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Erthygl i'r Wasg Press Release

Waliau'n siarad: Coleg Harlech

Adeilad a fu'n gartref i filiwnydd ac a newidiodd fywydau cannoedd o fyfyrwyr fydd yn hawlio sylw **Waliau'n Siarad** ar S4C nos Sul 19 Ionawr 2020.

Am bron i ganrif, bu Coleg Harlech yn cynnig ail gyfle am addysg i oedolion o bob cwr o Gymru a thu hwnt. Sefydlwyd y coleg yn 1927 ar safle Plas Wern Fawr, gyda golygfeydd godidog dros Fae Ceredigion. Adeiladwyd y plasty yn wreiddiol yn gartref i George Davison, gŵr o Loegr a wnaeth ei ffortiwn fel un o gyd-sylfaenwyr cwmni ffotograffiaeth byd-enwog Kodak. Roedd yn unigolyn radical ac anghonfensiynol oedd yn hoff o gomisiynu gweithiau celf, gwylio ballet a chynnal partïon gwyllt.

Yn 1927, cytunodd i werthu Plas Wern Fawr am bris rhesymol i Thomas Jones - sosialydd o Dde Cymru a fyddai'n dod yn Ysgrifennydd Cabinet i David Lloyd George. Roedd Thomas Jones wedi gweld cymaint o bobl y cymoedd yn dioddef oherwydd iddynt adael ysgol yn rhy gynnar ac roedd am sefydlu coleg unigryw a fyddai'n agor drysau i oedolion na gafodd addysg gyflawn pan yn blant.

Yn y rhaglen, bydd Aled Hughes a Sara Huws yn olrhain hanes hynod yr adeilad drwy straeon pobl fu'n astudio ac yn gweithio yno yn ogystal â hen luniau ac archif.
Mewn sgwrs gydag Aled ar safle'r Coleg, mae Gwyn Jones o Blas Glyn y Weddw yn rhannu atgofion o'i gyfnod yn y coleg yn y 1990au:

"O'n gwybod ar ôl gweithio saith mlynedd mewn jobsys o'n i ddim isio neud, ar gyflog isel ac yn y blaen, mod i isio mynd yn nôl i ddysgu. Dyna be oedd hwn - rhyw fath o gwrs *access* i fynd mewn i Brifysgol. Nath o newid `y mywyd i," meddai Gwyn.

Mae Sara'n rhyfeddu at y murluniau o fywyd diwylliannol a diwydiannol Cymru a beintiwyd yn y 1930au ac sydd i'w gweld o hyd yn yr hen ystafell gyffredin.
Mae hefyd yn clywed am bensaernïaeth drawiadol y lle a'r tân fu bron a difetha'r cwbl yn 1968. Llosgwyd Neuadd Fawr yr adeilad yn ulw ond o'r llwch, fe godwyd adeilad arloesol Theatr Ardudwy a agorwyd yn 1974.

Wrth gloriannu'r adeiladwaith, dywed y pensaer Efa Lois Thomas o Aberystwyth: "Mae'n ddiddorol oherwydd mae brwtaliaeth yn steil sy'n dyddio nôl o'r chwedegau, saithdegau... a'r canlyniad yw adeiladau rili uchelgeisiol, rili gyffrous fel hyn."

Caeodd Coleg Harlech yn 2017 a'r theatr flwyddyn yn ddiweddarach. Er mewn dwylo preifat bellach, mae'r adeiladau yn wag ar hyn o bryd ac mae hynny'n destun siom i Alun Elidyr a fu'n perfformio sawl gwaith ar lwyfan y theatr.

"Mae o'n codi gwarth arnom ni dwi'n meddwl, bo' ni wedi caniatáu i hyn ddigwydd, achos does 'na nunlla arall yn agos at fan hyn beth bynnag sydd â'r un math o adnoddau," meddai Alun.

Ymhlith cyfranwyr eraill y rhaglen mae'r cyn diwtor a'r hanesydd Jon Parry, y pensaer Dan Morris o Landeilo, yr hanesydd Dr Elin Jones, Elgan Philip Davies o Aberystwyth, Edwina Evans, Glory Thomas sy'n hanu o Batagonia, Mair Tomos Ifans, Carys Huw a Sheila Maxwell.

Waliau'n Siarad: Coleg Harlech
Nos Sul, 19 Ionawr 8.00 S4C
Ar alw: S4C Clic; BBC iPlayer a llwyfannau eraill
Cynhyrchiad Unigryw ar gyfer S4C

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Erthygl i'r Wasg **Press Release**

If walls could talk … Coleg Harlech

A building that once housed a millionaire and changed the lives of hundreds of students will feature in **Waliau'n Siarad** on S4C on Sunday, 19 January 2020.

For nearly a century, Coleg Harlech has been offering a second chance in adult education from all over Wales and beyond. The college was founded in 1927 on the site of Plas Wern Fawr, with spectacular views over Cardigan Bay. The mansion was originally built as the home of George Davison, an Englishman who made his fortune as one of the co-founders of the world-famous Kodak photography company. He was a radical and unconventional individual who loved commissioning works of art, watching ballet and hosting wild parties.

In 1927, he agreed to sell Plas Wern Fawr at a reasonable price to Thomas Jones - a South Wales socialist who would become Cabinet Secretary to David Lloyd George. Thomas Jones had seen so many valleys people suffer from leaving school too early and he wanted to set up a unique college that would open doors for adults who were not fully educated as children.

In the programme, Aled Hughes and Sara Huws trace the building's remarkable history through the stories of people who studied and worked there and through old photographs and items from the archive. In a conversation with Aled on the college site, Gwyn Jones from Plas Glyn y Weddw shares memories of his time at college in the 1990s:

"I knew after seven years of working in jobs I didn't want to do, on low pay and so on, that I wanted to go back to learning. And this was sort of an access course to get into university. It changed my life," said Gwyn.

Sara is amazed at the murals of Welsh cultural and industrial life painted in the 1930s and still visible in the old common room. She also hears about the striking architecture of the place and the fire that nearly destroyed it in 1968. The Great Hall of the building was burnt down, but the groundbreaking Theatr Ardudwy building was built on the site and opened in 1974.

Evaluating the structure, architect Efa Lois Thomas of Aberystwyth says: "It's interesting because the brutalist style dates back to the sixties, seventies ... and the result is really ambitious, really exciting buildings like this."

Coleg Harlech closed in 2017 and the theatre closed a year later. Although now in private hands, the buildings are currently vacant and this is a disappointment to Alun Elidyr who performed many times on the theatre stage.

"I think it's shameful that we've allowed this to happen, because there's nowhere else near here offering the same kind of resources," said Alun.

Other contributors in the programme include former tutor and historian Jon Parry, architect Dan Morris of Llandeilo, historian Dr Elin Jones, Elgan Philip Davies of Aberystwyth, Edwina Evans, Glory Thomas of Patagonia, Mair Tomos Ifans, Carys Huw and Sheila Maxwell.

Waliau'n Siarad: Coleg Harlech
Sunday, 19 January 8.00 S4C
English subtitles available
Available to watch on-demand at S4C Clic, iPlayer and other platforms
An Unigryw production for S4C