

THE INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF WELSH ESTATES (ISWE)



College of Arts and Humanities
Bangor University

Autumn 2016

INTRODUCING THE INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF WELSH ESTATES

The Institute for the Study of Welsh Estates (ISWE) has been established as an innovative interdisciplinary research centre at Bangor University. Our mission is to support research based on the vast archival and cultural heritage collections generated by landed families and estates over centuries, to provide new insights into the history of Wales.

We believe that this research has an important role to play in contemporary Welsh society, adding cultural value to historic houses and heritage sites throughout the nation. We are committed to working in partnership and collaboration with a range of external stakeholders towards the goal of making Wales an exemplar for heritage tourism.

- **Innovative research**
- **Outstanding collections**
- **Partnership and engagement**
- **Cultural value**

Landed estates have formed an important part of Welsh life for centuries. Since their emergence in medieval times it was in and around estates that much of the social, cultural, political, economic and industrial fabric of Wales was stitched together. The impacts of estates on the history of the nation have been profound.

Almost every part of the Welsh landscape has at some

point or another been influenced and shaped by the priorities of an estate: from country houses with their parks, gardens and outbuildings to farms, cottages, churches, roads, fields, woodlands and walls to industrial sites such as mines and quarries.

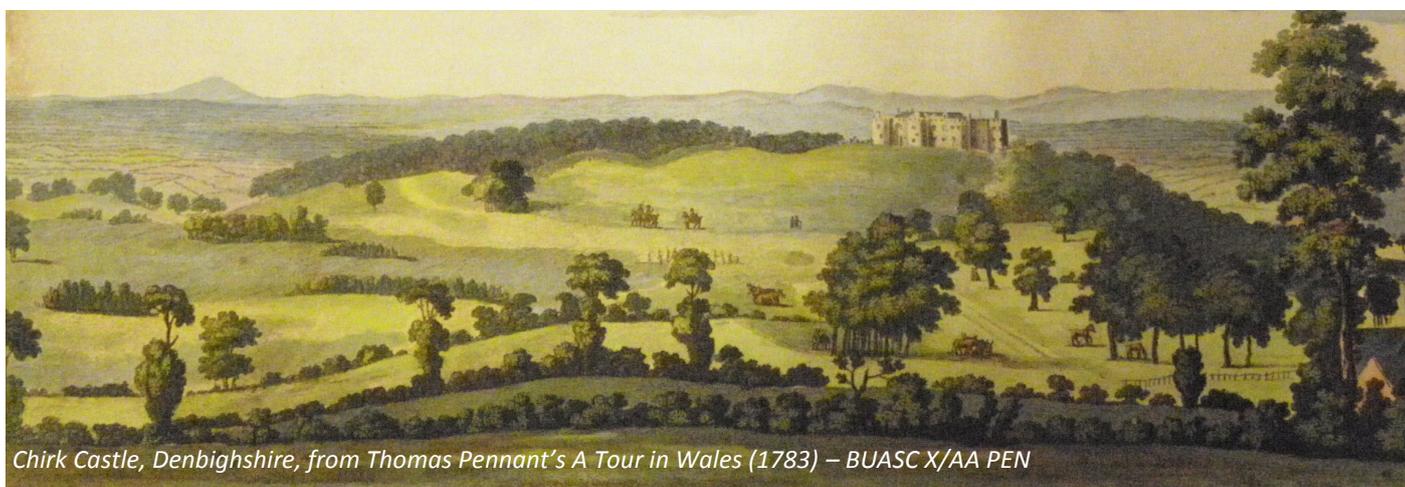
ISWE aspires to emerge as a fresh intellectual presence in the life of Wales, by developing into a national collaborative hub for coordinating research into the history of Wales, through the lenses provided by estates.

The following principles guide much of our work:

Innovative research:

ISWE exists to energise research focused on the historical dimensions of estates, land use, rural life, country houses and gentry culture on an all-Wales basis. In pursuing this agenda we are positioned to fill a conspicuous gap in Welsh historical scholarship, supporting a vibrant programme of collections-based projects which have the potential to animate and challenge understandings of Welsh history, culture and identity.

This research profile will be driven by a vibrant multidisciplinary team of doctoral, early career and more established researchers. Our projects are underpinned by the incredibly rich heritage generated by Welsh estates over the course of their existence, including archives, landscapes, architecture, literature and a variety of visual and material culture. Much of this evidence remains under-researched, providing fertile ground for innovative analysis and new findings.



Chirk Castle, Denbighshire, from Thomas Pennant's A Tour in Wales (1783) – BUASC X/AA PEN

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Outstanding collections:

Bangor is uniquely well-placed to host ISWE. Within the University we operate as a lively partnership between the *College of Arts and Humanities* and *Archives and Special Collections* department. Our archives house one of the nation’s most extensive and significant collections of family and estate papers, providing an outstanding platform for innovative collections-based projects.

The National Library of Wales and many of the county record offices in Wales also hold significant archival collections relating to estates. We are committed to working with the archive sector in Wales to fully unlock the research potential of these materials and ensure that the collections are as accessible as possible.

Partnership and engagement:

We are committed to being an outward-looking research centre. This involves forming partnerships with organisations outside the university, to develop projects and initiatives which will deliver mutual and far-reaching benefits. Whether it be working with the custodians of Wales’ country houses and estates, linking up with local and national cultural heritage organisations, or forming joint projects with other universities, collaboration is at the core of everything we do.

Cultural value:

We are passionate about making a contribution towards the understanding, communication and enrichment of Welsh history and heritage; a heritage which we believe should play an integral part in society, today and into the future.

As we discover, investigate and unravel the histories of Welsh estates we want to ensure that our findings and experiences are widely shared and easily accessible.

We will continue to develop an exciting programme of public events for communities across the length and breadth of Wales.

ISWE is also committed to working with partners to enhance the cultural heritage profile of rural Wales. Our research can play a significant role in enhancing the visitor experience at a variety of heritage sites - bringing to life country house collections and explaining the stories behind features in the landscape. ISWE’s ambition for Wales is to become an exemplar for rural heritage tourism.

To find out more about ISWE, visit <http://iswe.bangor.ac.uk>.

INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF WELSH ESTATES



BANGOR UNIVERSITY



THE NATIONAL HUB FOR CO-ORDINATING RESEARCH INTO THE HISTORY OF WALES, THROUGH THE LENSES PROVIDED BY LANDED ESTATES

- COLLECTIONS-BASED
- PARTNERSHIP AND COLLABORATION
- RESEARCH EXCELLENCE
- AMBITION AND INNOVATION
- INTERDISCIPLINARITY
- OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT
- REASSESSING ASSUMPTIONS AND INSPIRING DEBATE

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BANGOR UNIVERSITY PROFILE

University Mission Statement:

A strong, confident institution recognised regionally, nationally and internationally as a centre of excellence for its varied portfolio of teaching and research, and for the unique, multicultural, inclusive experience it provides for its staff and students.

Bangor University was founded in October 1884 as a direct result of a campaign in the late-19th century for higher education provision in Wales.

Funds were raised by public subscription to establish a college of university rank in north Wales. The University was originally based in the Penrhyn Arms Hotel, built in 1799 by Benjamin Wyatt, architect for the nearby Penrhyn Estate. An important feature underpinning its foundation was the voluntary contributions made by local people, including farmers and quarrymen, from their weekly wages over a period of time.

Bangor University has a long tradition of excellence and exceeds expectations, both for academic standards and student experience. We now have over 11,000 students and over 650 teaching staff based in 23 Academic Schools, grouped into five Colleges.

Bangor has a strong research base across a spectrum of academic disciplines. We are in the top 40 in the UK for research (excluding specialist institutions and single-submission universities). The Research Excellence Framework (REF) 2014 - the most recent assessment of research quality - recognised that more than three-quarters of Bangor's research is either world-leading or internationally excellent, ahead of the average for UK universities.

Over half of Bangor's academic Schools have been ranked in the UK top 20 for quality of research. As well as supporting links with commercial and industrial bodies in the UK and overseas, the University also aims to be responsive to local and regional needs and is particularly conscious of its north Wales location and role as a research resource and a training base for Wales.

The latest National Student Survey (NSS) results reflects the University's focus on student experience. The results – released August 2016 – place Bangor amongst the UK's top 15 universities for overall student satisfaction (excluding specialist institutions). The Pontio Arts & Innovation Centre is a new social hub for students as well as a centre for learning, innovation and the performing arts. As well as being the new home for our Students' Union, it houses a theatre, cinema, lecture theatres, exhibition spaces, bar and cafés.

The location, the scenery and the surrounding area are amongst the reasons why many of our students and colleagues choose to come to Bangor. Located in the heart of Gwynedd, Bangor is on the doorstep of many of the region's prime attractions, including the Isle of Anglesey and Snowdonia National Park.



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NEWS

GRADUATION SUCCESS FOR 'MOSTYN PROJECT' STUDENT

Many congratulations to Dr Sam Garland who graduated at Bangor this summer (July 2016) after finalising his PhD project, which was based on the collection of manuscript newsletters sent to Sir Thomas Mostyn of Gloddaith in the late-17th century. Sam's research formed part of the '[Mostyn Project](#)', which aims to unlock the research potential of the collections generated by the Mostyn family and estate, over centuries.

Sam undertook his doctorate within the [School of History, Welsh History and Archaeology](#), under the supervision of Prof Tony Claydon.

His thesis is entitled 'News in late-Seventeenth Century Britain' and can be consulted in the University Library. Further information on Sam's

research can be found in Issue 1 of the [ISWE Newsletter](#).

We wish Sam every success for the future.



NEW BOARDS ESTABLISHED TO GUIDE ISWE'S DEVELOPMENT

During 2016 ISWE has been busy developing its institutional profile and structure. This has included the establishment of an external Advisory Board, which met for the first time in April.

The Board comprises community members who share an interest in the development of ISWE into a rigorous academic entity, capable of making significant contributions towards Welsh society and culture.

June witnessed the first meeting of ISWE's Steering Group, which brings together academic colleagues from right across the University to discuss research initiatives of relevance to the centre's interests. Members of both groups will act as ambassadors for the centre and will play an important role in underpinning ISWE's ongoing development.

VISIT TO MAYNOOTH, IRELAND, JUNE 2016

In early June ISWE's Project Manager enjoyed an informative visit to the [Centre for the Study of Historic Irish Houses and Estates](#) based at Maynooth University.

The success of the Irish centre, spearheaded by Prof Terence Dooley and Dr Ciarán Reilly, provided much of the inspiration for the establishment of a Welsh equivalent in Bangor. During the visit Dr Evans learnt about the various projects, relationships and events which have allowed the Centre to emerge as such an innovative intellectual presence in the life of Ireland.

The visit also provided an opportunity to see Dr Reilly's outstanding exhibition entitled

'1916 and the Irish Country House', which provided a unique insight to the lives of Irish 'Big House' families and how they were affected by war in Europe and rebellion at home in 2016.



EXHIBITION: 'VISITORS AND TRAVELLERS TO NORTH WALES'

2016 has been officially earmarked as a 'Year of Adventure' in Wales. To celebrate this theme the [University Archives and Special Collections](#) compiled an exhibition of archival material which reflects the long history of travel to the region, often facilitated by the hospitality offered at country houses. The exhibition will be on display in the Council Chamber Corridor of the Main Arts Building in Bangor University until 16 December 2016.



HISTORY FIELDTRIPS TO NATIONAL TRUST PROPERTIES ENRICH STUDENT LEARNING EXPERIENCE

Third year undergraduate students enrolled on the *Land and Power in England and Wales c.1780-1888* special subject module had the opportunity to visit [Penrhyn Castle](#) and [Plas Newydd](#) this spring.



Dr Lowri Ann Rees, the module convenor, organises field trips to the nearby National Trust properties each year. This provides a fantastic

opportunity for students to see examples of nationally significant country houses situated right here on our doorstep in north Wales and appreciate first-hand their role as symbols of power within local communities. Students marvelled at the scale of these buildings, and the opulent displays of wealth within. At Penrhyn Castle they saw the ornately-decorated grand hall, elaborate plasterwork along the grand staircase, the slate bed Queen Victoria reputedly refused to sleep in during her visit to North Wales, the exquisite art collection, and had the opportunity to wander through the corridors both upstairs and downstairs.

At Plas Newydd students found out more about the First Marquess of Anglesey, whose *Grand Tour* letters – deposited in Bangor University

Archives and Special Collections – they had been studying. In the military museum they were able to see the famous ‘Anglesey leg’, the artificial wooden leg worn by the Marquess following the loss of his leg at the Battle of Waterloo in 1815. In addition to the awe-inspiring views across the Menai Straits, the formal dining with its spectacular Rex Whistler mural was another highlight of the visit.



Plas Newydd, Anglesey

BANGOR CATALOGUING PROJECT OPENS UP ACCESS TO PENRHYN JAMAICA PAPERS

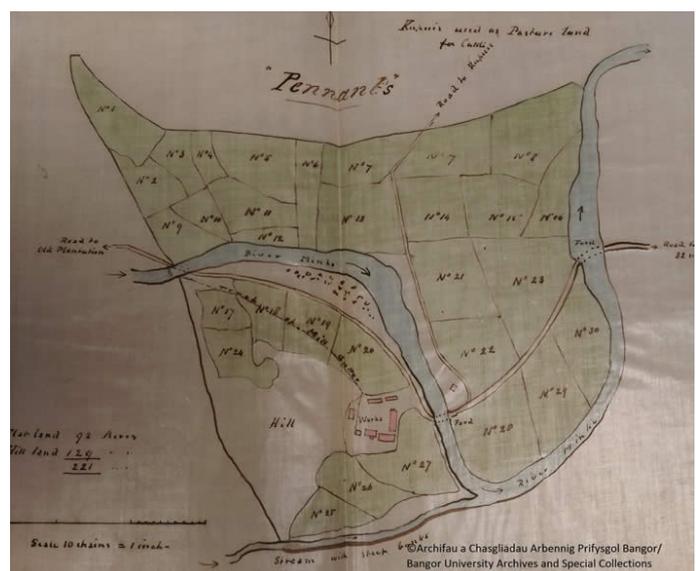
We are pleased to announce that the previously-uncatalogued Jamaica Papers, forming part of the Penrhyn Estate Collection at [Bangor University Archives and Special Collections](#), are now available for consultation in the archives reading room at Bangor University.

Project Archivist, Sarah Vaughan, has provided catalogue entries for all 372 items relating to the Pennant family’s involvement in Jamaica as part of the ‘[Sugar and Slate](#)’ cataloguing project, funded by the National Cataloguing Grants Scheme. The compilation of the catalogue has also necessitated the arrangement and categorisation of the papers, including complete re-numbering and re-packaging.

The Jamaica series is divided into six categories:

1. Deeds and Documents
2. Correspondence
3. Accounts
4. Reports and Surveys
5. Maps and Plans
6. Printed Material

The catalogue is now available to consult online, by visiting Bangor University Archives and Special Collections (www.bangor.ac.uk/library/archives).



Entries relating to all 47 lineal metres of previously-uncatalogued Penrhyn material, appertaining to all aspects of the estate, will be uploaded to the online catalogue over the forthcoming months.



EVENTS

'OPEN DOORS' AT WALES' COUNTRY HOUSES

ISWE was pleased to see that dozens of Welsh country houses and other important heritage sites opened their doors to the public this September as part of the annual [Open Doors initiative](#).



Organised by CADW, the Welsh Government's historic environment service, Open

Doors is a national celebration of Wales' architectural heritage, providing unique opportunities for both local residents and visitors from further afield to explore a range of historic sites free-of-charge.

Since its inception, Open Doors has highlighted the cultural significance

of country house heritage in communities right across Wales.

In addition to events held at country house sites, there have also been opportunities for visitors to learn about other aspects of estate heritage as historic churches and castles also participated in the programme, in addition to a number of archives, museums and libraries.

Erddig near Wrexham, one of the National Trust properties that participated in the scheme.



SIGNIFICANCE OF WELSH ESTATE ARCHIVES HIGHLIGHTED AT 'BIG REVEAL' SHOWCASE

In May, Elen Wyn Simpson, Head of Archives and Special Collections at Bangor University, attended [The Big Reveal](#), a conference which showcased collections made accessible by conservation. Held at the National Library of Wales, the conference was organised by the Wales Higher Education Libraries Forum (WHELF) and the Archives and Records Council Wales (ARCW). In her paper, delivered in collaboration with Chris Woods, Elen talked about the significance of the Penrhyn Estate Collection and the opportunities associated with making the papers more accessible through cataloguing and conservation initiatives.

The conference showcased the rich range of projects and initiatives

taking place in archives and record offices throughout Wales. This included a presentation by Flintshire Record Office on the recent conservation of the Erddig Family Book (Ref: FRO, D/E/1542), a volume compiled by Philip Yorke (1849-1922) of Erddig featuring over 500 documents from the family and estate archives dating from 17th-20th centuries. A full report on the conservation project can be found on the National trust website.

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/documents/abc-bulletin-winter-2015-2016.pdf

WELSH LAND AGENT RESEARCH PRESENTED AT NAASWCH CONFERENCE

In July Dr Lowri Ann Rees travelled Harvard University to participate in the biennial [North American Association for the Study of Welsh](#)

[Culture and History \(NAASWCH\)](#) conference.

Dr Rees delivered a paper based on her research into the life and role of the land agent in Wales. The paper further developed themes explored in an earlier conference co-organised by Dr Rees in October 2015 at Dundee University, entitled: *The Land Agent in Transnational Context*. This was co-organised with colleagues from the [Centre for Scotland's Land Futures](#) at the University of Dundee and the [Centre for the Study of Historic Irish Houses and Estates](#), Maynooth University. Dr Rees is currently working with these colleagues on a co-edited volume of essays stemming from this successful event.



HHA AGM SIGNIFIES VALUE OF WELSH COUNTRY HOUSE STUDIES



Dr Shaun Evans was delighted to give a presentation as guest speaker at the [Historic Houses Association's \(HHA\)](#) Wales AGM in June 2016. The meeting was held at the fantastic Gelli Aur / Golden Grove in Carmarthenshire, which is currently undergoing an ambitious restoration project.

As part of a broad outline of ISWE's strategy Dr Evans outlined the ways in which research can play an important role in providing the intellectual apparatus required for the development of Wales' country house heritage offer. He also confirmed that in order to succeed it would be essential for ISWE to develop close relationships with the owners and custodians of Wales' historic houses, not only for access to

the rich array of historical evidence which they may contain, but also because country houses that are open to the public provide fantastic opportunities for sharing research about the history of Wales with wider audiences.

In his introduction HHA Wales Chairman Mr Michael Tree highlighted the exciting potential of ISWE and heaped praise on Bangor University for supporting the initiative. He commented that it was impossible to articulate the history of Wales without making reference to the impact and influence of estates. He also pointed to the significance of the archival material generated by Welsh estates over recent decades, urging that steps should be put in place to ensure that these records – relating to a period of immense change in the long existence of estates in Wales – are preserved for future research, alongside the historical collections already available at local record offices throughout Wales.

In his concluding remarks HHA

President Mr Richard Compton identified the promising opportunities for ISWE to contribute to the organisation's cultural heritage policy, set out in the '[Heritage Means Business](#)' document. He said that HHA members in Yorkshire had benefited a great deal by supporting the aims and projects associated with the [Yorkshire Country House Partnership](#) and urged a similar collaborative approach in Wales. The event also provided an opportunity to visit Cwrt Henri and [Stradey Castle](#) where Dr Evans was able to discuss ISWE's future development with HHA members.



ISWE OUT AND ABOUT

So far, 2016 has been a busy year for the ISWE team. Nia Powell attended the [Cambrian Archaeological Association's](#) Spring Conference earlier this year, which had as its theme the 'Historic Woodland and Parkland in Wales'. ISWE was also pleased to be present at the National Library of Wales for the inaugural [Wales Map Symposium](#) in May.

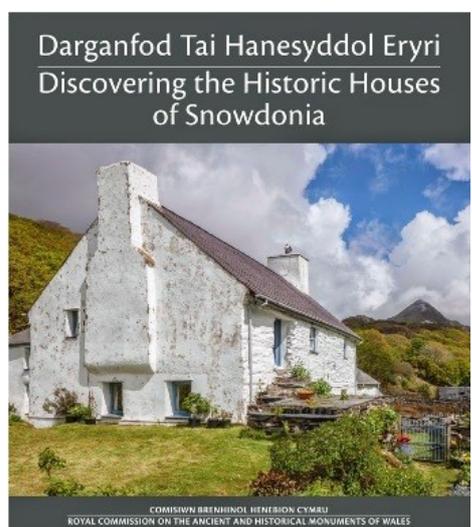
In April Dr Lowri Ann Rees delivered a talk on local landed estates to the North Wales branch of the [Johnian Society](#) who were visiting Bangor University as part of their annual pilgrimage, which also included visits to the homes of two Johnians who hailed from North Wales: Bishop

William Morgan (1545-1604) and Archbishop John Williams (1582-1650).

In June Dr Shaun Evans travelled to Llandrillo in Edeirnon to give a guest lecture as part of the [Discovering Old Welsh Houses Group's \(DOWHG\)](#) AGM. Many DOWHG members had researched Welsh estates and their archives as part of the community archaeology project underpinning the production of the [Discovering the Historic Houses of Snowdonia](#) publication and were interested to hear about ISWE's aims and aspirations.

Earlier in the year Dr Evans was also invited to speak to members of the Edeyrnion Historical Society about his

research into the historical impact of the Mostyn family and estate.





EVENTS

CONFERENCES AND SYMPOSIA ROUNDUP 2016

ISWE was delighted to support the inaugural event of Research Centre Wales in early June. Research Centre Wales is an embryonic interdisciplinary initiative which aims to add greater coordination to the rich range of arts and humanities research at Bangor University focused on Wales and Welsh identity. This first event took the form of a two-day colloquium entitled [Wales: In Search of Heritage](#).

In June Dr Lowri Ann Rees presented a paper at the ESRC-funded workshop [Sojourners, Economic Migrants, Expats: Temporary Migrations in Global Perspective](#) at Northumbria University. Lowri's paper focused on her ongoing research into Welsh sojourners to

India, specifically men who had travelled to India in the service of the East India Company during the late-18th and early-19th centuries. Of those men fortunate enough to return home to Wales, some went about utilising their newly-acquired riches to purchase land and property. Dr Rees' paper will be appearing in extended form as a forthcoming article entitled 'Welsh sojourners to India: the East India Company, networks and patronage, c.1760-1840'.

Earlier in the year Dr Shaun Evans travelled to Somerville College, Oxford to take part in a three-day international conference analysing issues of [Dynasty and Dynasticism, 1400-1700](#). Dr Evans gave a paper focusing on heirlooms, heraldry and hauntings, which demonstrated how members of the Mostyn family

constructed a dynastic image across the 16th and 17th centuries, through their establishment of an heirloom tradition centred on certain items of silver plate, including the [Mostyn Ewer and Basin](#) (now at the National Museum of Wales) and the [Mostyn Salts](#) (now at the V&A).



The Mostyn Flasks, 1610 (Copyright: Temple Newsam, Leeds)

PRESENTATION HIGHLIGHTS CULTURAL HERITAGE POTENTIAL OF RURAL WALES

ISWE's Project Manager was delighted to be invited to Llandrindod Wells to speak at the [Country Land and Business Association's \(CLA\)](#) Polisi Cymru meeting in early June. The CLA is a membership organisation which provides advice and representation for all sectors of the rural economy.

In his presentation, Dr Shaun Evans provided an introduction to ISWE's aims and ambitions and in particular, highlighted how research into the history of estates can make a positive difference to the economic vibrancy of rural Wales. Reflecting on the importance of tourism to the Welsh economy, he urged that rural Wales should strive to develop into

an exemplar for heritage tourism, through the creation of an outstanding visitor experience offer. Dr Evans commented that the research produced by ISWE can play a role in identifying, analysing and articulating the rich histories embedded in the Welsh landscapes and their associated built environments to new and wider audiences.

After the presentation Dr Evans took questions and comments from the Polisi Cymru group, comprising the Chair and Director of CLA Cymru and the Chairs of the four regional branch committees in Wales, which represent over 3,500 members, including land owners, farmers and a wide variety of rural businesses. ISWE looks forward to working in partnership with such stakeholders

to develop projects which will help heighten the cultural value of Welsh landscapes.





FORTHCOMING EVENTS

INAUGURAL NORTH AMERICAN MEETING, OCTOBER 2016

ISWE are looking forward to visiting the US in October for a special showcase event at Harvard University.

Friends, academic colleagues and alumni will join us for a reception at the Harvard Faculty Club, where Vice-Chancellor Prof. John G. Hughes will speak about recent developments at Bangor, including the establishment of the Institute for the Study of Welsh Estates. This provides a fantastic opportunity to promote ISWE's aspirations to new and wider

audiences and is very much in line with our outlook on stimulating international interest in Wales and its history.

The reception will run alongside the 36th Annual [Harvard Celtic Colloquium](#), which will feature papers from ISWE colleagues. We are delighted that many members of our Advisory Board will be joining us on the visit to partake in the promotional activities.

A full write-up the event will feature in the next edition of the newsletter.

ARCHIVES AND SPECIAL COLLECTIONS ANNUAL LECTURE NOVEMBER 2016

The 2016 Bangor University Archives and Special Collections Lecture will be delivered by Dr Marian Gwyn on the subject of 'The Pennants of Penrhyn in Jamaica: Power, Profit and People'.

The lecture will take place at 5.30pm, Wednesday 2 November 2016 in the Eric Sunderland Lecture Theatre, Bangor University.

All are welcome to attend.

ISWE SEMINAR SERIES 2016-17

Everyone associated with ISWE is looking forward to the next series of ISWE Research Seminars which starts this October. Previous seminars have focused on issues such as contemporary estate management, the tenant experience and the performance of lordship in 16th century Wales.

For the opening of the 2016/17 session we look forward to welcoming Bettina Harden MA, former Chair of the [Welsh Historic Gardens Trust](#) and Executive Member of the [Georgian Group](#). The fashioning of the landscape surrounding country houses represented an important means for the Welsh gentry to promote their status, wealth and identity. Bettina will be talking about the development of garden taste and style across Wales, in a richly-illustrated presentation based on a forthcoming book. 'All these enchanting scenes' is not to be missed.

In November Dr Elizabeth Green will be joining us to talk about the

National Trust's approach towards presenting and promoting the country house and estate heritage of Wales. Liz has responsibility for the curation and conservation of [National Trust properties in Wales](#) and will demonstrate the role that collaborative research can play in enhancing the visitor experience at sites such as Chirk Castle, Erddig, Plas Newydd, Powis Castle, and of course nearby Penrhyn. Our partners at the [Thames Valley Country House Partnership](#) (based at Oxford University) have recently started an exciting long-term initiative with the National Trust, entitled '[Trusted Source](#)' which we are very keen to replicate in Wales.

In the New Year [Dr Lloyd Bowen](#) of Cardiff University will be travelling to Bangor to talk about his research into 'religion, status and honour in Jacobean Flintshire'. Earlier in his career Lloyd undertook some excellent research into the household accounts of Sir Thomas Aubrey of Llantrithyd, Glamorganshire. His latest project focuses on north east Wales and in particular the intense rivalry

which developed between the Morgans of Gwylgre / Golden Grove and the Egertons of Egerton and Oulton in Cheshire following the death of Piers Mostyn of Talacre in 1606. Featuring duals, stolen hawks and plenty of insults, this lively case study provides one of the most vivid insights into the mindsets and values of the 17th century gentry.

These seminars are open to the public - come along and you will receive a warm welcome!

Further information on the seminars, including dates, times and locations can be found on the back page of this newsletter and on the [Events](#) section of our website.



Gwylgre (Golden Grove) in Llanasa, Flintshire



ISWE'S PUBLIC SYMPOSIUM 2016



'RECONSIDERING THE GENTRY OF NORTH EAST WALES'

ISWE held its 2016 public symposium on Saturday, 25 June. Organised in collaboration with the [North East Wales Heritage Forum \(NEWHF\)](#) and the [Flintshire Historical Society](#), the one-day event showcased research into the historical influence, impact and interests of landed families and estates across the Denbighshire, Flintshire and Wrexham region.



Hosted at [Mostyn Hall](#) in Flintshire, one of the most characterful country houses in Wales, the day comprised a series of ten short presentations on a variety of themes relating to Welsh estates, extending from music, poetry and literature through to politics, archives, parks and gardens. The proceedings were opened by ISWE Project Manager, Dr Shaun Evans, who commented on the rich insights estates can provide into the history of Wales, before attempting

'a history of the Mostyn family in one object' in a short paper which analysed the design and presentation of a (now missing) candelabrum, which was created as a testimonial to Edward Mostyn Lloyd-Mostyn (1795-1884) in 1843.

In the first session of papers, Sarah Ward, a DPhil student at St. Catherine's College, Oxford, reflected on her doctoral research into gentry culture and royalism, religion and revolution in north east Wales between 1640 and 1688, with a rich case study centred on the Davies family of Gwysaney, near Mold. Sarah is due to complete her thesis towards the end of this year. She was followed by Dr Sally Harper, Senior Lecturer in Music at Bangor University. Sally's paper provided a fascinating insight into music, drama and entertainment in the gentry houses of Elizabethan Wales, through an analysis centred on the rare 'tune list' of John Salusbury of Lleweni (1566-1612), dated c.1595. The wonderful sound recordings which accompanied the presentation could not have found a more fitting stage than the old great hall of Mostyn! To end the morning session, The Venerable T.W. Pritchard, Vice-President of the Flintshire Historical Society, provided an account of his time as curate at Ruabon in the 1960s, where his long interest in local

history was initiated through an exploration of the Wynnstay archive and an intrigue for the influence of the Sir Watkin Williams-Wynns



John Salusbury of Lleweni (Watercolour by Moses Griffiths after the original portrait)

The second session of the day was started by Dr Mary Chadwick, Research Assistant on the Anne Clifford Project at the University of Huddersfield. Mary's paper put forward the idea of 'manuscript poetry as social media', demonstrating how members of the Griffiths family of Garn (near Henllan) utilised and shared manuscript poetry as a means of promoting their



status and identity, within a 'social network' across the period c.1770-1810. Mary was followed by Spencer Gavin Smith, a PhD student based at Manchester Metropolitan University who is writing a thesis entitled 'Parks, Gardens and Designed Landscapes of Medieval North Wales and North West Shropshire'. Spencer's lively presentation highlighted a selection of the medieval deer parks he has located during the course of his research. He also provided a fascinating interpretation of the estate surrounding Owain Glyndŵr's court at Sycharth through an approach with applied archaeological analysis of the landscape to the vivid literary description provided by Welsh poet Iolo Goch (fl. 1345-1397). To conclude the second session, Helen Williams-Ellis, a PhD student in the School of Welsh at Bangor and member of ISWE's Advisory Board, delivered a paper focusing on the various ways in which Katheryn of Berain (d.1591) and her second husband Richard Clough (c.1530-70) had sought to present themselves to the world, through both image and writing. Further information on Helen's research into Katheryn of Berain can be found in a separate article featured in this newsletter.

Dr Paul R. Evans, Editor of the Flintshire Historical Society Journal started the final session with an overview of the history of nearby Downing Hall, the home of the famous literary squire [Thomas Pennant \(1726-98\)](#), which was partially destroyed by fire in the early -20th Century and afterwards left derelict until it was demolished in 1953. This focus on country house architecture continued into the next paper as Dr Mark Baker, Chair of the [Gwrych Castle Preservation Trust](#) and the heritage charity '[Love My Wales](#)', provided an introduction to his

forthcoming research into 'the houses of the Alyn Valley'. Ms Nia Powell concluded the papers with an intriguing presentation entitled 'swallowed up whole', which tracked the fortunes of a minor Flintshire estate and made the important point that many Welsh estates, of varying size, were often consumed by larger neighbours; a situation highlighted by the composite nature of large estate collections such as the Mostyn papers.



The three sessions were chaired by Dr Lowri Ann Rees and Mr Stephen Rees (both members of ISWE's Steering Group) and Mr Einion Wyn Thomas (former University Archivist and member of ISWE's Advisory Board). Their sharp timekeeping meant that we concluded just in time to see Wales progress in the football!

Mr Richard Thomas, Chairman of the Flintshire Historical Society provided the closing remarks.

We offer our sincere thanks to Lord Mostyn, the staff at Mostyn Hall and Mostyn Estates Ltd. for their generous hospitality. We were delighted that the occasion provided an opportunity for attendees to see part of the Mostyn Hall collection, including the famous silver harp associated with the 16th century Caerwys eisteddfodau, which was put on display. The event was very well attended, with all tickets selling out in just over a week. We apologise to anybody who missed out on this occasion. Everyone associated with ISWE was delighted with the symposium and we intend to hold similar public events, in other parts of Wales, in the future.

To receive notifications of future events please visit the events page of our website or sign up to our mailing list by emailing iswe@bangor.ac.uk.





CURRENT PROJECTS

THE WELSH TITHE WAR – A STUDY IN AGRARIAN DISCONTENT

by **SIÔN EDWARD JONES**

My Study focuses on the history of the tithe in Wales roughly from the end of the 18th century to the end of the 19th century.

It is not a subject which has attracted much scholarly attention in Wales, and my aim is to fill a knowledge gap in our understanding of this most vexing and misunderstood of payments.

The study cannot be considered a general history of the tithe during this period, for such a feat would require several tomes of dry analysis if one delves into the many aspects of tithe collecting in England and Wales. Rather, it is a history of the attitudes of the Welsh people towards the tithes. This naturally takes us into the territory of Nonconformist politics because most (though not all) of the tithes were in the possession of the Church in Wales, and most (though not all) of the tithe payers were Nonconformist tenant farmers and freeholders. Yet, what is perhaps astonishing is that a full blown protest against the payment of the tithes did not occur



until 1886. That movement was dubbed the ‘tithe war’, and forms a substantial part of my study.

Of course, one cannot discuss the non-payment of tithes by tenant farmers without looking at the attitudes and responses of the landed gentry. The Tithe Commutation Act of 1836 certainly intended for the landlords to pay them. Yet, a custom developed which went against ‘the spirit’ of that Act. The landlord and tenant would agree between themselves that instead of the tenant paying a larger rent which included the tithes, the tenant would instead pay a reduced rent and pay the tithes himself as a separate concern. It seems probable that the intricacies of this custom varied from estate to estate and from place to place.

During the ‘tithe war’, some landlords were more zealous than others in making their tenants pay the tithes. Despite this, it seems that evictions for non-payment of tithes were extremely rare. Many simply re-assumed the responsibility for the payment of tithes, thus taking the wind out of the sails of the agitation in many parishes. The Tithe Act of 1891 firmly placed the responsibility of paying the tithes on the landlords.

Siôn is a PhD student in the School of History, Welsh History and Archaeology, studying under the supervision of Dr Lowri Ann Rees.



Images shown are of the tithe agitation in Flintshire, printed in The Graphic (21 January 1888)

KATHERYN OF BERAIN (d.1591)

by HELEN WILLIAMS-ELLIS

Had I been commissioned to produce a documentary on Katheryn of Berain (and I tried many a time), then I would not be where I am now: a mature PhD student in the School of Welsh at Bangor University. My goal is to write Katheryn's biography and to show how she has been depicted in word and image. Four times married, mother to six children and step-mother to countless others; no wonder that she is known today as 'Mam Cymru' – the 'Mother of Wales'.

In his *Tours in Wales* Thomas Pennant did much to make Katheryn infamous with the story of the 'wooer' who came too late. On leaving the church after the funeral of her first husband John Salusbury of Lleweni, Katheryn was approached by Morris Wynn of Gwydir who offered his condolences and asked for her hand in marriage, to which she is said to have replied: 'Morris, I've already accepted Richard Clough's proposal on the way into church, but if the same sad state befalls me again I shall certainly keep you in mind'. True to her word, three years after the death of husband number two, Katheryn married Morris Wynn; and after his death in 1580, aged 50, she married for the fourth time, Edward Thelwall of Plas-y-Ward, one of the executors of her third husband's will. This last transaction was a double wedding with Katheryn's daughter by Morris Wynn (who can't have been older than five, six or seven) betrothed to Simon Thelwall, Edward Thelwall's eldest son from his first marriage. So all-in-all I've had lot of juicy stuff to be getting on with!

The famous [portrait of Katheryn](#) with her hand on a skull hangs in the



*Portrait of Katheryn of Berain, dated 1568
(Copyright: National Museum of Wales)*

National Museum of Wales in Cardiff. Another fine copy on canvas hangs in the National Library of Wales in Aberystwyth. Katheryn was 34 when this portrait was taken by a Dutch artist, possibly Adriaen van Cronenburg. The skull, a familiar motif in early-Tudor paintings is a

memento mori, reminding us of the fragility of life. This was certainly true in Katheryn's case. Her dress, of black silk brocade in the fashionable hourglass silhouette, draws attention to her tiny waist. She is bejewelled but the large chain on her waist is a pomander full of herbs or sweet



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smelling rose-petals to fend off nasty odours. Under the dress with detachable gold sleeves, Katheryn wears a heavily embroidered linen petticoat. The luxurious fabrics and the jewelled fingers reflect her status as the wife of a rich merchant (Richard Clough), but she was also a formidable heiress in her own right.

When William Cynwal, her personal bard welcomed her back to Berain – her family home in Llanefydd, Denbighshire – after the death of Richard Clough in Hamburg, he advocated that she should find another husband. Cynwal's elegies to Katheryn, together with the archives associated with the Salusburys of Lleweni, Wynns of Gwydir and Thelwalls of Plas-y-Ward are deposited at the National Library of Wales. They provide an invaluable source of information about the life and times of Katheryn. However, it was a visit to the Heinz Archive at the National Portrait Gallery in London which led to an unexpected find. Richard Clough (husband number two) who commissioned the famous portrait of his wife, had himself been painted. However, little was known about the portraits of Clough by the German painter, Ludger tom Ring. A recent visit to Germany afforded me the opportunity to see two exquisite miniatures of Clough at Münster Museum and the Gemäldegalerie in Berlin. The third painting, *Wedding at Kana*, considered to be Ludger tom Ring's masterpiece was destroyed in Berlin in 1945. Fortunately, glass plates of the huge painting were preserved and Prof. Jochen Luckhardt of the Herzog Anton Ulrich-Museum in

Braunschweig was able to reproduce the image, which in his view depicts Clough's concubine, prior to his marriage with Katheryn.

Are there portraits still extant of the three other husbands? That continues to be a major quest. The other is deliberating on Katheryn's religious identity. Did she remain a Catholic during the heady days of the Protestant Reformation? Three times a widow, Katheryn also suffered the heart-break of seeing her first-born son and heir, Thomas Salusbury, executed for high treason for his part in the Babington Plot in 1586. His final words before being hung, drawn and quartered were: 'so have I lived a Catholic, shall I die a Catholic'.

Katheryn died five years later on a Thursday night and was interred at Llanefydd Church. Thirteen Welsh-language eulogies were sung at her memorial service in September 1591. Not one poem mentions the son executed in 1586; the disgrace must have been all-consuming.

So this is the story that I'm trying to write; of a woman, wife and mother who lived through turbulent times in Wales and on the Continent. When the thesis is finished I intend to publish Katheryn's biography, so that I'm able to share the story of this remarkable Tudor lady with a wider audience.

Helen is a PhD student in the School of Welsh, studying under the supervision of Professor Jason Walford Davies. She is also a member of ISWE's Advisory Board.



Berain, Llanefydd the birthplace of Katheryn of Berain (courtesy of Helen Williams-Ellis)

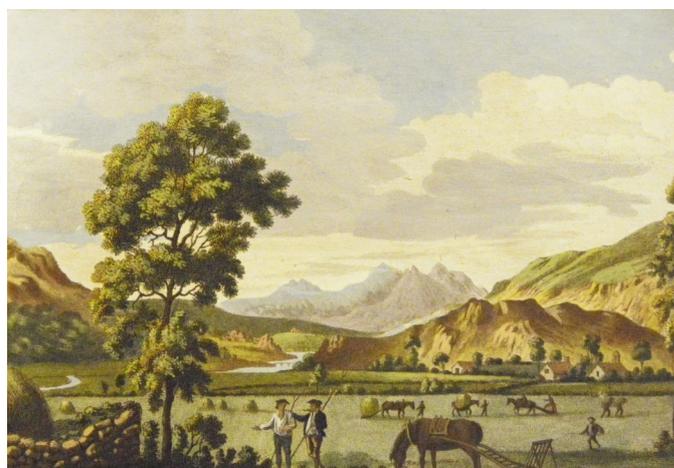


IMAGES FROM THE VAULTS

Over recent months we have been exploring the collections we have in the University Library, Archives and Special Collections to locate images which relate to Welsh estates, country houses and gentry culture. Over the forthcoming years we will be publishing a selection of these images as postcards to promote the work of the Institute. Look out for the first batch of five, coming soon!



Mostyn Hall, Flintshire, published in Thomas Pennant, *A Tour in Wales* (1784), Bangor University Archives and Special Collections (X/AA 7 PEN).



A view of life in rural Wales, featuring the summit of Snowdon from Capel Curig, published in Thomas Pennant, *A Tour in Wales* (1784), Bangor University Archives and Special Collections (X/AA 7 PEN).



Cyfartha Castle, Merthyr Tydfil, the home of the Crawshaw family, published in Henry Gastineau, *Wales Illustrated* (1830), Bangor University Archives and Special Collections (X/AA 7 GAS).



'The Ladies of Llangollen', Printed in *Plas Newydd: As it was and as it is* (1884), Bangor University Archives and Special Collections (X/AM 6 LLA)



Seminarau Ymchwil 2016/2017 Research Seminars

Bettina Harden

'ALL THESE ENCHANTING SCENES'

Garden taste and style in Wales

Dydd Iau, 20 Hydref 2016

Thursday, 20 October 2016

Dr. Elizabeth Green

'THE NATIONAL TRUST APPROACH'

Wales' historic houses in context

Dydd Iau, 8 Rhagfyr 2016

Thursday, 8 December 2016

Dr. Lloyd Bowen

'A GREAT STYRRE & ADOE'

Religion, status and honour in Jacobean Flintshire

Dydd Iau, 26 Ionawr 2017

Thursday, 26 January 2017

Mae pob Seminar Ymchwil yn dechrau
am 5.30pm yn Ystafell Cledwyn 3,
Prifysgol Bangor

CROESO I BAWB

All Research Seminars begin
5.30pm in Cledwyn Room 3,
Bangor University

ALL WELCOME

CONTACT INFORMATION

If you would like to discuss any aspect of ISWE's development, your comments and suggestions would be most welcome:

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