



...STOP PRESS.....CyMAL UPDATE.....STOP PRESS...

Fed President Chris Delaney has recently corresponded with Jenny Randerson, Minister for Culture, Sport and the Welsh Language, regarding the Federation's concerns about the winding down of CMW and the launch of CyMAL. Y Mag is devoting pages one and two of this issue to printing selected extracts from these letters.

Jenny Randerson's letter of December 18th 2002

"In your letter you say that a number of members are concerned that the period of transition between the Council of Museums in Wales (CMW) and CyMAL may result in a reduction in service and support for museums in Wales.

The Welsh Assembly Government will work together with CMW to ensure that any disruption during the transition period is kept to a minimum. With regard to funding, CMW will be funded in full up until 31 March 2004; and financial provision will be made for CyMAL during 2003/04 in order to bring staff into post and set up accommodation in readiness for 1 April 2004. You may also wish to know that my officials will be meeting with CMW in January. One of the purposes of the meeting will be to ensure that we work together in a constructive way and enable CMW to continue to provide a high standard of service and accessibility to grant aid until CyMAL is established."

Chris Delaney's response of March 11th 2003

"However in the short term, we feel that the proposed location for CyMAL will generate two significant problems, continuity of provision to museums across Wales and a museum contribution to CyMAL's developing agenda. The reason being that we believe it probable that many existing members of CMW staff would not wish to transfer to Aberystwyth and would be looking to leave for new posts before CMW ceases to exist in March 2004. Therefore there will be a haemorrhaging of expertise and sector knowledge leading to difficulties for museums in the transitional period and possible consequences for the future of museum provision across Wales.

As you are aware CMW maintains, in addition to its principal office in Cardiff, a regional office in Wrexham. This has allowed CMW officers to move out into the museum community and provide immediate and direct assistance to museums across Wales, many of which are staffed by only one or two individuals. This professional contact has been crucial to personal and service development. While ICT is a significant development in communication for lone and isolated workers, it is no substitute for personal contact. We would suggest therefore, that at least in the short term, CyMAL maintains one of CMW's regional offices in order to retain staff expertise and an accessible point of contact for the museum community across Wales.

With regard to the proposed Advisory Council, our executive was keen to know your current thinking on this body. In particular, the date when it will be established, its terms of reference and how its membership will be selected and constituted. Therefore we would appreciate an update on the current situation regarding the proposed Advisory Body."



Further extracts from recent correspondence between Chris Delaney, Fed President, and Jenny Randerson, Minister for Culture, Sport and the Welsh Language.

Jenny Randerson's response March 26th 2003

“All members of CMW staff are assured of a job in CyMAL and we are keen to retain the expertise of as many staff as possible. However, it is appreciated that not all might be able to take up a post in Aberystwyth. We are working closely with CMW to ensure that disruption is kept to a minimum. In addition, CyMAL will offer a number of opportunities which should be attractive to potential recruits.

The next step will be to advertise for a Head of CyMAL. An organisation structure and business plan will then be prepared. It is at this stage that we shall need to consider how we can ensure accessible and direct assistance to museums across Wales, as well as to libraries and archive services. I can assure you that, whilst CyMAL will be located in Aberystwyth, it will work for the benefit of museums in the whole of Wales.

I am continuing to use my Advisory Group on CyMAL to provide me with advice during the transition period as we develop CyMAL, including with regard to the proposed Advisory Council about which no decisions have yet been made. Membership of this group includes John Marjoram, the Acting Director of the Council of Museums in Wales, and John Williams-Davies of the National Museums & Galleries of Wales.

I should be grateful if you would let John Marjoram have any thoughts you may have on the Advi-

Chris Delaney's response March 27th 2003

“We believe that there is a representation on the Advisory Group from each of the three domains and officers of CMW and the NMGW represent the museum domain. In the past this has been a standard arrangement with CMW representing the collective views of the non-national museum sector in Wales.

With the advent of CyMAL and the demise of CMW, the Federation sees a changing role for itself and we anticipate that we will have new roles of advocacy and representation for the museum sector in Wales, as CMW relinquishes these roles in the future. However, in the interests of continuity, we feel that we should now play a part in forging the future shape of CyMAL, through participation on your Advisory Group.

We wonder therefore if you could consider extending an invitation to the Federation for a representative to sit on your Advisory Group on CyMAL.”



CyMAL UPDATE

John Marjoran updates us on the latest news regarding CyMAL

Developments since the last newsletter are as follows:-

- announcement of Aberystwyth as location of CyMAL. No intention to have other offices.
- Minister advisory group is providing input on the timetable, work programme and structure of CyMAL.
- Head of CyMAL likely to be in post by early this summer. The job will be advertised publicly.

CMW staff have been fully informed of the location, and options for future work patterns discussed. There is still an issue regarding the ability of existing staff to transfer to CyMAL. CMW as a body is also concerned that if any staff transfer before April 2004 there may be consequences for CMW to deliver its programme in 2003/04.

Museums will be pleased to know that the Welsh Assembly Government will honour any ongoing (ie after 2003/04) project grants approved by CMW.

John Marjoram
Acting Director
CMW

NOTICES

The Society of Museum Archaeologists' 2003 Conference

The Society of Museum Archaeologists' 2003 conference is to be held in the National Museum & Gallery Cardiff 6th - 8th November 2003. The conference theme will be Artefacts Galore! collections management across the UK.

Further information can be obtained by contacting: Miss Elizabeth A. Walker, Department of Archaeology & Numismatics, National Museums & Galleries of Wales, Cathays Park, Cardiff, CF10 3NP. Telephone: 029 2057 3274, email: Elizabeth.Walker@nmgw.ac.uk

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The Welsh Federation of Museums and Art Galleries does not accept responsibility for, nor necessarily agree with, any views expressed, statements or claims made in articles, news items or letters published in Ymag.

The Federation welcomes contributions in both Welsh and English to the newsletter.

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The Future of the Federation

Introduction

With the demise of CMW and the rise of CyMAL members of the Executive Committee have taken the opportunity to reconsider the role and activities of the Federation. This has been promoted by the loss of CMW's advocacy role and concerns raised by several members of the Federation that their views have not been sought or listened to during the recent discussions. The Federation's constitution was prepared some time after CMW was set up, so is now the time to change the way the Federation operates?

The following article sets out four options identified by a small working group. Each option has its merits though some would require a considerable amount of work to put in place. The feasibility of combining two or more options should not be overlooked. The proposals are outline at this stage; once opinions have been collected more details can be developed.

Structural Changes

Option 1: (basically the *status quo* option) Loss of CMW representation will mean that the Federation will not have any advocacy role whatsoever and will concentrate on professional discussion and social activities. The main role of the organisation will be to ensure that communication exists between professional members to enhance professionalism in all areas of museum and gallery activity. This could be fulfilled by arranging seminars on professional museum related topics, by arranging an annual conference, or by arranging professional development related events at various points throughout Wales. The newsletter 'Y Mag' would contain, information, events programmes and contributions on professional issues such as the development of new facilities, exhibitions, etc.

Result: Federation would have no spokesperson and will cease to have any advocacy role. Advocacy would be left to the MA and the Welsh archives and library professional bodies.

Option 2: Federation re-constitutes itself to develop a new organisation. This would act as an advocacy body for museums in Wales and a pressure group impinging on the work of CyMAL. This would mean that the Federation takes on the current advocacy role of CMW including

representation on UK and Wales bodies. In order to do this the Federation would have to be constituted as a corporate body and probably as a charity. (There is a question as to whether Fed might be able to 'take over' the current CMW articles and memorandum or whether it has to set up a new constitution. If this option were popular the legal details could be researched further). This would require more time input from the Federation membership. If subscriptions could be increased significantly (e.g. by taking over the CMW subscription base), then part-time or consultant staff could be appointed. Y Mag would be extended to include 'political' information that would be designed to set out opinion and reaction amongst the membership.

Result: Radical change for the Federation but would create a new strong voice providing input into CyMAL and WAG policy. Committee members and staff would have to agree who was the most appropriate spokesperson for the Federation.

Option 3: Federation remains as currently and continues to organise seminars and meetings of a professional/social purpose. These would be supplemented with a Policy Committee (2 or 3 people, either all or some from the current Executive Committee) to provide immediate reaction to government/professional developments. The work of the policy committee would be based on a Policy or Position Statement agreed by the AGM annually. Members of the Policy Committee would be expected to contribute more time to the Federation and would have to be prepared to comment on behalf of the Federation on the basis of the position statement and any ongoing consultation. Y Mag could have a dual function of providing professional advice and information but also reporting on the work of the Policy Committee. Subscriptions would have to increase slightly to reflect increased costs in consultation and expenses for committee members whose employers cannot support their Federation activities.

Result: The Federation could begin to offer an opinion on matters affecting the profession. How seriously we are taken will depend on the ability of the Policy Committee to provide comments and prove the use of the Federation to CyMAL. This is not going to be easy as the more organised libraries and archives sectors already have a very strong voice.



Option 4: The Federation ceases to exist and the MA are encouraged to establish a Welsh committee to act as the representative body.

This option has the advantage of UK-wide representation though the membership in Wales would have to increase to reflect more local opinion within the wider membership. The MA have no policy on establishing regional committees though the increasing pressure to become more responsive to regional issues in England may result in a formal assessment of that strategy in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Result: Strong advocacy for the Welsh museum sector based on UK-wide membership, but loss of a Welsh-only museum voice?

Position Statement

Based on the options outlined., the steering group felt that it would be helpful to develop ideas on what the position statement might contain and the issues on which the Policy Committee might develop its advocacy.

The Position Statement should set out the basis for Federation's views. It would develop from the professional basis of the Federation's current constitution and should only include issues that are representative of the views of all of the membership.

The mission of the Federation should be:

To promote the highest standards of professionalism and public service.

The aims should be related to the need to encourage high standards based on accepted schemes such as Registration, together with an understanding that the ethos of museum work should be based on the enlightenment, education and enjoyment of the public.

The following objectives could be used to develop a fuller position statement:

- è To promote the highest standards of collection care and public service above the minimum levels set out within the Registration Scheme whilst working with all members to achieve the minimum required.
- è To advocate to grant and other support organisations on the importance of basic collection care as a foundation for quality public education services based on those collections

- è To encourage joint working throughout the museum, libraries and archives sectors to meet public demand through joint projects and establishing a regular cross sector discussion forum.
- è To identify and promote the needs of professional staff in terms of continuous professional development, communication, and information services
- è To advocate on behalf of specific collections requiring action to maintain professional standards at all levels within the museum community
- è To provide information on museum issues on, or relating to, Wales to stakeholders, community and users.

Current Issues

The Issues that could be drawn from this and the current situation in museums in Wales might be as follows:

- è Key issue relating to excavated archaeological collections and their management between excavation and deposition
- è Ensure that museum authorities appoint qualified staff to provide museum collections-based services in all areas of Wales
- è Continuous Professional Development Infrastructure – providing the basis for support for those undertaking such formal (such as the AMA) and informal training.
- è Encourage the continuation of joint working arrangements between museums locally, regionally, and working with National Museums.
- è Evaluating and commenting on pilot schemes involving Welsh museums, such as the current national and regional museum partnerships, e.g. Sharing the Treasures.
- è Special requirements of the independent and voluntary museum sector for professional support to assist in community and volunteer based projects.
- è Ensuring that the transitional phase between CMW and CyMAL is managed with the minimum of disruption to the service provided to museums, through shadowing arrangements or the transfer of work programmes from CMW to CyMAL according to available personnel.

This article is the result of a Federation working party consisting of Kevin Mason (Bodelwyddan Castle Trust), Jane Henderson (Cardiff University), Rachale Rogers (Abergavenny Museum) and Chris Delaney (Carmarthenshire County Museum)



INTERESTED IN THE AMA?

Jennifer Thomson updates us on the Regional Support Group

The AMA Support Group for South Wales and the South West of England was set up in the Autumn of 2002, with the aim of providing support and contacts for those working towards the AMA, a forum for discussion of topical issues, and a means of facilitating CPD activities. It is one of several similar groups, which, with the help and encouragement of the Museums Association, have been set up across Britain in the past few years by and for people working towards the AMA.

These support groups provide an important means for people undertaking the AMA, who are often based in widely scattered institutions, to meet with others in a similar situation in order to be able to discuss the issues surrounding the AMA, share experiences, and provide contacts and networking opportunities which can help them in carrying out CPD activities. Participation in a support group, with the opportunities it offers for organising events, visiting other institutions, arranging presentations on topical issues, and so on, can be an important CPD activity in itself.

Who is it for?

The South Wales and South West of England group is open not only to those people currently working towards the AMA, but also to AMA mentors and anyone thinking about taking up the AMA, as the group aims to encourage more museum professionals to take up the AMA. The group's membership currently stands at about 17 people, and represents a diverse cross-section of the museum profession. The membership ranges from people who are just embarking on a career in museums, to those whose career is well-established. Members work in a wide variety of institutions, from national museums to small local authority or independent museums to National Trust properties. This not only highlights the diverse range of museum professionals who are taking up the AMA, but also allows members to benefit from making contacts with professionals working in very different situations from their own.

When does the support group meet?

The Support Group meets every three months at a member's museum, and meetings are alternated between South Wales and the South West of England in order to ensure that all members have a chance to attend a meeting not too far from where they live. The meetings generally take the form of a visit behind the scenes to see the type of work carried out at the host museum, a discussion on members' progress towards achieving CPD, a discussion or presentation on a topical issue, and a chance for members to raise any other issues they may have to do with the AMA.

Our first meeting took place at the Bristol City Museum and Art Gallery in November 2002, where the Collections Manager spoke to us about the work of the Museum and showed us the Museum's stores. At this meeting we also agreed upon the aims and structure of the group. The next meeting took place at the National Museum and Gallery of Wales in February 2003, where various members of staff from the Department of Art talked to us about their work. We also listened to a very useful presentation on the professional review experience, and had a lively discussion of CPD planning.

The next meeting is scheduled to take place on the 13th May, at the Roman Baths Museum in Bath. The meeting will begin at approximately 10am, and in the morning there will be a discussion of members' progress on CPD, and the opportunity to discuss other issues relating to CPD, the AMA and the NVQ. Following on this, in the afternoon we have arranged a session on ethical problem-solving which will be run by Ratan Vaswani of the Museums Association. Subject to demand we may also be able to offer a short session on preparing for the professional review.

As well as regular meetings, the Support Group also has an email discussion group which provides a further forum for support and discussion of issues of interest to members. The address is <http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/AMAsupportgroup/>

If you are interested in joining the Support Group, or would like more information about it, then please contact:

Jennifer Thomson
National Museum & Gallery of Wales
Cardiff



DRAWING NEW AUDIENCES

The Royal Regiment of Wales Museum in Brecon participated in The Big Draw for the first time in October 2002. As well as being one of 11 out of 730 participating organisations to be selected for a Drawing Inspiration Award, we learned valuable lessons from the planning, execution and follow-up of our project.

What is The Big Draw? It is an annual, UK-wide scheme to encourage people of all ages to draw. Museums and other institutions organise projects ranging from one-day events to month-long activities.

Planning our participation. We had many initial questions to answer. What would our event be? Where? When? How? For whom? Why? Limited space, staff and resources meant concentrating on a one-day event was not feasible. Activities spread thinly over the whole month, would be the only option. Focussing on the most famous episode in our Regimental history - the defence of Rorke's Drift against a large Zulu army in 1879 - led us to our project: drawing Zulu warriors to *Create a Zulu Army!* The advantages of this included the visually attractive subject of the colourful Zulu warriors, the artefacts in the museum from the Anglo-Zulu War that could provide stimulus material, and the fact that this episode is well-known in Wales and further afield.

Starting the project. Front-end evaluation involving our most likely audiences produced positive responses from primary and secondary schools. Publicity posters were devised in-house, mailed to schools and other groups, and displayed locally. Our popular website was used to advertise the project to a wider audience and provide stimulus images. Submissions were encouraged by e-mail and post. In the museum, drawing materials, a table and chairs were provided. The project began with several schools booking visits to draw from sources in the museum, plus outreach which involved taking artefacts to local groups unable to come to the museum.

Swelling the ranks of the Zulu army! As soon as some drawings were submitted, they were displayed both in the museum and on the website. These were invaluable in encouraging other participants. When staff had time, impromptu artefact handling sessions occurred to increase interest in the project. School visits prompted family visits, with many children bringing their parents to the museum to see their Zulus on display. A previously untapped audience, pre-school groups, produced a range of imaginative collages and drawings. Particularly welcome, in a project honouring their ancestors, were the marvellous drawings sent by Zulu children from Rorke's Drift. We ended up with a splendid army of over 1,200 Zulus by participants from 20 months to 75 years old, from 3 continents, using various media.

Conclusions. Our museum and our visitors benefited from a project that caught the public imagination and for which we could provide appropriate stimulus material. Drawing materials and publicity cost relatively little, but the major expenditure - which we underestimated - was

staff time. Preparation and follow-up was considerable. We printed attractive certificates for organisations which submitted group entries and created a database of participants so every artist's name was listed in the museum. Some would say this was not necessary, but we wanted every participant to feel they were a highly valued visitor and therefore be more likely to visit again.

The Big Draw brought new audiences to the Regimental Museum, encouraged repeat visits, and stimulated both visitors and (just as importantly) staff to see how the museum could be used for different activities. The project brought wide and positive publicity, in newspapers and on national television and radio.



Drawing by Capt. E. H. Wagner

Will we do it again? Maybe. With our very small staff, the scale of the project became disproportionate to other functions of the museum, but that was a reflection of our approach and our visitors' enthusiastic response to The Big Draw.

The Bigger Picture. We had several military participants. One of the least expected was Captain Erich H. Wagner of the US Marine Corps, who sent three beautiful drawings by e-mail from New York. We have been unable to contact him recently by e-mail; we think he may be serving in Iraq.

The Zulu army is not on permanent public display, but can be seen at the Museum by request.

**Alison Hembrow, Education Advisor & Outreach Officer,
The Royal Regiment of Wales Museum, Brecon**



GEORGE BEST

FROM CHILDHOOD IDOL TO TEMPORARY EXHIBITION

On the 1st of May 2003 Powysland Museum will open a new temporary exhibition called "... and here comes Best". In the introduction to this exhibition I have written:

"As so many people I am a fan of George Best, and have been since I first saw him in my hometown of Copenhagen in 1969 playing a pre-season game for Manchester United.

The exhibition is a celebration of the talent of George Best. It focuses on his footballing career at Manchester United from 1963 to 1973, looking at the way his talent and his good looks propelled him into a type of stardom, which had not been seen before within the world of football. The displays place his career and life in a social history context taking into consideration the music, the fashion, and the culture of the times and look at how football became fashionable and how women began to be interested in the game and its exponents.

Although George Best was not single-handedly responsible for the social changes of the period, there is no doubt that his status as the first "celebrity-footballer" made him a catalyst and a lever for such developments and influenced both the game of football and the fate of future footballers. The exhibition is not just for George Best fans, Manchester United supporters and football enthusiasts. But also for visitors who remember the 1960's or who are curious about one of the most famous decades in the 20th century. And it is also for all the David Beckham and Michael Owen followers whose idols can trace their status to George Best."

I have always believed in creating temporary exhibitions with topics that interested me because I think that way the result is more likely to also be of interest and enjoyment to visitors – hence George Best. Obviously as I am writing this article in March the displays are neither finished nor the exhibition opened, so I can't say whether my theory has been proven right. However, until now I have thoroughly enjoyed myself.

Obviously I have been in contact with and visited the Manchester United Museum, that was a hard days work!!! From where I shall be borrowing a number of artifacts including programmes, advertising gimmicks and one of George Best's Northern Ireland tracksuits.

I am also having a number of artifacts from a member of staff at The People's Museum in Manchester who is a Manchester United fan. Through the curator there, Nick Mansfield, I was made aware that Cyfarthfa Museum had a tie display stand showing the upper part of George Best with three ties. Scott Reid most kindly tracked down this item and lent it to me. Those committee members who saw me hugging Scott wildly at our last meeting will now know



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why!

Madame Tussauds' in London found me a slide and a newspaper clipping from when George Best was immortalized there. I have made contact with a journalist from Manchester Evening Standard who handed over 87 photos of George Best for the displays – I am still drooling, while I am awaiting a photograph of George Best and David Beckham from their joint appearance on the "Parkinson Show" courtesy of Michael Parkinson himself. I have had interesting and funny conversations with Jimmy Hill, David Sadler (former Manchester United player) and

Mike Summerbee (formerly of Manchester City), who has promised that I can borrow his wedding video as George Best was best man.

I am still waiting to hear from the National Portrait Gallery regarding the loan of a photographic portrait; from Cookstown Sausages about the famous advert by George Best; and from Texaco who made him Sportstar of the Year 1967.

Now all I need to do is write the text, set up the exhibition including a recreated boy's bedroom c.1968 and open the doors. You are all most welcome.

**Eva Bredsdorff, Senior Museum Curator
Powysland Museum
Welshpool**

