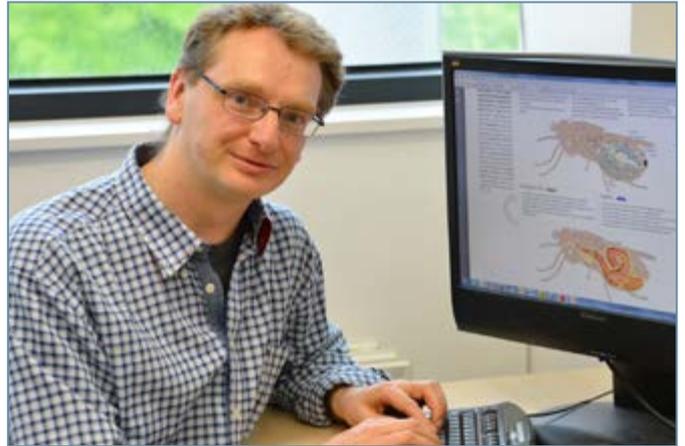
Professor John Warren is Director of Learning and Teaching and Professor of Ecology at IBERS, teaching the theory and practical aspects of ecology and conservation with an agricultural flavour. His research interests are in the maintenance of diversity and enhancement of conservation value particularly within agricultural ecosystems. You can follow John's botanical musings at <http://johnscroblog.wordpress.com/>

GENETIC CODE OF TSETSE FLY COMPLETED

Dr Martin Swain of the Institute of Biological, Environmental and Rural Sciences, was one of the authors of a paper published in *Science* on the completion of the genetic code of the tsetse fly. The paper, *Genome Sequence of the Tsetse Fly (*Glossina morsitans*): Vector of African Trypanosomiasis*, is available online at www.sciencemag.org/lookup/doi/10.1126/science.1249656

Tsetse flies function as the insect carriers of African trypanosomes - parasites - to humans and animals in sub-Saharan Africa. Human African trypanosomiasis or sleeping sickness is a widespread tropical disease that can be fatal if not treated. It is spread by the bite of an infected tsetse fly hosting a small parasite that leads to a serious infection in the brain and the meninges (the covering of the brain and spinal cord).

The completion of the genetic code of the tsetse fly will accelerate research on tsetse's basic biology, and the outcomes of the research can then be applied to improving current tsetse control methods.



Dr Martin Swain

Full story: www.aber.ac.uk/en/news/archive/2014/04/title-149506-en.html

REASSESSING THE TRANS-ATLANTIC REVIVALIST, GEORGE WHITEFIELD



Dr David Ceri Jones

Evangelical religion is one of the most dynamic and rapidly growing religious movements in the world today.

The present-day global evangelical movement had its origins in the religious revivals that swept the British Atlantic world in the middle decades of the eighteenth century.

Dr David Ceri Jones from the Department of History & Welsh History has been awarded a £115,527 grant from the Leverhulme Trust to better understand the early evangelical movement through a reassessment of the life, context and legacy of its inventor and chief inspiration, the trans-Atlantic revivalist, George Whitefield (1714-70).

George Whitefield was probably the most famous religious figure of the eighteenth century, crossing the Atlantic at least a dozen times between 1738 and 1770. A charismatic preacher, in London, Bristol, Boston and Philadelphia, Whitefield addressed some of the largest congregations that had ever been recorded; crowds of twenty or thirty thousand were the norm, and occasionally there were considerably more.

Full story: www.aber.ac.uk/en/news/archive/2014/04/title-148655-en.html

TALENTED US STUDENTS VISIT ABERYSTWYTH

The Fulbright Commission Wales Summer Institute, now in its fourth year, is a six-week cultural and academic programme for US students held at three internationally renowned Welsh universities: Aberystwyth, Bangor and Cardiff.

Eight talented US students explored the geography, culture, heritage and history of Wales, visiting museums, galleries and tourism landmarks from 21 June - 2 August 2014. Their fortnight in Aberystwyth particularly focused on the changing economic and social issues of mid Wales.

Gillian McFadyen from the Department of International Politics said: "The aim of the programme is to provide the students with an exciting academic programme, to explore the geography, culture, heritage and history of Wales as well as develop their learning, research and communication skills."



The Fulbright students and Gillian McFadyen

GRADUATION 2014

As usual this year's Graduation Week was a highlight of the University calendar, with ten ceremonies between 14 and 18 July. The 2014 cohort of 3,026 graduates celebrated their achievements with friends and families, and those who were not able to be present followed the ceremonies through the live-streaming service.

FELLOWS 2014

During 2014 it was also the University's pleasure and privilege to confer twelve new Fellows. The title of Fellow is awarded to honour individuals who have a close association with Aberystwyth and the University, or who have made an outstanding contribution to professional or public life in Wales. The 2014 Honorary Fellows are:

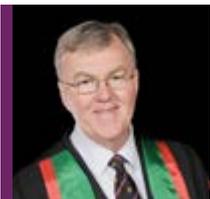
D GERAINT LEWIS



D Geraint Lewis is an author and former Education and Children's Librarian for Dyfed and Assistant Director of Education at Ceredigion County Council. A graduate of Aberystwyth, he is the author of *Geiriadur Cynradd Gomer*, *Y Llyfr Berfau*,

Pa Arddodiad?, *Y Treigludur*, and *Geiriau Lletchwith*. He has been the Honorary Secretary of the Welsh Books Council since 1986 and was the winner in 1996 of the Tir na n-Og award for his dictionary *Geiriadur Gomer yr Ifanc*. Geraint Lewis' numerous publications are a testament to his enthusiasm in presenting the Welsh language to children and adults.

PROFESSOR JOHN HARRIES



Professor John Harries is a renowned atmospheric physicist and Wales' first Chief Scientific Adviser on Science and Technology. His team produced the first observational evidence of an increase in the Earth's greenhouse effect between

1970 and 1997. He is a past President of the Royal Meteorological Society, and the International Radiation Committee and was a board member of the Natural Environment Research Council. He is Emeritus Professor and Distinguished Research Fellow at Imperial College, Fellow of the Institute of Physics, the Royal Meteorological Society, the American Geophysical Union and a member of the American Meteorological Society.

JEREMY BOWEN



Jeremy Bowen is a prominent Welsh journalist and presenter. Born in Cardiff, and a graduate of University College London and Johns Hopkins University, Jeremy Bowen joined the BBC in 1984.

A war correspondent for much of his career, he became the BBC's Middle East correspondent in 1995. Since 2005 he has been the BBC's Middle East Editor reporting from more than 70 countries, often in the line of fire. Jeremy Bowen was reporting from Gaza in July and unable to attend Graduation in person, but recorded a video address for the ceremony: <http://youtu.be/BKam3ousucE>

SIR MICHAEL MORITZ



Cardiff-born venture capitalist and philanthropist, Sir Michael Moritz is chairman of Sequoia Capital in California. After studying history at Oxford University, he worked at *Time* magazine before carving out a career as

one of Silicon Valley's most sought-after investors. He is a former member of the board of directors of Google and his internet company investments include many household names. Sir Michael was appointed Knight Commander of the Order of the British Empire (KBE) in the 2013 Birthday Honours for services to promoting British economic interests and philanthropic work.

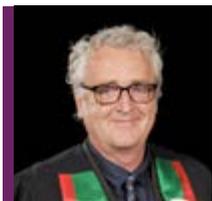
RHODRI MEILIR



Welsh actor, Rhodri Meilir, graduated from the Department of Theatre, Film and Television Studies in 2000. Rhodri has appeared in a number of television shows including the long running BBC sitcom, *My Family*, ITV's *Afterlife* and

Terry Pratchett's *Hogfather* on Sky One. He has also featured in a number of films including *The Baker*, Kevin Allen's *Y Sycas* and the Doctor Who Christmas Special *The Runaway Bride*. He is well known on Welsh television for his roles in *Y Pris*, *Caerdydd*, *Teulu*, *Tipyn o Stad* and as *Rapskaliwn*.

ED THOMAS



Playwright, director and producer, Ed Thomas, is founder member and creative director of TV production company Fiction Factory. Ed Thomas has written, directed or produced more than 120 hours of award-winning

drama. He has also produced a number of programmes for S4C including *Hinterland/Y Gwyll*, a detective series produced in Welsh and English and distributed internationally by All3Media. A second series of *Hinterland/Y Gwyll* is being filmed in and around the University.

RHOD GILBERT



The son of two Aber alumni, Rhod Gilbert is best known for his comedy genius. In the first 18 months of his career he was the first person in the UK to reach the finals of every major new talent competition and succeeded in

scooping four awards. In 2010, Rhod fronted the BBC series *Rhod Gilbert's Work Experience*, he has been a regular contributor to a range of major comedy shows and now hosts the BBC Radio Wales' *Rhod Gilbert Show* every Saturday morning.

PROFESSOR BONNIE BUNTAIN



Professor Bonnie Buntain is the Assistant Dean Professor of Public Health at the University of Calgary in Canada. Prior this she was the Chief Public Health Veterinarian at the Food Safety and Inspection Service for the US

Department of Agriculture, where she advised on all veterinary issues regarding food safety, humane slaughter and handling and optimising the use, retention and recruitment of public health veterinarians. Professor Buntain is a doctor of veterinary medicine, former Chief Public Health vet for the US government and one of the founding deans of North America's newest vet school in Calgary.

DR JOHN SHEEHY



Emeritus Head of the Applied Photosynthesis and Systems Modelling Laboratory at the International Rice Research Institute, Dr John Sheehy is an alumnus of Aberystwyth University.

Dr Sheehy has led multidisciplinary teams in the public sector specialising in the physiology of crops, their yield and the environment. He assembled an international team of scientists to revolutionise rice yield by supercharging photosynthesis in an initiative funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. Shortly after retiring, he was honoured with an OBE.

BRIAN JONES



A west-Wales farmer and entrepreneur, Brian Jones established Castell Howell Foods Ltd in the mid-1980s. Mr Jones continues to lead Castell Howell Foods Ltd as its Managing Director, and the company now employs 400 staff and is

firmly established as one of the country's leading independent food wholesalers specialising in Welsh products. Castell Howell is one of IBERS' industrial partners and supports research and development in improving food quality and sustainable supply chains.

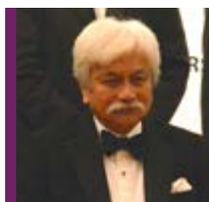
BARONESS KAY ANDREWS



Baroness Kay Andrews became the first woman Chair of English Heritage (2009-2013). She is the author of a recent report for the Welsh Government on Culture, Heritage and Poverty, and has also written books and articles on

science policy, social policy and education. She is a Deputy Speaker of the House of Lords. Baroness Andrews is an alumna of Aberystwyth University, having graduated with a BA in International Politics in 1964.

HIS ROYAL HIGHNESS TUANKU MUHRIZ IBNI ALMARHUM TUANKU MUNAWIR



In November, HRH Tuanku Muhriz ibni Almarhum Tuanku Munawir, the eleventh Yang di-Pertuan Besar of Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia, was conferred at a ceremony in Kuala Lumpur. His Royal Highness graduated

in Law from Aberystwyth in 1970 and he is Royal Patron of the Aberystwyth University Alumni Club of Malaysia. He has made an important contribution to the commercial and business life of the country, his successes being widely acknowledged in Malaysia and beyond. In addition to his professional interests, His Royal Highness is also a noted supporter of charitable causes.

REUNIONS

ABERORIGINALS



In the photograph are, from left to right:

Richard Sanders - Geography 1974-1977, former AU staff. Plays for Aberoriginals HC (since 1998) and organises the games against current students at the end of May each year. Played 6 games in the World Cup for the Welsh Dragons.

Dr Antony Wyatt - Member of staff in Geology until 1997 and deputy warden of Neuadd John Williams from 1976 to 1984, warden of Carpenter and Ceredigion Halls from 1984 to 1986. Played in 8 international games for Wales over 60s in 2014, also plays for Aberoriginals HC.

Dr Ben Johnson - Geology PhD, 1979. UCW Captain 69/70. Plays for Aberoriginals HC (Captain since 1977) and Wales over 65s Captain.

Glyn Thomas - Welsh for Adults. Glyn is the Wales over 65s Manager and goalkeeper. At 73 he is the oldest Aberoriginal still playing hockey. He has played 8 international games for Wales over 65s including all 6 World Cup games in The Hague (conceding only 3 goals throughout the tournament).

Jeff Robinson - Geography PhD, 1976. UCW Captain 73/74, played for UCW staff teams late 70s and 80s. Aberoriginals secretary since 1977 and is the current

The Aberoriginals Hockey Club was formed in the mid 1970s as Aberystwyth alumni and staff team. The club reunites to play the current students at the end of May each year; this year the students provided tough opposition drawing 1-1 on grass and beating the Aberoriginals 5-2 on Astro. The team also represents Wales at the annual Internationals Veterans Hockey Tournament held in August.

The Aberoriginals made a significant contribution to the Wales Teams in the Hockey World Cup held in The Hague in June 2014, with seven alumni taking part in the 7th Grand Masters World Cup Competition.

Welsh Dragons Manager. Played 8 international games for Wales over 65s in 2014, scoring the opening goal against Italy at the World Cup.

Gareth Hughes - Geography 1970. Met his wife at the Freshers Ball October 1967 and is still married after 44 years. Plays for Aberoriginals HC and played in 8 international games for Wales over 65s in 2014.

Ian Johnson - Agriculture 1975 and UCW staff. Plays for Leominster and Aberoriginals HC. Played in 8 international games for Wales over 60s in 2014.

PHYSICS CLASS OF 1964

On Saturday 21 June 2014, a group of nineteen, including one staff member and six spouses, gathered at the Physical Sciences Building to celebrate 50 years, to the day, of receiving their degree results. William Williams organised the event and summarized the day's activities:

Professor Andy Evans, Head of Department, gave an excellent presentation in the main lecture theatre on today's departmental structure and ongoing research. We then moved to the Honours Laboratory where many, many memories were rekindled. Our Class was the first to use this laboratory and we were part of the official opening ceremony for the building, which included a visit to the class by HRH the Duke of Edinburgh. Many remembered his interesting questions!

In the afternoon, we toured Old College and ended in the Physics Lecture Theatre where a collection of photographs and memorabilia were displayed. The members happily supplied names and information on these for the University archive. A final visit was made to the Applied Maths lecture theatre overlooking Cardigan Bay, with its memories of lectures and sightings of dolphins in the bay!

A memorable day – thank you everyone for making the effort to be there.



Professor Andy Evans (left) and the Physics class of 1964, 50 years on.

WOMEN'S CLUB 1955 TO 2014

The Aberystwyth University Women's Club was founded in 1955 to promote friendship between the women associated with the University. In the almost sixty years which have elapsed, the roles of women in the University have altered markedly. Here Margaret Bates reviews the Club and the decision to bring this chapter of the University's history to a close.



Wendy Davies, Gillian Manton, Margaret Bateman, Judith Bray (President), Dwynwen Belsey, Elgan Davies, Leontia Slay, Shan Hayward, Mercedes Mills, Hazel Binding.



The University's Women's Club approached its sixtieth birthday in 2014. The original constitution reflected the need for an organisation to promote friendship among females connected with the institution, (later expanded to include other Aberystwyth institutions), and set up a system to try and achieve this.

Each autumn and spring term an elected committee arranged monthly meetings with a talk by an eminent visitor followed by coffee and chat. Speakers included PD James, Mary Warnock, the Earl of Powys, Lord Elystan Morgan, and Susi Madron, the founder of Cycling for Softies. The summer term was AGM and outing time.

It was customary for the wife of the college/university Principal/Vice-Chancellor to be Women's Club honorary president. When Vice-Chancellor Professor April McMahon came to Aberystwyth and agreed to become the club's honorary president, our constitution had to be modified, a change which was one of a series of alterations made gradually as the role and needs of women in the University altered.

The lives of women have altered considerably since 1955; more are working outside the home and have wide opportunities to find friendships for themselves. As a consequence, the perceived need for the club diminished and it became difficult to cajole anyone into taking on the organising jobs.

As a result, at the 2014 AGM members decided to activate the provisions in the constitution for dissolution of the club and Mr Elgan Davies, University Librarian, was asked to put together a history of the club, *Club Merched Prifysgol, Aberystwyth University Women's Club 1955-2015*.

Elgan said: "What the members of the University Women's Club achieved over the past 60 years is phenomenal. I was previously aware of some of their activities, but it was only when I started to go through the minute books, annual reports and newspaper clippings that I became aware of the breadth of their contribution to the University and Aberystwyth itself. They certainly deserve recognition, and I hope that this brief history will go some way towards achieving that."

Despite the sadness at not being able to continue, remembrances over sixty years are valued. Many strong friendships are in place and Club friends will continue to gather for coffee on the third Tuesday of the month at the Arts Centre Café at 10.30am.

The minutes of the club and officers' notes etc. are all available in the University archive for research purposes.

OLD STUDENTS' ASSOCIATION

STEPHEN LAWRENCE, OSA PRESIDENT 2014 / 2015

In May 1880 the Aberystwyth College Club was formed in Oxford. Its members were former students of the 'College by the Sea' who had found their way to the 'city of dreaming spires'. Later, in 1892, Tom Ellis, the then MP for Meirioneth, called a meeting in Aber of old students of the College. It was a tremendous success, and thus was formed an Association which had as its dual aims - enabling past students to keep in touch with each other and furthering the interests of the College. In the 120 plus years since then the Association's achievements in both of these areas has been outstanding! As Dr E Ellis, in his book *The University College of Wales, Aberystwyth 1872-1972* writes, 'Ever since 1892 the Old Students' Association has been perhaps the most durable single support to the College'.

Given this meritorious history I feel honoured and privileged to have been invited to be President of the Association this year. Having been a member since I left Aber (and a member of the General Committee since the mid-1980s) I am very conscious of the list of distinguished people who have held the Presidential office and will do my best to maintain the tradition and build on their powerful legacy! Part of that legacy can be seen across Aberystwyth – there are important landmarks that stand as testimony to the commitment and energy of the Association - for example, the Assembly Rooms which were purchased by the OSA for use as a Students' Union in memory of those former students who lost their lives during the First World War. The early development of the Penglais Campus, the swimming pool, language laboratories and other projects were also supported by significant OSA fundraising efforts. Add to this the many, many scholarships and bequests that have been made possible by the generosity of members and you have a massive contribution to the success of the institution. Of course, in these challenging times for higher education this effort needs to be continued and built upon. In this context the OSA is working closely with the University's Development and Alumni Relations Office to ensure that all alumni have the chance to maintain contact and affinity with their alma mater.

Like many people who have benefitted from the wonderful social and academic environment of Aber I feel a real sense of gratitude for the years I spent at the University. Even in 2014 the relative intimacy of its size, the pastoral quality of its location and the strength of its academic programmes seem to engender a loyalty amongst current and former students that is hard to beat.

The OSA must continue to foster this loyalty if Aber is to capitalise on the goodwill and expertise of its alumni. Pursuing this goal will not only serve the best interests of the University but will ensure we remain true to the founding principles of the Association.



Steve graduated with a BSc Econ in 1978 and followed this with a Masters in 1979. He returned to Aber in 1990 as the first Director of the new Development and External Affairs Office, a period which he reflects upon with Louise Jagger, the current Director on pages 6 and 7. Until recently Steve was Chief Executive of Chawton House Library and he is currently Director of the Africa Justice Foundation.



REUNION 2015:

A DATE FOR YOUR DIARY, JUNE 26 – 28TH

Following a very successful Reunion 2014, this year the Association will time Reunion 2015 to coincide with the University's open day for the local community, Access All Areas, on Saturday 27 June. The Committee has arranged to start the weekend's activities with an exclusive tour of the National Library of Wales on the afternoon of Friday 26 June (huge thanks to John Hughes who has organised this as a Friend of the Library). The college reception where the University formally welcomes OSA members back to Aber will be held on Friday evening in Old College, and this year we are delighted to be able to feature a performance of some recently-restored operatic duets from the George Powell music collection held in the Hugh Owen Library. In the glorious setting of Old College, Aber Opera, a local group of talented enthusiasts, will give the first performance in perhaps 200 years of this rare music from the collection of treasures in the University archive.

The AGM of the Association will be held at 10.00am on Saturday 27 June offering a warm welcome to all members, giving you the chance to have your say about the future of the OSA. Then at 11.00am the University will be open to all visitors for Access All Areas, with displays and hands-on activities to show off the wonderful range and depth of work carried out on a daily basis in our modern, research-led institution. There will be something for everyone to see and do, both on Penglais and at other locations.

The Annual Dinner of the Association will be held in Medrus on Penglais Campus; a formal occasion heavily laced with a great deal of happy reminiscing and catching up with old friends against a background of excellent hospitality from the Conference Team.

On Sunday the Committee has arranged a visit to a local attraction, but this won't start too early in the morning to give you a chance to recover from Saturday's packed programme!

We would love to welcome you back to Aber; if you would like more information and details of how to book your place at Reunion, please get in touch with the Honorary Secretary or colleagues in the Development and Alumni Relations Office on development@aber.ac.uk or 01970 621568.

ACTIVITIES

As well as the OSA's regular annual activities at the Eisteddfod (5 August), Royal Welsh Agricultural Show (21 July) and Llandovery Lecture (Saturday 30 May), there are local branches organising events in their area too, for example the London Branch's programme of guided walks: St Paul's and Blackfriars on 16 April 2015 and the origins of the Port of London on 6 May 2015. If you would like to know more about any OSA activities please get in touch at the addresses above or see the web page www.aber.ac.uk/alumni and follow the links.

London Branch's Guided walks:

St Paul's and Blackfriars	- 16 April
The origins of the Port of London	- 6 May
Llandovery Lecture	- 30 May
OSA Reunion 2015	- 26 - 28 June
Access All Areas	- 27 June
Royal Welsh Agricultural Show	- 21 July
Eisteddfod	- 5 August

APPOINTMENTS

We have many reasons to celebrate Aber's alumni, staff and students. The list below is just a selection of these; congratulations to everyone on their successes over the past year.

AT ABERYSTWYTH UNIVERSITY

New appointments



Professor Richard Beardsworth was appointed Chair in International Politics in September 2013. He was formerly Professor of International Theory at Florida International University (2012-2013) and Professor of Political Philosophy and International Relations at the American University of Paris (2005-2011).



Professor Mike Gooding has been appointed as Director of the Institute of Biological, Environmental and Rural Sciences (IBERS). Professor Gooding was previously Professor of Crop Science and Agronomy, and Head of the School of Agriculture, Policy and Development at the University of Reading.



Louise Jagger was appointed Director of Development and Alumni Relations in March 2014. An alumna of Bath and Aberystwyth Universities with over 25 years' experience in fundraising within the UK, Louise has led major capital appeals, fundraising campaigns and regular giving programmes for a range of charities, including Scope, NCH and NSPCC.



Phil Maddison was appointed Director of Health, Safety and Environment. Prior to joining the University, Phil worked in heavy regulated industries including government and public sectors in the Middle East and across the UK.



Professor Mustapha Kamal Pasha was appointed Chair in International Politics in October 2013, having been Sixth Century Chair and Head of International Relations at the University of Aberdeen since 2006, and prior to that teaching at the School of International Service, American University, in Washington, DC.



Professor Gary Rawnsley has been appointed as Professor of Public Diplomacy. He joins Aberystwyth from the Institute of Communications Studies at the University of Leeds, where he specialised in public diplomacy, soft power, propaganda and information warfare, with a special emphasis on China and Taiwan.



Gareth Lloyd Roberts was appointed Director of Aberystwyth Arts Centre in November 2013. Gareth was previously Producer at Wales Millennium Centre in Cardiff, where he spent 9 years working in various roles, including Programming Officer and Programmer.



Professor Kevin Shingfield joined the University as chair in Nutritional Physiology at IBERS. His research to date has concentrated on lipid metabolism in ruminants and understanding gene responses to nutrients. In the new role, he will focus on systems biology approaches to understanding biologically and economically important physiological responses in livestock and the broader impacts on the environment, product quality and human health.



Mark Taylor has been appointed as Director of Estates Development. An alumnus of the University of Westminster with a BSc in Urban Estate Management and the University of South Wales with a Post Graduate Diploma in Management, Mark has some 30 years' experience in the estates sector.

Heads of Department



Professor Simon Cox
Department of Mathematics



Dr Nigel Holt
Department of Psychology



Dr Anwen Jones
Department of Theatre,
Film and Television Studies



Dr Louise Marshall
Department of English and
Creative Writing



Dr Bernard Tiddeman
Department of Computer
Science



Professor John Williams
Department of Law and
Criminology

Senior Appointments



Professor Kate Bullen
Director of Ethics and
Equality



Caryl Davies
Director of Student Support



Tim Davies
Director of Information
Services



John Glasby
CEO of the Students' Union



Alwena Hughes Moakes
Director of Communications,
Marketing and Public Affairs



Ruth Owen Lewis
Director of the International
Office



Professor Colin McInnes
Director of Research, Impact
and Excellence



Professor Sarah Prescott
Rendel Chair in English
Language and Literature



Professor Michael Woods
Professor of Transformative
Science

AND OUTSIDE ABERYSTWYTH UNIVERSITY

Personal Chairs



Professor Elin Haf Gruffydd Jones
Department of Theatre, Film and Television Studies



Professor Alun Hubbard
Department of Geography and Earth Sciences



Professor Luis Mur
Institute of Biological, Environmental and Rural Sciences



Professor Martyn Powell
Department of History and Welsh History



Professor Malcolm Thomas
School of Education and Life Long Learning



Professor John Williams from the Department of Law and Criminology has been appointed to the Welsh Government's advisory panel on safeguarding and protection of vulnerable adults with special responsibility for the adult protection legal framework and Adult Support and Protection Orders.



Professor John Grattan, Pro Vice-Chancellor for Student Experience and International, has been appointed to the Board of the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA).



Sue Chambers, Director of HR, has been appointed Chair of Universities Human Resources (UHR) Wales, and a member of the UK UHR Executive.



Professor Tony Jones, Emeritus Professor of the Department of Geography and Earth Sciences, has been appointed Chief Assessor for the 7th Phase of UNESCO's International Hydrological Programme (IHP).



Dr John Scally (Diploma in Information and Library Studies, 2007), has been appointed Chief Executive and National Librarian of the National Library of Scotland. He takes over from fellow Aber alumnus, Martyn Wade who retired at the end of March.



Professor David Trotter, Head of the Department of European Languages and Director of the Anglo-Norman Dictionary project, has been elected a foreign corresponding member (*correspondant étranger*) of the *Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres* in Paris.

AWARDS AND ACHIEVEMENTS



Charmian Gooch (History, 1987) is the winner of the annual TED Prize for 2014,

awarded to an extraordinary individual with a creative and bold vision to spark global change. By leveraging the TED community's resources and investing \$1 million into a powerful idea, the TED Prize supports one wish to inspire the world. You can see her lecture at www.ted.com/talks/charmian_gooch_my_wish_to_launch_a_new_era_of_openness_in_business



Lillian Stevenson, Subject Librarian for the Department of Law

and Criminology, International Politics and Academic Services Manager, was awarded the Wildy BIALL (British and Irish Association of Law Librarians) Law Librarian of the Year Award 2014.

Congratulations to **Peter Keelan** (MSc in Archive Administration, 2007), on being honoured as the Welsh Librarian of the Year at the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP) Wales annual conference.



Tudur Parry (Agriculture and Countryside Management, 2014) is

the winner of the prestigious Llyndy Isaf Farming Scholarship for 2014/5. Tudur takes over from alumna Caryl Hughes, last year's winner.



Dr Debbie Nash from IBERS has been awarded Senior Fellow status with the Higher Education

Academy (HEA). Debbie is a Senior Tutor and Lecturer in Equine & Animal Science and is one of only two women to receive the Award at the University.

Cardiff actor and Aber alumnus



Mathew David (Drama, 2009) picked up a prize at the Sundance Film

Festival in Utah in January 2014 for his role in *Burger*. The 11 minute short-film, funded by Iris Film Prize, observes the individuals who inhabit a late night burger bar and was shot on location in Cardiff. Mathew, along with the cast and Norwegian director, Magnus Mork, won a direction and ensemble acting prize.

Congratulations to Aber alumna **Lleucu Roberts** (BA, PhD Welsh 1989) on her literary success in the National Eisteddfod this year. Lleucu scooped the top two prizes for writers, namely the Daniel Owen Memorial Prize for the novel *Rhwng Edafedd* (Between Threads) and the Prose Medal for the book *Saith Oes Efa* (The Seven Lives of Eve).

Congratulations to Aber alumnus and acclaimed poet **Ceri Wyn Jones** (English), upon winning the National Eisteddfod Chair in Llanelli this year. The title of this year's competition was 'Lloches' (Refuge). This is the second time that Ceri has been awarded a National Eisteddfod Chair.



Former postman and Aber alumnus, **Stephen Jones** (Physics, 2005),

was among six award winners of the Teachers of Physics Award 2013. Now head of Physics at Penglais School in Aberystwyth, Stephen has been described as an exceptional teacher.



Kate Hamer (MA Creative Writing, 2014) has been signed to Faber in a two book deal. Kate's first novel, *The Girl in the Red Coat*, will be published in spring 2015.



Creative Writing PhD student **Eliza Granville's** novel has been signed

by a major UK publisher. *Gretel and the Dark* was published by Hamish Hamilton, an imprint of Penguin, in February 2014.



Dr Huw Morgan, lecturer in the Department of Physics, received an award established by the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol in memory of Dr Eilir Hedd Morgan, to be presented to an individual under forty years of age who has made a significant contribution to science through the medium of Welsh.



Congratulations to **Lucy-Jane Newman** (Management

and Business, 2014) on winning InvEnterPrize 2014, Aberystwyth University's version of Dragon's Den and worth £20,000 to the winner. Lucy's winning pitch, 'Florence Taylor', was highly praised by the panel.



Congratulations to **Dr Anja Gebel** (PhD, International Politics, 2012) on being

awarded the Lord Bryce Dissertation Prize by the UK Political Studies Association. The award is presented for the best PhD dissertation in International Relations / Comparative Politics.



Gruffudd Antur (Physics, 2013), was announced as the Meirionnydd 2014

Urdd National Eisteddfod chief bard. A celebrated poet, Gruffudd won the Chair at the Urdd National Eisteddfod in Eryri in 2012, and for Aberystwyth at the Inter-collegiate Eisteddfod in Cardiff in 2011 and Bangor in 2012. He was also the chaired poet at Llanuwchllyn Eisteddfod in 2011.



Dr Sarah Taylor from the University's Planning, Governance and Business Information Department

won the Firefly Children's Book Prize 2014, with *Arthur and Me* a 21st century take on a rather grumpy King Arthur and his squabbling knights.

In the Wales Book of the Year 2014 **Meic Stephens** (French 1961) won the Creative Non-Fiction category with *Rhys Davies: A Writer's Life*; **Francesca Rhydderch** (PhD, English 2001) topped the Fiction category with *The Rice Paper*



Diaries and PhD student **Tyler Keevil** won the People's Choice Award for *The Drive*.



Alumna **Francesca Rhydderch** (PhD, English 2001) was shortlisted

alongside Tessa Hadley, Lionel Shriver, Zadie Smith and Rose Tremain for the BBC National Short Story Award 2014, for her short story *The Taxidermist's Daughter*, which is set in Aberystwyth.



Congratulations to **Dr Susan J Davies** (Associate Lecturer in the

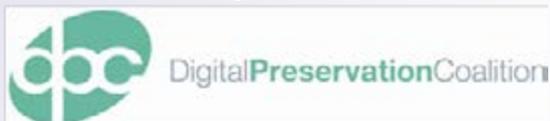
Department of Information Studies) on being awarded the Ellis Prize by the Archives and Records Association. The Ellis Prize recognises excellent work in the sector and 'significant contribution to archive theory and practice'. 

AWARDS AND ACHIEVEMENTS

FOR ABERYSTWYTH UNIVERSITY

The **BEACON Biorefining Centre of Excellence**, an innovative Welsh research partnership between Aberystwyth, Bangor and Swansea Universities, has won a prestigious European Commission RegioStars Award for 2014. Led by IBERS at Aber, BEACON is dedicated to developing industrial products from plants. Further information is available online at beaconwales.org/en/

The **School of Management and Business** was shortlisted for the prestigious Business School of the Year Award at the *Times Higher Education Awards 2014*.



Aberystwyth was shortlisted under two categories the **Digital Preservation Awards 2014**. Created in 2004 by the Digital Preservation Coalition, the Awards are a celebration of achievement for those people and organisations that have made significant and innovative contributions to ensuring our digital memory is accessible tomorrow.

The University has been recognised for its progress in advancing gender equality in arts, humanities and social science careers in higher education with the Bronze level in the Equality Challenge Unit's trial **Gender Equality Charter Mark** – the first award scheme of its kind for these disciplines.



maths and medicine (STEMM) in higher education and research.

The University has achieved the Bronze Award in the **Corporate Health Standard (CHS)**, an initiative run by the Welsh Government and the quality mark for workplace health promotion in Wales.

Aber has also received its first **Athena SWAN Charter Award** that recognises commitment to advancing women's careers in science, technology, engineering,



BOOKSHELF

The following are just brief outlines of some of the many books produced by Aber academics over the last year:

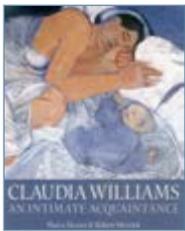


The Bible as Visual Culture:

When Text Becomes Image

John Harvey, Art

An interdisciplinary study of the Bible and visuality, this book applies theoretical and methodological approaches-native to fine art, art history, and visual cultural studies but new to biblical studies-to examine the significance of images for biblical exegesis and how images expisit the Scriptures.



Claudia Williams:

An Intimate Acquaintance

Robert Meyrick and Harry Heuser, Art

Figurative artist Claudia Williams paints intuitively, drawing themes and inspiration from aspects of her personal life. This book provides a closer look at Williams' artistic development and influences, her decorative use of textures and patterns, as well as her varying approaches to subjects that so perceptively convey a feeling of unity and compassion.



So Many Moving Parts

(poetry collection)

Tiffany Atkinson, English and Creative Writing

An eccentric 21st century meditation on the awkwardness of body and spirit and their unexpected, often unwanted intrusions into the business of everyday life. Lyrical and experimental by turns, these poems push familiar events - commuting, telephones, babysitting, foreign travel - to open out toward unanswerable questions and elemental connections with an unstable physical world.



Reading Poetry

Peter Barry, English and Creative Writing

This book illustrates the key elements of poetry at work, covering many different kinds of verse, from traditional forms to innovative versions of the art, such as 'concrete' poetry, minimalism and word-free poems.



The Visitor (novel)

Katherine Stansfield,
English and Creative Writing

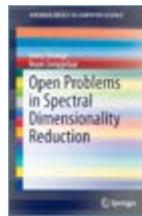
Katherine Stansfield grew up on Bodmin Moor in Cornwall. She moved to Wales in 2002 to study at Aberystwyth University where she now works as a lecturer in Creative Writing. *The Visitor* is her debut novel, and is steeped in the coast and people of Cornwall.



Marlford (novel)

Jacqueline Yallop,
English and Creative Writing

A novel set in the summer of 1969, exploring the relationship between the structured past of the nineteenth century and the new demands of the twentieth. The novel draws on research into the English country house, model villages and salt mining.



Open Problems in Spectral Dimensionality Reduction

Harry Strange and Reyer Zwiggelaar,
Computer Science

The last few years have seen a great increase in the amount of data available to scientists, yet many of the techniques used to analyse this data cannot cope with such large datasets. Spectral dimensionality reduction is one such tool for the data processing pipeline, and this book will be applicable to anyone with a solid grounding in statistics and computer science seeking to apply spectral dimensionality to their work.



Small Screen Aesthetics:

From TV to the Internet

Glen Creeber, Theatre, Film & Television Studies

This ground-breaking study provides a critical and historical account of small screen aesthetics, tracing its origins from the early days of television through to the arrival of the Internet, YouTube and beyond.



Cult Film Stardom: Offbeat Attractions and Processes of Cultification

Edited by Kate Egan and Sarah Thomas,
Theatre, Film & Television Studies

This edited collection provides a much-needed overview of the variety of processes through which film stars and actors become associated with the cult label. It brings together chapters from an international group of scholars which focus on a wide range of cult stars and actors.



Theatre and Event:

Staging the European Century

Adrian Kear,
Theatre, Film and Television Studies

This book examines how, in these first decades of the twenty-first century, contemporary European theatre-makers have sought to consider the disastrous events of the twentieth century as the 'unfinished business' of the contemporary.



Social Media and Minority Languages: Convergence and the Creative Industries

Edited by Elin Haf Gruffydd Jones, Theatre, Film and Television Studies

This book includes case studies, theoretical debates, international comparisons on minority languages, and presents a research agenda for the development of the field of Minority Language Media studies. It addresses the challenges present in multi-platform, mobile communication environments, focusing on the pitfalls and opportunities brought about by social media and other Web 2.0 applications.



Gwenlyn Parry

Roger Owen, Theatre, Film & Television Studies

Gwenlyn Parry was one of the most important Welsh-language playwrights of the twentieth century. This study is the first extended treatment of his life and work in English, and examines the complex and occasionally paradoxical relationship between the autobiographical aspects of his writing and his use of theatrical form.



Contemporary Military Strategy and the Global War on Terror: US and UK Armed Forces in Afghanistan and Iraq 2001-2012

Alastair Finlan, International Politics

Offering an in-depth analysis of US/UK military strategy in Afghanistan and Iraq from 2001 to the present day, this text explores the development of contemporary military strategy in the West in the modern age before interrogating its application in the Global War on Terror.



Unwanted Visionaries: The Soviet Failure in Asia at the End of the Cold War

Sergey Radchenko, International Politics

Examining Soviet policy towards Asia in the 1980s, this book brings bilateral narratives – accounts of Soviet relationships with China, India, Japan, and other Asian players – into a metanarrative showing how the Soviet leaders, from Brezhnev to Gorbachev, saw Asia as a theatre for superpower contestation, and why their regional policies ultimately failed.



Armed Drones and the Ethics of War: Military Virtue in a Post-Heroic Age

Christian Enemark, International Politics

This book assesses the ethical implications of using armed unmanned aerial vehicles ('hunter-killer drones') in contemporary conflicts, in the light of ethical principles that are intended to guard against unjust increases in the incidence and lethality of armed conflict.



Democracy Promotion: A Critical Introduction

Jeff Bridoux and Milja Kurki, International Politics

This critical introduction to democracy promotion seeks to provide students with an understanding of some of the key dynamics and contentions revolving around this controversial policy agenda.



The Sword and the Shield: Britain, America, NATO and Nuclear Weapons 1970-1976

Kristan Stoddart, International Politics

Offering new insights in the nuclear weapons policies of the Heath government and the difficulties they, and Wilson's Labour government, experienced during the first half of the 1970s in regard to national policy and relations with allies.

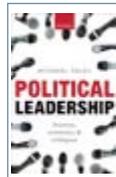


Turkey facing east:

Islam, modernity and foreign policy

Ayla Göl, International Politics

This book focuses on the the importance of Turkey's relations with its Eastern neighbours - Azerbaijan, Armenia and the Soviet Union - during the emergence of the modern Turkish nation-state from the ruins of the Ottoman Empire.

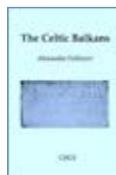


Political Leadership:

Themes, Contexts and Critiques

Michael Foley, International Politics

Leadership, particularly political leadership, is a notoriously elusive subject that generates a host of different points of explanatory focus,. This new study engages with an expansive range of empirical, theoretical, and interpretive research into the issue of leadership but does so in a way that ensures that the political character of the subject is kept securely in the foreground.



The Celtic Balkans

Alexander Falileyev, Welsh

Celtic-speaking peoples are known to have settled in the Balkans from the third century BC. This book offers the first comprehensive study of the relevant place-names and personal names of Albania, Bulgaria, Greece, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia and the European part of Turkey.



Pygiana ac Obsesiynau Eraill

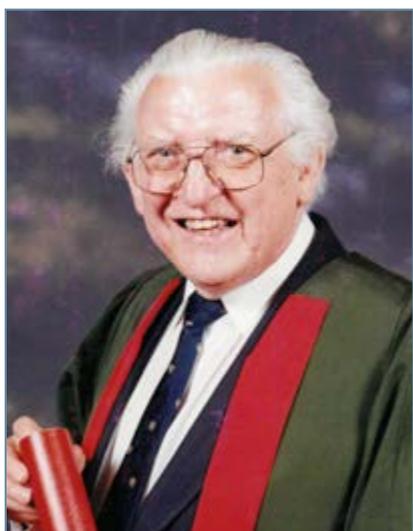
Mihangel Morgan, Welsh

A collection of writings on the arts in Wales, England and the USA - a personal study of some of the biggest names in film and the the visual arts.

OBITUARIES

It is with great sadness that we record the loss in these pages of alumni, students, Fellows and members of staff, past and current, of whose passing we have been informed during the last year. Our sincere condolences go out to the family and friends of those listed here.

Lord Wyn Roberts, (1930 – 2013)



Ieuan Wyn Roberts was born in Llansadwrn, Anglesey and won scholarships to study at Harrow School and then University College Oxford where he read history. There then followed a career in journalism and broadcasting where his considerable talents soon showed marked promise. During the 1950s and 1960s he was variously, a sub-editor with the Liverpool Daily Post, a news assistant for the BBC and a programme executive with Television Wales and the West, and later Harlech TV.

In 1970 he was elected Conservative Member of Parliament for Conwy. He held that seat for 27 years, and had the joyful luxury (not given to all MPs!) of vacating it at a time of his own choosing. For twenty four of those twenty seven years he was closely connected, in one capacity or another, with the workings of the Welsh Office, serving as Parliamentary Private Secretary to four Secretaries of State for Wales under two Prime Ministers. His first language was Welsh, an invaluable skill in supporting these Anglophone Secretaries. From 1974 – 79 he was an official front bench opposition spokesman on Welsh Affairs. From 1979 – 94 he was a Minister in the Welsh Office. That fifteen year tenure constitutes, by many years, the longest unbroken term by any minister in an individual department. If a week is a long time in politics, a decade and a half must be several aeons.

He possessed that ample ability to analyse the chemistry of a problem and also to devise a solution which was appropriate to the Welsh perspective. It is no wonder that in his performance as a minister he was constantly referred to as “a safe pair of hands”, “unflappable” and “exhibiting coolness under fire”. Many indeed were the attacks from opposition which evaporated in the light of his radiant countenance and charitable smile over the despatch box.

In 1990 he was knighted for his political service and in the following year was appointed a member of the Privy Council. In 1997 he became a Fellow of Aberystwyth University and in the same year was ennobled as Baron Roberts of Conwy. He served as opposition spokesman on Welsh Affairs in the Lords until 2007. After retiring he also served as President of the University of Wales School of Medicine.

Lord Elystan Morgan said when proposing Lord Roberts as a Fellow of Aberystwyth University: “Politics, like many other demanding activities, brings out either the best or worst in its practitioners. In the case of Wyn Roberts it brought out the very best. Former Parliamentary colleagues and opponents alike spoke of him as a model of courtesy, chivalry and charm. There are few accolades which can be of such priceless worth.”

Lord Roberts leaves a wife, Enid, and two sons, Huw and Geraint. His son Rhys predeceased him in 2004.

Torin Lakeman (1995 – 2014)

Torin Lakeman, a second year physics student, died in December 2014. Professor Qiang Shen, Director of the Institute of Mathematics, Physics and Computer Science said: “Torin was an intelligent student, achieving some excellent grades during his first year, particularly in Applied Physics and Astronomy modules. He will be sadly missed, and fondly remembered by staff and students alike at the Department.”

Ern Nian Yaw (1991 – 2014)

Law student Ern Nian Yaw, from Malaysia, graduated in 2013 with a 2(1) LLB, and joined the Department of Law and Criminology’s Human Rights and Humanitarian Law Masters programme. Ern returned to Malaysia in June 2014 to complete his dissertation and to take up a placement with the United Nations Human Rights Commission, but tragically died in a car accident in July 2014, whilst returning to Kuala Lumpur from Malacca after securing the release of forty refugees from a detention centre. In a tribute, Professor John Williams, Head of the Department of Law and Criminology said: “Upon his arrival in Aberystwyth in 2012, Ern immediately made a great impression as a unique and special individual. His warm personality, bright smile and genuine modesty endeared him to everybody who met him. Ern was destined to be a great campaigner for human rights. He would have made a difference – he would have worked to shape a fairer and more just society.”

STAFF

Professor Dave Barnes (1955 – 2014)



Dave Barnes was Professor of Space and Planetary Robotics at the Department of Computer Science.

Originally from Blackburn, he graduated from the University of Bradford before going on to complete a Masters degree in Machine Intelligence and Robotics at Queen Mary College University of London, and a PhD in Artificial Intelligence and Robotics at Aberystwyth in 1985.

Dave played a key role in the development of the robotic arm that featured on the Beagle 2 Lander mission to Mars and worked closely with the late Professor Colin Pillinger.

Dave was a member of the UK STFC Aurora Advisory Committee (AurAC), and represented the interests of the UK EPSRC community on issues relating to the ESA Aurora Programme and Planetary Exploration.

He was a founding member of the UK Space and Planetary Robotics Network, and a member of the UK STFC Particle Physics, Astronomy and Nuclear Physics Science Committee.

Dave was a member of the ESA ExoMars Rover team, and was researching autonomous science sample acquisition methods for the ExoMars mission, which is scheduled for 2018. He was a Co-investigator for the mission's Panoramic Camera (PanCam) science instrument, with responsibilities including PanCam modelling, simulation, image data processing and science data visualisation.

More recently he was central to the initial developments for the proposed Spaceport project through his work with the Wales Academic Space Partnership.

Professor Dave Barnes died on 25 July 2014, aged 58.

John Basterfield (1941 – 2014)



Dr John Basterfield was a former lecturer in the Statistics Department and then the Department of Mathematics.

Originally from Barrow-In-Furness, John graduated in Mathematics with first class honours from Cambridge in 1963. He continued with his studies in Cambridge until 1967, completing the Mathematical Tripos in 1964 followed by a three year Research Studentship. He was awarded his PhD from Cambridge in 1972 and his research in pure probability theory found subsequent application in the diverse fields of

finite geometry, discrete maths and coding theory.

In 1967 John was appointed Assistant Lecturer in Statistics at Aberystwyth University and subsequently Lecturer. His combination of enthusiasm, clarity of exposition and good humour made John a popular and much-loved lecturer whether in his favoured fields of stochastic processes and statistical inference or in hands-on computer practicals.

As a respected voice and safe pair of hands in academic matters, John also contributed significantly to the successful merger that created the Department of Mathematics.

In his spare time, John was a keen chess player and enthusiastic supporter of local clubs.

Geoff Constable (1957 – 2014)



Geoff Constable joined the University in 1995 and worked in a number of roles, most recently as Liaison Officer for the HEFCW-funded CADARN Learning Portal, a national project working with academic staff creating educational media to inspire new students into higher education.

Geoff was a graduate of the University of Kent, Canterbury and Aberystwyth University where he completed an MSc in Computer Science in 1994.

Geoff joined the Department of Computer Science in 1995, and worked in a number of roles and projects, including the 'MICE-NSC' project, webmaster, multicast IP deployment, UK-wide Video Technologies Advisory Service, IP 'Quality of Service' studies, rural network deployment, the use of communications and IT, and a large European-funded software engineering project called SCREEN.

In 2001, Geoff joined the Welsh Video Network (WVN) Support Centre, a pioneering and global leading initiative established with staff based at Swansea and Aberystwyth. Geoff was appointed Video Services Support officer, and worked there until 2012 supporting many thousands of users of the WVN.

Geoff had been a long standing member of the local UCU Exec and the Health, Safety and Environment representative, and worked tirelessly in these roles supporting the Union and the interests of its members at Aberystwyth.

A champion of green and environmental causes Geoff was successful in raising the profile of these issues at a University level.

Geoff Constable died on 30 July 2014, aged 57 years.

SINCERE CONDOLENCES TO THE FAMILY AND FRIENDS OF:

(* denotes OSA member)

Anthony, Mr David G*, died March 2014, (History, 1953)

Atherton, Mr Gary, died May 2013, (International Politics, 1977)

Barker, Mrs Beatrice, nee Wardle, died January 2013 (Botany 1932)

Barnes, Mrs Gwyneth*, née Roberts, died August 2013, (French, 1962)

Bevan, Mr Derek R B* (Law, 1959)

Bleines, Mr David Norman, died February 2014, (Philosophy, 1969)

Cann, Mr Richard David Michael, died September 2014, (Animal Behaviour, 2012)

Cartwright, Mr Raymond, date of death unknown, (Mathematics, 1952)

Chandler, Mr Ian, died June 2013, (1982)

Chilton, Mr Stephen, died November 2014, (Art 2004, MA 2013)

Cwyfan Hughes, Mr Dafydd Emrys*, died June 2014, (Law, 1944)

Davies, Mrs Eleanor Nesta*, née Lewis, (English, 1947)

Davies, Miss Sharon, date of death unknown (Education, 2005)

Elfyn, Miss Mareed, died December 2013, (Theatre, Film and Television Studies 2011, PGCE 2012)

Evans, Mr Hywel Griffiths*, died January 2014, (Economics 1956)

Felton, Mr Michael, died January 2014, (former staff)

Fidler, Mr Douglas N*, died December 2013, (Agriculture 1945, MSc 1947)

Flynn, Mrs Vivica Jane, née Nielsen, died May 2014, (Drama 1981)

Fuller, Mr Terry, died February 2014, (International Politics 1967)

Gardner, Mr Howard Stuart*, died January 2014, (Chemistry 1949)

Gibbon, Mr Richard John, died December 2013

Gillespie, Mrs Margaret Gwennant*, née Davies, died August 2014, (Welsh, 1935)

Hawkes, Professor Terence, died January 2014, (English staff 1961)

Howell, Mr Christopher John, died March 2014, (Economics, 1990)

Hughes, Dr Elinor*, died January 2014 (widow of Dr John Hughes)

Hurley, Mrs Margaret Maurine*, née Thomas, died June 2014, (Geography, 1949)

Isaac, Dr Philip John, died October 2013, (Physics 1953, PhD 1956)

Paul Davis (1977 – 2014)



Paul Davis was a projectionist and tutor at the Arts Centre, where colleagues paid the following tribute to him: "Paul was a hugely popular member of the Arts Centre team. Nothing was ever too much trouble; he approached every job with enthusiasm and positivity, whether it was in his early role working in the cafés, then as a dedicated member of the cinema team, as an inspirational tutor in the children's animation classes or as a supportive guide in the Digilab.

Always willing to go above and beyond what was needed, he was a genuinely lovely man and will be hugely missed by all his friends in the Arts Centre, and all the people whose lives he touched."

Paul was a loving family man and doting father to his young son, Sam. Paul died on 13 September, aged 37, after a short illness.

Annwen Frost (1946 – 2014)



Annwen joined the Continuing Education Department as a Secretary for Welsh for Adults in 1995. She also worked for a time at the Welsh Language Teaching Centre, on the University of Wales Trinity Saint David campus, Lampeter, with the Lecturer with responsibility for Welsh for Adults.

Annwen's contribution was very important to the development of Aberystwyth University's role as a provider of Welsh for Adults intensive and higher courses over a wide area, stretching from Harlech in the north to Llandeilo in the south and St Davids in the west.

Annwen coordinated the Summer Course, a residential course for Welsh learners of all standards, which takes place on Penglais Campus every summer, until she took early retirement in 2011.

She will be remembered as a highly motivated and conscientious person, who was extremely well-liked by all who came into contact with her. Her enthusiasm for the work she did was infectious.

Mrs Annwen Frost passed away on 10 September 2014, at the age of 67.

Professor Ivor Gowan (1922 – 2014)

Professor Ivor Gowan was Head of the Department of Political Science at Aberystwyth from 1965 to 1988, and Vice Principal for a period.

Ivor and his wife, Gwen, were devoted to the then University College of Wales, Aberystwyth and he played a large part in the governance of the College. He was greatly interested in devolution in Wales. He also played a substantial role in encouraging students from overseas to study at Aberystwyth.

Professor Ivor Gowan died on 8 August 2014 at the age of 92.

Professor David Gwilliam (1953 – 2014)



Professor Gwilliam worked for the University from 1978 until 1989, returning in 1992 when he was appointed to an Ernst and Young Chair. He remained here until he took a Chair at Exeter University where he was Head of Department until his retirement in October 2013.

He went up to Trinity College Cambridge in 1971, where he was awarded an Exhibition to read Economics. He would return to Cambridge, as a Fellow of Churchill College, following his qualification as a Chartered Accountant with Price Waterhouse.

Subsequently, he was a visiting professor at the London School of Economics and at Australia's Monash University (Melbourne) and a member of the Accounting & Finance Panel of the 2008 Research Assessment Exercise.

In 2013, he was awarded a Lifetime Achievement Award by the British Accounting & Finance Association, on whose Conference of Professors he had been a very active and influential member.

Professor David Robert Gwilliam passed away on 31 August 2014 aged 61 years.

Mariaine Victorine (Peggy) Jones (1948 – 2014)



Born in Belgium, Peggy started her career as a nurse training in Bronglais Hospital, Aberystwyth. She later took a degree in nursing in London and returned to Aberystwyth to take up the role of Matron in Bodlondob.

At a career crossroads, Peggy met Dr Kemp, the then Warden of Cwrt Mawr, who asked her if she would like to become 'a mother to 1,300 University students'. This fortuitous meeting prompted the start of her new and happy life as Residence Manager with the University.

Peggy retired after 16 years of service in 2007.

James, Mr Owain Richard, died July 2013, (Physics 2004)

Johnston, Dr Charlotte S*, née Ware, died June 2014, (Philosophy 1947, MA English 1948)

Jones, Mr Owen Evan, died February 2013, (1951)

Kabbah, Mr Alhaji Ahmad Tejan, died March 2014, (Economics 1959)

Lewis, Mrs Kathleen*, née Oldaker, died October 2013, (1948)

Lewis, Mrs Ann, née Harries, died January 2014, (Welsh, 1954)

Lindley, Professor Dennis, died December 2013, (Statistics staff 1960-1967)

Martin, Mr Raymond Joseph, died November 2013, (Economics 1972)

Millar, Mrs Freda*, née Poley, died June 2014, (1952)

Morris, Mr John Rhys Oakley, died March 2013, (Latin, 1938)

Pritchard, Mrs Lilian Mary*, née Roylance, died January 2014, (History 1956)

Prothero, Professor Ralph Mansell*, died December 2013, (Geography 1945, MA 1947)

Roberts, Mr Daniel, died April 2013, (Education, 1974)

Roberts, Mr Brian Guest*, died January 2014, (Physics 1956)

Samuel, Mr Michael Robert, died April 2014, (English, 1998)

Smith, Mrs Elinor Gwenda, née Jones, died May 2013, (French 1951)

Sullivan, Mr Gordon David*, died September 2014, (Agricultural Botany 1948)

Thomas, Mr John Rees, died November 2013, (International Politics, 1980 and 1984)

Thomas, Mr David Roy*, died April 2014, (1962)

Wilkinson, Mr Ted Levin*, died July 2014, (International Politics 1977)

Williams, Dr Vivian*, died March 2014, (Geography, 1952)

Williams, Mr John David Thomas*, died July 2014, (Zoology 1959)

Wilson, Professor David*, (PhD Agricultural Botany 1968)

Wootton, Dr Robert John, died March 2014, (Zoology staff)

Yeoman, Dr Glyndwr, died February 2014, (Chemistry 1949, PhD 1952)

Dr Richard Kemp (1941 – 2014)



Richard Kemp had a long and successful career in Aberystwyth University in the biological sciences, beginning in 1962 as an undergraduate student of zoology, continuing in the Zoology Department as successively postgraduate, lecturer and senior

lecturer before becoming a Reader in Zoology until his retirement from IBERS. His main field of research was in the cancer-related problems of the adhesion of animal cells and later in the heat output of individual cells monitored by microcalorimetry. Away from his academic work he held office for lengthy periods as Treasurer of Bryamlwg Social Club and as Warden of Cwrt Mawr hall of residence.

Outside the University, Richard was a keen cricket enthusiast and umpire. More recently joint work with labs in Georgia, the Crimea and Russia led his colleagues there to organise ambitious passages down the Volga River and across the Black Sea to Sevastopol on the slow boat from Istanbul.

His achievements were despite severe disablement since boyhood.

Graham Lloyd Rees

It is with sadness that we note the death of Professor Graham Lloyd Rees, former head of the Economics Department and Vice Principal of the University.

Dr Boris Mitavskiy (1976 – 2014)



Dr Boris Mitavskiy came to the University in 2011 as a Research Assistant in Evolutionary Computation, funded by the EPSRC, within the Department of Computer Science.

He obtained his PhD in Mathematics from the University of Michigan following the completion of his BS in Mathematics undertaken at Arizona State University.

Dr Mitavskiy previously held positions within the Universities of Sheffield, Birmingham and the A* Bioinformatics Institute in Singapore. Boris, together with two other authors, won the best paper in the year award in 2009 from the International Journal on Intelligent Computing and Cybernetics.

During his time at Aberystwyth, he worked on the Evolutionary Approximation Algorithms for Optimization: Algorithm Design and Complexity Analysis project, jointly with partners at the University of Birmingham; focusing on designing and analysing evolutionary approximation algorithms for hard optimization problems like scheduling and routing, bringing traditional theoretical computer science and evolutionary computation together.

Dr Boris Mitavskiy died on 10 July 2014, aged 38.

Michael John (Mike) O'Hara (1933 – 2014)



Professor Michael O'Hara FRSE, FLSW, FRS, was former Professor of Geology and Head of Department at Aberystwyth.

Mike O'Hara was one of the leading petrologists of his generation. It has been said

that modern igneous petrology and geochemistry would not be the same without Mike's many discoveries, creative efforts and deep insights. He pioneered the use of experimental and theoretical petrology to unravel the processes involved in the formation of the ocean crust from the underlying mantle. He was also one of the original Apollo scientists who investigated the rocks returned from the Moon. He was awarded the Murchison Medal of the Geological Society of London and both the N L Bowen and Hess Medals of the American Geophysical Union.

Mike O'Hara's scientific success lay in his vision and an approach that did not follow bandwagons but continually challenged tradition and authority. He was a likeable and approachable man who hid his great scholarship and intense concern about the subject under a veneer of humour. Many Earth Scientists worldwide owe much to his unstinting encouragement and advice. He will be much missed.

David Rickard

David Williams (1973 – 2014)



David Williams worked as a Language Tutor in the School of Management and Business, where colleagues paid the following tribute: "David joined SMB at a crucial time as it was preparing for its re-accreditation by the Association of MBAs. A critical component of this accreditation was English language support for the many international students.

His work on a new support structure for SMB's international students was explicitly recognised in AMBA's positive report on the School. David's education and prior experience in business and economics made him an ideal tutor for our students.

He was a complete professional and showed incredible fortitude in working through several rounds of chemotherapy. David was a well-liked and respected member of the SMB community and will be greatly missed."

Robert John Wootton (1942 – 2014)



A native of Birmingham, Bob took his first degree at Cambridge University, followed by a PhD at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver. His long career in research and teaching started in the Department of Zoology here in Aberystwyth and

ended on his retirement as a Reader at IBERS.

Bob was renowned internationally for his research on fish, particularly sticklebacks. He was the author of many papers and several books in this area and was elected to Fellowship of the Linnean Society. In 2010 he was awarded the Le Cren Medal of the Fisheries Society of the British Isles. He was fully committed to teaching and was instrumental in establishing the innovative degree courses then known as Environmental Science and Aquatic Biology. Their successors, Environmental Biosciences and Marine & Freshwater Biology, continue to attract students to IBERS.



Bethan Gwanas

HOME FROM HOME: PANTYCELYN IN THE 1980s

Although the memories are a little misty by now, I do remember quite a lot of the three years I spent in Pantycelyn between 1980 and 1984 (the more mathematically inclined among you will have noticed that there are actually four years between 80 and 84, but I was studying French, so my third year was in France, tu vois).

The name 'Pantycelyn' brings back the smell of disinfectant; the ringing of payphones (which took 10p pieces) on the ground floor, phones which would ring and ring until some poor fool answered and who would then have to trot up and down the stairs for ages looking for the caller's son/daughter/boyfriend/girlfriend; endless queues for the three payphones on Sunday nights and groans when the people in front asked to reverse the charges, as that meant the call would last 30 minutes or more; even longer queues for the baths and the ritual of looking for a plug, as the boys liked to steal the girls' plugs for some reason. They also liked to fill a bath with freezing cold water and throw some innocent victim into it, fully clothed. Oh, that was so very entertaining.

I still remember the thrill of seeing letters in my pigeonhole in the *lolfa* (common room), big, thick envelopes with handwritten letters from friends and family, letters which were so much more interesting and satisfying than any text or Facebook message; the sound of *Stondin Sulwyn* and *Galw Gari*, on Radio Cymru emanating through doors on weekdays and *Sosban* with Richard Rees on Saturdays; passing choir rehearsals and coming out in goose pimples, and a full *lolfa* watching *Grange Hill* in the afternoons.

Oh, and I remember the Space Invaders and Pacman machines in the pool room next to the *lolfa*. I dread to think how many hours, no, days, and 10p pieces I spent on

those. I was a Space Invaders addict. I was so competitive, so determined to get top score and beat Huw Chambers. Unfortunately, I was shooting 'Invaders' when I should have been writing essays, even when I should have been sitting exams, and I was brought before the Dean at the end of my first year. I managed – by the skin of my teeth – to persuade him that I would give up the game of the devil and work much harder and that I really didn't deserve to be made to redo the first year. Phew.

The Welsh language magazine *Llais y Lli* would appear every term, full of photos and interesting articles – some better written than others, and sometimes, anonymous authors would print an A4 sheet called *Sŵn Drwg*, which was basically a list of scandal and gossip, sometimes funny and sometimes extremely vicious: some of the comments were so libellous, the authors would have been dragged into court if they tried it today.

I remember reading and sunbathing on the parapet on sunny days, and gazing at the sunset over Ceredigion bay from the window of the large single room I had in my final year, when I had returned from France, a wiser, more mature person who had learnt that there was so much more to life than going to the pub. Until somebody said: "Coops? Half-five?"

I relish the memories of chats with the girls the morning after a 'sesh', all of us squashed into one small bedroom in our pyjamas, nursing mugs of tea and coffee, giggling, shrieking and blushing furiously as we were reminded or enlightened of the previous evening's drunken adventures.

But I also relish the memory of writing poems and stories for the annual Inter-College Eisteddfod, of singing *cerdd dant* with all my heart and soul under the tutelage of Bethan Bryn, of dressing up as a cat in a leather jacket for some

Noson Lawen competition, of performing the splits in a comedy sketch (until the night I tore my hamstring), and of listening with eyes like saucers to one of our warden, Dr John Davies, Bwlchllan's amazing speeches, and to Hywel Teifi, when he was speaker at our Christmas Dinner, before things became somewhat crazy and the smell of disinfectant swept through the corridors again the following morning.

Yes, we were often silly; yes, I'm glad some bits are still misty; but I learnt so much about life and people, about our country, our language and our culture, and I remember it all with a smile. ■



KICKING THE BAR

The ballad of the sad café | Russell Davies

Suppose you expect a story? So, I am sorry to disappoint you. This isn't really a story. There is no real beginning, middle or end. It isn't divided into the trinity of sections so beloved to, and belaboured by, nineteenth century nonconformist ministers. It relates simply to the day, as a student at Aberystwyth in 1977, when I met the future.

I started off intending to go to a lecture in Old College (honestly, Professor Ieuan Gwynedd Jones) but, as ever, there was a fatal distraction.

It was one of those crisp, still mornings of translucent beauty when winter refuses to surrender to spring. The sea was a flat, even sky-blue, with straggling streaks of a bluish-black, like dark veins that moved sensually, as in a slow oriental dance. So rather than head for the Old College, I turned into a café – appropriately called 'Y Dewin' (The Magician).

The café was new and had the promise of conviviality, civility and camaraderie of the table which predicted the venture's success. Then the one factor that would surely secure it – the waitress, one of the most exquisitely beautiful creatures I have ever seen. An *object d'art*. Jaw lower than my bell-bottoms, I gazed in awe at transcendent, pneumatic beauty. An angel flew by, very slowly, as I tried to re-establish my equilibrium and sangfroid (cruel friends say I never had them to lose). It was the unbearable awkwardness of being. Then in a voice like a nightingale's, or soft spring rain, she spoke to me. She spoke to me. OK, it was just to ask if I wanted anything to drink. But she spoke to me. I ordered coffee. "And to eat?". As she handed me the menu, it was then that I met the future.

The menu might well have been written in Swahili or north Walian. It bore no resemblance to any food I had ever encountered. Those were the days when the pinnacle of haute cuisine in our area was a sausage-roll, or lard on toast, or a bantam-in-the-bucket in the lounge if you were posh. This prescient fare was a mix of bistro / brasserie / fusion / fast casual / Mongolian BBQ / Teppanyaki. Herbs! – they put herbs in the food. It was an epicurean wonder, straight out of a twenty first century Glyndebourne picnic hamper. But this was 1977.

Even after all these years, I can still feel an emotional, almost physical point of contact, of frisson with that moment. If time travel is possible, then this is probably my best chance of getting through a worm-hole into the past, to cross the Einstein-Rosen Bridge to the X-men days of future past. Weird as it sounds I feel I can almost talk to that youth that I once was at that point in time.

What should I say to myself? What would you say to your younger self? After 38 years in the basement of the Ivory Tower, what have I learnt? What pearls of wisdom would I wish to share? How about:

'Enjoy the beauty and power of your youth, you will miss them when they are gone.'



or

'Remember these numbers they will be useful on 19.11.1994 – 30, 3, 5, 44, 14, 22 and 10.'

or

'The raindrops that keep falling on your head are acid: they are killing the fish, the trees and the animals – and will eventually hit you even closer to home, for your hair is going to disappear.'

One is never short of advice, usually of biblical origin, but people often add flippant asides; "Jesus saves" – "but Keegan scores on the rebound"; "An eye for an eye" – "makes the world go blind". Graffiti is another source of wisdom, for the words of the prophets are written on the toilet walls; "In the land of the blind the one-eyed man is king"; "If at first you don't succeed, skydiving might not be for you".

Proverbs provide even more advice, whether of a spiritual or a secular nature, but it is always contrary. A man rich in such lore, like Sancho Panza, can always find a venerable maxim to fortify the view he happens to be taking. On foresight, we are told: 'Make hay while the sun shines'; 'A stitch in time saves nine'; 'Woe unto you, ye hypocrites.' But the same authorities provide the opposite maxims, suggesting that moral prudence is fallible, for we hear 'A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush'; 'Carpe diem'; 'Enough of the day is evil thereof.' Or the wonderful Welsh advice: '*cos din taog: efe a gach yn dy ddwrn*' (tickle a serf's bottom, he will s**t in your fist).

There is little use pretending; "What's bred in the bone.....". Memory recalls champagne, but in the reality of the moment we drank still cider. Even if I could speak over the gulf of time; even if the younger I could have seen a little silhouette of a man who had travelled from his future to share some advice, I'm pretty sure I know what the younger I would have done: smile politely, stare at the waitress and ignore all advice (even the numbers) for I had seen the future in 1977 in Aberystwyth in the sad café.

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