



culture in terms of a fall into obscurity, via the lens provided by Edmund Burke's account of the French Revolution: 'What a revolution was here!'. Llandudno stands in for the everyday once more in James Joyce's *Ulysses*, where the absence of Dublin's Lord Mayor on holidays in Llandudno represents the fallen world of Dublin civic politics and the distance traveled from Fenian revolutionary politics. Beneath these two invocations of Llandudno's problematically everydayness lie the banal facts of Union between Britain and Ireland: Llandudno developed as a tourist destination because of the expansion of the railway network in North West Wales to meet the needs of the many London-bound Irish, notably members of parliament, professionals and migrant workers. The paper uses Michael Billig's theories of 'banal nationalism' to locate Llandudno along the infrastructural axis of Union, and to suggest new ways of reading Arnold's Celtic 'revolution'.

## **Mary-Ann Constantine, Centre for Advanced Welsh and Celtic Studies**

### **'The Revolutionary Tense: George Cadogan Morgan narrates 1789'**

In the summer of 1789 Glamorgan-born scientist and Dissenting preacher George Cadogan Morgan set off with a small party of friends to visit France. Having been assured that they would find Paris 'perfectly free of disturbance' they took a hotel room at the Palais Royal on the 9th July and began to visit the sights. Within days they found themselves at the very eye of the revolutionary maelstrom. In a series of letters written home to his wife and his uncle, the political philosopher Richard Price, Morgan describes the events as they unfurl, and, a staunch republican, expresses his hopes for France's future. Following Gavin Edwards' inspirational readings of 1790s texts as expressions of 'narrative (dis)order', I want to explore the perception of time (and in particular the use of tense) in these letters as reflections of the destabilising nature of the revolution itself.

## **Charlotte Jackson, Swansea University.**

### **"By measuring the distance, we come home." – A comparison of Raymond Williams's *Border trilogy*, and Louise Erdrich's *North Dakota* saga.**

I am currently in my second year of a PhD, in which I am making a comparative study of Welsh writers in English and Native American writers in English. At present I am comparing Raymond Williams's *Border trilogy* with a series of novels by the Chippewa writer Louise Erdrich. Drawing from this comparison, and using the word 'revolution' as a starting point, I will discuss the different forms of revolution that these texts engage with. Initially, I will speak about revolution as a physical act of turning around, and in the case of the texts concerned, returning home. Both Williams and Erdrich write about characters that leave behind their communities, yet despite physically 'going away' these individuals maintain a psychological orbit around their home. Raymond Williams's own critical writings will inform my discussion here, especially with reference to the juxtaposition of the country and the city that can be clearly seen within the novels. The desire to pull away from, and yet simultaneously to return to the homestead, results in several characters forming complex dual identities. Whilst these characters leave in order to seek change, others within the community (often of an older generation) are fearful of it. In an attempt to preserve what is seen as a 'traditional' way of life, there are instances within both sets of texts where groups of individuals take part in their own 'revolutions'. I will close my paper by discussing how successful such rebellions are, and how the concept of revolution is altered when the acts concerned are done with the aim to inhibit change rather than to affect it.

## **Dr. Matthew Jarvis**

### **'Writing for Revolution? Reading the Red Poets'**

Initially published in the mid-1990s as what was intended to be a one-off collection of 'Welsh Socialist poetry' – 'Turn the world on its head with Welsh Socialist poetry' ran the subtitle on the front cover – *Red Poets* magazine saw the appearance of its sixteenth annual edition in 2010. Edited throughout its life to date by Merthyr poet Mike Jenkins, the magazine had its roots in 'Cymru Goch, the Welsh Socialists', with many initial contributors having 'been in the Welsh Socialist Republican Movement before that' (<http://www.redpoets.org/our-history.html>). The notion of revolution is readily manifest in that initial subtitle's suggestion of turning the world on its head. Moreover, Jenkins's introduction to that first edition of the magazine wedded itself to a commitment to 'challenging the whole ludicrous system', and suggested that 'writing or reading a poem about their lives can give working-class Welsh people a purpose to really change the way things are'. Whilst acknowledging the distinctions between contributors' political positions

in day-to-day life – Jenkins notes, for example, three notable supporters who were variously ‘a Trotskyite, [...] a leftwing nationalist and [...] a member of the Communist Party’ (<http://www.redpoets.org/our-history.html>) – this paper seeks to examine the particular socio-political agendas and commitments of the poetry itself. Fundamental to this, it crucially aims to examine what sorts of revolution (in either material conditions or modes of thought) are propounded by the work published in Red Poets.

## **Professor Dafydd Johnston (Centre for Advanced Welsh and Celtic Studies, Aberystwyth)**

### **‘From Rhuddlan to the Bastille: translating medieval Welsh poetry in the age of the French Revolution’**

This paper will consider three English translations of a medieval Welsh poem by Gwilym Ddu on the imprisonment of the rebel Sir Gruffudd Llwyd (1317) which became associated in the 18th century with the myth of the massacre of the Welsh bards by Edward I (made famous by Thomas Gray’s *The Bard*). A prose translation by Evan Evans in *Some Specimens of the Poetry of the Ancient Welsh Bards* (1764) was the basis for two subsequent verse translations, one by John Walters (1782) and the other by Richard Llwyd (1804). The original text is highly opaque in language and style, and despite Evans’s claim to have produced a faithful rendering its very difficulty and ambiguity can be seen to have allowed the translators some freedom of interpretation. The translation by Walters is a fairly innocuous versification of Evans’s prose, but Llwyd’s version is a much more radical reworking which develops the motif of the prison into a symbol of the condition of the Welsh nation and ends with the silencing and suicide of the bard. It will be argued that this key historical text gained new resonance as a result of the fall of the Bastille and the suppression of radical opposition by the British Government in the 1790s.

## **Professor H. Gustav Klaus (University of Rostock) Plenary Lecture**

### **‘Voices of Anger and Hope 1840s to 1940s’**

**I would like to look at the double articulation, signalled by my title, in the poems of several radical writers, from Hugh Williams, Chartist and (thought to be) the mastermind behind Rebecca, to T. E. Nicholas and Idris Davies in the interwar period. A glance at the Welsh poems of David Martin, an exile in a different sense than Davies or Nicholas (during his imprisonment), will round off the overview. Cross-references to the work of their contemporaries from the rest of the British Isles will accompany the talk.**

## **Llyr G. Lewis (Cardiff University)**

### **‘“A Song from the Deep”: T. Gwynn Jones’s English-language poetry’**

The poet T. Gwynn Jones (1871-1949) is widely acknowledged as a revolutionary figure in Welsh language literature. His 1902 ode ‘Ymadawiad Arthur’ is often noted as a milestone which gave rise to a new wave of poetry in the early twentieth century, sometimes described as the Welsh Literary Renaissance. Jones, along with others such as John Morris-Jones, was a prominent figure and catalyst of this revolutionary new school of poets, and he was subsequently much imitated but seldom matched.

Particularly in his longer poems, Jones employed the imagery of a rich medieval literary heritage within his own work, and often delved into Welsh and Celtic mythology and literature for inspiration. His language and diction, also, were influenced by his medieval interests and were often eloquently archaic. Little attention, however, has been devoted to Jones’s English-language writing, although many examples abound in David Jenkins’s biography of him.

Though many of these may be regarded as juvenilia, Jones continued to write poetry in English in later life, and I intend to examine these poems more closely than has previously occurred. In doing so I hope to assess whether the same Celtic imagery and subject matter is employed in these poems, or whether they

are reserved for more immediate and often political concerns. Can they be regarded in the same 'revolutionary' light as his longer Welsh poems? I also hope to consider questions of language by comparing his use of English, Welsh and various registers of diction within those two languages.

## **Dr. Marion Löffler (CAWCS, Aberystwyth)**

### **'The Marseillaise in Wales'**

The 'Marseillaise' is (arguably) the most famous cultural artefact to emerge from the French Revolution of 1789. This key symbol of a decade which laid the cornerstone for modern politics, written as the 'War Song for the Army of the Rhine' in 1792, and adopted as the French national anthem in 1795, soon made its way across the Channel into Britain. A partial English translation of four of its seven stanzas had appeared in several radical publications as early as 1793. Three years later, a Welsh adaptation of this English version and of an unknown, possibly French, source, appeared in the radical Welsh periodical *Y Geirgrawn*, accompanied by a new paratext on its importance and the translator's radical stance. In the years and decades which followed, this Welsh song was copied into various manuscripts, added to, translated back into English and sung at local gatherings in the Unitarian 'black spot'. The nineteenth century saw it reprinted in Welsh periodicals, used by the Welsh working class movement and translated into Welsh at least twice more.

Both this wider history of the 'Marseillaise' in Wales and a closer look at the text of its adaptation, 'Cân Rhyddid', illustrate how revolutionary ideas may be transmitted: when the translator combines deep political conviction with a thorough knowledge of his own culture to create a brilliantly evocative new text.

## **Dr Sarah Morse (CREW, Swansea University)**

### **'A de-industrial revolution? Ron Berry's reinhabitation of his post-industrial environment'**

Advocates and practitioners of reinhabitation, whether or not they use the term, start from the premise that not only has the environment been abused, aspiring reinhabitants have themselves been wounded by displacement and ecological illiteracy so they must (re)learn what it means to be "native" to a place.[1]

Originally conceived by Peter Berg and Raymond Dasmann as the process of 'applying for membership in a biotic community and ceasing to be its exploiter'[2], reinhabitation is a 'specific method of committing oneself to a place'[3]. This paper will examine how Ron Berry's writing aspires to reconnect with, and commit himself to, the post-industrial Blaenycwm habitat in numerous ways, offering a return to the land, but also engaging with the social, historical and natural surfaces of the landscape, as well as the subterranean plane.

Drawing on Berry's hitherto largely unexplored archive of papers, in addition to his published autobiographical and fictional writing, this paper will consider Berry's exploration of society's disturbed interaction with the landscape, the narratives it contains and the natural environment it sustains. In doing so, it argues that his act of reinhabitation emphasises a concurrent rehabilitation: the recovery of the narratives of industry, the re-establishment of what he terms 'the dialectic of man and his environment', and a restoration of the community and landscape he inhabits.

[1] Lawrence Buell, *Writing for an Endangered World* (Cambridge, MA: Bellknap Press, Harvard, 1995) p.84

[2] Peter Berg and R. Dasmann, 'Reinhabiting California', *The Ecologist* 7 (10), pp. 399-401, p.399

[3] Matthew Jarvis, *Environments in Contemporary Welsh Poetry* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2008) p.71

## **Dr. Gwyneth Tyson Roberts (Aberystwyth University)**

### **"Women sit like genii of secluded caves": Jane Williams (Ysgafell) and the long slow revolution of women's writing in Wales**

It has been estimated that of book-length texts published in Britain in the 19th century, fewer than 1 per cent were by women writing in areas such as history, philosophy and economics, and some of the most interesting work by Jane Williams (Ysgafell), who had a writing career of over 50 years (in itself an achievement for a woman in the 19th century), falls into this category. She clearly wished her work to be considered on its merits, with neither criticism nor special allowances to be made simply because the

author was a woman, while at the same time being fully aware of the constraints under which she lived and worked; the quotation of the title is taken from the Introduction to *The Literary Women of England* (1861), in which she compared the situation of men “stand[ing] on a promontory, commanding extensive views” with that of women, sitting in caves “receiving echoes and communicating reverberations from the outer world”.

This paper considers two of her writings on Welsh subjects in traditionally male-dominated genres – Artegall (1848), her response to the 1847 Blue Books, and *A History of Wales derived from Authentic Sources* (1869) - in order to argue that, by writing what she did when she did, she made a significant contribution to the long slow revolution of women’s writing in Wales.

## Steven Roberts

### **‘Rev. William Howels (1778-1832): the Making of an Anti-Radical’**

In its report of the death of the Rev. William Howels (1778-1832), *The Cambrian* newspaper judged that he had done ‘more to exalt the character of his countrymen in London than any other Welshman’. From a farming background in the Vale of Glamorgan, Howels became one of London’s celebrity preachers. Among his teachers were David Jones, Llangan; among his correspondents, William Wilberforce, Robert Peel and Iolo Morganwg; among his patrons the earl of Roden; and among his auditors the young John Ruskin and the future Cardinal Manning. In some autobiographical fragments, Howels declared that as a schoolboy in Cowbridge he had taken the side of the revolutionaries in France in 1789, and welcomed it as a good example for Wales, his mind ‘being ... impregnated with hatred towards the English, from reading Welsh history’. His revolutionary sympathies were not to last. He became celebrated for his staunch and uncompromising Calvinism, and by the time he became an established figure in the world of London sermon-going, he was equally noted for his conservative views on a variety of issues of the day. In religion he opposed Socinians, the Irvingites, High Anglicans and the bishops of his own Church of England. In politics he was an enemy of Catholic Emancipation. His anti-Catholicism became in his later years his distinguishing characteristic. This paper seeks to trace and explain the making of William Howels the anti-Radical, by considering the record of his own words, in sermons and letters, and by exploring the spate of biographical treatments of him that followed his death.

## Heike Röms and Rebecca Edwards, Aberystwyth University

### **‘Restaging a Revolution – The first Welsh ‘happening’ (Cardiff 1965)’**

This paper will examine the idea of ‘revolution’ within the context of art making, where it is intrinsically bound up with (modernist) ideas of innovation and originality. We will argue that changes in artistic practice are often the result of rather more erratic and protracted developments than the idea of ‘revolution’ implies – far from erupting in a revolutionary moment that rings in an irrevocable transformation, they tend to emerge through a series of (re)stagings of such moments. To acknowledge the essentially reiterative nature of such supposed original events also helps to refute the widely held assumption that in (relatively marginal) places such as Wales, innovative practices are necessarily secondary (‘provincial’) afterthoughts to the artistic revolutions staged in the centres of art production. But equally, we wish to call into question those positions that, in their attempt at recovering a Welsh artistic tradition, have dismissed the influence of international artistic revolutions as mere ‘metropolitan effects’ (P. Lord).

We will focus on an example from Wales’ little-known recent avant-garde past. Mid-way through the 1960s, a decade that has become synonymous with revolutions of many kind, a group of fine artists and poets staged the very first Welsh ‘happening’ in Cardiff, on the occasion of the 1st Commonwealth Poetry Conference in 1965. The happening, organised by the newly appointed Director of Studies at the city’s art school, Tom Hudson, with the participation of a range of guests, including Jean-Jacques Lebel, Philip Corner and poets Jeff Nuttall, Roger McGough and Adrian Henri (and a two-hundredweight Vietnamese pig), epitomized the aesthetic and political battles that divided the conference between poets associating themselves with the new forms of Beat and jazz poetry and those regarding them as ‘degenerate freaks’ (H. Webb).

The Cardiff happening staged a ‘revolutionary’ gesture of disconnecting itself from a traditional way of art making that consequently caused the customary consternation in the local press. But it also self-consciously referenced and restaged a series of international neo-avantgardist practices. In turn, it contributed (even if not in a straight-forward manner) to the emergence of new poetry and performance art in Wales. We are aiming to explore what new insights into the development of artistic ‘revolutions’ might be revealed through close attention to an event such as this, tracing artists, practices and ideas as they travelled from New York, Paris and London to Cardiff and tracking their long-term repercussions on the art scene in Wales.

The paper emerges from “It was forty years ago today...”: Locating the Early History of Performance Art in Wales 1965-1979”, a two-year research project supported by a large research grant from the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC).

**Cathryn Charnell White (Centre for Advanced Welsh and Celtic Studies, Aberystwyth)**

**‘A “weather eye” on the French Revolution’**

This paper will focus on the French Revolution through a meteorological lens. It will encompass evidence of an El Nino whose effects contributed to the social and political unrest which culminated in the events of 1789; meteorological intervention which prevented the French fleet from landing at Bantry Bay, Ireland (1796); as well as more literary, metaphorical uses of the weather to reflect the political climate throughout the Revolutionary Wars and beyond.