



CYMDEITHAS CYFIEITHWYR CYMRU

A report on activities during 2013-14

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Introduction

The main aim of Cymdeithas Cyfieithwyr Cymru – the association of Welsh translators and interpreters – this year has been to continue to maintain and develop professional translation standards and to improve, increase and expand translators’ knowledge and skills.

This was achieved in several ways, including:

- increasing and developing our membership to represent ever greater numbers of translators;
- holding membership examinations for translators and interpreters;
- promoting translators’ professional development by providing a varied programme of workshops, and starting to develop a Continuing Professional Development scheme;
- maintaining our relationship with Higher Education institutions, particularly the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol, and investing in academic research for the benefit and advancement of the translation profession/industry;
- maintaining and nurturing our links with other organisations and institutions;
- promoting and marketing the Association and its members;

The Association’s programme of work was guided by the 3-year business plan for the period up to 31 March 2016. On the basis of the business plan, the Welsh Language Commissioner funds the regulatory activities carried out by the Association.

This report provides an overview of activities during 2013-14; a summary of the financial situation; and information about the Association’s governance arrangements.

Also included in the report is a vote of thanks to Berwyn Prys Jones, in appreciation of his service as Chair of the Association, following his retirement from that post in September 2013, after more than a quarter of a century.



Our thanks for commendable service

Can any of our members remember Berwyn Prys Jones becoming Chair of Cymdeithas Cyfieithwyr Cymru? I certainly can't. And who was the previous Chair? Was there a previous Chair? Regardless of that, I'm sure all the members are extremely aware that Berwyn was Chair for over a quarter of a century before retiring in 2013. At that point he decided that it was time to loosen the shackles and devote more time to some of his main interests, such as preserved steam!

It would probably be excessive to quote the opening verses of Genesis and claim that the Association was "formless and empty" in the early days, since it had no salaried staff, and no office as such. It was thanks to those such as Megan Tomos and Nia Wyn Jones that membership was established and an association developed at that time.

Berwyn was perfectly suited to the role of Chair, since he was one of the first people in Wales to be employed as a Welsh translator. He therefore served his apprenticeship as a translator during the period when the craft had to be learned without the help of handbooks and terminology lists, and without much external support. At that time, translators learnt from the "stalwarts", namely experts on various aspects of the Welsh language such as T. J. Morgan, Glanmor Williams, Dafydd Jenkins, Mati Rees, and local authority officers such as R.T.D. Williams and Alun R Edwards.

Berwyn is also instinctively "neat and tidy", in other words, he pays great attention to detail in everything he does: he used to keep lists in order to ensure he was always consistent. Furthermore, he's not afraid to express a difference of opinion, which he can generally back up with facts or quotes. He was "just the chap" to be at the helm during the formative years.

I'm sure all the Association's staff and officers over the years, as well as the members of the various panels and committees, can testify to Berwyn's attention to detail, his care and support in all tasks assigned to the Chair, particularly the Chair of an Association which has now become responsible and accountable for considerable public funds. A crucial element in all of this is ensuring a happy, friendly atmosphere amongst all members and those working on behalf of the Association, and Berwyn's affable demeanour has facilitated that at all times.

Although he has now relinquished his leading role, Berwyn is still a loyal, hardworking member, for which we are extremely grateful, since he has a wealth of experience upon which officers will be able to draw in future. Thank you, Berwyn, on behalf of everyone involved with Cymdeithas Cyfieithwyr Cymru.

Mary Jones, Chair



1. Membership of Cymdeithas Cyfieithwyr Cymru

On 31 March 2014, membership of the Association stood at 348 individual members (compared with 354 members on 31 March 2013), as follows:

Full Members - 194
Basic Members - 140
Interpreting Members - 70 (14)*

* The figure in parentheses represents the number of members who are solely Interpreting members. The remainder are also either Full members (43) or Basic members (13).

There has been a further increase in the number of Full Members. This is the highest number of Full Members in the history of the Association, and there has never been such a big gap between the numbers of Full and Basic Members.

We had 8 Corporate Members and 7 Institutional Members.

2. Holding membership examinations for translators and interpreters

In April 2013, the Association was facing an uncertain financial situation as a result of ongoing discussions with the Welsh Language Commissioner, so we decided not to hold the intended **Text Membership Examinations**.

Only one round of examinations was held during the year, in December 2013, and the results were as follows:

Total number of Candidates *	51	
	Candidates	Passes
Full *	33	18
Paper 1 – into Welsh	26	7
Paper 2 – into English	13	11
Basic *	18	8
Paper 1 – into Welsh	16	3
Paper 2 – into English	7	6

* Some candidates sat both papers

The trend first seen in October 2011, when the number of candidates who sat the Full examination exceeded those who attempted the Basic papers, continued, thus indicating an increasing desire amongst translators to achieve a truly professional standard in their work. This also reflects the efforts made by the Association to insist that organisations and institutions use Full Members.



It was good to see the vast majority of candidates in the examinations for **Full Membership** reaching the required standard, and providing many examples of intelligent, sparkling translation. Having said that, unfortunately, the unsuccessful candidates were seen to struggle with each of the four elements used as criteria (meaning, register, syntax and accuracy). We must presume, therefore, that a number of them need considerably more experience and training before sitting an examination at this level. One might suppose that they include several who can produce a good standard of written Welsh, but who have not mastered the art of translation, i.e. they need to be able to convey the exact meaning of the original, rather than translating without paying sufficiently detailed attention to the text in front of them.

A deliberate attempt was made to set contrasting pieces in the examinations for Full Membership, and one piece in each paper was likely to be considerably more familiar in style for experienced translators, since it was more similar to the type of work they have to deal with every day. It comes as no surprise, therefore, that most of the candidates found the piece in the unfamiliar style more challenging. At this level, translators are expected to be able to convey the meaning of all kinds of English texts in accurate, natural Welsh, and vice versa.

In the examinations for **Basic Membership**, although there were some good things in most of the scripts presented, the work was generally of only a satisfactory standard, since no candidates achieved grade 1 for all elements.

The pieces set, although they contained sufficient challenging elements to be suitable for use in an examination, deliberately attempted to ensure that translators at this level were not out of their depth in the test. It was disappointing, therefore, to see such a small minority presenting a satisfactory translation, particularly since so many had such difficulty in conveying the meaning of the original correctly.

Generally, candidates should take advantage of any opportunity to develop and improve their translation and language skills, as well as learning to ensure that the translation of the original text pays detailed attention to accuracy.

In 2013, no-one was deemed worthy to receive the **Wil Petherbridge Memorial Prize** - which is presented in memory of the Association's former Secretary and a pioneer in the field of translation in Wales - to the most promising candidate for Basic Membership, for translation into Welsh, if a worthy recipient is identified.

The only **Interpreting Test** of the year was held in January 2014 at professional sound studios in Cardiff and Groeslon. There were 6 candidates, 3 of whom were successful. Although the standard was not as high, generally speaking, as it has been in previous tests, the best candidates translated clearly, accurately and fully, placing intelligent emphasis and using appropriate syntax and idioms in the target language. The main weaknesses were uncertainties of syntax, register and idiom, since many of the unsuccessful candidates used the syntax of the Welsh sentence in their English and translated idioms literally, thereby demonstrating a need to listen to high quality English.



3. Promoting professional development

In order to promote translators' professional development, a varied programme of activities was organised, including a conference, workshops, the translation e-workshop and the Interpretation Exercise. Many translators see the regular professional development and training opportunities offered by the Association as extremely valuable, and as one of the strengths of the Association.

A total of 181 individuals benefited from these activities, and there were 268 registrations. Of these individuals, 80 were already members of the Association, and the majority of the remainder were translators working for central government, local authorities, the education sector or other public institutions. This demonstrates that these organisations value the exceptional and important provision offered by the Association as a means of facilitating their own staff's professional development. The next step will be to encourage those translators to become members.

A total of 7 **face-to-face workshops** were organised during the year. In line with the pattern we have now adopted for several years, most were held in more than one location across Wales (including Bangor, Caernarfon, Aberystwyth, Lampeter, Swansea and Cardiff), so that they were as accessible as possible to translators in all parts of Wales. The workshop topics included: 'Golygu'r Gwallau Môn' (tutor - Rhiannon Ifans), 'Cysondeb, cydlynad, ergyd' (tutor - Meg Elis), 'I speak the two spokes' (tutor - Berwyn Prys Jones), 'Datblygiad a defnyddio cyfieithu peirianyddol' (tutors - Terence Lewis MITI and staff from the National Assembly for Wales) and 'Techneg Llais – CAP' (tutor - Ann Llwyd). These were very well received on the whole, although we had to cancel the odd session.

In September 2013, 68 delegates came to Reichel Hall, Bangor University for our first **Conference** in three years, entitled 'Gwella'r Gwallau'. The conference discussed common errors found in translation, such as using appropriate registers and syntax, the importance of using standardised terminology, and clear communication when translating. The 4 keynote speakers, Tegau Andrews, Fiona Gannon, Heini Gruffudd and J. Elwyn Hughes, gave high-quality, interesting and entertaining presentations. The conference was sponsored by the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol, and Bangor University's TILT (Training in Languages and Translation) project, and Literature Wales.

The translation e-workshop has remained popular as an effective means of offering structured training to people who can work to deadlines in their own time. Participants receive comments on their translations from tutors who are both professional translators and examiners. The translation e-workshop was offered at both Full and Basic level separately for the first time, following demand for this provision at the higher level. During the year 8 translation e-workshops were held, attracting 43 participants.

Similarly, the **Interpreting Exercise** was seen as a valuable opportunity for people to translate two excerpts of similar length and standard to those used in the Interpretation Test, in the actual studios where the tests are held. It's an opportunity for them to familiarise themselves with the procedure and requirements of the Interpretation Test, and receive critical and constructive feedback from a tutor, as well as an opportunity to discuss the translation. A total of 14 people took part in this scheme.

During the year, work commenced on preparing a **Continuing Professional Development scheme** for members of the Association.



4. Maintaining our relationship with Higher Education institutions

The Association continued to maintain its close relationship with the **Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol**, and the Coleg recognises translation as an important field that it wishes to support. The Chief Executive was a member of the Coleg's Translation Studies Project Board, as was Heini Gruffudd.

The Association has been a key partner in the **University of Wales Trinity St David** Postgraduate Certificate in Interpreting, the first qualification to be offered in Welsh/English interpreting, and one which offers an opportunity to gain an academic qualification which satisfies the requirements of the translation profession/industry. We congratulate all of the first 5 students who registered on gaining their Certificates in the summer of 2013.

Close links were maintained with the **University of Bangor**. The Association's sponsorship of Dawn Wooldridge's PhD, 'Profiling errors: a study of how prospective English-Welsh translators translate', came to an end in November 2013. This PhD was part of the KESS scheme, supported by the European Social Fund through Welsh Government. The Association is still supporting 'Translation cultures: a translation research network', a project for which Bangor School for MFL had received an AHRC grant.

5. Maintaining links with organisations and institutions

Representing the Association on various committees continued, including the Group for the Promotion of the Welsh Language (a group which the Welsh Government Welsh Language Unit is responsible for co-ordinating and administering), the Welsh Government's Sharing Translation Resources Project Board, Rhwydiaith, and the steering group for the North Wales Mentrau Iaith Cross-border Project (this project is funded under the Rural Development Plan, and includes a Community Translation Scheme).

The relationship between the Association and **Translators' House Wales** and **Tŷ Newydd Llanystumdwy** has continued. Once again, the Association sponsored the Bardic Staff awarded to the winner of the Translation Challenge. The Challenge in 2013 was to translate, from Spanish into Welsh, three poems by the Cuban poet, Víctor Rodríguez Núñez. Mererid Hopwood was the winner, and the Bardic Staff was presented to her at a ceremony held at the Aberystwyth University stand by our then Chair, Berwyn Prys Jones.

The Association worked with several public institutions for the benefit and development of the profession, including the Welsh Government Translation Service, the Assembly Translation and Recording Service, HM Courts and Tribunals Service, and a number of public organisations.

In February 2014, the Chief Executive was one of the speakers at the Senedd in Cardiff when the National Assembly for Wales launched its new machine translation resource, developed jointly with Microsoft.

The Association maintained its relationship with the ITI, and also with the European Commission Directorates of Translation and Interpretation.



The Association is a member of: FIT (Fédération Internationale des Traducteurs / International Federation of Translators); the Wales Council for Voluntary Action; Mantell Gwynedd; the Institute of Welsh Affairs, Celebrating Our Language and Dyfodol i'r Iaith.

6. The Hedley Gibbard Memorial Lecture

An appreciative audience came to listen to T. James Jones giving the Hedley Gibbard Memorial Lecture at the National Eisteddfod in Denbighshire. His lecture, entitled, 'Trosi Dylan', discussed the translation of 'Under Milk Wood' and other poems by Dylan Thomas, and he read excerpts from his translations. The lecture was sponsored by Literature Wales.

7. The Welsh Language Commissioner: funding regulatory activities

In August 2013 we reached an agreement with the Commissioner regarding the business plan for the 3 years up to 31 March 2016. The business plan was formulated on the basis of the 10 regulatory activities listed in the Commissioner's letter dated 19 December 2012, namely:

- Maintaining a register of professional translators, and insisting that they adhere to the Association's code of conduct.
- Maintaining and developing the levels of membership, e.g. Basic, Full, Corporate, Student, etc.
- Investigating complaints against members of the Association and taking any subsequent disciplinary action, including revocation of membership.
- Ensuring general recognition for qualified translators, particularly amongst the organisations which will be required to conform to the requirements of the Welsh Language Measure (Wales) 2011.
- Marketing and promoting the profession.
- Giving advice on translation courses provided by educational establishments.
- Working with educational establishments to set up a Continuing Professional Development scheme, in order to reflect a commitment to raising standards.
- Monitoring members' compliance with a compulsory CPD scheme.
- Helping members to develop their businesses.
- Advising the Welsh Language Commissioner on issues relating to the quality of translation.

The business plan also took into account the fact that the Commissioner had informed us that she had no plans to fund the Association from 31 March 2016, and that the business plan should demonstrate how the Association would be self-sufficient from that date.

On the basis of the business plan, the Commissioner funds the regulatory activities carried out by the Association. The grant is paid specifically for activities relating to the 10 regulatory items listed above. General annual targets are set, and every quarter, more detailed activities are agreed, linked to the stated targets. Achievement is monitored on a quarterly basis, and quarterly payments are authorised only when satisfactory progress has been demonstrated in each quarter.



8. The financial situation

The Association received a grant of £87,359 from the Welsh Language Commissioner towards its regulatory activities.

The Association's other main source of funding was the membership payments, which netted £43,084, compared to £43,542 in 2012-13.

The income generated therefore enabled the Association to continue to employ 2.6 members of permanent staff, as well as carrying out the work described in this report.

The accounts show a surplus of £17,027 for the year.

The financial report was prepared by Owain Bebb a'i Gwmni, Caernarfon.

9. Management of the Association

9.1 Cymdeithas Cyfieithwyr Cymru Cyf is a company limited by guarantee. It is registered in Wales, registration number 4741023.

The Association is managed by the Board of Directors. The following were members of the Board of Directors during the year:

David Bullock, Ann Corkett, Fiona Gannon, Heini Gruffudd, Wyn Hobson, Berwyn Prys Jones, Dewi Morris Jones and Mary Jones.

Bethan Mair Evans, Catherine Jones, Claire Richards and Lowri Roberts were welcomed as new directors in September 2013.

Berwyn Prys Jones retired as Chair of the Association at the 2013 Annual Meeting, and Mary Jones was elected as his successor.

The Board of Directors met on 9 May 2013, 31 July 2013 and 27 January 2014.

9.2 The Association has the following boards and committees:

Text Examiners and Markers / The Text Examination Board

The following served as examiners and markers for the Text Membership Examinations during the year, and acted as members of the Text Examination Board in turn when they were marking: Fiona Gannon (Chief Examiner), Mary Jones (Deputy Examiner), Meinir McDonald (Deputy Examiner), Catrin Beard, Ann Corkett, Meg Elis, Heini Gruffudd, Wyn Hobson, Berwyn Prys Jones, Dewi Morris Jones, Sylvia Prys Jones, Glenys Roberts, Catrin Small, Megan Hughes Tomos, Heledd Williams, Tegwen Williams and Gareth Wood.

The Interpretation Board



The following were members of the Interpretation Board during the year:
Wyn Hobson (Chair), Delyth Davies, Lynwen Davies, Siôn Edwards, Rhys George, Catrin Howells
Lloyd, Hywel G. Hughes, Rhian Huws, Aled M. Jones, Siân Eleri Jones, Ann Llwyd, Siôn Aled Owen,
Mair Parry-Jones and Angharad Watson.

The Interpretation Board met once, on 14 February 2014

The Membership and Professional Standards Committee

The following were members of the Membership and Professional Standards Committee during the year: David Bullock (Chair), Delyth Davies, Fiona Gannon, Berwyn Prys Jones, Claire Richards and Lowri Roberts.

The Committee met on 27 March 2014.

10. Closing remarks by the Chief Executive, Geraint Wyn Parry

I would like to thank Nia Wyn Jones and Judith Kaufmann for their hard work and commitment to Cymdeithas Cyfieithwyr Cymru, and Mary Jones, the new Chair, for her constant support. Thanks go also to all members of the Board of Directors, the Text Examination Board, the Interpretation Board and the Membership and Professional Standards Committee for their loyalty to these committees and their wisdom in carrying out their work. The successful co-operation between staff, directors and committee members is one of the great strengths of the Association – long may it continue.

As stated in this report, Berwyn Prys Jones retired as Chair of the Association in September 2013, having held that post with considerable honour and dignity for over a quarter of a century. I would like to pay my own tribute to Berwyn for his robust and measured guidance, his constant support and encouragement, and his wise counsel, not forgetting his wit and humour. The Association and the translation profession in Wales are greatly indebted to him, and we thank him for his exceptional contribution in promoting and developing a profession which holds a special place in his heart.

