Iconic First World War poet remembered at emotional event

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Thanks to National Lottery players, the former home of one of Wales's most famous poets is being reopened following extensive redevelopment today.

Poet and soldier Hedd Wyn was killed on the first day of the infamous Battle of Passchendaele, and was posthumously awarded the Eisteddfod Chair – the annual cultural festival's most prestigious literary prize – six weeks later for his now famous poem, Yr Arwr (The Hero).

The Chair was subsequently draped in black cloth and became known as Y Gadair Ddu, or The Black Chair and came to symbolise a generation of Welsh youth who lost their lives in the First World War.

Saving Yr Ysgwrn

Hedd Wyn's family home, Yr Ysgwrn, situated in what is now part of the Snowdonia National Park, was purchased in 2012 with money from the National Heritage Memorial Fund (NHMF), which was set up to commemorate those have given their lives in conflict for the UK.

Then, using money raised by National Lottery players, HLF granted £3.1million to repair and develop the buildings at Yr Ysgwrn to ensure they could continue to tell the story of Hedd Wyn and the war that impacted on so many lives across Wales and the UK.

Telling their story

Baroness Kay Andrews, Trustee and Chair of HLF Wales committee, was joined by First Minister of Wales, Carwyn Jones, at the opening. She said: "It is a privilege to have been able to play a role in bringing the life and work of Hedd Wyn at Yr Ysgwrn to a new generation, and to do so in the centenary year of his death and of his greatest poetic achievement.

"His death robbed Wales of one of its greatest modern poets, but the Great War robbed all Wales of untold talent. Hedd Wyn stands for all those men who did not return, for the promise that was never fulfilled, and for the family of the nation which honours them."

Since 2010, HLF has invested £6.2m of National Lottery money into more than 100 projects across Wales exploring the First World War and its legacy, giving our communities the chance to explore and tell these hidden stories of the Great War.



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Kaylinn Nash, Ysgol Uwchradd Cwmbran yn y digwyddiad Rhyfel Byd Cyntaf yn y Senedd Patrick Olner, Tall and Short Photography

'My Dearest Mother': A Valleys View of the First World War