

<b>Institution:</b> Aberystwyth University
<b>Unit of Assessment:</b> 28: History
<p><b>1. Unit context and structure, research and impact strategy</b></p> <p><b>Overview</b></p> <p>The Department of History and Welsh History at Aberystwyth University is one of the oldest University History departments in the country (founded 1872) and has a longstanding tradition of research excellence in the fields of medieval history and European history, as well as a special responsibility for and leadership in scholarship on the history of Wales. The Department has set out in the current REF period to produce world-leading scholarship; to develop and consolidate an international research presence through individual and collaborative research initiatives; to expand its research impact; and to make a wider contribution to civic engagement and community outreach. We have taken steps to ensure the sustainability of the Department as a research-led unit, whilst maintaining the vitality of our current research.</p> <p><b>Unit context and structure</b></p> <p>Since REF 2014, the Department has been restructured and consolidated as a research-led unit of 13 members of staff (12.25 FTE) as part of a University-wide sustainability programme (see REF5a), and is now on a much more stable footing to go forward as a dynamic group of experienced researchers making important contributions in key areas of the discipline. It currently comprises eleven full-time and two part-time staff, as follows: two holders of University Chairs (<b>Schofield, O'Leary</b>), two Personal Chairs (<b>Morus, Weiler</b>), three Readers (<b>Jones, Nicholas, White</b>), two Senior Lecturers (<b>New, Thompson</b>), and four Lecturers (<b>Arwyn, Emlyn, Li, Taylor</b>, the last two early-career). We also have eleven Emeritus staff, who retain strong and close links with the Department.</p> <p>In consolidating, we have maintained our established strengths in medieval history (4.75 FTE: <b>Schofield, Weiler, New, Emlyn, Taylor</b>) and in the history of Wales from the medieval period to the present day (5 FTE: <b>Emlyn, Jones, O'Leary, Thompson, White</b>), cross-cutting with clusters of expertise in medical and scientific history (<b>Thompson, Morus</b>); historiography (<b>Weiler, Schofield</b>, previously <b>Lambert</b>); memory studies (<b>Arwyn, Nicholas</b>, previously <b>Lambert</b>); Methodism and Evangelicalism (<b>Jones, White</b>); and the history of the mass media (<b>Nicholas</b>, previously <b>Phillips, Powell</b>). We have also invested in expanding the geographical scope of our research, with a new specialism in the history of South-East Asia (<b>Li</b>, previously <b>Phillips</b>).</p> <p>In line with the University's distinctive role in Welsh culture and society, the Department has an institutional responsibility to support historical research in the medium of Welsh. Five members of staff are Welsh-speakers and have disseminated their research in both Welsh and English.</p> <p>Our breadth of research expertise is demonstrated in the Department's Research Centres: the <b>Aberystwyth Centre for Media History</b>; the <b>Centre for Research in Historiography and Historical Cultures</b>; the <b>Centre for the Social and Cultural History of Wales</b>; and the <b>Centre for the History of Science, Technology and Medicine</b>. All our centres reflect the Department's overarching research interests in historiography, public and private understandings of the past, and new trends in historical study.</p> <p>We maintain active collaborative research relationships with scholars around the globe in joint research activities and research networks, including interdisciplinary networks. We also actively engage in national and international research dissemination, including organising conferences both independently and collaboratively; participating in conferences in the UK and around the world; and through our research seminar activities.</p>

We also maintain a significant research outreach role, with a strong focus on developing civic and community knowledge exchange, from local cultural and heritage activities to schools' history teaching.

### ***Research and impact strategy***

Our research and impact strategy during the current REF period has been guided by the University's Research and Innovation Strategy described in REF5a, particularly its core principles of encouraging ambitious research that challenges existing approaches and knowledge; maintaining a supportive and research-led academic environment; promoting inclusivity in research; and collaborating with external partners in Wales, the UK, and globally to generate important and innovative research with impact both within and beyond the academy.

The Department's research strategy has built on and further developed the strategic aims outlined in REF 2014, i.e., to:

- support and develop our research centres
- develop our grant application strategies, including targets for research grant capture, and collaborative applications
- support early career researchers (ECRs)
- maintain and develop postgraduate researcher (PGR) recruitment as an integral feature of our research culture and environment
- help shape the research infrastructure of the discipline going forwards.

Underpinning all these aims has been the fostering of an inclusive and supportive departmental research environment where every member of staff is research-active and active in applying for research grants.

The success of our research strategy can be measured in our grant capture over this REF period, with over 60% of staff (**Jones, Morus, New, Nicholas, Powell, Schofield, Thompson, Weiler, White**) in receipt of awards and a total of £1,187,000 awarded; in the activities of our research centres; in staff participation in research dissemination at national and international level; and in staff roles in peer review, editorships, and other marks of research esteem within the discipline.

The Department's impact strategy is embedded in our research strategy. We seek through all our research to develop both public and private engagement with the study of the past. Our staff are encouraged to see impact in their research, to seek out collaboration with outside agencies, including, but not limited to, museums, archives and heritage organisations, to relate their research to the world outside, and to develop research engagement both beyond the discipline and beyond the academy. Our REF 2021 impact case studies, and our community engagement as evidenced below, demonstrate how world-class historical research can engage with and influence external bodies in a range of instances and across disciplines, from heritage activity and source digitisation projects to forensic and environmental science.

The development and implementation of the Department's research strategy is led by the Head of Department (HoD) and Director of Research (DoR), in consultation with the Department's Research Committee, chaired by the DoR, and under the aegis of the Faculty of Arts and Social Science (FASS). FASS was established in 2018 as part of a University-wide restructuring that replaced the institute-based structure from REF 2014. This has enabled the Department to reconfigure interdisciplinary links with subjects including Modern Languages, Welsh and Celtic Studies, and Theatre, Film and Television Studies. Coordination and collaboration within FASS is facilitated by the Faculty Research Committee, on which the Department is represented by the DoR, and by initiatives led by the Associate Dean for Research, Knowledge Exchange and

Innovation, including the appointment of Senior Research Development Leads, a concordat to support ECR development, an impact group, monthly 'women doing research' workshops, and the creation of new interdisciplinary research centres. The Department's research strategy and output are monitored at University level by the Research Monitoring Committee, and ultimately by the University's Research Committee led by the Pro-Vice Chancellor for Research.

Protocols to ensure research integrity and ethical practice in research are maintained and administered by the University as described in REF5a. The Department provides initial assessment of ethical issues relating to research projects, from undergraduate to academic staff, with referral onwards to university-level committees as appropriate. Good research practice is overseen through adherence to discipline-wide standards and ethical protocols. These are reinforced by university-level mechanisms regarding good practice and opportunities for reflection upon academic excellence and best practice, for instance in Departmental research seminars.

In addition to complying with university OA requirements, the Department has engaged directly with the Open Access agenda, encouraging and supporting the submission of particular OA publications by staff members and engaging in discipline-wide discussions regarding the delivery of OA and its potential impact on income streams for learned societies.

### ***Research and impact strategy going forward beyond REF 2021***

The Department has set strategic objectives for the next REF period that build on our achievements in the REF 2021 period and engage with the trajectory of the University's Research and Innovation Strategy for 2019-2024 and with University initiatives as described in REF5a. In the next assessment period, we will:

- Continue to aim for increases in per capita grant capture, building on our past experience in developing successful major research award applications to pursue new grant opportunities, both collaborative and individual.
- Continue to pursue impact through our research activities; and build on our impact strategy by further developing our relationships in heritage, media and other sectors.
- Expand our international collaborative research initiatives, through our Departmental research centres and through independent collaborations.
- Expand our internal cooperation with other departments in interdisciplinary University research centres, e.g., the new Centre for the Movement of People and projected Centre for the History of War, and to contribute actively to the University's Old College project, including its proposed public-facing activities and exhibitions.
- Maintain and strengthen our inclusive research environment, by securing the equal and effective participation of all staff in research activities, and by supporting staff whose research has been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and its impacts.
- Give targeted research support (e.g., priority in research leave) to early career scholars and to scholars developing major research grant applications.
- Further expand our PGR recruitment, and explore more opportunities to fund studentships through doctoral training partnerships and team project grants (e.g. Leverhulme Trust)
- Further develop our research seminars, conferences, symposia and workshop activities with a strategic focus on promoting our research centres and enhancing our research profile nationally and internationally, including wider use of livestreamed events.

- Develop ongoing opportunities for civic engagement and local and community outreach through our research and our research dissemination activities.

## 2. People

### ***Staffing strategy and staff development***

Our staffing strategy has always been to develop our research strength in key themes and areas, while offering specifically research-led UG and PGT teaching, and PGR supervision of the highest quality and expertise. Our staffing strategy going forward is to maintain and enhance the breadth, depth and vitality of our research, with emphasis in the short term on replacing our expertise in American history, and in the medium term on consolidating our research depth in modern history, within the context of maintaining a financially stable unit with a strong focus on active research grant capture. We are also committed as a department to supporting research expertise in Welsh History, and the dissemination of research outputs in both Welsh and English.

The restructuring of the Department to enhance sustainability saw an element of staff turnover, with three retirements and four moves to posts elsewhere. Since then, the appointment of **Li** to replace **Phillips** has secured our emerging research specialism in South-East Asian History, and **Weiler's** success in securing a Leverhulme Fellowship has enabled **Taylor's** appointment to a fixed-term position. A new permanent appointment in American history is confirmed for 2021. New staff have either established research excellence or a research trajectory that promises excellence in the future, and are expected to contribute actively to the Department's research strategy.

In this REF period we have also recruited Research Assistants to work on six funded research projects as follows: 'Imprint'; 'Disability in Industrial Society'; the Gogerddan Estate Archive project; 'Sharing Scientific Stories'; 'Aberystwyth at War 1914-19'; and 'People's Voices in a People's War: Aberystwyth 1939-45'. All our RAs are appointed in a competitive process, have shared office space in the Department, are encouraged to publish their own project outputs, and (where consistent with the terms of the award) are offered teaching opportunities as part of their career development.

The University's promotion procedures have historically sought to balance individual merit, internal competition and financial resources. Due to fiscal restructuring, promotions were suspended between 2017 and 2020, but despite this in the REF 2021 period the Department performed exceptionally strongly, with three staff promoted to Reader (**Nicholas, Jones, White**) and one to Senior Lecturer (**New**). In 2017 **O'Leary** was appointed to the prestigious Sir John Williams Chair of Welsh History. Staff are encouraged to apply as appropriate and their applications mentored by a senior colleague.

The Department has always been committed to facilitating and enhancing staff personal, career and research development. The introduction of a University-wide workload allocation measurement model (WAMM) enabled us to distribute teaching and administrative burdens more equitably and effectively and so release more time for staff research. The University-wide annual staff appraisal process, the Effective Contribution Scheme (ECS), also enables the HoD to tailor the teaching and administrative workloads of staff members, and staff to provide feedback on their opportunities for research activity. Individual research priorities and direction are discussed with the DoR and HoD, and grant applications are supported and peer-reviewed at Departmental, Faculty and University level. The Department provides all staff with a personal research grant of £500, and Faculty-level financial support is available for conference attendance and research network activities. Under the new Concordat for Researcher Development, the University has extended its commitment to 10 days p.a. training and development for each researcher.

Research leave for all research-active staff is a key element of the department's research culture, allocated by the HoD and DoR, and with research leave objectives and outcomes

monitored at Faculty level. Previously awarded on a one-semester-in-seven rota, departmental research leave was temporarily suspended for a year following restructuring, but reinstated by careful and targeted use of resources and support teaching. We are currently in transition to a new Faculty-wide research leave model of one-semester-in-eight.

New members of staff are guided through probation by a Departmental mentor, and ECRs have their teaching and administrative workloads specifically monitored by the HoD. Faculty-level support mechanisms for ECRs include mentoring and financial support for research activities. Research development training at University level includes research proposal writing and grant management and is supported by the University Concordat to Support the Career Development of Researchers. The informal 'Shut Up and Write' initiative, inspired by a Women in Research Network discussion and co-organised by Arwyn, helps junior staff develop their research by collaboratively setting aside time for writing.

### **Research students**

The Department's postgraduate research culture is particularly strong. Postgraduate research students are considered an integral element of the Department's research culture and are welcome participants in departmental research activities and initiatives, including research seminars, conferences and associated social events. The Department also supports research initiatives generated by the postgraduates themselves, including the annual Aberystwyth Postgraduate Conferences. In this REF period we have added to the international outreach of our postgraduate research culture by welcoming visiting research students from France, the USA and China.

As a department we support postgraduate recruitment in both English and Welsh. The criteria for acceptance include excellence at MA or equivalent, and a research proposal that indicates synchronicity with both the prospective supervisor's research specialism and the Department's research strategy. We have a longstanding tradition of welcoming both full-time and part-time students and both early- and later-career applicants, and we have a strong record of seeing MPhil students transfer to PhD after a year of study. Our PGR recruitment is especially impressive. We currently have 21 PhD students at different stages of their doctoral research, one MPhil student, and three visiting students. 13 of our PhD students are full-time and 8 part-time; the current gender balance is 4:3 M:F; one student is conducting their research through the medium of Welsh.

Postgraduate student funding has come from a range of sources, including university scholarships and departmental fee waiver awards, AHRC DTP awards, a Leverhulme Trust Research Project Grant, the Pantyfedwen Foundation, the Eleanor James Scholarship, and local county council awards. Just over half our students are self-funded.

All our PhD students have access to study facilities and financial support. They are allocated shared offices with networked computer facilities within the Department, and the University also provides PGR study space on campus. The Department has a research fund to help with PGR research travel and conference expenses and to organise research workshops.

Research training and skills development are integral features of our doctoral programme. The University Graduate School runs a programme of postgraduate research training modules, a compulsory Research Ethics module and academic career development workshops to which members of the Department contribute. Tailored research training for History PhD students includes instruction in languages (including medieval Latin), palaeography, and source-specific research methodologies.

Our PhD students are assigned a principal supervisor, with whom they meet regularly (typically at least one hour per fortnight or equivalent), and a second supervisor who provides additional support and research expertise. Every member of staff (excepting early-career staff) is currently supervising at least one PhD student, with an average of two and a University-set maximum of six students. Research monitoring is carried out annually, with students submitting written

evidence of research progress and an action plan for their next 12 months' research, and discussing their progress, their supervision and any research support needs with the Department's Postgraduate Research Monitoring panel. Its recommendations are reported upwards to the Faculty and University PGR Research Monitoring Boards, and actions confirmed as required.

The department takes postgraduate career mentoring and development particularly seriously. Our students are encouraged to join research networks, to present research papers at the departmental research seminar, to participate in conference organisation, and to present conference papers as soon as appropriate. We financially support the Aberystwyth Postgraduate Conference (2017, 2018, 2019, postponed 2020), organised by the students themselves and attracting participants from the UK and overseas, which provides a forum for students to present and share their research and attend workshops on article writing and publication by departmental staff with journal editing experience. We also offer mentored undergraduate seminar teaching for our PGRs.

During REF 2021 22.5 History PhDs were awarded (compared to 14.5 awards for REF 2014 and 13 for REF 2008), an increase in the annualised rate of 11% compared to REF 2014. They have moved into a range of careers in the heritage sector and elsewhere, and four have been appointed to permanent academic posts in other UK institutions.

### ***Equality, diversity and inclusion***

The Department promotes equality and diversity through established University procedures and networks, and through a supportive Departmental environment that seeks to encourage inclusivity among staff and students alike. The University is accredited as a Disability Confident Employer; is one of Stonewall's Top 100 UK Employers for an LGBT+ friendly workplace; and has established networks addressing BAME and LGBT+ staff, Women in Research, and Disability and Wellbeing.

At REF 2021 census date the Department's academic staff had a gender balance of almost 50% (7M:6F), the strongest representation of female staff in our 125+ years history, up from c.25% in REF 2008 and c.33% in REF 2014; and both BAME and LGBT+ representation. We have always demonstrated very strong support for flexible and part-time working for personal and family reasons, and during REF 2021 had three staff on part-time contracts; three staff also took paternity leave.

All Departmental staff complete equality and diversity training and unconscious bias training as part of their staff development. This is implemented at all levels, from the hiring, mentoring and promotion of staff, through PGR supervision and examination, to the personal tutor system which alerts staff to equality and diversity issues among students. The Department appoints its own disability, equality and diversity officers (including an Equality champion), and staff play active roles in the University's Women in Research Network, the Faculty-level women's support network, and the University-wide female academic mentoring programme; **White** is also a member of the 'Established Scholars' focus group for Women and Research in Social Sciences and the Humanities.

Principles of equality and inclusion were incorporated into the REF 2021 selection process, as outlined in the University's Code of Practice, with unconscious bias training required for all members of the REF Reading Committee and supplementary reviewers. The Department's REF Reading Committee also included an independent member from a cognate department to monitor fair practice. Applications for output reductions for Individual Staff Circumstances have been assessed through an anonymous process, with decisions made outside the department.

The Department supports a bilingual research environment in which English and Welsh languages have equal status. The maintenance of a secure and positive research environment for our Welsh-medium staff and students is one of the Department's key ongoing objectives and places us at the forefront of Welsh-medium scholarship, including researching and publishing in

Welsh (**Arwyn, Emlyn, O'Leary, White**), participating in Welsh-medium research networks (**Emlyn, O'Leary, Thompson, White**), supervising, examining, editing and peer-reviewing Welsh-medium research (**O'Leary, White, Thompson**) and contributing to Welsh-language public engagement activities (**Arwyn, Emlyn, Morus, O'Leary, Thompson, White**).

### 3. Income, infrastructure and facilities

#### *Income*

Over this REF period the Department has generated a research income of £1,187,000, representing £96,900 per capita FTE. This compares to £1,067,000 (£72,100 per FTE) for REF 2014 and £227,726 for RAE 2008. Over 60% of staff have been successful in new research grant awards, half of them six-figure sums.

This income generation reflects the vitality of our sustained Departmental strategy targeting large grant capture alongside smaller awards. Grants have been awarded across the entire REF period; several substantial grants awarded during REF 2014 have carried over; and several new projects will run well beyond REF 2021, maintaining the momentum of our grant capture success going forwards. Awards have come from both public and private funding bodies and have been used to fund major projects (both collaborative and individual), research-facilitating events, community research and outreach, and personal research. They include the following (\*indicates award carried over from REF 2014):

#### AHRC:

- £236,618.86 (of £626,679): 'Imprint: A Forensic and Historical Investigation of Fingerprints on Medieval Seals' (with University of Lincoln) (2016-18) (**New**)
- £185,664.01 (of £606,845): 'Unsettling Scientific Stories: Expertise, Narrative and Future Histories' (with York and Newcastle Universities) (2015-18) (**Morus**)
- \*£8,147 (of £22,675; AHRC development grant): 'Recreating the Late Victorian Popular Science Experience' (Feb-Dec 2013) (**Morus**)
- £4,098: Anglo-Norman Dictionary project (2017-2021) (**Schofield**)

#### British Academy:

- \*£9,500: 'Seals in a Local Context (Mar-Aug 2013) (**Schofield**)

#### Leverhulme Trust:

- £155,304 (Major Research Fellowship): 'Unity, Diversity and the Past in Europe c.1100-c.1300' (2019-22) (**Weiler**)
- £59,892.34: 'The Political Works of Richard Brinsley Sheridan' (2016-18) (**Powell**)
- £115,527: 'George Whitefield and Transatlantic Protestantism' (2015-17) (**Jones**)
- \*£140,507 (Major Research Fellowship): 'The Great Famine: Dearth and Society in Medieval England' (2012-15, extended to 2016) (**Schofield**)
- \*£175,421 (of £249,000) (Research Project Grant): 'The British Press in WW2' (2011-14) (**Nicholas**)

#### Wellcome Trust:

- \*£153,298 (of £907,220): 'Disability in Industrial Society: A Comparative Cultural History of British Coalfields, c.1780-1948' (with Swansea, Northumbria, Glasgow Caledonian and Strathclyde Universities) (2011-16) (**Thompson**)

Other:

- £43,090 (National Lottery Heritage Fund): 'People's Voices in a People's War: Aberystwyth 1939-45' (2020-22) (**Nicholas**)
- £50,600 (Heritage Lottery Fund): 'Aberystwyth at War 1914-1919: Impact, Experience, Legacy' (2018-19) (**Nicholas**)
- £5000 (Marc Fitch Fund): 'George Whitefield and Transatlantic Protestantism' (2016) (**Jones**)
- £2,658 (History Research Wales): 'Gogerddan Estate Archive' (2015) (**White**)

In addition, in December 2019 **New** was awarded a £123,189 three-year Leverhulme Trust Major Research Fellowship for 'Identity, Interaction and Exchange in Medieval England' (commencing Sept 2020). This is the third such Fellowship awarded to the Department in the last eight years, and marks over £3/4m research income from the Leverhulme Trust alone over the past nine years.

Research grant capture to enhance the vitality and sustainability of the Department's research going forward is encouraged through Departmental, Faculty and University-level initiatives. The University's Department of Research, Business and Innovation hosts talks, research cafes and 'Grants Factory' workshops, and reviews grant applications. Faculty-level Senior Research Development Leads encourage collaborative inter-disciplinary research activities and provide grant application mentoring. All staff are encouraged to develop research grant applications, supported by a dedicated Research Development Officer with quality-enhancing processes including internal peer review of all proposals. Equality and inclusion in access to research grant capture is addressed through targeted measures including an annual project development sandpit for ECRs and ringfenced ECR pump-priming research funds, and Faculty 'women doing research' workshops covering topics including international research, mentoring, leadership and the REF.

***Infrastructure and Facilities***

The Department of History and Welsh History is located in a spacious modern building (opened 2006) that it shares with the cognate Department of International Politics. All staff have their own offices for research and supervision, and priority access to meeting and teaching rooms in the building. Research project staff have shared offices, and Emeritus staff their own dedicated office. Our PhD students share offices located together on the ground floor, with networked computers and individual desk and shelf space.

The Department's research facilities are of the highest order. The University library, the Hugh Owen Library, has built up its collections over more than a century, is a member of the UK Research Reserve and a European Documentation Centre. It has a dedicated History librarian, maintains an active purchasing policy, and is particularly alert to the provision of electronic research resources, including a significant number of on-line archive collections of specific relevance to historians.

The Department also benefits from the easy proximity of the National Library of Wales, one of the five copyright libraries of the UK, just a five-minute walk away. The NLW is of inestimable value as a research resource for our staff and students alike. It is the national repository for manuscript collections for Wales from the medieval period to the present; the home of the University of Wales Centre for Advanced Welsh and Celtic Studies (CAWCS); and a hub for Welsh media resources, including the National Screen and Sound Archive for Wales, the Welsh Newspapers Online digitisation project, and the new National Broadcasting Archive for Wales (NBAW). These resources, as well as the NLW's world-class printed, visual and material collections, enable us to support a hands-on research culture that we embed in both our research and pedagogy. Departmental staff actively collaborate with the NLW in acquiring new



archival materials (for instance, the NBAW), that in turn enhance our research profile and research engagement.

Aberystwyth is also home to the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales (RCAHMW), and the Ceredigion Archives, both of which provide additional resources for historical research as well as research training for History postgraduates.

#### 4. Collaboration and contribution to the research base, economy and society

##### **Overview and Collaborations**

The Department's research initiatives over the REF 2021 period have made a significant contribution to the discipline's research base through both collaborative and individual activities, and at the local, national and international level.

First, our longstanding weekly research seminar series promotes connections and collaborations with other scholars, showcasing new research by our own staff and invited scholars from the UK and overseas, and attracting an audience of staff, students, emeritus colleagues and members of the wider Aberystwyth history community. The move to online seminars during the COVID-19 pandemic saw a striking expansion in audience numbers, inclusivity and diversity, something we aim to build on with livestreaming of seminars, debates, and other research events going forward, and a wider range of participants, including overseas collaborators. We also support and participate in Welsh-medium research seminars organised by the University, the NLW and CAWCS, promoting interdisciplinary research scholarship and collaboration in Welsh.

The Department's research centres play a core role in the vitality and sustainability of our collaborative research agenda, by facilitating internal and external research collaborations and organising national and international conferences, symposia and public engagement activities:

- **The Centre for Media History**, co-directed by **Nicholas** and Dr Jamie Medhurst of the University's Department of Theatre, Film and Television, and the first such centre in the UK, promotes the study of media in historical and transnational context. It is associated with the Centre for Media History, Macquarie University, the Centre for Cinema History, Lingnan University, Hong Kong, and the Centre for Media History, Bournemouth University; is a co-convenor (with Bournemouth, Lunds and the Han-Bredow-Institut, Hamburg) of the 'Entangled Media Histories' research network; and is the home of the journal *Media History*. During the REF 2021 period it organised two international conferences, 'Newspapers, War and Society', and 'Shared Histories: Media Connections between Britain and Ireland' (the latter with Dublin City University), and a research symposium for leading scholars, 'The British Press in WW2'; and oversaw the publication of two special issues of *Media History* and two edited collections arising out of its research activities. In 2015 it marked its tenth anniversary by launching a series of Annual Lectures. In summer 2020 it was due to fulfil a longstanding ambition and co-host (with Macquarie and Loughborough Universities) the first international conference of media history centres from around the world; this is now postponed to 2021.
- **The Centre for Research in Historiography and Historical Cultures**, co-directed by **Lambert** (to 2017) and **Weiler**, explores trends in historiographical and other representations of the past. During REF 2021 it supported a series of panel sessions at the Leeds International Medieval Conference and a series of postgraduate history symposia hosted by the department, and published a major edited collection arising out of its research activity that brought together scholars from around the world.
- **The Centre for the History of Science, Technology and Medicine**, co-directed by **Morus** and **Thompson**, is dedicated to the cultural study of science, technology and medicine, a growing field in which its co-directors are leading figures. During REF 2021 it supported two major externally-funded collaborative projects, 'Unsettling Scientific Stories' (AHRC, with York and Newcastle Universities) and 'Disability in Industrial

Society' (Wellcome Trust, with Swansea, Northumbria, Glasgow Caledonian and Strathclyde Universities). Its work is particularly strong in research impact, providing impact case studies for both REF 2014 and REF 2021.

- **The Centre for the Social and Cultural History of Wales** promotes the study of the history of Wales and 'four nations' approaches to the history of the UK. During REF 2021 it supported the 'Disability in Industrial Society' project (see above) and co-organised the Ireland-Wales International Research Network conference '1916 in Ireland and Wales', with the support of 'Wales Remembers'/'Cymru'n Cofio'. It also provides a hub for the postgraduate student community working on the history of Wales.

Collaborations with other University departments include the Centre for Media History (**Nicholas**, with Theatre, Film and Television Studies), the Centre for the Movement of People (**Arwyn**, with Modern Languages), and a new initiative on the history and literature of medicine in Wales (**Thompson**, with Welsh and Celtic Studies). Collaborative activities have included organising conferences and editing publications arising from their proceedings, running seminar series, and developing research grant proposals.

Collaborative projects with other HEI's constitute a vital element of the Department's research grant capture. These include 'Disability in Industrial Society' (**Thompson**, with Swansea, Northumbria, Glasgow Caledonian and Strathclyde Universities); 'Imprint' (**New**, with Lincoln); and 'Unsettling Scientific Stories' (**Morus**, with York and Newcastle). In the early part of the assessment period, collaboration with Bangor University was facilitated through the Aber-Bangor Institute of Medieval and Early Modern Studies, including a conference on 'Travel and Conflict in the Medieval and Early Modern World' (organised by **Emlyn**) in 2015. Our ongoing grant capture initiatives maintain this collaborative focus.

The Department also maintains an active presence in collaborative research networks across the discipline, and across international and disciplinary boundaries. These include the Four Nations History Network (**O'Leary**); the Ireland-Wales International Research Network (with Cork and Cardiff) (co-manager **O'Leary**); the international Tyndall Correspondence Project (**Morus**); 'Political Culture in the Latin West, the Islamic World and Byzantium, 700-1450' (with Oxford and Ghent) (**Weiler**); a research network on food and food security in the Middle Ages, sponsored by the Spanish government, with workshops in Brussels, Lleida and Rome (**Schofield**); and 'The Nordic "Civil Wars"' (with Oslo) (**Taylor**). **Schofield** is also a member of the Scientific Committee of the Datini Institute, Prato, and **New** a member of the ArchHives international science/conservation/historical research network (run through Cambridge and Copenhagen) investigating pre-modern wax, bee colony die-off and historical climatic events.

Members of the Department also collaborate individually with scholars both nationally and internationally. **Schofield** has organised sessions with colleagues at the University of Valencia at the last two World Economic History Congresses. **Weiler** has developed research links with colleagues at UNC Chapel Hill and is planning a joint seminar series on historiography with Bochum University. **Nicholas** has developed historical mapping templates with historians at Queens University of Charlotte, USA, and advises on Greek media history research initiatives at Panteion University, Athens. **New** is exploring the chemistry of medieval sealing wax with colleagues at Reading University.

The Department also collaborates with non-academic bodies in Aberystwyth and beyond. The Ceredigion Archives, Ceredigion Museum and National Library of Wales are partners on our 'Aberystwyth at War 1914-1919' and 'People's Voices for a People's War' projects. **White** is honorary curator of the Calvinistic Methodist Archive at the NLW. **Nicholas** is on the Advisory Group of the NLW Broadcast Archive of Wales.

#### **Contributions to the discipline and research base**

Our staff contribute to the discipline's research base as members of leading advisory panels, consultative bodies and academic editorial boards; by organising national and international

conferences and conference panels; and in disseminating our research nationally and internationally through conference papers, research seminars and other academic settings. Our staff's national and international research reputations are further demonstrated through our PhD examining in the UK, Europe and USA.

The significance of research in the Department and the contribution of individuals to the research base and discipline has been recognised during the assessment period by honours and awards including the election of **Morus**, **O'Leary** and **Schofield** as Fellows of the Learned Society of Wales, and **Schofield** as a Fellow of the Academy of Social Science. Two members of the Department have been honoured by overseas institutions: **Weiler** was Dorothy Ford Wiley Visiting Professor, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, in 2015; **Jones** was elected Fellow of the Evangelical Studies Program at Baylor University, Texas, in 2019.

Members of the Department have contributed to the vitality and sustainability of the discipline and of the wider scholarly community through leadership roles in learned societies and subject associations. **Morus** was elected to the Council of the Learned Society of Wales and serves as Director of MYRDDIN, the Welsh Network for the History and Social Study of Science. **Jones** is Convenor of the Association of Denominational Historical Societies and Cognate Libraries. **New** is Chair of SIGILLVM, the international network for the preservation and study of seals and sealing practices,

Contributions to the research base have additionally been made as members of grant award panels or peer review colleges, including the AHRC Strategic Review College (**Schofield**), and the AHRC Peer Review College (**New**, **Schofield**). Additionally, **Nicholas** has peer-reviewed applications to the *Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft* (DFG) and AHRC; and **Thompson** is an Advisor on Wellcome Trust applications. **Schofield** is also a REF 2021 sub-panel member and is Chair of the Advisory Board of the AHRC project 'The People of the Peasants' Revolt'. **Morus** was a member of the AHRC Advisory Group 'Science in Culture', to 2014.

Through editorial work for academic journals, staff in the Department have supported scholarly publishing and shaped disciplinary trajectories. During this REF period, six staff have served as editors or co-editors of academic journals as follows: *Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society* (**Jones**), *Welsh History Review* (**O'Leary**), *History of Science* (**Morus**, to 2015), *Economic History Review* (**Schofield**, to 2017), *Llafur: Journal of the Welsh People's History Society* (**Thompson**), and *Ceredigion: Journal of the Ceredigion Historical Society* (**White**). Staff have also served as members of editorial or advisory boards for *Twentieth Century British History* (chaired by **Nicholas**); *British Journal for the History of Science*; *Continuity and Change*; *Early Popular Visual Culture*; *Economic History Review*; *History of Science*; *Journal of Religious History*, *Literature and Culture*; *Llafur: Media History*; *Y Traethodydd*; *The Medieval Journal*; *Wesley and Methodist Studies*; and as peer reviewers for c.30 other journals across a wide range of specialisms.

The Department's presence on leading academic publishers' editorial boards is also strong, particularly in the fields of medieval history and Welsh history. **Schofield** is General Editor of *The Medieval Countryside* series for Brepols, and Chair of the Users Advisory Board for the Bibliography of British and Irish History (Royal Historical Society/Institute of Historical Research/Brepols), while **Jones** is co-Editor of the *Routledge Studies in Evangelicalism* series. Staff members serve on the editorial boards for the British Academy's Social and Economic History series (**Schofield**), Ashgate's *Rural Worlds* series (**Schofield**), Rowman & Littlefield's *Global Epistemics* series (**Morus**), the ARC Humanities Press series *War and Conflict in Pre-Modern Societies* (**Taylor**), Boydell & Brewer's *Writing History in the Middle Ages* series (**Weiler**), and the University of Wales Press series *Studies in Welsh History* (**White**), *Re-Thinking Welsh History* and *Gender Studies in Wales* (both **O'Leary**), and *Scientists of Wales* (**Morus**). Members of the department have also acted as peer reviewers for leading academic publishers, including: Oxford, Cambridge, Edinburgh, Princeton, Chicago, Stanford, Pittsburgh and Harvard University Presses, Boydell & Brewer, Palgrave Macmillan, Routledge, University of Wales Press, and Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol.

Conference organisation, leadership and participation are significant elements of both the Department's research environment and its international research reputation and are supported financially at both Departmental and Faculty level. National and international conferences organised by members of the Department include:

- 11<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> Anglo-American Seminars in Medieval Economic History, Wells 2013, Stirling 2016, Worcester 2019 (**Schofield**)
- 'Newspapers, War and Society': Fifth Gregynog Media History Conference, Gregynog, 2014 (**Nicholas**)
- 'George Whitefield: Life, Context and Legacy', Pembroke College, Oxford, 2014 (**Jones**)
- 'Travel and Conflict in the Medieval and Early Modern World', Bangor, 2015 (**Emlyn**)
- '1916 in Ireland and Wales', Ireland-Wales International Research Network, Aberystwyth, 2016 (**O'Leary**)
- 'Shared Histories: Media Connections between Britain and Ireland', Sixth Gregynog Media History Conference, with Dublin City University, Dublin, 2016 (**Nicholas**)
- ASEAUK conference, London, Sept 2016 (**Phillips**)
- 'Peacemaking and the Restraint of Violence in Medieval Europe', Oslo, 2018 (**Taylor**)
- British Archaeological Association annual conference. Shrewsbury, 2019 (**New**)
- EUROSEAS conference, Berlin, 2019 (**Phillips**)
- British Society for the History of Science Annual Conference 2020 (postponed) (**Morus**)

The vitality of the Department's research is also demonstrated by invitations to deliver keynote addresses to conferences, research networks and learned societies, including the following: by **Jones** (Annual Lectures to the Wesley Historical Society and the Congregational History Society); **Morus** (British Society for the History of Science Annual Conference, Swansea, 2015; International History, Philosophy and Science Teaching Group Annual European Conference, Flensburg, 2016); **New** (Scottish Medievalists Annual Conference, 2014); **O'Leary** (Wales-Ireland International Research Network, Cardiff, 2014; Launch of the Four Nations' History Network, London, 2015; Centre de Recherche sur les Identités Nationales et l'Interculturalité, Nantes, 2017; Inaugural Conference of the AHRC Network on Anti-Popery in British History, Newcastle, 2018; Conference for the Agrégation Interne Civilisation Britannique, Rouen, 2019); **Schofield** (Bangor Medieval Colloquium, 2016; conference on medieval food markets' development and integration, Lleida, 2020); and **White** (Oxford Centre for Methodism and Church History/Wesley History Society, 2019).

Over the REF 2021 period the thirteen current members of the Department have also presented over seventy conference and research papers across Britain and the world. These include papers delivered to annual history conferences (including the German Historical Society; British Society for the History of Science; British Archaeological Association; Anglo-American Conference; Association for Asian Studies; EuroSEAS, Social Science Historical Association; Leeds International Medieval Conference; European Social Science History Conference; World Economic History Conference; and North American Association for the Study of Welsh Culture and History); national archives and museums (TNA, British Museum, State Archives of Belgium); and other national and international conferences and symposia. Members of staff also regularly present their work-in-progress at research seminars in history departments across the UK, including (in this REF period) the universities of Oxford, Cambridge, St Andrews, Stirling, York, Leicester, Manchester, Huddersfield, Liverpool John Moores, Cardiff, Bangor, UCL and the IHR. Our international research outreach is particularly impressive, with staff presenting papers and participating in symposia at institutions across Europe (including Athens, Berlin, Brussels, Cologne, Lleida, Madrid, Odense, Paris, Rome, Saratov, Tel Aviv, Valencia, and Vilnius); Canada (Kingston, Toronto); the USA (Boston, Chicago, Denver, Philadelphia), East and South-East Asia (Hong Kong, Kuala Lumpur, Kyoto, Seoul, Shanghai, Singapore, Taipei, and a five-lecture series by **Schofield** in Wuhan); and Australia (Canberra, Macquarie).

All senior members of the Department are in regular demand as external examiners for doctoral degrees, for universities including the following: Cambridge; Kings College London;

Huddersfield; Leicester; Manchester; Nottingham Trent; Oxford Brookes, SOAS; York; Bangor; Cardiff; Edinburgh; National University of Ireland Galway; University of Girona; University of Paris-Sorbonne; University of Valencia; University of Delaware.

Departmental staff are actively involved in developing historical research resources both for teaching and for academic research and research development. **Emlyn** was a consultant on a project to develop teaching resources on the Middle Ages for the Coleg Cymraeg resources library. **New** was advisor to the Portable Antiquities Scheme; the British Academy English Episcopal Acta Project; the L.T.C. Rolt archive deposit at Ironbridge Gorge Museums Trust; and the St Padarn's Church Community Heritage and Conservation Project, Aberystwyth. **Nicholas** is Consultant Editor for the Adam Matthew Digital archive collections: 'The First World War', 'Mass-Observation in the 1980s', 'British Service Newspapers of WW2', and 'Topical Budget Newsreels 1911-31', and has developed a set of Year 9 history resources on local history and the First World War. **Thompson** is adviser on five successful Wellcome Trust record conservation projects. **White** was liaison for a NLW/Farmers' Union of Wales project into the use of tithe maps and associated place-names to research historical land use.

### ***Contribution to economy and society***

Departmental staff have also played a proactive role in contributing to the economy and society through public engagement activities and knowledge exchange with civic communities and with local, national and international media.

Departmental research interests inform our ongoing engagement with wider public and policy matters. On the UK/international stage, **Phillips** spent two years of the REF period under part-time secondment to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, advising senior policy colleagues about the history and culture of Southeast Asia and contemporary policy challenges, and delivering training directly to UK diplomats in foreign embassies. Departmental staff have also participated in Welsh government initiatives. **O'Leary** was a member of the Welsh Government's First World War Centenary Historical Interpretation Group 2013-18. **Arwyn** and **O'Leary** were speakers at the Interdisciplinary Workshop on Migration (Aberystwyth, July 2017), with representatives of the Welsh Government, Home Office and Wales Strategic Migration Partnership; **Arwyn** also participated in the Community Sponsorship in Wales academic roundtable with representatives of the Home Office, Goodfaith and Social Finance (Aberystwyth, Oct 2017). **Thompson** is a member of the Welsh National Advisory Group of Disability Research on Independent Living and Learning (DRILL); **Nicholas** is a member of the Steering Group of the National Broadcast Archive for Wales.

Knowledge transfer and outreach is something with which all our staff actively engage. New in particular has led on a significant number of initiatives, in collaboration with heritage organisations including MALD/CyMAL, the Portable Antiquities Scheme, the Archives & Records Association, and ICON, and at venues including the British Library, Museum of London, National Museum Wales, Royal Cornwall Museum, and Exeter Cathedral Archives. These have included training events for heritage professionals with the Oxford Archivists Group/Conservation Consortium; the West Yorkshire Archives Service; PAS Cymru/National Museums Wales/Saving Treasures; ARA West Midlands; and ARA Wales. Locally, **Nicholas** organised archive research training at the Ceredigion Archives and the NLW for volunteers on the 'Aberystwyth at War 1914-19' project; and **Arwyn** has provided oral history research training for local and community oral history projects.

Other staff have given public lectures at leading venues such as the Hay Festival (**Morus**, 2017); Gregynog Festival (**O'Leary**, 2017); National Eisteddfod (**White**, 2017); the Antiquaries Society and Hereford Cathedral's 'Magna Carta 2017' (**New**).

Departmental staff have also been involved in public exhibition activities. **Morus** was consultant for the Science and Industry Museum/Wellcome Collection international touring exhibition *Electricity: The Spark of Life*. **Taylor** has worked with the Forsvarsmuseet, Oslo. **Li** co-organised a photographic exhibition, *The Golden Leaf*, for the Centre for Photography and Film,

Singapore. **O'Leary** curated a bilingual online exhibition, 'The Great War and the Valleys', and **Nicholas** co-curated a public exhibition, 'Aberystwyth at War, 1914-1919', at Aberystwyth Arts Centre, to coincide with the Armistice Centenary.

The vitality of the Department's research has been further demonstrated through engagement with the Welsh, UK and international media. **Arwyn, Emlyn, Jones, Morus, O'Leary, Thompson** and **White** are regular contributors on BBC Radio Cymru and BBC Radio Wales, and **Morus, O'Leary, Thompson** and **White** are familiar faces on S4C. While in post, **Phillips** was a regular commentator on BBC World and the BBC World Service on Thai history and current affairs and published an article in the *New York Times* on the death of King Bhumibol. Our media engagement has typically reflected both our research specialisms and ongoing research projects. **Arwyn** has published articles on 'Fallen Women' in the *Western Mail* (Nov 2016), on 'German Expellees' in *Golwg* (June 2017) and on German refugees in a blogpost for British Archives Online (May 2018) - as well as multiple discussions of Donald Trump's foreign policy for BBC Radio Cymru. **Li** has presented a podcast for 'Myanmar Musings' (2018). **Morus's** 'Unsettling Scientific Stories' project led to him featuring in *Dibendraw* (S4C) discussing Marconi (May 2015); *Great Lives* (BBC Radio 4), discussing Nikola Tesla (January 2018); and *Victorian Sensations* (BBC4) (April 2019); he has also been interviewed on *Counterpoint* (ABC Radio, Australia), and *Sunday Morning* (Radio New Zealand) (both April 2020); written articles for *The Independent* (Oct 2018), *Aeon*, and *BBC Science Focus Magazine* (July 2019); and published an article on 'Frankenstein: the real experiments that inspired the fictional science' on the popular academic website *The Conversation* (Oct 2018) that by July 2021 had over 109,000 online reads across the world. **New** drew on her ongoing research on 'Medieval CSI' to present a podcast for BBC History and features for *BBC History Magazine* (Jan 2016), and *New Scientist* (Jan 2017). Perceived parallels between WW2 and the COVID crisis in spring and summer 2020 saw **Nicholas** invited to discuss the 'Phoney War' on *The Archive Hour* (BBC Radio 4); music and news provision in national emergencies on BBC local radio and LBC, and food rationing and family separation in BBC Archive blogposts. **O'Leary** featured in *Bás nó Saoirse/Death or Liberty* (Tile Films (Ireland)/Roar Films (Australia)), broadcast in three languages on TG4 (Ireland), S4C (Wales) and ABC (Australia) (Oct 2015). **Thompson** drew on his research on the history of health provision in *Corff Cymru* (S4C) (2016); *Matron, Medicine and Me* (BBC1) (2016) and *National Health Stories* (BBC Radio 4) (June 2018). **Weiler** has written on medieval elections for BBC HistoryExtra. **White** contributed to *Huw Edwards a'r Cymry Estron* (S4C) (May 2015) and *The Man who Killed Richard III* (S4C /History Channel) (Nov 2015). Meanwhile, two staff members have featured on BBC1's *Who Do You Think You Are?*: **White** (Greg Davies, Feb 2017) and **Thompson** (Ruth Jones, recorded spring 2020). In addition, **White** was a jury member of the 2014 BAFTA Cymru Gwyn Alf Williams Award, for the TV programme/series which contributed most to an understanding of Welsh history.

Finally, local and community outreach is an increasingly important and rewarding element of the Department's research engagement activity. During the current REF period we developed a series of new initiatives that have enabled us to contribute more actively to local and community history, developing historical engagement at a community level, and bringing our own historical research to community arts, youth and heritage groups and the local schools curriculum. We have given history talks at the NLW (**Emlyn, White**), local pubs (**Schofield**), the Carmarthenshire Antiquarian Society (**White**), the Powysland Club (**New** and **Schofield**) and the U3A at Llandrindod Wells (**Nicholas**). **Nicholas's** HLF funded community project 'Aberystwyth at War 1914-1919' united local archive bodies, heritage groups and volunteers in collective research on the local area, and featured Armistice Service readings, WWI-themed public film screenings, an exhibition, an interactive online map of Aberystwyth servicemen and their home addresses, and workshops with local schools' Year 9 students. A follow-up project exploring Aberystwyth in WW2 was launched in spring 2020. We aim to increase our local and community outreach role alongside our international, national and public research engagement, and make it a key element of our Departmental research and impact strategy going forward.