

# The Welsh Literature Archive Project



Ifor ap Dafydd

*The Welsh Literature Archive / Archif Llenyddiaeth Cymru*

Digital Preservation Roadshow – 15/02/10

# Literary Archives

- Rich and important part of the collection
- Modern Welsh writers have been collected for about 50 years
- Literary magazines and periodicals: e.g. *Wales*, *The Anglo-Welsh Review*, *Planet*, *Poetry Wales*, *Taliesin*, *Barddas*
- Cultural institutions and publishers– e.g. *Academi*, *The Welsh Arts Council*



# Who?

- Dannie Abse
- Sam Adams
- Ron Berry
- Alison Bielski
- Gertrude Maud Carter
- Brenda Chamberlain
- Gillian Clarke
- Emyr Humphreys
- Idris Davies
- Rhys Davies
- W H Davies
- Tom Early
- Caradoc Evans
- Margiad Evans
- Menna Gallie
- Raymond Garlick



## ... and many more

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- David Jones
- Glyn Jones
- Gwyn Jones
- Jack Jones
- Alun Lewis
- Richard Llewellyn
- Raymond Williams
- Robert Morgan
- Jan Morris
- Roland Mathias
- Oliver Onions
- John Ormond
- John Cowper Powys
- Dylan Thomas
- Edward Thomas
- Gwyn Thomas
- R S Thomas



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## The Welsh Literature Archive Project

The literary archives of the future are likely to contain computer documents, e-mail messages, web pages and so forth, as well as papers and books. Rapidly changing technology offers us multiple options, tools and experiences in everyday life, but this situation also presents a serious challenge as we think about safeguarding our cultural heritage.

The project aims to:

- research the field of digital and hybrid archives (paper and digital)
- raise awareness and create discussion concerning digital preservation
- collaborate with a sample of prominent authors (English and Welsh language)
- plan to receive and preserve digital literary archives
- assist authors, and others, to safeguard their precious electronic documents.

More material will be appearing on these pages in the near future, but do take a look at the [guidelines for authors](#) and other [useful links](#).

Please also feel free to get in touch with Ifor ap Dafydd, Development Officer for *The Welsh Literature Archive*; we would very much like to hear your views:

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Collections



# Digital Preservation: some questions / ideas

- Hardware and software changing rapidly
- Degredation, corruption [‘bit rot’]
- Safeguarding materials – ‘backups’
- Different locations / media – USB drives, servers, CD etc
- Born-digital /digitised
- Collaboration with creator
- ‘early intervention’
- What’s part of the archive?
- What is ‘publication’?
- Hybrid archives
- Web archiving















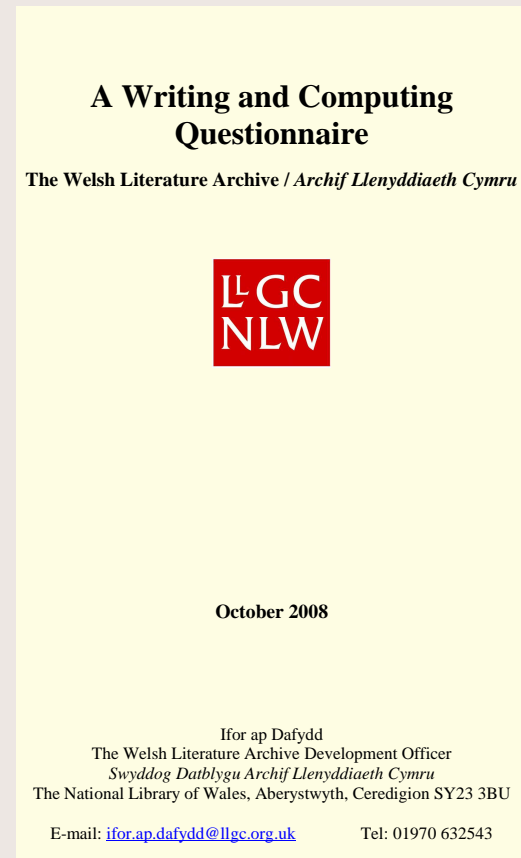


# An archive of machines?



# The questionnaire

- 60 questions in 6 Sections
- General: Your Computer
- Creating and Composing
- Saving and Organising
- E-Mail
- Using the Internet
- And Finally ...



# *The Welsh Literature Archive:* the sample

- 15 authors
- 8 men, 7 women
- 30 - 80+ years old
- English and Welsh language
- Genre: Prose / poetry



# Profile as computer owners

<b>Writer</b>	How long have you been using a computer? (For writing)	When did you buy your current computer?	What kind of computer do you use?	How many computers have you owned?
A	3-5 (6-10 for other activities)	1-2	Albacomp LG	3-5
B	6-10	1-2	Sony Vaio	1-2
C	6-10	3-5	Sony Vaio VGN-FS 285B	1-2
D	6-10	3-5	Siemens PC, E-Mac Apple Mac	3-5
E	6-10	3-5	Dell laptop	2



F	6-10	3-5	Dell (owned by uni) Toshiba laptop (at home)	or 'used', i.e. actually <u>owned</u> by the uni. 5
G	6-10	6-8	Acer Laptop	Only this one
H	'NEVER' 6-10 (for other activities)		We are part of a system at work	
I	11-20	Less than a year ago	Mac OS X	3-5
J	11-20	1-2	Mac Book	More than 5
K	11-20	3-5	Toshiba PSL 17E	3-5
L	21-30	1-2	Dell Inspiron 1501	3-5
M	21-30	3-5	Toshiba laptop	3-5
N	25	1-2	Acer, also a very small Phillips	6-7

# How long?

- **6 have been using a cpu for writing for 6-10 years**
- 3 have been using a cpu for writing for 11-20 years
- 3 have been using a cpu for writing for 21-30 years
- 1 has been using a cpu for writing for 3-5 years [A]
- **and there is 1 who doesn't use a cpu at all for writing [H]**
  
- **Half the sample 11-30 years**

# Keeping 'forever'?

- 'Given the rate at which the Internet is changing the average life of a Web page is only 77 days if no effort is made to preserve it, it will be entirely and irretrievably lost.' [www.archive.org](http://www.archive.org)
- 'It is only slightly facetious to say that digital information lasts forever – or five years, whichever comes first.'  
Jeff Rothenberg, 'Ensuring the Longevity of Digital Documents', *Scientific American*, 272 (1995)

**When you bought a new computer, did you transfer the contents from the old computer to the new?**

<b>5</b>	<b>I transferred most of the content</b>	<i>A, C, E, F, J</i>
4	No, but I saved the computer's content in another medium (e.g. another hard disk, USB drive, CD, disks)	<i>D, L, M, N</i>
3	Yes, I transferred everything	<i>B, K, I</i>
<b>1</b>	<b>This issue has not arisen</b>	<i>G</i>



# Comments on transfer...

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- **I:** *“I took expert advice”*
- **J:** *“+discs also. I don’t understand this question. All documents, paper & electronic, all important & must be saved”*

# Careful or careless?

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- **L:** *“I bought a new computer when nothing needed to be saved”*
- **N:** *“No – lost some things”*

# Self-appraisal...

- **C:** “Buying a new computer was (and will be in future) a chance to weed a little of the unruly growth that tends to accumulate on one’s hard disk. The decision to delete files was quite arbitrary – but quite definite at the same time. I transferred most of the content of the old computer, but there were some things on there I never wished to see again – the transfer process was therefore a means to weed a hard disk and a soft memory (that is, the one in my head)”



# Saving and Organising

- **8/14** give document a ‘specific descriptive name’, e.g. Poem Title.doc; with **2** giving date/version details also.
- **8/14** keep a current piece of work in a ‘specifically named/designated folder’, **6** work on the ‘desktop’
- Majority keep other copies of document in **2 or 3 locations** (USB, e-mail, other cpu)
- **2** keep copies in **4 or 5** other locations
- **2 don’t keep any other copies at all**



# E-mail: authors as users

- **10/14** use e-mail ‘**several times a day**’, and the other **4** use it ‘daily’.
- **All** use it in the context of ‘writing’, ‘other professional correspondence’ and ‘personal correspondence’
- **12/14** consider e-mail ‘**very important**’
- **5** have been using it for **10+** years, **8/14** have been using e-mail **6-10** years, and **1** for **3-5**.

# Looking after e-mail?

- **14/14** don't have e-mails spanning the whole period.
- **13/14** don't make a 'backup' of their e-mail.
- **1 keeps ALL e-mail**
- **1 keeps NO personal e-mail**
- Range of storing and deleting practices



## Some lessons, challenges and issues arising:

- Literary archives will be hybrid – interaction of paper and digital
- Important data has been lost
- Authors are likely to have materials stored in many locations, media, and machines
- Good awareness – but storage, saving and backup practices vary. (e-mail)
- E-mail integral; web 2.0 used by minority

# Call for digital archive service/ assistance/intervention:

- **M:** *Archive service*
- **A:** *A safe place somewhere! Like you have in big companies – a safe place outside the home to send work.*

**C:** *I think a safe and private space online with a convenient system in which to load current versions [of work] would be useful. I already have space on the web and the linking technology is also available – in that respect, I guess I'm just a little lazy.*



# Preservation challenges and possible solutions

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- How to collect and receive?
- Early intervention – collaboration with data creators
- Online upload tool for depositing digital material?
- Access to data once it has been transferred?
- Security, authenticity and integrity – for depositor, institution, end user
- Integration of workflows: Virtua/Vital, 1 system solution?



## HOME

Welcome to the RODA demo server

In this demo server you may login with users with different roles and permissions:

- **Consumer** - The role played by those persons, or client systems, who interact with the repository to find preserved information of interest and to access that information in detail. This can include other OAISs, as well as internal OAIS persons or systems. These users may search and browser public information on the repository.
  - **Username:** consumer
  - **Password:** consumer
- **Producer** - The role played by those persons, or client systems, who provide the information to be preserved by the repository. These users may submit information packages to the repository.
  - **Username:** producer
  - **Password:** producer
- **Archivist** - The role played by the person responsible for editing descriptive metadata and accepting/rejecting submission information packages.
  - **Username:** archivist
  - **Password:** archivist
- **Administrator** - The role played by the person who has the responsibility to schedule preservation actions, monitor repository actions, inspect statistics
  - **Username:** administrator
  - **Password:** administrator

As this is a demonstration server, some features were deactivated, and some private systems were exposed:

- Encrypted access (SSL): **DEACTIVATED**
- Persistent identifiers (Handle System): **DEACTIVATED**
- Fedora Commons and Fedora Generic Search: **EXPOSED**
- Translation is **NOT** complete



# RODA: first impressions and questions

- Pros?
- User interface which can be customised for metadata/bilingual
- Performs checks
- Preservation Copy
- Documents process
- OAIS model
- Fedora
- Cons?
- Can it deal with email?
- Early days?
- Scalability
- Compatability/development work needed for integration?

[www.llgc.org.uk/memory](http://www.llgc.org.uk/memory)

