



The Penrhyn Project: 3 year PhD Studentship in the social and political history of North West Wales, c.1860-1980.

Qualification Type: PhD

Location: Institute for the Study of Welsh Estates, Bangor University

Application deadline: 16 October 2017

Funding amount: The studentship includes the full cost of tuition fees plus a maintenance stipend worth c.£10,000 per annum, for the 3 year duration of the award

You will also be paid a fixed allowance of £2,000 per year for 3 years in recognition of the requirement to undertake work experience of approximately 100 hours per year. Details of the work experience (normally teaching, supervision of practicals or research assistance) will be discussed and agreed with your supervisor.

Hours: Full time, commencing autumn 2017 / January 2018

Summary

The [Institute for the Study of Welsh Estates](#) (ISWE) at Bangor University invites applications for a 3 year PhD Studentship focused on the impact and influence of the Penrhyn estate on the social and political identity of North West Wales during the period c.1860-1980. This unique studentship is sponsored by the [Drapers' Company](#) and includes a stipend of c.£10,000 for three years, in addition to the cost of all tuition fees and funding to attend an international conference.

Supervised by an expert and interdisciplinary academic team headed by [Professor Andrew Edwards](#) (Dean of the College of Arts and Humanities and Professor of Modern History) and linking to integral parts of the region's cultural heritage profile, the project provides an outstanding opportunity for a motivated, talented and ambitious graduate looking to develop a career in the academic and / or cultural heritage sectors. The successful candidate will be based in the [School of History and Archaeology](#).

The Penrhyn Estate

From the time of its emergence in the medieval period through to the early part of the 20th century, the Penrhyn estate constituted a dominant force in the life of North West Wales. This influence extended across a massive landholding base and embraced all aspects of society, ranging from industry, politics, culture and religion through to architecture, language, farming and land management. The story and legacy of Penrhyn is complex, multifaceted and infused with important episodes of considerable controversy and contention, which merit further analysis in their own right. However, the impact of Penrhyn is one which extends beyond the Great Quarry Strike of 1901-03 and the family's links to the slave trade. Since 1951 [Penrhyn Castle](#) has been in the possession of the National Trust and is a major visitor attraction. Penrhyn offers an outstanding prism for exploring the social and political history of the region, its communities and links to the wider world.

The Project

By 1883 Penrhyn was the third largest estate in Wales, with a huge rental income of £63,000 per annum. Its owner, Edward Douglas-Pennant (1800-86) was in the highest rank of British landowners, his immense political and social power radiating from Penrhyn Castle across much of the surrounding region. Member of Parliament and Lord Lieutenant for Caernarfonshire, Douglas-Pennant was elevated to the peerage in 1866 as Baron Penrhyn of Llandegai. On top of his landed wealth and political influence, Lord Penrhyn also owned the incredibly prosperous Penrhyn slate quarries in Bethesda, which employed as many as 2,500 men. He has been called 'the crucial element in Gwynedd society in the nineteenth century'. During his lifetime Penrhyn and its environs emerged as a theatre for playing out all the issues of political, cultural, religious and social contention in late-19th century Wales society, as an

increasingly assertive Liberal, Nonconformist, Welsh-speaking and radically-minded contingent propagated a powerful message of national reform and reawakening, centred on emancipation from the traditional structure of Welsh society, embodied by the ascendancy of Lord Penrhyn. In the following generation the 'Great Strike' at the estate's slate quarry tore apart the community and has ramifications for the social and political identity of the region which are relevant to this day. From the beginning of the 20th century the position of social power and political influence exerted by the Penrhyn estate began to decline and in 1951 its primary powerbase was presented to the National Trust.

The successful candidate will have freedom to develop an innovative research project on any aspect(s) of the impact and influence of the Penrhyn estate on the social and political identity of North West Wales across the late-19th and 20th centuries. Potential themes include:

- The memory of the 'Great Strike' and its social and political ramifications (a multigenerational perspective);
- The roots of party politics and political alignments: Welsh Conservatism, Nationalism and the Labour Party;
- Penrhyn and the north Wales press;
- The response to radicalism: religion, language and politics in the local landscape;
- The decline of the Penrhyn influence and the emergence of new local power structures;
- Penrhyn Castle in the 20th Century: public attitudes, community engagement and heritage site.

Research incorporating an oral or public history methodology would be particularly welcome, as would projects which engage with the archival collections held by [Bangor University Archives and Special Collections](#) and [Gwynedd Archives](#).

This studentship forms part of an exciting long-term programme of research centred on the impacts and influence of the Penrhyn Estate which links to an application to secure [UNESCO World Heritage Status for the Gwynedd Slate Industry](#) and a National Trust initiative to [transform the visitor experience at Penrhyn Castle](#). Alongside the production of a doctoral thesis, the successful candidate will have opportunities to work closely with heritage organisations, archives, local history societies and community groups to create an engaging programme of heritage and tourism outputs (web content, exhibitions, guided walks etc.) which promote the history of the Penrhyn estate.

The Institute for the Study of Welsh Estates

ISWE is a new research centre based within the [College of Arts and Humanities](#) at Bangor. Its objective is to support and promote innovative research into the history, culture and landscapes of Wales, through the prisms of landed estates and the collections they generated over the course of their existence. Bringing together colleagues from academic fields ranging from History, Welsh, Law and Music, through to Forestry, Heritage Studies and English Literature, ISWE benefits from the outstanding corpus of estate archives held by [Bangor University Archives and Special Collections](#). In addition to working closely with equivalent research centres across the UK, Ireland and Europe, ISWE enjoys close collaborative relationships with partners in the archive, cultural heritage, local history and rural affairs sectors.

This studentship represents an important early initiative for ISWE, providing opportunities for the successful candidate to contribute towards the development of a research centre which is quickly forming a distinctive role in the cultural and intellectual life of Wales. For more about ISWE's aims and approach please visit <http://iswe.bangor.ac.uk>.

Postgraduate Study at Bangor University

Bangor University is committed to maintaining an environment which allows its postgraduate students to fully realise their potential during this exciting period of their lives. You will become part of a vibrant and supportive academic community including other postgraduates, early-career researchers and established academics. In addition to the expert guidance provided by your supervisory team, you will have access to outstanding training and development opportunities through the [College's Graduate School](#) and Bangor University's [Doctoral School](#).

As an important part of the ISWE community you will be invited to engage with its exciting programme of research activities and public events and will have access to unique opportunities for developing your skills and experiences

through its partnerships with organisations in the archives and cultural heritage sectors. You will also have the opportunity to undertake undergraduate teaching in the College of Arts and Humanities.

This studentship also includes funding for you to attend an international conference.

How to apply

The closing date for applications is 16 October 2017

Apply online at <https://apps.bangor.ac.uk/applicant/>. Incomplete Applications or applications received after this specified time will not be accepted.

The application must contain the following documents:

1. Covering letter (max 1,000 words): The covering letter should set out your reasons and motivation for applying to study at Bangor University; your understanding and expectations of doctoral study; your academic interests generally; and provide evidence of how you fulfil the following criteria:

- A demonstrable interest in the project and the aims of the Institute for the Study of Welsh Estates;
- A good general understanding of Modern Welsh and British Social and Political History;
- A strong academic record in a relevant field of study, including a BA degree (2.1 or above) and ideally an MA at Merit or Distinction level;
- An ability and commitment to complete the PhD project (including a thesis) within the three-year studentship period (i.e. project and time management skills);
- Experience of oral history / public history / archival research methodologies;
- Experience of working in a cultural heritage setting and / or knowledge and understanding of heritage interpretation techniques;
- Outstanding communication and interpersonal skills (including written and oral), ideally in English and Welsh;
- An ability to travel to sites and communities of relevance to the project.

2. Research proposal (max. 500 words): The research proposal should give an indication of the ways in which you would like to develop the project. It might include sections on the following:

- Title and summary of the research;
- Key research themes and questions;
- Overview of relevant academic literature (references can be included as additions to the word limit);
- Proposed methodology;
- The intellectual significance and contribution of the proposed research;
- Ideas for cultural heritage outputs.

3. Academic / Professional Qualifications: *This should also include proof of English Language Competency (7.0 IELTS minimum) for applicants without English as a first language.*

4. Curriculum Vitae: This should be no longer than two pages.

5. References: All applications require two academic references to be submitted in support. Candidates must approach referees themselves and request a reference to be submitted.

Where can I find more information?

Informal enquiries about the project should be directed to: [Dr. Shaun Evans](mailto:shaun.evans@bangor.ac.uk), Director of the Institute for the Study of Welsh Estates (shaun.evans@bangor.ac.uk). General enquiries about the Studentship or the application process should be directed to: Postgraduate Admissions Administrator (pgadmissionscah@bangor.ac.uk).

The online application form is available [here](#).