



HANES PLAID

Plaid Cymru History Society Newsletter Issue 3

Spring 2021

Happy Birthday!



Foundation of Plaid History (Photo: Mari Evans)

The Plaid Cymru History Society has celebrated ten years of working to record the work of our national movement.

Since its establishment at a meeting in the Chapter centre, Cardiff, the Society has arranged a series of events to mark notable occasions and people. We have cooperated with local branches - such as Cangen Penarth where a blue plaque was unveiled to recall the life of Saunders Lewis.

The Society also advises on safeguarding documents and photographic records, and ensure safe storage in the National Library or local county archives.

And thanks to Penri Williams, Pentyrch, the Plaid History website provides a substantial and growing resource of information on the party's activities since the early days.

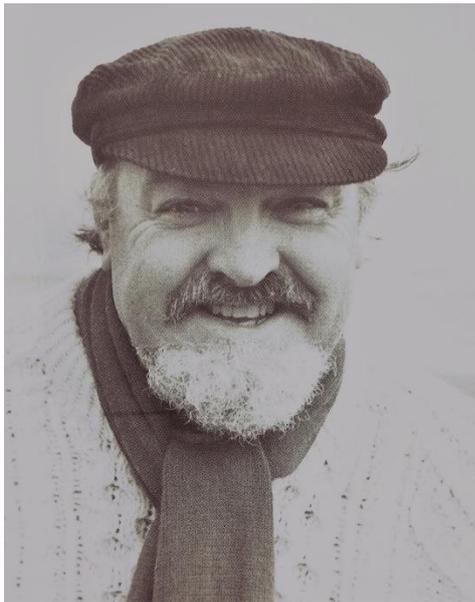
Remembering Harri Webb



Despite lockdown restrictions, a ceremony was held to mark the centenary of the birth of Wales' radical nationalist poet, Harri Webb.

On a rainy September morning on the Gower peninsula a wreath was laid by Guto Ap Gwent at the grave of Harri Webb in Pennard church.

We are grateful to Emeritus Professor Prys Morgan for his inspiring graveside speech - and to the media for considerable coverage on the S4C's Heno programme and on BBC Radio Cymru and Radio Wales ([links on the Plaid History website](#)).



Harri Webb (1920-1994), poet, author and and celebrated nationalist - much more about him on our website

Recalling Kitch



The life of the poet, dramatist and nationalist James Kitchener Davies will be the subject of the first face-to-face public lecture organised by the History Society - providing the National Eisteddfod goes ahead this year.

The lecture will be given by Professor M. Wynn Thomas in Tregaron, close to the birthplace of Kitchener Davies (1902-1952) who made his home in Trealaw in the Rhondda Fawr. Kitch worked tirelessly for Plaid Cymru, with street meetings a speciality, including one rumbustuous gathering where a brickbat was thrown at Gwynfor Evans!

Spotlight On Ambrose Bebb

Can't wait for the next (real life) Conference? Or us either - especially since it will mean the chance to hear more about one of Plaid Cymru's founding members, Ambrose Bebb.



W. Ambrose Bebb (1894-1955) in the Llangollen Summer School, 1927

The noted political observer and historian Professor Richard Wyn Jones has agreed to speak about the contribution of Ambrose Bebb, a key figure within Plaid Cymru who had strong connections with Brittany.

More About Wynne Samuel



A condensed version of the biography of Dr Wynne Samuel in this year's National Library archive summary. You can read a full version by Plaid History chairman Dafydd Williams on the website (www.hanesplaidcymru.org).



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Plaid History Lectures

An important part of the History Society's work is to provide a rounded picture of the people who campaigned for Wales to live as a nation.



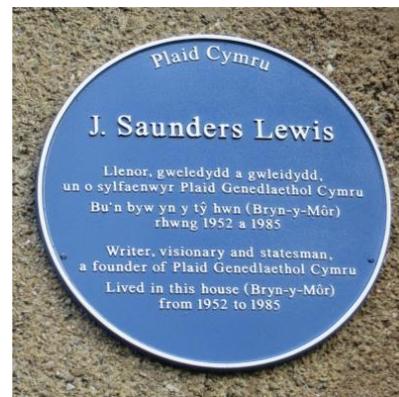
Dr Noëlle Davies - she and her husband Dr DJ Davies had a major influence on the development of Plaid Cymru

By staging - and recording - lectures and documentation we ensure focus on the history of the national movement and thus help shape the future of our nation.

One example is the lecture given in Plaid Cymru's 2017 Spring Conference in Newport by the leading historian of Plaid Cymru's early years, D. Hywel Davies, Morryston. The topic was a remarkable couple, Dr Noëlle Davies and her husband Dr DJ Davies. Both played leading roles in charting the course of Plaid Cymru.

An audio version and script are still available (on <http://www.hanesplaidcymru.org/dj-and-noelle-shaping-the-plaid/?lang=en>).

What About A Blue Plaque?



How about celebrating the history of our national movement in your home area with a blue plaque - like this one (many thanks to Cangen Penarth)? It's not that difficult - contact Plaid History (details below) for more information.

Plaid History Website

It's worth checking out the Plaid Cymru History Society's website - it's full of interesting details about the activities of the national movement. Go to: www.hanesplaidcymru.org - there's also a Facebook page at [@hanesplaidcymru](https://www.facebook.com/hanesplaidcymru).



Morgan's Writings

Plaid Cymru doyen Syd Morgan is also a stalwart of the History Society.



Syd Morgan

His interest in chronicling matters beyond the confines of the party - Irish, or pan-European amongst others - is shown in his October 2016 talk 'Wales and the Easter Rising' at

<http://www.hanesplaidcymru.org/darlith-syd-morgan/>

Dafydd Williams' interview with Syd, recollecting his decades of activism, is also on the Society's website:

<http://www.hanesplaidcymru.org/cyfweliad-gyda-syd-morgan/?lang=en> .

Some fruits of more recent research into historical trends can be seen on his personal site, www.morganideas.cymru. I can do no better than point you to two articles there on themes of contemporary relevance: 'Three Lost Leaders of Plaid Cymru?' concerning the party and gay

activism; and 'Tiger Bay Born: Plaid Cymru's First Black Candidates', providing a rundown of people who have stood for the party in south Cardiff from 1985 onwards. And there is the promise of yet more to come from him.

Stephen Thomas

Ioan Roberts

A volume of tributes to the author, journalist and steadfast nationalist Ioan Roberts was published in 2020, thanks to Gwasg Carreg Gwalch.



With introductions by Lis Saville Roberts MP AS and the editor Alun Jones, the new volume contains 27 tributes in Welsh, and three in English by close friends from Ireland and Scotland, as well as extracts from Ioan's own work. The book which costs £8.50 may be found in Wales' bookshops. You can also read bilingual versions of a number of tributes, including an address by Plaid chairman and former government minister, Alun Ffred Jones, on the Plaid History website.



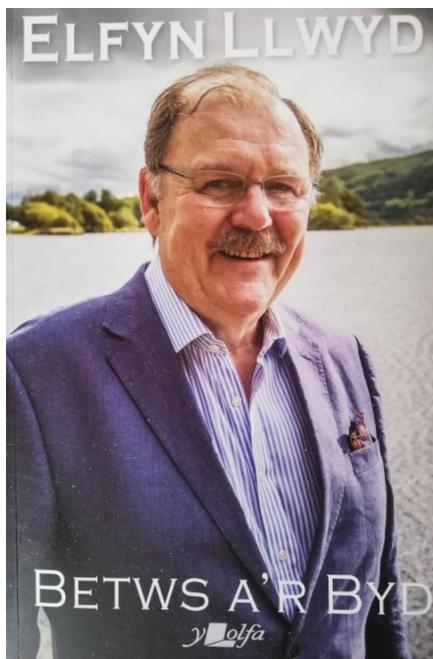
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Betws a'r Byd

That's the title of a new and highly readable Welsh-language book by Elfyn Llwyd, the former Plaid Cymru MP.



The focus is on the author's time in Westminster, and I confess I would like to hear more about Elfyn's childhood and his career as a solicitor.

But readers get much more than their money's worth from this lively book, with an account of two decades in that madhouse parliament on the banks of the Thames laced with a store of amusing anecdotes.

Here's one story from the time when Plaid Cymru was pushing for a better Welsh

Language Act - as Elfyn and Dafydd Wigley walked down one of the corridors of the Palace of Westminster, a group of Tories came past and one of them - a party whip by the name of Lightbown - shouted "Look at those ungrateful ba****ds!".

Dafydd Wigley answered in a flash - "Listen here Lightbown - our people were writing poetry when your lot were chewing bark in the bogs of Bavaria!" And Lightbown's Tory acolytes couldn't help laughing.

As well as making us smile, Elfyn has succeeded in writing an excellent book - a detailed chronicle that adds substantially to knowledge of the history of our national movement.

'Betws A'r Byd', written in Welsh by Elfyn Llwyd, Y Lolfa, £9.99 is available in Welsh bookshops now.

Dafydd Williams



Project 2021



National Library of Wales, Aberystwyth

Once the National Library of Wales reopens, members of the Plaid Cymru History Association will be engaged on an important project to update a record of the party's publications - and make them available worldwide.

The project, to be carried out in cooperation with the World Microfilms company, will market digitalised versions of Plaid Cymru's publications available to academics and others interested in the history of our national movement.

The work involves selecting specific items from the party's extensive annals and sending them for copying. Please let us know if you live near Aberystwyth and would be willing to help.

Join Plaid History

You are very welcome to join the Plaid Cymru History Association - membership is open both to individuals and to party branches.

A strong membership helps us identify and safeguard important records, and promote activities to celebrate the contribution made by Plaid members past and present.

Ideally we would like to see a number of Plaid History cells, making use of the resources of the National Library and each of Wales' county archives.

How to join? Go to the Plaid History website (www.hanesplaidcymru.org), follow 'Menu' at the top and then 'Membership'.

Contact Us

Have you got historical items you would like to hand over for safekeeping to the Plaid Cymru History Society? You can contact Plaid History's Secretary Eluned Bush by emailing history@hanesplaidcymru.org