The Ninety-second Annual Report of the Council

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The Financial Report for 1999-2000 is published as a companion volume to this Report.



Henry Gastineau (1791 – 1876) Hafod Copper Works (c. 1830) Reproduced courtesy of the Swansea Museum Service

NATIONAL MUSEUMS & GALLERIES OF WALES

PRESIDENT'S FOREWORD

In the year 2000, we inevitably think about the future, whether as individuals, as businesses or as institutions. With the National Assembly in its infancy, Wales has had an additional impetus to do so. Whatever our background or wherever we live in Wales, it is impossible to suppress the surge of excitement and hope that a new millennium brings. In my view the National Museums & Galleries of Wales (NMGW) has a crucial role to play in this new drive to the future. We must grow out of our cultural past, not in isolation from it.

You will see from the pages of this report that it has been a year of rich and varied activity throughout our seven sites. For our museums and galleries, it has also been a year of taking stock of our past, rethinking our future, quite ruthlessly assessing what we have, and planning how we can best manage those assets, to serve Wales properly.



Anna Southall Director

NMGW be doing in the coming century? It seems to me our role is twofold. First to preserve, maintain and add to the collections in our care, so that our part of the nation's heritage is professionally looked after and remains available for future generations. Secondly, we must use old, new and

What should we at

very new methods of communication to ensure that what we have is accessible in some way to everybody in Wales – and indeed, beyond – whatever their age, background, culture or means.

The achievements and progress described in this report would not be complete without an outline of forward looking strategic initiatives, developed throughout the year.

1. We have continued to develop and deliver the industrial strategy to embrace and reach out to all of Wales and to ensure that Wales now takes its timehonoured place in the industrial history of the world. Last year, following the successful renovation of the Welsh Slate Museum, we concentrated on public consultation on our industrial strategy, and the development of a new industrial and maritime

museum. Swansea was the chosen site and we have made great progress in our partnership with the City and County of Swansea during this year.

Other partners and possible funding agencies expressed interest in the scheme to create a 'core museum', which embraces the existing Swansea Maritime Industrial Museum and also involves newly built gallery space. This museum will be at the core of a 'museum campus', which will include the Swansea Museum and allow for the development of other



Mathew Prichard President

existing historic buildings to house activities which give wide and easy access, in reality or through the use of information communication technology, to Wales's heritage. The City and County of Swansea also have plans to develop the wider destination of Swansea Waterfront. The core museum and museum campus are seen as essential in catalysing the urban regeneration of this historically important area of Swansea and we are pleased to be part of this important project in Wales's second City, probably the subject of a future application for European funding.

Coal mining is central to Wales's proud claim to be the first industrial nation. In January 2000 we heard that the Heritage Lottery Fund had awarded NMGW, jointly with Big Pit Mining Museum, a grant of £4.9 million, the largest they have given in Wales to date. A further £1.6 million has been sought from other sources in order to implement a capital improvement scheme to allow Big Pit to assume the status of the National Mining Museum of Wales, as a part of NMGW, in January 2001, thus enriching NMGW as well as ensuring a successful future for this extraordinary and powerfully evocative site.

NMGW's industrial triangle of slate at Llanberis in the North, coal at Big Pit in the south is completed by the Museum of the Welsh Woollen Industry in Dre-fach Felindre in West Carmarthenshire, which has also been the subject of an application to the Heritage Lottery Fund. If, as we hope, this is successful, it will help us tell the story of this "Huddersfield of Wales" in the lovely, historic context of the Teifi Valley.

2. We shall ensure that we can care for and manage, to the highest standards, the collections and estates within our care.

NMGW holds 5.2 million artefacts and groups of specimens upon which it draws for research, study and display. But history starts afresh each day, and our collections cannot stand still. We continue to collect for coming generations, preserving and researching our heritage so that we can enhance our own understanding of our world and make that knowledge widely accessible, and enable informed decisions about the present and future.

Two years ago NMGW set about creating a new Collections Centre at Nantgarw, a cornerstone of our collection strategy. We are now developing this facility, firstly by creating the Archives Resource Centre which will hold important archives which compliment the collections; and secondly, in the longer term, we plan an extension to house many of our less-used but equally important research collections. More modern and accessible storage facilities will lead to enhanced use of these collections by specialists and the public alike.

3. We shall ensure that NMGW is widely recognised as relevant to today's society, using old and new means of communication to satisfy the needs of our audiences.

The redevelopment of WSM has been referred to above. Over the past ten years a phased redevelopment of the Roman Legionary Museum in Caerleon has been implemented, largely funded by private donations. The year 2000 is the 150th anniversary of this museum, and the celebrations will also mark the near completion of the redevelopment of this highly successful museum, tardislike behind its exquisitely elegant classical portico.

Developments during the year at the Museum of Welsh Life (MWL) included continuing work on the restoration of St Fagans Castle and its historic gardens and on the re-erection of the medieval church of Llandeilo Tal-y-bont. Work commenced on a 1948 prefab and on the 'House for the Future'. It is anticipated that there will be several welcome new attractions opening in the coming year. In this year, we welcomed the first Director of National Museum & Gallery (NMG) to Cardiff. MWL has long had a curator or Director, NMG now has one too. Michael Tooby arrived in time to



Interactive activities in the Glanely Gallery

preside over the opening of the Glanely Gallery, an interactive discovery zone where specimens and artefacts can be handled and examined by visitors of all ages with the help of experts – in person or through electronic links.

We have come late to the benefit of new technology - but, increasingly, have seized them with enthusiasm. Our website visitors have increased more than threefold in the last year. Daily coverage of live field trips (an archaeological dig for Viking remains on Anglesey and a trip to research life on the sea bed in the Seychelles) were amongst the most dynamic and popular websites. Videoconferencing has enabled staff to enthuse schools and colleges all over Wales; both technologies fuse with live interpretation in the new Glanely Gallery at NMGW. Web-based catalogues and data-bases have enabled us to satisfy needs of scholars worldwide, and a bid for funding to digitise our collections will, if successful, revolutionise their access in the years to come.



Museum of the Welsh Woollen Industry

4. We shall underpin all our aspirations and activities by managing effectively our existing resources – in terms of collections and estates as well as our human and financial resources of revenue to ensure NMGW maintains its position as an international flagship for Wales.

Master planning for 2007, our centenary year, and beyond, began this year. The development of the Collections Resource Centre at Nantgarw is the essential foundation for all longer term plans to improve the public facilities and services at NMG and MWL and to improve collections care.

Our staff, and investment in their talents, are crucial to our progress as a 21st century museum: this year saw the roll-out of a staff restructuring programme to improve leadership, increase team co-operation and empower all seven museums. A review of Court, Council and Advisory Committees procedures confirmed the holding of two Court meetings a year – a spring meeting held in the north, in addition to the autumn AGM in Cardiff. Council members now chair a number of advisory panels and committees whose members are as powerful in their role as ambassadors for NMGW as they are valuable for their advice. Every aspect of the museums' work – be it public access or international research – is now supported by a committee. We are most grateful to these sixty or so people for their commitment and generosity to the museum. We also started a major review of grading and remuneration to improve our ability to recruit, develop and retain talented staff.

During the first years of this new, post-industrial century, our urgent priority will be to husband resources so that we can tell the story of industry in Wales. As the first country to earn our living chiefly by industrial means, our social history, our culture, arts and technology have been massively affected by industry; our environment, geology, and landscape have all, in their turn, influenced our industrial history and been irrevocably changed by it. Industry is central to the story of this country: recreating that story in the coming decade will be challenging and exciting. It is also long overdue.

> Mathew Prichard President of Council

NATIONAL MUSEUM & GALLERY CARDIFF

ARCHAEOLOGY & NUMISMATICS

Acquisitions and Interpretation

During the year, the Museum acquired two spectacular Treasure finds: a hoard of 3,778 late third century AD coins, one of the finest

hoards of the period from Roman Britain, from Rogiet and a 15thcentury decorated gold signet ring from Raglan (both Monmouthshire). They were purchased under the 1996 Treasure Act, which has already improved the recording and protection of certain classes of portable antiquity containing gold or silver - notably finger rings and coin hoards.

pards.

The great majority of archaeo-

logical finds still fall outside the scope of the Act. Consequently, the Government launched an initiative to promote the voluntary recording of archaeological finds - 'Finding Our Past'. After a successful application to the Heritage Lottery Fund and with the support of the National Assembly for Wales, a pilot scheme has now been established in Wales, involving a variety of organisations working in partnership. The Finds Co-ordinator, based in the National Museum & Gallery, has worked closely with local museums and the regional Archaeological Trusts to establish a network of reporting centres throughout Wales



Filming with Julian Richards for the series *Meet the Ancestors* at Llanbedrgoch, Anglesey.

where finds can be taken for recording. Through recording archaeological finds made by the public, the scheme is enabling a large number of people, especially metal detectorists, to contribute towards the understanding of our past. Details of recorded finds are made available on the Internet (www.finds.org.uk).

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The Raglan ring

1994 a hoard of Roman coins, buried around AD 310, was found during gas pipeline-laying operations near Bridgend. Thanks to sponsorship from BG Transco plc, the hoard of over 1,400 coins can now be seen on long-term display in the Coins & Medals Gallery, NMG.

The conserved 13th-century Magor Pill boat timbers were returned from the York Archaeological Wood Centre in

December 1999. The treatment has been extremely successful, with very little shrinkage and an excellent preservation of surface detail. Grants from the Esmée Fairbairn Charitable Trust and Laings Charitable Trust helped to meet the cost of conservation. The conserved timbers are stored at the Collections Centre, Nantgarw, while plans are developed for the boat's eventual display.

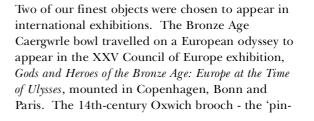
Fieldwork and Research

In the field, excavations on the early medieval and Viking-period settlement at Llanbedrgoch, Anglesey produced exciting results. Three burials were discovered in the vicinity of two other bodies, found the previous year. All had been casually dumped into shallow graves in the upper fill of the enclosure ditch, and at least one adult appeared to have had his wrists tied. This led to speculation that the three adults, child and adolescent were the victims of a Viking raid. The excavation and discoveries were recorded by the BBC for inclusion in a series to be called 'Meet the Vikings', when results from further analysis of the skeletons will be revealed. This research project was made accessible to all who visited the 'Digging for Vikings' webpages. A bilingual dig diary, in which all senior members of the project team played a part, described events as they unfolded. The event proved to be very popular, generating over 6,500 web-site hits during the excavations.



Viking-age burials discovered at Glyn, Llanbedrgoch.

Work also continued on the Early Mesolithic site (c. 7000 BC) at Burry Holms, Gower. The site has produced many stone tools - projectile points, saws and scrapers - and large quantities of waste from their manufacture. Organic samples should throw light on the nature of the environment of the area, which lay some distance from the coast at this time.





National Archaeology Weekend: striking coins

National Archaeology Weekend: dyeing and textiles

up' adorning the cover of the National Museum & Gallery Guide - was displayed in the 'Trésor de Colmar' exhibition at the Musée d'Unterlinden, Colmar (Alsace).

The Oxwich Bracelet

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Access

During National Archaeology Weekend the Department took up residence in the Celtic Village, Museum of Welsh Life. Lost crafts of our prehistoric ancestors were revived, such as iron smelting, weaving and dyeing and coin striking. Visitors could also try their hand at digging for the past in the second season of excavation at Abernodwydd.

ART

Exhibitions

The year saw two contrasting contemporary exhibitions, both with a photographic theme. *David Hockney Photoworks*, an exhibition from the Museum Ludwig, Cologne, explored Hockney's use of photography as an art form. *Land of My Father: The Photographs of David Hurn* was a record of people, places and life in Wales at the close of the 20th century from the camera of one of our most distinguished photojournalists. Two smaller touring exhibitions of 18th century art, the Oppé drawings and the Gilbert silver were also shown at the National Museum & Gallery.

The first full year's programme in the Oriel Celf yng Nghymru / Art in Wales Gallery focused on the contemporary visual culture of Wales, with two group shows, a celebration of the Welsh Group, and *Certain Welsh Artists* curated by Iwan Bala. Another

celebrated the work of the Derek Williams Trust over the last ten years. *Regarding the Function of Objects: Recent Sculpture by Cecile Johnson Soliz* marked the end of the artist's Cardiff residency. The Art in Wales programme has been kindly supported by Lloyds TSB Commercial.

Acquisitions and collection care

Johann Zoffany's great portrait of Henry Knight of Tythegston, Glamorgan, with his three children, was acquired by NMGW for £1,129,038, thanks to the bequest of the late June Tiley, with additional support from the Heritage Lottery Fund and the National Art Collections Fund. David Hockney's The Actor, acquired with the assistance of the Derek Williams Trust, the NACF, and the Hon. James Butler Charitable Trust, now provides a keystone for a significant group of British paintings of the 1960s at the National Museum & Gallery. Other acquisitions included portraits of Lewis Weston Dillwyn, the founder of the Swansea China Works, and of the pioneer geologist Sir Henry de la Beche, as well as Ben Marshall's Griffith Owen, Harpist, of Tywyn and Kashan, an abstract painting of 1984 by Bridget Riley. Works generously presented by the



Henry Knight of Tythegston and his three children, undergoing cleaning

The Gorsedd Procession by David Hurn

Contemporary Art Society for Wales included mining scenes by Vincent Evans and Jack Crabtree.

Frans Snyders, *The Poulterer's Shop*, and two paintings by Melchior d'Hondecoter were conserved and hung in Gallery 2 (17th century). The Zoffany was also conserved, and Gallery 4 (18th century) was re-arranged.

This year saw a number of arrivals and departures. Andrew Renton, from the National Museums and Galleries on Merseyside, took up the post of Curator (Applied Art). Internal re-organisation permitted the creation of two Assistant Curator posts in the Fine Art section, one with responsibility for the 30,000 strong collection of prints, drawings and watercolours, and the other for art created after 1945. The latter will sustain and develop our growing commitment to the contemporary art of Wales. Dr Mark Evans, Assistant Keeper (Fine Art) since 1984, left to take up the post of Head of Paintings at the Victoria and Albert Museum. A pivotal figure in the refurbishment of the art galleries during 1988-93, he will be much missed. His successor, Dr Ann Sumner, joined us from the Holbourne Museum of Art, Bath, in April 2000.



The Poulterer's Shop by Frans Snyders



Place Furstenburg, Paris, August 7, 8, 9, 1985 by David Hockney

BIODIVERSITY AND SYSTEMATIC BIOLOGY

Biodiversity at home

This year again saw the Department engage with a wide range of biodiversity projects, in the UK and abroad. Partnerships support many key elements of the Department's work on these projects and give it a contemporary focus. Primary among these within Wales are the Countryside Council for Wales (CCW), Welsh Universities, and Unitary Authorities who commission or support a great variety of biodiversity studies. For example, CCW is jointly funding a study of the Late Carboniferous fossil floras of the Glyn Neath area, which is a candidate for the World Geosites Inventory, for both palaeobotany and stratigraphy.

In the marine environment, new projects were begun on Carmarthen Bay, St. Brides Bay, off the Llŷn Peninsula and Cardiff Bay, while the INTERREG project entered its final year with additional funding for the final publication. Following previous acclaim, hedge and pond surveys were commissioned by Bridgend and Merthyr Tydfil County Councils.

Site assessments were carried out for insect faunas on the wetland natural nature reserves and contract research was undertaken on the Gwent Levels for Hyder. As part of a LIFE project, beetle surveys were carried out in the New Forest.

Biodiversity further afield

International partnerships are also vital to the promotion and development of the collections. In collaboration with the Royal Geographical Society, Marine Parks Authority and the Seychelles Fisheries Authority, a one month survey of the marine invertebrate diversity of the Seychelles was carried out. This project will compare tropical and temperate diversity and provide a taxonomic baseline for the bristle worm (Polychaeta) and shell (Mollusca) fauna of the Seychelles. The project, which is part of the Shoals of Capricorn Programme, was featured on the Discovery Channel and local press, and also on our website, where the regular updates were particularly well received. While the Darwin Initiative Project in East Africa





Bursidae, collected in the Seychelles.

Departmental staff preparing samples on the Seychelles Expedition.

Departmental staff sorting samples on the Seychelles Expedition.





Filming for the Discovery Channel on the Seychelles Expedition.

enters its final year a new bid was successful in collaboration with the Research Station on Galapagos. This project will help to build collection management capacity in the Galapagos.

Collection management

This continued to be high on the priority list and was further supported by capital expansion funds from the Welsh Assembly. This will allow speedier documentation of the shell, insect and marine invertebrate collections, allowing access via the Internet. The bryophyte collection has largely been re-organised in readiness for documentation and the flowering plants herbarium progressed with the publication of the Rubus (Bramble) catalogue and work on the Hieracium (Hawkweeds) collection. Publications for general readership included *Invasion of the Land* and *Plant Fossils*.

The Department achieved its full complement of staff this year with the appointment of Dr Ray Tangney as Head of Cryptogamic Botany and Dr Lucy Hammond as Department Manager.

The Merthyr pond survey



Amphinomidae (Fire Worm), collected in the Seychelles.



GEOLOGY

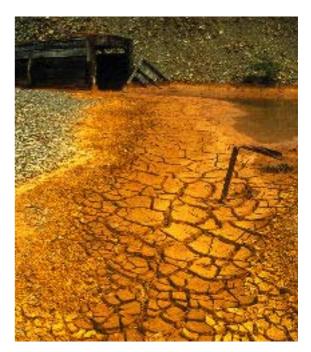
Access

Planning and preparation of the geological contributions for the new, interactive Glanely Gallery formed a major facet of the Department's work this year. Staff were also involved in several of the initial demonstrations and interpretation to visitors, helping to bring many previously unseen items from the Department's collection to life for more visitors than ever before.

The travelling exhibition *Tracking Dinosaurs* was installed at further UK venues, this year at the Yorkshire Museum, York, and the Ulster Museum, Belfast and continues to be a successful and popular attraction.

Geological conservation

National bodies concerned with geological conservation have drawn widely on the support and expertise of departmental staff. Work for contracts with the Joint Nature Conservation Committee on four volumes of the Geological Conservation Review series has been completed; two were published during the course of the year, on Cambrian to Ordovician stratigraphy, and Caledonian igneous rocks, both with substantial contributions by staff. The year also saw the completion of the final phase of MINESCAN, a four-year collaborative project with the Countryside Council for Wales, with a review of mines in Glamorgan and Gwent. MINESCAN was also the subject of a presentation at a conference in Madrid on management and conservation of geological sites. The Department hosted a weekend meeting of the Wales group of RIGS (Regionally Important Geological Sites), where staff presented papers and led a field trip.



Old workings at Cwm Rheidol, near Aberystwyth. A more detailed understanding of the mineral deposits of Wales will help to identify those areas most at risk from acid mine-waters - one of the primary aims of the Minescan project.

International cooperation

The international dimension of the Department's work expanded with research visits by staff to Argentina, China and Uruguay, supported by travel grants from the Royal Society of London and the National Research Council of Argentina. Presentations were given at international conferences in Prague and Krakow. Dr. M.G. Bassett continued his association with Sweden with museum visits to Stockholm and Uppsala, and fieldwork on Gotland. His extensive work on Scandinavian palaeontology and contributions to the university over a twenty-five year period were



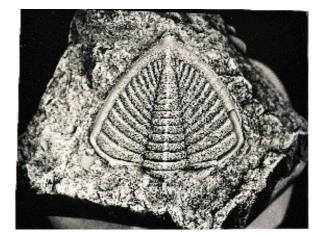
Rocks of Cambrian age in the Precordillera of Western Argentina

recognised in January 2000 by an honorary doctorate from the University of Uppsala.

Collections

Significant collections acquired include a fine collection of alluvial Welsh gold from the Dolgellau gold belt, including two nuggets of exceptional size, to be seen on display in the Evolution of Wales gallery, and a substantial research collection of Silurian corals from the Welsh Borderland, with supporting literature, representing a lifetime's work by Dr C.T. Scrutton of the University of Durham.

After two years of training, and following success in her Diploma examinations, Ms S.L. Chambers was awarded the Fellowship of the Gemmological Association and Gem Testing Laboratory of Great Britain, providing a much needed area of staff expertise in an area of frequent public enquiries.

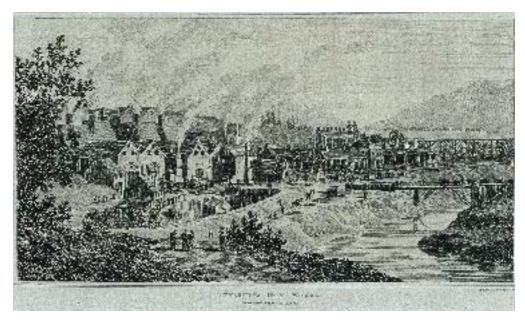


Paradechenella lunata, a new fossil species (trilobite) from Devonian-age rocks of Inner Mongolia.

Mrs D.G. Evans resigned after 18 years' service (1973-79; 1988 - 2000); over this period she made a valuable contribution as cartographic draughtsperson, and as a curator of the Department's map collection.

THE LIBRARY

The past twelve months represent the first operational year of the Library's computerized system. All new acquisitions are now automatically entered, and various projects were begun with the aim of adding certain key areas to the record. To date these have included books acquired in 1996-9, part of the rare books collection, and the museology section. Two books by the Elizabethan scholar from Denbighshire, Humphrey Lhuyd, and published in 1573 and 1584 respectively, have been acquired. The addition of William Gilpin's account of north Wales (1809) and a complete copy of John George Wood's *Principal Rivers of Wales* (1813-5) have enhanced the Welsh topographical collection.



Cyfarthfa Iron Works, Merthyr Tydfil, from Wood's Principal Rivers of Wales.

MUSEUM OF WELSH LIFE

Curatorial, Conservation and Re-erection Work

Uniquely, this year the Museum of Welsh Life's major building project was realized almost two hundred miles away from St. Fagans. The highly successful translocation of the four Fron Haul houses from Tanygrisiau to the Welsh Slate Museum at Llanberis was part of the HLF funded redevelopment of that site (see cover). Staff from the Historical Buildings Unit at MWL supervised the work of moving the buildings, undertaken by specialist contractors Dimbylow Crump. Research work, collection and preparation of the artefacts and re-display of the buildings were delivered by staff from the Department of Domestic Life and Rural Economy. The houses, which have been furnished as they appeared at different periods in their history, have been hugely popular and have provided WSM with a valuable educational tool.

In another radical departure from its usual sphere of activity, the Museum also embarked on a project to build a House for the Future at St. Fagans. Underlining the fact that one of the primary aims of a museum is to use its knowledge of the past to



The Welsh oak framework of the house shows how this building looks forward to the future on the basis of traditional building techniques.

inspire informed discussion about the future, the Museum's collection of historical buildings was used as the basis for this innovative and forward-looking project. Jointly with BBC Wales, the Museum challenged architects to provide a realistic contribution to the ongoing debate about the way housing and society might develop in Wales over the next fifty years, addressing socio-economic issues such as changing family structures, new patterns of work and leisure as well as more obviously building-related issues such as energy efficiency and sustainability. London-based architects Jestico &Whiles won the competition; the daunting challenge of translating their design into physical reality was taken up by the Welsh-based home builders, Redrow Homes, who became major sponsors of the project. Redrow in turn have been enthusiastically supported by over one hundred other companies: too many to mention here but without whom this project could not be completed.



St Teilo's Church, from Llandeilo Tal-y-bont, being reerected at the Museum of Welsh Life.

Alongside this new development, work continued on the Museum's on-going building projects. The late medieval Llandeilo Tal-y-bont church slowly began to take recognizable shape, providing an early indication of its tremendous interpretative potential. Steady progress was also made on conservation of the B2 Prefab from Cardiff, with the use of modern materials such as aluminium proving to be a new challenge to the traditionally based skills of the Historical Buildings Unit! Good progress was also made on the re-display of the first floor rooms at St Fagans Castle, although the

project was bedevilled by periodic flooding of the Long Gallery, a problem which took considerable time to locate and resolve.

Acquisitions

One of the most significant pieces of Welsh furniture to come onto the market in recent years, the Sir Rhys ap Thomas bed Michael Dos Santos, furniture conservator, re-erecting the Sir Rhys ap Thomas bed.





Designer Jill Salen's 'Cool Cymru' dress being prepared for display in the Costume Gallery.

from Derwydd House in Carmarthenshire, was acquired by the Museum in the course of the year. Although assembled to its present form in the mid-19th century, its fine panels were carved in the 16th century for Sir Rhys ap Thomas, the most prominent Welshman of his age. MWL was equally fortunate in being able to purchase a 19th-century carved cupboard, formerly at St Fagans Castle, which provides an added dimension to the redisplay scheme. MWL curatorial and conservation staff were also involved in preparation for the *Secret Spaces* and *Horrible Histories* exhibitions at the National Museum & Gallery.

Events

The Museum's programme of seasonal events and festivals drew some 60,000 visitors to the site despite unhelpful weather at critical times. Fortunately, the May Fair (1-3 May) on the theme of Living History was not one of those affected and the varied programme of activities brought life to virtually every part of the Museum. Other events such as the Forest Fair at the end of May and the newly-established Children's Festival in July continued to evolve into events which are now beginning to realise their potential. Once again, the Miners' Gala (12 June) sponsored by Tower Colliery lived up to its traditional reputation for fiery oratory with contributions by Tyrone O'Sullivan of Tower Colliery, MPs Ann Clwyd and Rhodri Morgan, and Terry Deary, author of the *Horrible Histories* series of children's books. This year, the Open Air Theatre Festival was extended into a third week, with all the productions again playing to almost capacity audiences. Halloween (31 October) and the Christmas Tree Celebration (8-11 December) proved as popular an end to the year as ever, although the latter did suffer somewhat from poor weather.



The Twenty-third Regiment of Foot: re-creating military manoeuvres from Napoleonic times on Cilewent Field.



Recreating the 'Forties feel' at the Workers' Institute, Oakdale.

INDUSTRY

Past and future

The appointment of two assistant curators in the spring of 1999, with responsibility for the coal collections (Ceri Thompson) and contemporary industry (Richard Davies) respectively, illustrates the Department's main focus over the past year, which has been on rebuilding its curatorial and conservation expertise and planning for the future.

Members of curatorial staff have been deeply involved in the planning of the proposed new Swansea Waterfront Museum, with the production of a travelling exhibition on the proposals (currently touring Wales as part of the public consultation strategy) in May 1999, and preparation of a draft storyline for the new museum in July-December 1999. The year has also seen continuing fruitful cooperation with the Big



Work on the Department of Industry's lamp collection

Pit Mining Museum, moving towards integration with NMGW. During the autumn of 1999, a decision was taken to dispose of 126 Bute St, concentrating the Department of Industry in the Collections Centre at Nantgarw. The gallery at 126 Bute St. was closed at the end of May 1999. An extensive conservation and packing programme began in preparation for the move, with additional conservators employed to undertake this work. Planning work for the move began in December 1999.



Russell Ellis, conservator (heavy objects), examining a mortar mill

Early in 2000 a technician and two conservators joined the staff at the Collections Centre, Nantgarw. On a sadder note, Mr Norman Windsor, Senior Conservation Officer, retired in May 1999 after thirteen years of much-valued service.

The Senior Curator attended the International Congress of Maritime Museums conference at Philadelphia in September 1999, and made benchmarking visits to maritime museums in New York and Mystic, Connecticut.

Collections management

During the year over 5600 artefacts were entered onto the collections management system (CMS); staff also accessioned the display items acquired for the Fron Haul quarrymen's houses at the Welsh Slate Museum.

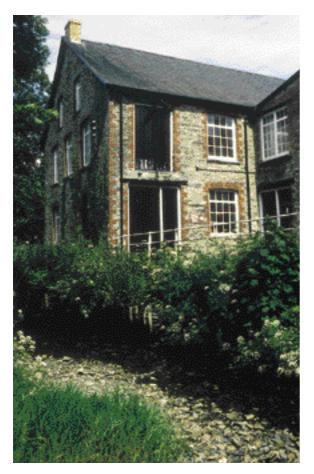
Accessions

Major accessions during the year include a fine ship portrait of the Porthmadog barque *Pride of Wales*, four watercolours of East Moors steelworks, a 1:2500 scale model of the Mochdre-Llanfairfechan section of the A55 Expressway in north Wales, a similar model of the Pontymoel road improvement scheme near Pontypool and an example of a Sinclair ZX Spectrum Plus computer made by AB Electronics at Abercynon in the 1980s.

MUSEUM OF THE WELSH WOOLLEN INDUSTRY

Major improvements at the Museum of the Welsh Woollen Industry herald a new future for the site itself and for the national collections. *A Vision for the Millennium*, the report which began the redevelopment process, is becoming a reality. Outline First Stage plans were submitted to the Heritage Lottery Fund in September 1999, but with the museum and the Woollen Industry Collections now firmly established as key elements in the NMGW Industrial strategy, the renovation programme has already begun.

When David Lewis established the original Cambrian Mills in 1902, the south-facing mill was the first to be built. Concealed within the L-shaped building lie the remains of the first mill to stand upon this site. Little is known about this early mill but the mill race which drove its machinery later served the newly-built Cambrian Mills. (The leat still runs beneath the museum, housed within a brick culvert, before rejoining Nant Bargoed fifty yards downstream.) This building was damaged by



The woollen mill and Nant Bargoed stream

fire in 1919, and although it was rebuilt, it no longer has its original third storey. The wooden lintels that survived this catastrophe remain black and charred and the original windows, also fire damaged, are far smaller than the ones which they replaced.



Keith Rees, technician, demonstrating spinning techniques

The north-facing mill was built a few years later and survived the fire intact. However, in 1997 a structural survey revealed problems and temporary strengthening work was undertaken. Following Cadw listing of the four main site buildings, permanent repair work began in February 2000. After a century of wear and tear, the most serious problem was the east gable, which was 13 inches out of the vertical at the apex. The wall has now been demolished and rebuilt and where necessary old windows were replaced with new replicas. The entire building has also been strengthened with stainless steel pins and anchors, using similar methods and technology to those employed in the restoration of the Brunswick Tower at Windsor Castle.

The consultant engineers, Veryards Ltd., and the main contractors, Noel T James, Ltd., worked with local craftsmen, including stonemasons Dacri and Jones of Saron. The work was completed to the highest conservation standards and all involved have helped to ensure the survival of the building for the next century and beyond. Undoubtedly, the major industrial archaeology survey shortly to take place will provide exciting information concerning the past development and use of this site information which will be invaluable in our continuing reinterpretation of this important industrial museum.

WELSH SLATE MUSEUM



Staff from the Museum of Welsh Life dismantling the Fron Haul row of quarrymen's houses, ready for re-erection at WSM.

On July 28, 1999, the last major element in the Welsh Slate Museum's Heritage Lottery-funded programme of developments was completed, with the opening of Fron Haul quarrymen's houses. Moved stone by stone from the slate quarrying village of Tanygrisiau near Blaenau Ffestiniog, these houses were then rebuilt and furnished to reflect three key periods in the history of the slate



The Fron Haul row of quarrymen's houses at the Welsh Slate Museum, Llanberis.

industry. The boom years at Tanygrisiau are in evidence in the 1861 house, while the 1901 house depicts living conditions during the cataclysmic three-year strike at Penrhyn Quarry, Bethesda. By late summer 1969 Dinorwig Quarry at Llanberis itself had closed, and the third house reflects this period. The remaining house is used for educational events and activities: all are underpinned by research, collections and expertise from the Museum of Welsh Life. Visitor comments indicate that the houses are very popular indeed, and they have - as we expected - led to a greater awareness of the social and domestic context of the lives of the quarrymen and their families.

With this element complete, final funding applications were submitted to the Heritage Lottery Fund later in the year, with the full £2.1 million project being completed on time and within budget. Visitor figures have continued to increase, from 42,500 in 1998/9 to almost 47,000 by the end of 1999/00. The ERDF-financed Llanberis marketing scheme, led by Gwynedd Council, is now in full operation, encouraging visitors to see the



The range in the 1901 house at Fron Haul.

village and its attractions as one composite, high standard package.

The Welsh Slate Museum is located within what were once Dinorwig Quarry's maintenance workshops. As part of the Museum's lease agreement with Gwynedd Council, we have been given the contents of all these buildings, and are at present conducting a full collections condition survey, in order to audit what we have, exactly, and its condition. This will continue until 2001. One of our main artefacts is the giant 50'5" diameter water wheel, built by De Winton of Caernarfon in 1870. Conservation repair of the wheel started in January 2000, and this too will continue for some time yet.

SEGONTIUM ROMAN MUSEUM

At this uniquely located museum, looking down the Menai Straits to the scene of the Roman attack on Anglesey, and within the westernmost part of the Roman Empire, primary school groups are given the opportunity to reflect on the reality of life in a 1st century AD military frontier zone.

This year, special presentations, *More Celts than Romans*, looked at the relationship between native inhabitants and invading forces.

Special events for summer visitors included pottery demonstrations, exploring Roman techniques,

guided tours and storytelling, and `detective' sessions, using evidence to make deductions about archaeological objects.

NMGW continues to work with Cadw: Welsh Historic Monuments (with whom it shares the site) and Gwynedd County Council to ensure a successful future strategy for this small, but nevertheless important, museum and site.



On guard at Segontium Roman Museum!

ROMAN LEGIONARY MUSEUM

With the Roman Legionary Museum (RLM) marking its 150th anniversary in 2000, once again we have enjoyed a very busy year, maintaining visitor figures of over 50,000 of which half were organised education groups. Despite recent popular developments such as the hands-on Studio it has been essential to continue developing the museum, as we are running at capacity.

The latest addition to the RLM is the Pegasus

Centre, a multi-purpose space for education groups to use as a classroom, a picnic area and also a facility for museum functions and lectures. The building itself is the former telephone exchange and was built circa 1937; since it was purchased by the museum in 1995 it has only been used for storage. The exterior of the Pegasus Centre will be a learning resource in itself as it reflects villa architecture at the time of Caerleon's occupation. This latest addition is a

artefacts from the collection. The focus of the exhibitions has been on how different types of objects displayed in the gallery were made by Roman craftsmen.

Preparation continues for our 150th anniversary celebrations. During the year the RLM has been working with 450 local school children to create a 'Junior Legion' who will be performing with the Ermine Street Guard in the Amphitheatre.



permanent legacy of the anniversary celebrations, kindly supported by Save & Prosper Educational Trust.

During this year there has been a varied programme of events at the RLM. The Ermine Street Guard visited with their replica leather tent and returned at Christmas to celebrate Saturnalia. During the summer the garden was transformed into a late Roman village with cookery, weaving and metalworking demonstrations. There have also been mosaic workshops and an interactive murder mystery that had everybody involved - including the staff!

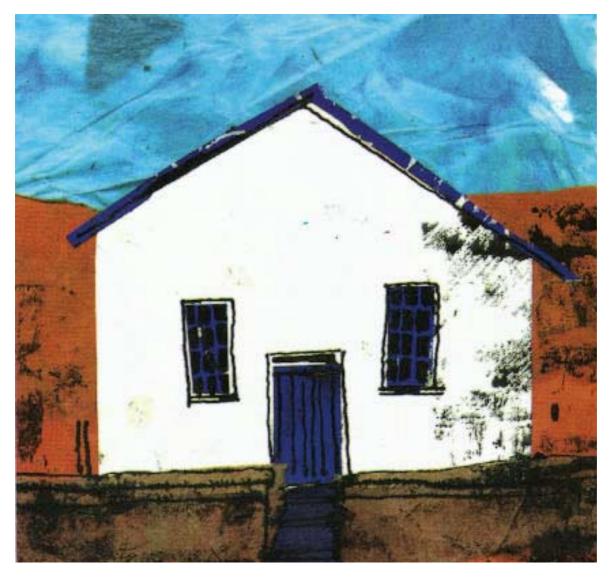
The Gallery has also been developed this year; title labels have been added to each display case to enhance visitors' understanding of the gallery design and artefacts displayed. Two small gallery cases were amalgamated to create a new case entitled 'Religion & Superstition'. This has allowed one case to be used as a temporary exhibition case, providing us with the space to display other

The Pegasus Centre, a multipurpose centre for educational use.



TURNER HOUSE GALLERY

The gallery's usual changing programme of temporary exhibitions of recent and contemporary work by Welsh artists began this year with new paintings by the Cardiff-based artist Brendan Stuart Burns, reinterpreting Pembrokeshire beaches. In contrast *Cefin Burgess: New Textiles* showed woven fabrics, collages, quilts and carpet designs inspired by the nonconformist chapels of Wales. One of the occasional photographic exhibitions at Turner House, *Erich Lessing: 50 Years of Photography* featured the work of this distinguished Austrian photographer, who covered many political events in post-war eastern Europe including the Hungarian Revolution. Turner House is also a venue for amateur and group exhibitions and this year saw the 104th annual exhibition of the South Wales Art Society, as well as an exhibition of work by members of the Watercolour Society of Wales. The year ended with the distribution exhibition of the Contemporary Art Society for Wales, a stimulating reflection of the diversity of art in Wales today as well as a retrospective of a number of older works from the 1930s to the 1970s.



Jerusalem (Independent), Llawrplwyf: from the exhibition Cefin Burgess: New Textiles, Turner House.

PRIMARY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR FIGURES

VISITOR FIGURES FOR THE PERIOD 1 April 1999 - 31 March 2000

	Actual 1999/2000	Previous Year 1998/99
National Museum & Gallery	204,902	208,063
Museum of Welsh Life Roman Legionary Museum	$323,566 \\55,612$	$363,727 \\ 52,903$
Museum of the Welsh Woollen Industry	12,047	14,455
Turner House Gallery	8,939	8,292
SHARED SITES WITH CADW Welsh Slate Museum Llanberis	46,963	42,722
Segontium Roman Museum	8,833	8,716
TOTAL	660,862	717,812

The Museum's performance against its Primary Performance Indicator targets set by the National Assembly for Wales:

	Actual 1999-2000	Actual 1998-99	Target 1999-2000
1 Visitor Numbers (000's)	662	718	723
2 Numbers (000's) of specimens which were curated, documented, conserved and stored to or above			
minimum standards	113	61	250
3 No of days open	2230	*	2391
4. Number of Visitors in education			
related parties (000's)	163	*	160
5. Total generated income as a % of Grant in Aid	10.7%	*	10.87%
* New performance indicator; no data available for previous year			

The birthday year at MWL i.e. 1998/99 resulted in high visitor figures and ambitious targets in the successive reporting year. These were not quite acheived. Performances in Collections and Research were affected by defiencies arising from overloading the Museum's ICT network, which have since been addressed via the Museum's capital ICT infrastructure works.

Development

Partners in time

Raising much needed funds for NMGW's core work is challenging at the best of times. But as the National Museum moves into the 21st century, this year has seen some of the most innovative fundraising yet sitting comfortably with the traditional.

When the BBC approached the Museum of Welsh life to build a House for the Future alongside its world famous collection of buildings from the past, the team at St Fagans jumped at the chance. Here was an opportunity to learn from traditional skills and our knowledge of the past to inform the development of housing in the new century. The only catch was the cost; £250,000.

The museum approached a number of major house builders and after detailed research and negotiation entered into partnership with Welsh house-builders, Redrow Homes. Redrow South-West Chairman Colin Lewis was only too pleased to become the main project partner. "This was just the sort of project we were looking for to help develop new skills and experience amongst my team and to reaffirm our company's commitment to continuing innovation in Wales."

This partnership has grown and developed to include over eighty different companies who will deliver another world-class project at a fraction of the real cost to the Museum of Welsh Life. Such partnerships are well publicised and take enormous effort and commitment from all involved. However other, less public partnerships have been no less effective.

June Tiley, a lecturer in art who lived in Dinas Powys, was a lifelong supporter of the museum and had a great affection for the national galleries in Cathays Park. Sadly Miss Tiley passed away in 1998. To reflect her lifelong love of the visual arts, she left a generous portion of her legacy to NMGW so that we might acquire a major work for the collection.

This gift became crucial when an opportunity arose to purchase a major 18th century painting by Johann Zoffany, *Henry Knight of Tythegston*, *Glamorgan, with his three children*. The price of the work was well beyond the limited resources of the Museum alone. However Miss Tiley's gift enabled us to enter into partnership with the Heritage Lottery Fund and the National Arts Collection Fund to acquire the painting for the nation.

Such public-private partnerships have helped develop the collections, the building and the reputation of NMGW in the past century and we will continue to create and develop many more in the years to come.

Making the Museum's work possible

If you would like to become more involved in supporting the work of NMGW these are just some of the ways you can help.

Membership and Friend Schemes £10 - £32.50

Thousands of individuals support the Museum by becoming a Member or Friend. In addition to gaining free access, and the opportunity to take part in exciting events and many more benefits, you will be providing essential financial assistance.

Patrons £250 - £4,000

Being a Patron offers a closer relationship, with privileges for your guests and family. Patrons can enjoy behind-the-scenes tours, priority booking for events and exclusive invitations to an annual Patrons' function with NMGW's President. Patrons are also acknowledged on the Donor Wall of the National Museum & Gallery Cardiff.

Bequests

If you are considering remembering the National Museums & Galleries of Wales in your will, then please let us know so that we may make the appropriate acknowledgements.

Company support

Corporate membership £1,250 - £1,750

A range of corporate memberships are available. These entitle companies to use the impressive facilities at any of our sites for entertaining clients or staff at a discounted rate.

Sponsorship £5,000 - £250,000

NMGW has one of the largest cultural and heritage organisations in the country. We have many opportunities for partnership through our extensive exhibitions and events programme, and many new and exciting capital projects.

For further information on any of these schemes please contact Richard Tynen or any member of the Development Department on 029 20573483.

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Senior Curator, Maritime & Transport Collections

David Jenkins Curator, Heavy Industry **Robert Protheroe Jones** Curator Coal Ceri Thompson Curator Modern & Contemporary Industry Richard Davies Documentation Officer Carolyn Charles Curatorial Assistants Mark Etheridge Peter H Bennett Administrative Assistant Judith Martin Senior Conservation Officer Norman Windsor (to 3/6/99) Conservation Officers, Models Robert Davies **Russell Ellis** Technicians Christopher Perry Philip Tuck Supervising Museum Assistant Norman Williams Museum Assistants Cornelius Healan Brian Husband Cleaner Margaret Hardy

WELSH SLATE MUSEUM

Keeber Dafydd Roberts Administrative Officer Nia Hughes Administrative Assistants Ceri Hughes (to 28/9/99) Tina Burgess Promotions Officer Julie Williams Exhibitions Officer Tudur Jones Collections Inventory Assistant Lucinda Willis Technicians David Davies Dennis R Jones Exhibiting Čraftsmen /Technicians Elwyn Wilson Jones Haydn Lewis Dylan C Parry Owen G Roberts Supervising Museum Assistant Dilys Jones Museum Assistants Douglas Ellis Gilbert Jones Maldwyn Owen Jones Gareth Rolant Davies Meinir Jones John Williams Cleaners Joan Allsup Lynda Parry Carol Roberts Margaret Roberts Catering Manager

Rhian Elis Catering Assistants Nia Lewis Maiwen Baylis Rhian Williams Cadi Hughes Margaret Morris

ROMAN LEGIONARY MUSEUM

Museum Manager Diane Dollery (to 31/7/99) Bethan Lewis (from 1/8/99) Curatorial Officer Julie Reynolds Administrative Officer Martin Studdard Education Support Officer Martin Collier Acting Education Officer Victoria Hutchings (to 26/3/00) Education Facilitator Eileen Pearce Museum Assistants Emlyn Jones Helen Bolton Mary Nichol Mary Johnson Cleaner Anne Clarke

SEGONTIUM ROMAN MUSEUM

Museum Assistants Dennis Jones John Parry

TURNER HOUSE GALLERY

Museum Assistants Tony Lace Ron Norman Cleaner Christine Bowen The President and Council would like to thank the following, and those who wish to remain anonymous, for their generous support of the National Museums & Galleries of Wales in the period from 1st April 1999 to March 2000

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