

The Poets of the Nobility Forum

Clynnog Fawr, May 2017

The Poets of the Nobility project's annual forum was held this year in Canolfan Hanes Uwchgwyrfai at Clynnog Fawr, a small and beautiful village on the northern coast of the Llŷn Peninsula, and one with a significant place in our history, as the element *Fawr* 'great' in its name suggests!

Rhys Goch Eryri, the gentleman poet from Hafodgaregog in Nanmor, Snowdonia, was the subject of our first speaker, Dr Dylan Foster Evans. He considered the evidence for the poet's literacy, his lineage and his poem for St Beuno.

Eurig Salisbury's talk focused on Syr Dafydd Trefor's poem to Dwynwen, and the poets' references to her statue which was housed in Llanddwyn church in the Middle Ages. Eurig also discussed the phenomena of pilgrimage, and shared his personal experience of taking part in a pilgrimage in Mumbai, India.

Dr Sara Elin Roberts turned our attention to Jasper Tudor. A son of Owain Tudor of Penmynydd and of Catherine de Valois, Jasper was the uncle of Henry VII, and played a key part in ensuring victory for his nephew on the battlefield at Bosworth in 1485.

The subject of Gruffudd Antur's talk was the oral tradition and how lines or couplets of poetry would often be refashioned accidentally (or sometimes intentionally) by *datgeiniaid* ('reciters, singers').

Nia Watkin Powell focused on Dafydd Nanmor, a poetic disciple of Rhys Goch Eryri, and the controversial question of whether his relationship with the married Gwen of Dolfrïog, near Dafydd's home at Nanmor, was fact or fiction.

To end the day, we were led by the Rev. J. Lloyd Jones on a guided walk around the church, which was founded early in the seventh century by St Beuno. We learned of Clynnog's importance in the early history of Gwynedd, especially as a stopover for pilgrims on their way to Bardsey.

Many thanks to everyone who came to support us this year, and special thanks to the members of Cymdeithas Hanes Uwchgwyrfai for their help with the arrangements and for allowing us to use their centre in Clynnog.

Ann Parry Owen

