

*SEA EMPRESS* is a publication produced in association with the *Sea Empress Project* hosted by the Reading Room in Manorbier, Pembrokeshire.

Cyhoeddiad yw *SEA EMPRESS* a luniwyd mewn cydweithrediad â *Phrosiect Sea Empress* a gynhelir gan y Reading Room ym Maenorbŷr, Sir Benfro.

This edition is last of a series including *Tide*, *Deep Time*, *Animism* and *Memory*

Dyma'r rhifyn olaf mewn cyfres sy'n cynnwys *Llanw*, *Amser Ddwfn*, *Animistiaeth* a *Cof*

Memory Edition  
/Rhifyn y Cof

# SEA EMPRESS



Dr Robin Crump's personal archive, men power washing rocks at West Angle Bay, March 1996. Courtesy the photographer.

Archif personol Dr Robin Crump, dynion yn golchi'r creigiau yn West Angle Bay, Mawrth 1996. Trwy garedigrwydd y ffotograffydd.



## Editor's Introduction /Cyflwyniad y Golygydd

Abigail Sidebotham

The Sea Empress oil spill that happened twenty years ago was an experience shared and felt deeply by most, if not all, of those who lived in Pembrokeshire at the time. In this final edition of the *SEA EMPRESS* publication on memory, we're bringing together works by artists and writers who explore collective memory and its contribution to the formation of cultural identity. The cover image is from Dr Robin Crump's personal archive and depicts two men hosing oil from rocks at West Angle Bay, a familiar scene in the wake of the Sea Empress oil spill.

Throughout the *Sea Empress Project*, with help from a group of brilliant volunteers, we've recorded 40 people, with diverse perspectives, recalling the oil spill. Some stories interrelate and intersect, whilst others contradict, and many interesting parallels have been found. Oral history is a human activity that takes place in the everyday. Whoever relates a joke, a story, gossip, or shares a personal experience, is communicating his or her oral histories to another, creating a collective self-image and contributing to the local cultural character. In Simone Rowat's and Rachel Marshall's collaborative experimental text, they activate local collective memory in Pembrokeshire through a fictitious obituary for Megan V. Welwind, an incarnation of the Sea Empress, who had an impressively long life and experienced much of local history.

Many of the writers and artists in this edition have focused on exploring aspects of the most defining, often traumatic, events of the twentieth century, and the scars and remnants that can be found within the landscape. Gilly Booth, an artist and filmmaker originally from Manorbier in Pembrokeshire, made a film in response to the Sea Empress oil spill called *Continuum*. In a conversation with creative collaborator and writer Stephen Barber, Gilly discusses *Continuum* in relation to Stephen's book *The Vanishing Map*.

Also included, are film stills depicting Port Talbot steelworks and a retired Sapper holding a WWII grenade, from my film *Her Name is Herman*, which tells the true story of a farmer who, in 1976 by premonition discovered an unexploded WWII Herman bomb buried deep beneath the ground on the Gower Peninsular. I

portray the bomb as an archetype of trauma, and the farmer and bomb disposal teams attempts to reach it as a masculine principle of conquest.

Absalom & Bardsley's series *Piss* from their book *Modern Life is Rubbish*, takes the poem *The Rag-Pickers Wine* by Baudelaire as a methodology for exploring the streets of Paris, using its detritus as fuel for work. *Piss* is a collection of photographs taken from a family photo album saturated in urine that they found under a bridge in Paris, the rag-pickers' locale. The photographs within the album depict a family holiday across a number of American cities, including visits to all the major financial and political centres. The colour photographs' chemical structure soaked with urine, has disintegrated into a fiery and macular portrayal, acting as a representation of the failure and broken promises of capitalist modernity, a sentiment that echoes on in Charlie Bird's poem *A City On A Hill*.

I'd like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude to everyone who's been involved in the *Sea Empress Project*, including all the volunteers trained in oral history interviewing and the community of people who've shared their memories with us, the children and teachers at Manorbier school who worked on the book-making project, and everyone who's engaged with events at the Reading Room - film screenings, workshops, talks and exhibitions - as well as all the artists, writers, marine ecologists, cultural geographers and wildlife experts who've delivered engaging talks and workshops and contributed works to the *SEA EMPRESS* publication - thank you. ✨

The oral history archive will be exhibited at the Reading Room in Manorbier from the 19th November until the 26th November (Wednesday-Sunday, 11am-4pm). Following this, the archive will be accessioned to The National Library of Wales, Tenby Museum and Pembrokeshire Archives, and can be accessed online at People's Collection Wales, making it available for popular and academic use now and in the future.

Abigail Sidebotham, *Her Name is Herman*, film still, 5K video, 15m 07s, color, sound, 2013. Courtesy the artist.

Abigail Sidebotham, *Her Name is Herman*, llun ffilm llonydd, fideo 5K, 15m 07e, lliw, sain, 2013. Trwy garedigrwydd yr artist.





Roedd gollyngiad olew'r *Sea Empress* a ddigwyddodd ugain mlynedd yn ôl yn brofiad a rannwyd ac a deimlwyd yn ddwys gan y rhan fwyaf, os nad pob un, o drigolion Sir Benfro ar y pryd. Yn y rhifyn olaf hwn o gyhoeddiad y *SEA EMPRESS* sy'n ymwneud â'r cof, cyflwynwn gasgliad o weithiau gan artistiaid ac awduron sy'n ymchwilio i gof cymuned a'i gyfraniad at ffurfio hunaniaeth ddiwylliannol. Daw llun y clawr o archif bersonol Dr Robin Crump ac mae'n dangos dau ddyd yn golchi olew oddi ar greigiau yn West Angle Bay, golygfa gyfarwydd yn sgil gollyngiad olew'r Sea Empress.

Trwy gydol *Prosiect y Sea Empress*, gyda chymorth criw o wirfoddolwyr anhygoel, rydyn ni wedi cofnodi atgofion 40 o bobl o wahanol safbwyntiau am y gollyngiad. Mae rhai hanesion yn perthyn ac yn cysylltu â'i gilydd tra bod eraill yn gwrth-ddweud, a chanfuwyd sawl cyffelybiaeth rhwng elfennau. Gweithgaredd dynol sy'n digwydd yn ein bywyd beunyddiol yw hanes llafar. Mae pwy bynnag sy'n adrodd jôc, hanesyn neu stori, neu'n rhannu profiad personol, yn rhannu eu hanes llafar â'i gilydd, gan ysgogi hunan-ddelwedd dorfol a chyfrannu at gymeriad diwylliannol yr ardal. Yng nghywaith arbrofol Simone Rowat a Rachel Marshall, maen nhw'n rhoi bywyd i gof y gymuned leol yn Sir Benfro trwy gyfrwng ysgrif goffa ddychmygol i Megan V. Welwind, sef ymgnawdoliad o'r Sea Empress, a gafodd oes drawiadol o faith ac a brofodd lawer o hanes lleol.

Canolbwyntiodd llawer o'r awduron a'r artistiaid yn y rhifyn hwn ar archwilio agweddau ar ddigwyddiadau mwyaf tyngedfennol, trawmatig yn aml, yr ugeinfed ganrif, a'r creithiau a'r olion sydd i'w canfod o hyd yn y dirwedd. Gwnaeth Gilly Booth, artist a gwneuthurwr ffilmiau sy'n hanu o Faenorbyr yn Sir Benfro, ffilm o'r enw *Continuum* fel ymateb i ollyngiad olew'r Sea Empress. Mewn sgwrs gyda'i chydweithiwr creadigol, yr awdur Stephen Barber, mae Gilly'n trafod *Continuum* mewn perthynas â thestun Stephen o'i lyfr *The Vanishing Map*.

Wedi'u cynnwys hefyd mae lluniau ffilm llonydd o waith dur Port Talbot a pheiriannydd wedi ymdeol o'r fyddin yn dal grenâd o'r Ail Ryfel Byd, o'i ffilm *Her Name is Herman*, sy'n adrodd stori wir ffermwr a ganfu, ym 1976 trwy ragargoel, fom Herman heb

ffrwydro o'r Ail Ryfel Byd wedi'i gladdu'n ddwfn dan y ddaear ar Benrhyn Gŵyr. Portreadir y bom fel archdeip trawma, a darlunnir ymdrechion y ffermwr a'r timau difa bomiau i'w gyrraedd fel egwyddor concwest wrywaidd.

Mae cyfres Sam Bardsley a Ben Absalom *Piss* o'u llyfr *Modern Life is Rubbish* yn cymryd y gerdd *Le Vin des Chiffonniers* (Gwin y Casglwyr Carpiâu) gan Baudelaire fel methodoleg ar gyfer chwilota strydoedd Paris, gan ddefnyddio'i sbwriel yn danwydd i'w gwaith. Ffotograffau yw *Piss* a gymerwyd o albwm lluniau teuluol wedi'i drwytho mewn piso, a ddarganfuwyd gan Sam a Ben o dan bont ym Mharis, cynefin y casglwyr carpiâu. Lluniau yw'r ffotograffau yn yr albwm o wyliau teuluol ar draws sawl dinas yn America, gan gynnwys ymweliadau â'r holl ganolfannau ariannol a gwleidyddol pwysig. Mae adeiledd cemegol y ffotograffau lliw, wedi'u trwytho mewn piso, wedi dadfeilio'n bortread tanlyd a brych, gan weithredu fel portread o fethiant ac addewidion chwilfriw'r byd modern cyfalafol. Dyma deimlad sy'n atseinio hefyd yng ngherdd Charlie Bird *Dinas Ar Fryn*.

Hoffwn fanteisio ar y cyfle yma i fynegi fy niolch i bawb a fu'n ymwneud â'r prosiect hwn, gan gynnwys yr holl wirfoddolwyr hyddysg mewn cynnal cyfweliadau hanes llafar a'r gymuned o bobl a rannodd eu hatgofion â ni, y plant a'r athrawon yn ysgol Maenorbŷr a weithiodd ar y prosiect creu llyfr, a phawb sydd wedi dod i ddigwyddiadau yn y Reading Room: dangosiadau ffilmiau, gweithdai, sgwrsiau ac arddangosfeydd, yn ogystal â'r holl artistiaid, awduron, ecolegwyr môr, daearyddwyr diwylliannol ac arbenigwyr bywyd gwyllt a gyflwynodd sgwrsiau a gweithdai hynod ddifyr ac a gyfrannodd waith i gyhoeddiad y *SEA EMPRESS* – diolch yn fawr. ✱

**Caiff yr archif hanes llafar ei arddangos yn y Reading Room ym Maenorbŷr o 19 Tachwedd tan 27 Tachwedd (Mercher – Sul, 11am – 4pm). Wedi hynny derbynodir yr archif i Lyfrgell Genedlaethol Cymru, Amgueddfa Dinbych-y-pysgod ac Archifdy Sir Benfro a gellir ei weld ar-lein yng Nghasgliad y Werin Cymru, fel y bydd ar gael at ddefnydd poblogaidd ac academaidd nawr ac yn y dyfodol.**







Gilly Booth, *Continuum*, film still, 16mm film, 13m 38s, B&W, sound, 1996. Courtesy the artist.

Gilly Booth, *Continuum*, llun ffilm llonydd, ffilm 16mm, 13m 38e, du a gwyn, sain, 1996. Trwy garedigrwydd yr artist.



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## In Conversation

### /Y Sgwrs

Stephen Barber and Gilly Booth

Gilly Booth is an international artist film maker originally from Manorbier, Pembrokeshire. In 1996 she made a film called *Continuum* in response to the Sea Empress oil spill. Here, she's in conversation with long standing collaborator, writer and theorist, Stephen Barber, discussing *Continuum* in relation to an extract from Stephen's book *The Vanishing Map* (Bloomsbury, 2006).

#### Gilly Booth:

In 1996 when the Sea Empress Disaster happened I remember going down to the beach and looking at the black sea. I remember the strange delayed 'flop' of the oiled waves and people staring along the seashore and crying. The trauma for the people of Pembrokeshire at that time was so great it was hard to absorb the devastation that had happened. I certainly didn't film it at that time but sometime after the event I bought a Bolex camera and decided to make a film that would hopefully evoke the emotion I felt at that time and also comment on how the film/media reports were transmitted and re-translated. I wanted to make a film that even if you understood Welsh, French, Italian and English it would be hard to read and decipher. The 'text' is spoken in different languages, repeated and fragmented, one always interrupting the other and colliding with the continuous digital subtitle. The narrators were recorded using their primary language in 16mm film, an analogue image, whereas the subtitle/translation was a digital image traversing the duration of the film.

Your book *The Vanishing Map* from 2006 seems to deal with memories of trauma, in the forms of photographic images, of moving-image sequences, and also of digital screens in corporate spaces?

#### Stephen Barber:

Yes, the text is about a visit to a war memorial in Bratislava in Slovakia, one of many war memorials for the very young Soviet soldiers who were killed during this journey that they made westwards towards Vienna and then on towards Berlin. And after that these extraordinary war memorials were created on hill tops above the cities that they had liberated. Bratislava is on the Danube as well. Each grave of the young soldiers has a photograph embedded into it and they are the original photographs, so let's say that the war memorial had been set up 1947; since then they have become increasingly disintegrated, torn apart, assaulted by people who were against the Soviet Army in the years of dissidence in Czechoslovakia. They would attack the photographic images and so they really have all these resonances and scars of time embedded in them. And by coincidence the day I was up on this war memorial, Bratislava went through this amazing process of corporatisation where the entire city became this hellish shopping mall, as the American president George Bush was giving a speech there. From this war memorial I could actually see down into the centre of the town filled with digital image screens that were projecting the face and body of Bush and his retinue. So there was this sense of oscillation or passage of time between the immediate moment of Bush making these promises about the weaponry that he was going to give to Slovakia and that sense of being there in that stilled terrain of time upon the war memorial.

I was also going to ask you about the Bolex camera, because the Bolex camera also has that kind of resonance of time. I guess for me it reminds me of Chris Marker's films at the beginning of the 60s including his film *Le Joli Mai*, which he made about the memories of the Algerian War, where he interviews people on the street because it's this idea of the immediacy of the Bolex camera. But which other French films did you have in mind as the whole of French cinema history is also about memory?

#### GB:

Chris Marker, the film essayist – definitely a massive inspiration. I enjoy his employment of the dislocation between sound, image and subtext and, yes, his intimate use of the Bolex camera, for which in fact you only have 90 seconds to record an image before you have to wind it up again. But before I started filming, I collaged together a text/script for the film from books, articles, interviews, translations I had lying around in my studio. I had on my bookshelf *A Lover's Discourse* by Roland Barthes, a fragmented text about love, loss and despair. At the time I was reading *Outside* by Marguerite Duras and researching her use of journalistic language. I was looking at how 1960s party political campaigning films in the BFI which had utilised the emotion of quotation to impart factual information. And also the early black & white psychoanalytical films starring French analysts, for example Lacan, where they quoted their theories to camera in a Brechtian way. These quotational techniques were integrated into feature films I was especially interested in, for example in the films of Jean Luc Godard. During this period I had also been recording sound interviews with people talking about their past lives which they had discovered using Regression Therapy techniques. The interview I eventually used, which appears right in the middle of *Continuum*, was with a female Japanese artist who regresses to become a male lumberjack who was killed by a tree falling on his head. She described passing from black light to white light and through this was healed. I collaged the various texts together and set up the film pretty quickly. The narrators were all people I knew and were not actors. I filmed the whole thing in a very short space of time in my own house. I wasn't really aware of what the outcome would be at the time but knew it was a reaction to what had happened in the 1996 Sea Empress disaster.

#### SB:

Yes so that sense of urgency is there, is always very important and as you say the Bolex has a very specific limit to the duration of the sequence that can be shot with it. I guess I had that sense also during these travels in Eastern Europe of this sense of something disappearing, something vanishing as I was travelling. Perhaps it was the resonances of people's experiences of the Second World War, or perhaps it was even their experiences of the contemporary moment, because something that felt tangible and corporeal about their lives was leaking out at the same time. One source for thinking about that at the time, and also touching on psychoanalysis, would be Freud's letters to Einstein from 1931–32, where they knew that a world war was coming and they had this exchange of letters about whether war was unavoidable, whether it was definitely going to happen – I think in the end they both decided it was. The image that comes out of this exchange of letters is Napoleon being told of the island of Okinawa, which is also a big preoccupation of Chris Marker in his film *Level 5* and maybe *Sans Soleil* as well. And this idea of the people of Okinawa in the early–19th century had no conception of warfare, had no conception of conflict, had no conception of trauma whatsoever. And that Napoleon saw this as completely aberrant, completely antithetical to the way in which he perceived reality. But then in the following century, in 1945, Okinawa is the site of one of the most intensive and bloody slaughters in battles of the world and mostly they committed suicide. This was when the Americans arrived into the battle of Okinawa. The people of Okinawa had been so persuaded

by the Japanese Imperial Army that the American troops were going to torture and kill them horribly. So as soon as they saw the Americans arrive they began to commit suicide in their thousands, many thousands jumping down wells, jumping off cliffs. And it's in *Level 5* that Chris Marker has this film of people on the cliff faces of Okinawa who jump into the sea.

#### GB:

*Level 5* is definitely an emotive film. In my film I was trying to capture a particular emotional state. Not using a fictional or documentary approach but more in the vein of quotational film portraits which collide with each other again and again, a bit like waves on a shore-line. I hoped that people would be transfixed within the filmic experience. The use of the black screen, which was originally inspired by Marguerite Duras's *L'Homme Atlantique*, lends itself to that feeling of absence or loss, loss in fact of the image of cinema which allows the text of the digital subtitle to come to the foreground and the viewer to imagine their own film-noir image. The dislocated voices accompanying an on-screen face, the sound or voice oscillating between comprehension and oblivion depending on your language skills.

#### SB:

Ah yes the voices in the film - I guess the voice is always a carrier of memory but then over time the voice transforms so when you listen to the sequences of voices in the film then they must carry different resonances of memory than they did at that time. Perhaps there is something ungraspable about the way in which memory is stored in the voice but is then transmitted into film.

Friday, 18th November, 7pm: Gilly Booth will be screening her film *Continuum*, along with associated works, including her film *Bomb* and Marguerite Duras's film *L'Homme Atlantique*. Writer and theorist Stephen Barber will be reading an extract from his book *The Vanishing Map*. Ceri Mathews and Julie Murphy will be performing Bethal a Welsh protest song and the evening will be rounded up with a performance by vinyl DJ artist, Jacob Whittaker. The evening is open to everyone, free of charge and non-ticketed. Drinks sponsored by Brecon Gin and Peter Spanton Drinks. ✱









Stephen Barber, *Untitled*, B&W photographs included in his book *The Vanishing Map* (Bloomsbury, 2006), 2004. Courtesy the writer.

Stephen Barber, *Di-deitt*, ffotograffau du a gwyn o'i lyfr *The Vanishing Map* (Bloomsbury, 2006), 2004. Trwy garedigrwydd yr awdur.



## City On A Hill /Dinas ar Fryn

Charlie Bird

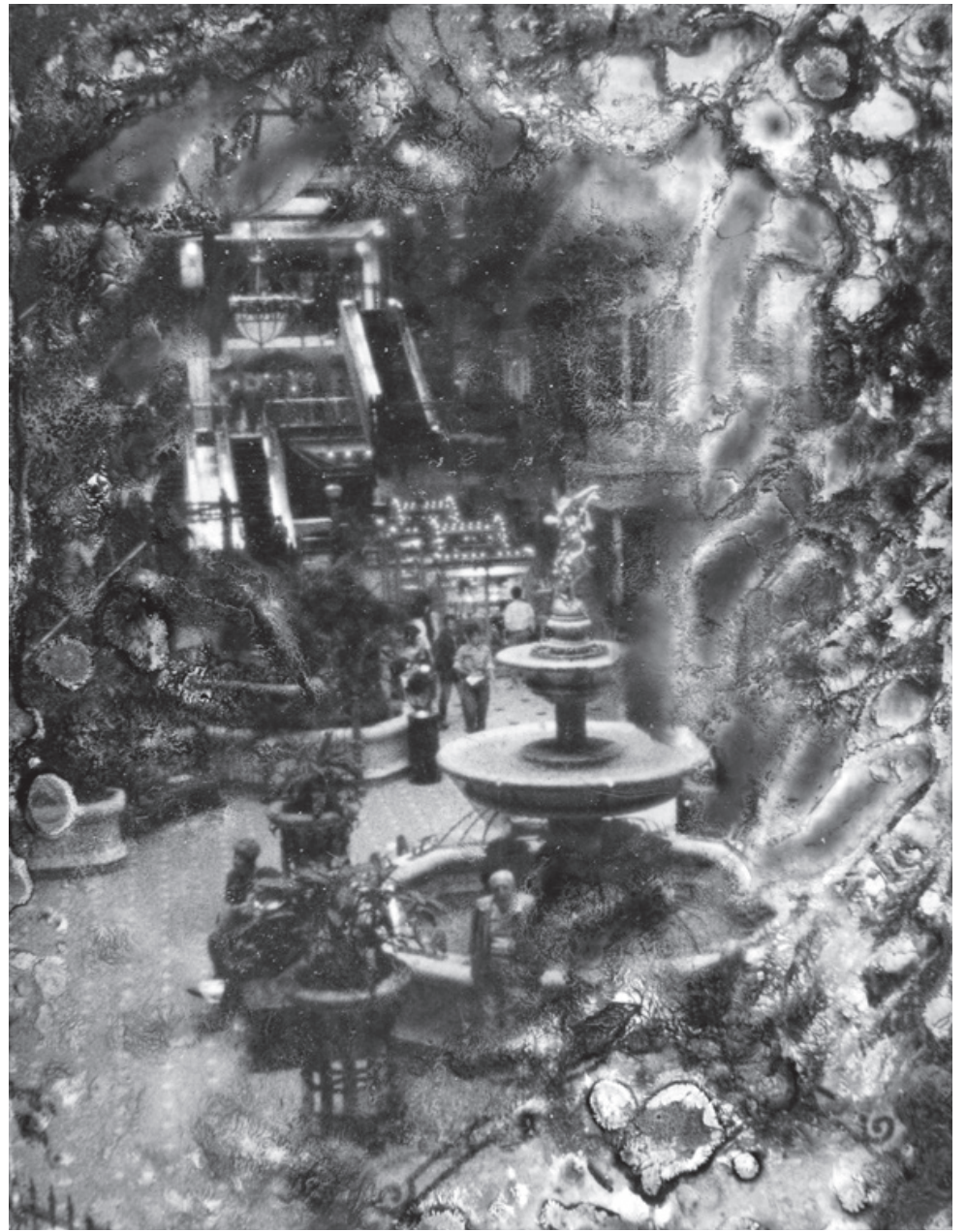
Supper is a city on a hill,  
meat, onions, tomato: crumbling houses,  
forgotten gardens, a church without a roof,  
labyrinthine spaghetti, roads nowhere,  
sauce moating at the foot of it: danger!  
Keep out.

I do not live there.

Dinas ar fryn yw swper,  
cig, winwns, tomato: adfeilion tai,  
gerddi angof, eglwys heb do,  
sbageti dryslyd, ffyrdd yn unman,  
saws yn ffurfio ffos ar ei odre: perygl!  
Cadwch draw.

Nid wyf yn byw yno.





Absalom & Bardsley, *Piss 2 / Piss 3*, photographic reproductions of found colour photographs soaked in urine from *Modern Life is Rubbish* (self published 2014), 2014. Courtesy the artists.

Absalom a Bardsley, *Piss 2 / Piss 3*, atgynrychiadau ffotograffig o ffotografau mewn troeth, o *Modern Life is Rubbish* (hunan-gyhoeddiad 2014), 2014. Trwy garedigrwydd yr artistiaid.



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## Megan V. Welwind

Rachel Marshall and Simone Rowat

Whilst conducting our research we came across the online obituary of Megan V. Welwind; a long time Pembrokeshire resident that had spent her golden years in Singapore. We thought it an insightful and historically important document and wanted to share it with the Pembrokeshire community.

It was noted that after the event of her death there had been some confusion about her identity. Her apartment was registered under a Chinese name and her neighbour had known her simply as “The Empress”. It was discovered that Welwind had moved country no less than eight times in her final decade, and changed identity a remarkable five. It has been suggested that Welwind in latter years reinvented herself time and time again as a reaction to her experience of exile.

The author of the obituary is not stated but what is clear is that they had known Ms Welwind in the final few years of her life and were able to record her curious accounts. If it had not been for this last minute effort, her story would have been lost to the tides. Our extensive research was unable to uncover any discernible form, not one photograph, article or anecdote of her description. Welwind has almost escaped history, her extraordinary soul nearly got away. A phenomenon which has led to our interest in the publication of this text. In so doing we hope that through the mercurial flow of her life, we may evoke in those she encountered a recollection. ✨

Wrth wneud ein hymchwil ar y we daethom ar draws ysgrif goffa Megan V. Welwind, un a fu'n byw yn Sir Benfro am gyfnod maith ar ôl treulio'i blynyddoedd aur yn Singapôr. Dyma ni'n meddwl bod hon yn ddogfen graff a hanesyddol bwysig, a phenderfynsom ein bod am ei rhannu â chymuned Sir Benfro.

Nodwyd bod peth dryswch wedi iddi farw ynghylch pwy yn union oedd hi. Roedd ei fflat wedi'i chofrestru dan enw Tsieinëeg, ac “Yr Ymerodres” yn syml oedd hi i'w chymydog. Darganfuwyd bod Megan wedi symud o wlad i wlad wyth gwaith yn negawd olaf ei hoes, ac yn rhyfeddol wedi newid ei henw bum gwaith. Mae rhai wedi awgrymu i Megan V. Welwind yn ei blynyddoedd diweddar ailddyfeisio'i hun dro ar ôl tro fel adwaith i'w phrofiad o fod yn alltud.

Nid yw awdur yr ysgrif goffa wedi'i enwi, ond mae'n amlwg ei fod wedi adnabod Ms Welwind ym mlynyddoedd olaf ei hoes ac wedi gallu cofnodi ei hanesion rhyfedd. Oni bai am yr ymdrech funud olaf hon, buasai ei hanes wedi'i gollu i'r môr. Er ymchwilio'n helaeth ni lwyddasom i ddatgelu unrhyw ffurf weladwy, dim un ffotograff, erthygl na hanesyn a roddai ddisgrifiad ohoni. Bron nad yw Megan wedi dianc o hanes, a'i henaidd rhyfeddol bron wedi ffoi am byth: ffenomen a ysgogodd ysfa ynom i gyhoeddi'r testun hwn. Wrth wneud, gobeithiwn hwyrach y gallwn, drwy lifeiriant arian byw ei bywyd, ddeffro atgof yng nghof y rhai a'i cyfarfu. ✨

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The *SEA EMPRESS* is a publication produced as part of the *Sea Empress' Project*, an oral history and community art project, by Abigail Sidebotham, delivered in partnership with Oriol Myrddin and Pembrokeshire County Council, during a residency at the Reading Room in Manorbier, Pembrokeshire.

Throughout the project a number of public events; talks, workshops, film screenings and exhibitions will take place at the Reading Room alongside production of four *SEA EMPRESS* publications exploring themes *Tide*, *Deep Time*, *Animism* and *Memory*.

You can keep up to date with the project on the website blog [www.orielmyrddinoffsite.co.uk](http://www.orielmyrddinoffsite.co.uk)

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Cyhoeddiad yw *SEA EMPRESS* a luniwyd fel rhan o Brosiect 'Sea Empress', prosiect hanes llafar a chelf cymunedol, gan Abigail Sidebotham, wedi'i gyflwyno ar y cyd ag Oriol Myrddin a Chyngor Sir Benfro, yn ystod cyfnod preswyl yn y Reading Room ym Maenorbŷr, Sir Benfro.

Trwy gydol y prosiect cynhelir nifer o ddigwyddiadau cyhoeddus: sgysiau, gweithdai, dangosiadau ffilmiau ac arddangosfeydd yn y Reading Room, ynghyd â llunio pedwar cyhoeddiad *SEA EMPRESS* yn archwilio'r themâu canlynol: *Llanw*, *Amser Dwf*, *Animistiaeth* a *Cof*.

Gallwch weld y newyddion diweddaraf am y prosiect ar y blog ar y wefan <http://orielmyrddinoffsite.co.uk/cy/>

The Reading Room, Maenorbŷr, Dinbych-y-pysgod, Sir Benfro, SA70 7SY

Dyfeisiwyd y cyhoeddiad *SEA EMPRESS* hwn gan Russell Roberts ac Abigail Sidebotham.

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Cedwir pob hawl. Ni chaniateir atgynhychu na throsglwyddo'r gwaith yn y cyhoeddiad hwn mewn unrhyw ffurf na thrwy unrhyw fodd heb ganiatâd yr artist neu'r awdur perthnasol.



## Megan V. Welwind

*An obituary for Megan V. Welwind, who has died on the 15th of February 2016: Her days are a tangle of many seasons, her nature was contradictory.*

To begin at the beginning she was born early in the morning on a summer's day when she came to life on the sea. Birthed on board the New Iron Paddle Steamer to Tenby, Megan slithered out on deck: slick, shiny and new. Her mother sadly never docked. On arrival Pembrokeshire was her natural home. Many deem it to be, "the pleasantest place in Wales". Megan came with nothing but her name and flowed with the crowd to Lower Frog Street. Her guardian, David Skyrme, came out of The Crown lubricated with silky liquor. For many years Megan followed behind him like his residue. The sky was dim and the gales blew and he gave her some shelter next to stormy waters. She went with him to the workhouse on the Haven but he went alone to his grave on the bottom of the sea. She drank and she gambled taking George Stokes as her lover. They courted in the tunnels against the seeping walls whilst the boats rocked down at the harbour. She was young and he was rich in tricks and ale. In spring she was reborn and saw the land with an internal innate overtone. The Preseli Hills, the ancient stone circle, the jagged tors and crests met there match as Megan trundled across them smouldering in her heritage. In the villages of Preseli men removed their hats to greet her. She instinctively turned her hand to various labours; starting the year in the slate quarry and finishing it on the horse plough. She often slept amongst the flock, protected by the shepherd. Following the A478 under the starlight back to Tenby she went down to the beach where she glimpsed the inky outlines of sleeping soldiers. What seemed like a mass stranding were Belgian regiments es-

caping from Dunkirk. Megan made her way down and lay amongst them. In 1958 Megan was refined by the refinery but yet retained something of her savage beauty and hunchback stance (caused by the whipping of the gales). When the cantilevers failed so did the taming of Megan. With a great rumble she walked out of Esso's front door and the bridge over the Haven collapsed on Dock-side. She proved too fluid and difficult to master. After, she went into hibernation for what seemed a long winter. There were reported sightings of a woman living on the coastal paths. Whilst she rested on the ground you could not see through her wild bushy hair, she blended with the shrubbery. Her mythical status grew. The IRA sought her out to guard their weapons stash. She was last seen in public competing for the Ironman title. Do you remember the old dry woman who sat on a dusty stone on the North Beach shore: by some enchanting metamorphic act she entered the water and began to glint and glide; her old bones lubricated by the waves, leaving a oleaginous trail behind her. Megan did not exit the water at Goscar Rock. Perhaps she swam to Singapore where she drew her last breath. In the breath before her last she pointed to a box containing: a poor quality collection of fossils: a printed copy of a Charles Norris etching of medieval Pembrokeshire: a 1967 poster of You Only Live Twice featuring the funeral scene filmed on board the HMS Tenby. Megan was both fluid and rough, glossy and gritty. It is clear that she had a long life and witnessed many things in the wilds of Pembrokeshire.

## Megan V. Welwind

*Ysgrif goffa i Megan V. Welwind, a fu farw ar 15 Chwefror 2016: Drysfa o dymhorau lawer yw ei dyddiau, anghyson oedd ei natur.*

A dechrau yn y dechreuad, cafodd ei geni'n gynnar yn y bore ar ddiwrnod o haf pan ddaeth yn fyw ar y môr. Wedi'i geni ar fwrdd y Stemar Olwyn Haeearn Newydd i Ddinbych-y-pysgod, ymlithrodd Megan allan ar y dec; yn llyfn, gloyw a newydd. Yn drist, ni ddaeth ei mam fyth i'r lan. Yn syth wedi cyrraedd, Sir Benfro oedd ei chartref naturiol. Dyfarna llawer mai dyma'r "lle brafiaf yng Nghymru". Daeth Megan heb feddu ar ddim ond ei henw a llifodd gyda'r dorf i Lower Frog Street. Daeth ei gwarcheidwad, David Skyrme, allan o'r Crown wedi'i iro â gwirod sidanaidd. Am flynyddoedd lawer dilynodd Megan ôl ei droed fel gwaddod. Roedd yr awyr yn dywyll a'r gwyntoedd yn gryf a rhoddodd yntau ychydig o loches iddi'n agos at ddyfroedd tymhestlog. Aeth hithau gydag ef i'r wyrwys ar yr Hafan ond aeth yntau'n unig i'w fedd ar waelod y môr. Yfodd hithau, a gamblo, gan gymryd George Stokes yn garwr iddi. Buont yn caru yn y twneli yn erbyn y waliau diferol tra siglai'r cychod i lawr yn yr harbwr. Roedd hithau'n ifanc ac yntau'n gyfuriog o driciau a chwrrw. Yn y gwanwyn cafodd ei haileni a gwelodd y tir gydag arlliw cynhenid mewdol. Daeth meistres ar y Preseli, yr hen gylch meini, y moelydd a'r trumiau geirwon wrth i Megan dreiglo drostynt yn mudlosgi yn ei hetifeddiaeth. Ym mhentrefi Preseli, tynnodd dynion eu hetiau i'w chyfarch. Trodd ei llaw'n reddfol at amrywiol lafurion; gan ddechrau'r flwyddyn yn y chwarel lechi a'i orffen ar yr aradr feirch. Cysgai'n aml ymysg y ddiadell, dan ofal y bugail. Gan ddilyn yr A478 dan olau'r sêr yn ôl i Ddinbych-y-pysgod aeth i lawr i'r traeth lle cafodd gipolwg ar amlinellau duon milwyr cwsg. Beth oedd y tiriad torfol ymddangosiadol hwn ond catrodau Belgaid

yn ffoi o Dunkerque. Ymlwybrodd Megan i lawr a gorwedd yn eu plith. Ym 1958 purwyd Megan gan y burfa ond daliodd i gadw rhywfaint o'i harddwch ffyrnig a'i hosgo gefngwrwm (a achoswyd gan chwipiadau'r gwyntoedd). Pan fethodd y cantilifrau, methu hefyd wnaeth yr ymgais i ddofi Megan. Gyda dwndwr mawr cerddodd allan o ddrws ffrynt Esso a chwypodd y bont dros yr Aber ar ochr y Doc. Profodd yn rhy hylifol ac anodd i'w meistroli. Wedyn, aeth i drwmwsg am aeaf hirfaith, yn ôl y tebyg. Byddai sôn weithiau fod pobl wedi gweld gwraig yn byw ar lwybrau'r arfordir. Tra gorffwysai ar y ddaear ni allech weld trwy ei gwallt trwchus gwyllt; ymdoddai i'r prysgwydd. Tyfodd ei statws chwedlonol. Daeth yr IRA i gysylltiad â hi i ofyn iddi warchod eu celc arfau. Y tro diwethaf iddi gael ei gweld yn gyhoeddus roedd hi'n cystadlu am deitl yr Ironman. Gofiwch chi'r hen wreigan sych a eisteddai ar garreg lychlyd ar Draeth y Gogledd? – trwy ryw weithred drawsffurfiadol hudol fe aeth i mewn i'r dŵr a dechrau llewyrchu a llithro, ei hen esgyrn wedi'u hiro gan y tonnau, gan adael llwybr olewaidd ar ei hôl. Ni ddaeth Megan allan o'r dŵr ar Graig Goscar. Efallai iddi nofio i Singapôr lle anadlodd ei hanadl olaf. Yn yr anadl cyn ei holaf fe bwyntiodd at flwch oedd yn cynnwys: casgliad gwael o ffosilau; copi argraffedig o ysgythriad gan Charles Norris o Sir Benfro'r Oesoedd Canol; poster You Only Live Twice o 1967 gyda llun o olygfa'r angladd a ffilmwyd ar fwrdd yr HMS Tenby. Roedd Megan yn hylifol a garw, yn sgleiniog a graeanog ar yr un pryd. Yn amlwg, cafodd hir oes a thystiodd i lawer o bethau yn nhiredd gwyllt Sir Benfro.

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### Reindeer Day

Saturday 19 November, 10am–1pm

Santa's reindeer (real furry ones!) will be outside the gallery 10am–12pm. Bring the children to make wearable antlers for the reindeer parade through the town. Join us for hot chocolate and the unveiling of our Artist's Christmas Tree Commission – this year by Carmarthenshire artist, Rachel Vater.

## MARCHNAD GWNEUTHURWYR 2016

22 Hydref – 31 Rhagfyr

Croeso i'r Nadolig yn Oriol Myrddin Gallery. Dewch draw i siopa am anrhegion, dillad sydd wedi'u dylunio a'u gwneud yn unigryw a danteithion blasus mewn oriel heddychlon.

### Diwrnod y Ceirw

Dydd Sadwrn 19 Rhagfyr, 10am–1pm

Bydd ceirw Siôn Corn (y rhai go iawn!) y tu allan i'r oriel rhwng 10am–12pm. Dewch draw â'r plant i greu cynwys ceirw y gellir eu gwisgo ar gyfer y parêd ceirw drwy'r dref. Ymunwch â ni am siocled poeth ac i weld dadorchuddiad ein Comisiwn i Artist ar gyfer Coeden Nadolig – eleni gan yr arlunydd o Sir Gaerfyrddin, Rachel Vater.



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