



40th ANNIVERSARY OF DEATH OF RICHARD HUWS

Good afternoon! I am Gerry Proctor, Chair of Engage Liverpool, which is a resident-led organisation that supports resident initiatives across the waterfront and city centre. I am very honoured to be leading today's anniversary event.

Richard Huws is someone who deserves to be commemorated and celebrated. He was an extraordinary man and a very accomplished engineer and designer. Dr Rob MacDonald will tell us more about him later but it is worth noting that he was a proud Welshman and a nationalist who designed the first logo for Plaid Cymru. He was fiercely opposed to the drowning of the Welsh valleys to provide drinking water for the English including for this city. It is appropriate that our first poem today will celebrate that aspect of his life.

His reputation as a designer and engineer was cemented at the Festival of Britain in 1951 when his water sculptures were exhibited to the nation for the first time and he was rightly acclaimed for his talent and ingenuity. Sadly none of them outlived the Festival and today, 40 years after his death, we stand beside the last remaining example of his work and know that he would have been so pleased that it is now declared a national monument Grade II Listed.

We contacted his family who apologise for not being able to attend today. They send their gratitude and greetings:

- Eldest daughter Catherine lives in Japan
- Eldest son Daniel lives in Aberystwyth and both are now too frail to travel.
- Daniel's two daughters - Hannah lives on Anglesey and Lucy in Aberystwyth.

We cannot thank enough this afternoon Rhiannon Liddell who has helped to bring together Welsh singers from the Liverpool Welsh Choral Union and from Bethel Chapel Choir who are here to commemorate this great Welshman Richard Huws.

They are now going to sing the first two songs on our programme.

We will now hear read the first two poems (sadly not read by students from Hope University due to the lecturer's strike action)

Reservoirs by R S Thomas which I will read,
Water by Philip Larkin read by Eryl Dooling.

Dr Robert MacDonald who was a student on Richard Huws' in the Liverpool School of Architecture in 1970 will now speak about him.

We invite our Welsh singers now to perform two songs from the programme

Our final two poems this afternoon are Directions for Visitors by Raymond Garlick read by Rhiannon Liddell followed by 'O Mona, land of song', verses from The Eisteddfod, by Sir Lewis Morris read by Ifor Griffith.

The final part of our memorial commemoration on this occasion of the 40th Anniversary of the death of Richard Huws is the Welsh National Anthem.

CONCLUSION

Thank you to everyone who has taken part this afternoon in this first in a programme of cultural activities here around the Piazza Fountain. A group of concerned residents and citizens has come together to raise the profile of the recently-listed Grade II sculpture and to raise the funds to have it fully refurbished and restored to its original glory when unveiled in 1967.

Please help us by simply writing down on the back of your programme your postcode and a YES if you feel that this is something you support. Pens are available and please hand it in before leaving. This will help us show evidence when fundraising of community involvement and concern.

Thank you to Rhiannon and all the singers from the Welsh Community today.

Thank you to Dr Rob MacDonald for his intervention today.

Thank you to Melissa Fields who has been filming the event.

Thank you to Ben and Oliver who have set up the PA system today.

Thank you to the Friends of the Piazza Fountain for their initiative that inspired all of us to get involved.

And finally thank you to Dr Richard Moore without whose academic brilliance and painstaking research this fountain would not have been listed.

Thank you to all of you for attending and we hope you will continue to support us in the months and years ahead.

