

LIFE WRITING IN WALES

March 30-April 1 2007

CONFERENCE BOOKING FORM

Name: .....

Organization:.....

Address:.....

.....

.....

Postcode:.....

Email:.....

Telephone:.....

Dietary requirements:.....

I am/am not willing to share a room (*delete as appropriate*)

I would like to become a member of AWWE (Annual membership: £10)

Please circle which you require:

Full board weekend (Fri – Sun):

Student	AWWE member	All others
£50	£120	£125

Saturday only(no accommodation):

£25	£30	£35
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TOTAL enclosed: £.....

Please make cheques payable to 'AWWE' and return your completed form **by March 1\*** to: Dr. Katie Gramich, School of English, Communication and Philosophy, Cardiff University, Colum Drive, Cardiff, CF10 3EU

*The conference is open to ALL, not just to members of AWWE/Croeso i bawb.*

CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

**Friday March 30**

2.00 – 4.00 p.m. AWWE Board meeting – open to all members

4.00 – 6.00 p.m. Tea and registration

6.00 – 7.00 p.m. Reception and Book Launch

7.00 – 8.30 p.m. Dinner

8.30 – 9.30 p.m. Plenary Lecture

**Barbara Prys-Williams:** 'Trust me, I'm an autobiographer': hidden agendas, sub texts and undercurrents in some 20th-century Welsh autobiographical writing in English

9.30 p.m. – late Conversations at the bar

**Saturday March 31**

8.00 - 9.30 a.m. Breakfast

9.30 - 10.30 a.m. **Damian Walford Davies:** 'Sweet Sylvan Routes' and Grave Methodists: Wales in De Quincey's *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater*

10.30 – 11.00 a.m. Coffee

11.00 a.m. – 1.00 p.m.

**Gwyneth Tyson Roberts:** 'An impartial compilation of biographical matter': Jane Williams (Ysgafell) and the Curse of the Biographer's Bias

**Sally Roberts Jones:** Writing Life

1.00 – 2.00 p.m. Lunch

2.00 – 4.00 p.m. Parallel Short paper sessions

Group A:

**Elisa Armellino:** Rescuing the past: John Cale and Lorna Sage as Autobiographers

**Sarah Morse:** 'Who Killed Bambi?': Sex, Drugs and Rock 'n Roll in Rachel Trezise's Rhondda'

**Meriel Owen Griffiths:** 'Abiding Anxieties': First person narratives and global perspectives in recent Welsh poetry in English

**Tinashe Mushakavanhu:** Fiction as national biography: personal and public narratives in the work of Rachel Trezise

Group B:

**Gwilym Games:** 'The most decadent book in all of English Literature': Life, Landscape and Literature in Arthur Machen's *The Hill of Dreams*

**Louise Parker:** 'I was born in Merthyr': Glyn Jones, Autobiography and 'Anglo-Welsh' Mythmaking

**Janet Rhys Dent:** The Model of a Welsh Mam: Truth, Art and the Memoir

**Liz Williams Jones:** Raising the Dead: The State of Historical Biodrama in Wales

4.00 – 5.00 p.m. Tea and free time

5.00 – 7.00 p.m. **Geraint Evans:** Up to Mametz: a Welsh prosopography of the Somme

**Alice Entwistle:** 'Pretending to pretend': authenticity and the sequence in Gwyneth Lewis's English poetry

7.00 – 8.30 p.m. Dinner

8.30 – 9.30 p.m. Poetry Reading: **Guest speaker tba.**

9.30 p.m. – late Conversations at the bar

**Sunday April 1**

8.30 – 9.30 a.m. Breakfast

9.30 – 10.30

**Malcolm Ballinn:** 'Chords of Memory': Life-Writing in the *Anglo-Welsh Review*, 1957-77

10.30 – 11.00 a.m. Coffee

11.00 a.m. – 1.00 p.m.

**Richard Chamberlain:** 'Pale Signature': Lyric and Life-writing in Dylan Thomas's Early Poems

**Neal Alexander:** Dialogues of Self and Soul: The Autobiographies of W.B. Yeats and R.S. Thomas

1.00 - 2.00 p.m. Lunch and departure

## AWWE at Gregynog

This is the nineteenth annual conference of the Association of Welsh Writing in English to be held at Gregynog Hall in Powys. From the outset, AWWE's aims have been to stimulate interest in Welsh writing in English in universities, schools, colleges, among the people of Wales and beyond. The Association has been active in arranging for the republication of texts long out of print, encouraging students to discover and analyse this rich body of writing and promoting awareness of Wales's literary heritage.

The annual AWWE conference is open to everyone and has a friendly and welcoming atmosphere. It offers an opportunity to meet and hear contemporary Welsh writers read their work and to listen to papers both by established scholars and postgraduate students at the forefront of research in the field. Readings and lectures are supplemented by fresh and lively discussions and debates. The conference has a different theme every year; this year's theme of Life Writing has attracted great interest and has resulted in a diverse and stimulating programme of speakers.

Today's AWWE members are drawn from a wide geographical area, both within and outside Wales, and from many different fields, not just academia. AWWE welcomes you warmly to the annual institution which is 'Gregynog.'

## Life Writing in Wales

In 2006 the Wales Book of the Year awards went to works of life writing: Robert Minhinnick's autobiographical essays *To Babel and Back* and Rhys Evans's biography, *Gwynfor: Rhag Pob Brad*. But this is not a new phenomenon: both biography and autobiography have had a long hold on the Welsh imagination. In the 19<sup>th</sup> century the *Cofiant/Memoir* chronicling the life, works and influence of a range of charismatic Welsh preachers became the genre *par excellence* for the expression of Welsh religious passion. In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the subject of autobiography shifted from the preacher to the worker; texts such as Bert Coombes' *These Poor Hands* came to be regarded as the authentic expression of the Welsh industrial experience. Other life writers leaned more towards the poetic, the humorous or the fantastical, like Dylan Thomas's *Portrait of the Artist as a Young Dog* or Dannie Abse's *Ash on a Young Man's Sleeve*. Meanwhile, poetry itself began to 'bear witness' to a life or to give expression to personal memories representative of a whole community; works such as Glyn Jones's 'Merthyr' or David Jones's *In Parenthesis* speak of such experiences. Welsh women's lives have also been eloquently represented in life writing, such as Brenda Chamberlain's *Tide-Race*, Gillian Clarke's 'Cofiant' and Charlotte Williams's *Sugar and Slate*. This conference will be an opportunity to explore this diverse tradition of life writing from Wales and, at the same time, to investigate and theorize the appeal of these most unstable of genres, blurring as they often do the boundaries between fact and fiction, between myth and reality.

## The Nineteenth Annual Conference of the Association for Welsh Writing in English

### LIFE WRITING IN WALES



Gregynog Hall,  
Newtown, Powys, Wales,  
SY16 3PW

March 30 – April 1, 2007

**AWF**  
THE ASSOCIATION FOR  
WELSH WRITING IN ENGLISH  
CYMDEITHAS LLEN SAESNEG CYMRU