

**BBC**

C Y M R U  
W A L E S



*The legend lives on:  
Dafydd Emyr  
as King Arthur  
brandishes  
Caledfwlch  
(Excalibur)*

**CALEDFWLCH**  
**Yr Ymchwil am Arthur**  
**Gyda Gwyn Alf Williams**

**Three-part drama-documentary on the Arthurian legend**

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## CANLYN CHWEDL ARTHUR

Oedd y Brenin Arthur yn gymeriad go iawn? Beth roddodd fod i'r Chwedl Arthurraidd - Camlan, Marchogion y Ford Gron, Gwenhwyfar, Caledfwlch - a sut ddaeth i fod yn un o fythau mwyaf pwerus y dychymyg Prydeinig ac Ewropeaidd?

Dyma rai o'r cwestiynau y bydd un o haneswyr amlycaf Cymru, yr Athro Gwyn A. Williams, yn eu hystyried yn *Caledfwlch - Yr Ymchwil am Arthur*, drama ddogfen mewn tair rhan gan BBC Cymru, yn dechrau ar S4C, Nos Iau, Chwefor 16 (9pm).

Mae'r Athro Gwyn Williams yn adnabyddus am y gyfres arloesol ar hanes Cymru, *The Dragon Has Two Tongues*, a gyd-gyflwynodd gyda'r diweddar Wynford Vaughan Thomas. Gyda'i frwdfrystedd amlwg tuag at ei bwnc, a'i arddull gyflwyno fywiog, enillodd enw iddo'i hun fel 'cofiadur y bobl', gan ddod â ffeithiau moel hanes yn fyw mewn rhagleni sy'n cyflwyno trafodaeth hanesyddol ddifrifol gyda golygfeydd dramatig grymus.

Daw *Caledfwlch* â holl hud a rhamant y chwedlau Arthurraidd yn fyw trwy gyfrwng drama liwgar a goludog yn dilyn anturiaethau Arthur a'i Farchogion ar hyd y canrifoedd. Darlunir gwrhydri maes y frwydr a'r twrnamaint, marchogion a cheffylau, ac fe'n harweinir drwy hanes Y Greal Sanctaidd, godineb Gwenhwyfar, pwerau hudol Caledfwlch ac Ynys Afallon. Dafydd Emry sy'n portreadu cymeriad Arthur, gyda Nicholas McGaughey fel Cei, Robert Gwyn Davin fel Bedwyr, Richard Elfyn fel Lawnslot, Athena Constantine fel Gwenhwyfar a William Vaughan fel Myrddin.

Mae'r ymchwil am Arthur yn arwain yr Athro Gwyn A. Williams i leoliadau ar hyd a lled Cymru, Prydain a Llydaw wrth iddo chwilio am darddiad y chwedl Arthurraidd, gan ddilyn trywydd ei datblygiad dros y canrifoedd, o'i gwreiddiau Cymreig, trwy ramantau'r Canol Oesoedd, hyd at ddehongliadau cyfoes ohoni yn ffilm Monty Python, *The Holy Grail*, a ffilm Richard Gere, *First Knight*.

"Chwedl Arthur yw'r cylch chwedlau mwyaf i Ewrop ei nabod erioed," meddai'r Athro Williams yn ei gyflwyniad i'r rhaglen gyntaf. "Mae Arthur yn dod i'r golwg ym Mhrydain y pumed ganrif fel hanes ac fel myth, ac yn sgrbo drwy bob iaith bron yn Ewrop i'w ymsefydlu yn arwr diangau ym meddwl bron pob cenhedlaeth hyd at ein dyddiau ni."

Cyfarwyddwyd *Caledfwlch* gan Colin Thomas, a gyfarwyddodd dair o ragleni cyfres ddogfen ddiweddar BBC Cymru ar genedlaetholdeb, *Blood and Belonging*. Mae *Caledfwlch* yn ailsefydlu ei bartneriaeth ddarlledu dros ddeng mlynedd gyda'r Athro Williams, a ddechreuodd gyda'r gyfres *The Dragon Has Two Tongues*.

Mae *Caledfwlch* yn gynhyrchiad gan Teliesyn i BBC Cymru ar gyfer S4C.

**Am wybodaeth bellach cysyllter â RWTH Williams, Swyddfa'r Wasg BBC Cymru ar (0222) 572445.**

\* Cyhoeddir llyfr i gydreddeg â'r gyfres gan BBC Books, *Excalibur: The search for Arthur* gan Gwyn A. Williams (pris £16.99).



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W A L E S

# DATGANIAD I'R WASG PRESS RELEASE

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## ON THE TRAIL OF ARTHUR

Did King Arthur really exist? What gave birth to the Arthurian legend - Camelot, the Knights of the Round Table, Guinevere, Excalibur - and why is it one of the most powerful myths in the British and European imagination?

These are some of the questions that leading Welsh historian, Professor Gwyn A. Williams, will be addressing in *Caledfwlch - Yr Ymchwil am Arthur* (Excalibur - The Search for Arthur), a new three part drama-documentary from BBC Wales, starting on S4C on Thursday, February 16 (9pm).

Professor Gwyn A. Williams is best known for the pioneering Welsh history series, *The Dragon Has Two Tongues*, which he co-presented with the late Wynford Vaughan Thomas. With his enthusiasm for his subject, and his lively presentation style, he has gained the title of 'the people's remembrancer', bringing the bare facts of history to life in programmes which combine serious historical analysis with powerful dramatic scenes.

*Caledfwlch* brings to light all the magic and romance of the Arthurian tales in the lavish and colourful dramatic scenes depicting the valour of the battlefield, the knights on their horses and the jousting tournaments, with tales of the Holy Grail, Guinevere's adultery, Excalibur and Avalon. Dafydd Emrys portrays the hero, Arthur, with Nicholas McGaughey as Cei/Kay, Robert Gwyn Davin as Bedwyr/Bedivere, Richard Elfyn as Lancelot, Athena Constantine as Gwenhwyfar/Guinevere and William Vaughan as Merlin.

The quest for Arthur leads Gwyn A. Williams to locations all over Wales, Britain and Brittany as he investigates the origins of the Arthurian legend and traces its development through the ages, from its Welsh origins, through Middle Ages romance to modern day interpretations of the Arthurian legend, including Monty Python's comic *Holy Grail* and Richard Gere's *First Knight*.

"The Arthurian legend is the largest circle of legends Europe has ever known," says Prof. Williams in his introduction to the programme. "Arthur comes to light in Britain in the fifth century as history and as a myth, and sweeps through almost every European language to become an immortal hero in the minds of almost every generation to this day."

*Caledfwlch* is directed by Colin Thomas, who recently directed three programmes in BBC Wales' series on nationalism, *Blood and Belonging*. *Caledfwlch* rekindles his long working partnership with Professor Williams, which began with the *Dragon Has Two Tongues*.

*Caledfwlch* is an independent production by Teliesyn for BBC Wales and S4C, and will be screened on the BBC2 network later in 1995.

**For further information please contact Rwth Williams at BBC Wales' Press Office on (0222) 572445.**

\* The series is accompanied by a BBC book, *Excalibur: The search for Arthur* by Gwyn A. Williams (price £16.99).

## **GWYN A. WILLIAMS (Cyflwynnydd ac awdur)**

"Mae angerdd, arddull liwgar a gwybodaeth eang yn nodweddion o'i lyfrau, rhinweddau sydd wedi ei wneud yn un o'r siaradwyr cyhoeddus unigol mwyaf adnabyddus yn y Gymru gyfoes. Mae wedi ystyried ei hun fel 'cofiadur y bobl', yn ymdrechu i ddylanwadu ar y farn gyfoes yng Nghymru drwy gyflwyno hanes Cymru mewn ffordd ddramatig...."

*Oxford Companion to Welsh Literature, 1986*

Ganwyd Gwyn A. Williams yn 1925 yn Nowlais, Merthyr Tudful. Wedi graddio o Goleg Prifysgol Cymru, Aberystwyth, aeth ymlaen i astudio yn Llundain cyn dechrau ar ei yrfa academaidd Iwyddiannus yn ddarlithydd Hanes Cymru yn Aberystwyth. Yn ddiweddarach yn 1963 fe ymunodd â Phrifysgol Caer Efrog, gan ddod yn Athro Hanes yn 1965. Dychwelodd i Gymru yn 1974 yn Athro Hanes yng Ngholeg Prifysgol Cymru, Caerdydd cyn ymddeol o'r byd academaidd yn 1985.

Fe gyhoeddodd nifer fawr o lyfrau gan gynnwys, *Artisans and Sans-culottes* (1968), *Goya and the Impossible Revolution* (1976) *The Merthyr Rising* (1978), *Madoc: the making of a myth* (1980) a *When Was Wales? a History of the Welsh* (1985).

Dechreuodd gyrfa Gwyn Williams fel cyflwynnydd ac ysgrifennwr poblogaidd ar gyfer y teledu yn 1977 gyda *Madoc* a *The Merthyr Rising* gan BBC Cymru. Aeth ymlaen i gyd-gyflwyno y gyfres uchel-ei-chlod, *The Dragon Has Two Tongues*, gyda'r diweddar Wynford Vaughan Thomas ar gyfer Channel 4, HTV a S4C, cyfres a arweiniodd at iddo ymaelodi â Teliesyn a'i bartneriaeth waith hir gyda Colin Thomas. Gyda'i arddull gyflwyno fywiog a brwd frydig, gan ddod â ffeithiau sychion hanes yn fyw i'r sgrin deledu, bu *The Dragon Has Two Tongues*, yn fod o sefydlu Gwyn Williams fel 'hanesydd y bobol'.

Ymhlieth ei gyfraniadau eraill i deledu mae *Lest Who Forgets?* (1985), *The African from Aberystwyth* (1987), *Back to Barcelona* (1988) *Cracking Up* (1989), *Hughesovka and the New Russia* (1992) a *Writing on the Line* (1993) a enillodd wobr Bafta Cymru yn 1993 am y ddrama-ddogfen orau.

### GWYN A. WILLIAMS (Presenter, writer)

"His books are characterized by passion, a colourful style and wide erudition, qualities which have made him one of the most recognizably individual public speakers in contemporary Wales. He has seen himself as 'a people's remembrancer', attempting to influence contemporary opinion in Wales by a dramatic presentation of Welsh history..."

*Oxford Companion to Welsh Literature, 1986*

Gwyn A. Williams was born in 1925 in Dowlais, Merthyr Tydfil. After graduating from University College of Wales at Aberystwyth, he studied in London before beginning his long and successful academic career as lecturer in Welsh history at Aberystwyth. Later in 1963 he joined the University of York where he became Professor of History in 1965. He returned to Wales in 1974 when he became Professor of History at Cardiff University until his retirement from the academic world in 1985.

He has published many books, including *Artisans and Sans-culottes* (1968), *Goya and the Impossible Revolution* (1976) *The Merthyr Rising* (1978), *Madoc: the making of a myth* (1980) and *When Was Wales? a History of the Welsh* (1985).

Gwyn Williams's career as a popular presenter and writer for television began in 1977 with *Madoc* and *The Merthyr Rising* made by BBC Wales. He went on to co-present the award winning series *The Dragon Has Two Tongues*, with the late Wynford Vaughan Thomas for Channel 4, HTV and S4C, a series which led to his becoming a member of Teliesyn and a long working partnership with Colin Thomas. With his enthusiastic and lively presentation style, which brought history to life on the television screen, *The Dragon Has Two Tongues* helped to establish Gwyn Williams as a popular 'people's historian'.

His other television credits include *Lest Who Forgets?* (1985), *The African from Aberystwyth* (1987), *Back to Barcelona* (1988) *Cracking Up* (1989), *Hughesovka and the New Russia* (1992) and *Writing on the Line* (1993), which won a BAFTA Wales award in 1993 for the best drama-documentary.

### **COLIN THOMAS (Cyfarwyddwr)**

Ganwyd Colin Thomas yn 1939 ac fe'i magwyd yng Nghymru. Wedi cwblhau gradd mewn Saesneg a Sefydliadau Gwleidyddol ym Mhrifysgol Keele, ymunodd â'r BBC o dan gynllun hyfforddi.

Hyfforddodd gyda John Boorman yn y BBC ym Mryste gan fynd ymlaen i gynhyrchu a chyfarwyddo nifer o raglenni dogfen ar gyfer y BBC, gan gynnwys y ddrama fentrus, *Raw* ac *Animated Conversations*.

Yn 1978 fe adawodd y BBC, ac wedi dod yn un o sefydlwyr o gwmni cydweithredol Teliesyn aeth ymlaen i ysgrifennu a chynhyrchu drama, dogfen a dramâu-dogfen ar gyfer S4C, RTE, ITV, UK Channel 4 a'r BBC. Yn 1980 fe ysgrifennodd a chyfarwyddodd ei ddrama deledu *Freeborn John*.

Mae ei waith arloesol wrth gyflwyno hanes i'r teledu wedi dod â chlod arbennig iddo. Bu'n gyfrifol am gynhyrchu a chyfarwyddo *The Dragon Has Two Tongues* (1985), a'r gyfres o ddramâu-dogfen ar gyfer Channel 4, *Cracking Up* (1989). Enillodd ei gyfres *Hughesovka a'r Rwsia Newydd/Hughesovka and the New Russia* wobr dogfen Bafta Cymru yn 1992 ac *Alien Face in the Mirror* wobr y ddrama-ddogfen yn 1994. Yn 1993 fe gyfarwyddodd dair o raglenni cyfres BBC Cymru ar genedlaetholdeb, *Blood and Belonging*, a gyflwynwyd gan Michael Ignatieff.

### **COLIN THOMAS (Director)**

Colin Thomas was born in 1939 and brought up in Wales. After a BA honour degree in English and Political Institutions at Keele University, he entered the BBC as a production trainee.

He trained with John Boorman in BBC Bristol and subsequently produced and directed numerous documentaries for the BBC, including the innovative drama *Raw* and the award-winning animation series *Animated Conversations*.

In 1978 he left the BBC and after becoming a founder member of the Teliesyn co-operative, has written and directed drama, documentary and drama-documentary for S4C, RTE, ITV, UK Channel 4 and BBC. In 1980 he wrote his first television drama *Freeborn John* which he also directed.

His pioneering work in television history has won critical acclaim. He produced and directed *The Dragon Has Two Tongues* (1985), and the Channel 4 drama-documentary series *Cracking Up* (1989). His *Hughesovka and the New Russia/Hughesovka a'r Rwsia Newydd* won the Bafta Wales documentary award in 1992 and his *Alien Face in the Mirror* the drama-documentary award in 1994. In 1993 he directed three of the BBC Wales award-winning *Blood and Belonging* series on nationalism, presented by Michael Ignatieff.

## **CALEDFWLCH - CYDNABYDDIAETHAU**

Cyflwynnydd ac awdur	Yr Athro Gwyn A. Williams
Arthur	Dafydd Emyr
Bedwyr	Robert Gwyn Davin
Cei	Nicholas McGaughey
Lawnslot	Richard Elfyn
Gwenhwyfar	Athena Constantine
Myrddin	William Vaughan
Gwas	Sion Evans
Lleisiau	William Thomas a Dafydd Rowlands
Stuntiau a cheffylau	The Knights of Arkley
Cyfarwyddwr	
Ffotograffiaeth	Ray Orton
Cyfansoddwr	Edward Williams
Animeiddio	Joanna Quinn a Steve Weston
Sain	Alan Jones
Golygydd	Mali Evans
Gwisgoedd	Maxine Brown
Coluro	Helen Tucker
Sgript Gymraeg	Dafydd Rowlands
Is-gynhyrchydd	Mary Simmonds
Uwch-gynhyrchydd	
ar ran BBC Cymru	Brynmor Williams
Cynhyrchydd	Pauline Williams
Cyfarwyddwr	Colin Thomas

*Cynhyrchiad Teliesyn i BBC Cymru ar gyfer S4C*

## CALEDFWLCH - CREDITS

Presenter and writer	Professor Gwyn A. Williams
Arthur Bedivere Gawain Lancelot Guinevere Merlin Page	Dafydd Emyr Robert Gwyn Davin Nicholas McGaughey Richard Elfyn Athena Constantine William Vaughan Sion Evans
Voices Stunts and horses	William Thomas a Dafydd Rowlands The Knights of Arkley
Director of Photography Composer Animation Sound Editor Costume Make Up	Ray Orton Edward Williams Joanna Quinn a Steve Weston Alan Jones Mali Evans Maxine Brown Helen Tucker
Welsh script Deputy-producer Executive producer for BBC Wales Producer Director	Dafydd Rowlands Mary Simmonds Brynmor Williams Pauline Williams Colin Thomas

*A Teliesyn production for BBC Wales and S4C.*

## **CRYNODEB O'R GYFRES**

### **RHAGLEN 1: 'YNYS Y CEDYRN'**

(Nos Iau, Chwefror 16, S4C, 9pm)

Mae Gwyn A. Williams yn arwain yr ymchwil am dystiolaeth o fodolaeth yr Arthur hanesyddol, gan bwys o a mesur y tair prif fynhonnell hanesyddol y cyfnod. Er mai prin yw'r dystiolath ffeithiol, mae Gwyn Williams o'r farn bod yna Arthur go iawn, ond nad oes modd rhoi dyddiad pendant iddo.

Mae'r broses o greu'r myth am Arthur yn dechrau yn llenyddiaeth lafar Gymraeg gynnar , gyda cherddi Taliesin a chwedl *Culhwch ac Olwen*, yn portreadu Arthur fel arwr gyda phriodoleddau hudol. Caiff y chwedl Arthuraid ei llunio yn raddol gan ddylanwadau crefyddol, cyn cael ei meddiannu gan y Normaniand ac yna Sieffre o Fynwy.

Daw Gwyn A. Williams i'r canlyniad mai rhyfelwr Brythoniadd oedd Arthur, yn amddiffyn gweddillion y gwareidiad Rhufeinig-Cristnogol rhag y Sacsoniaid. Crewyd ef yn arwr hanner-paganiadd gan y Brythoniaid, gan roi iddo bwerau dwyfol. Mabwysiadodd y normaniaid yr elfennau hynny o'r stori y gallent hwy uniaethu ag ef, a chyflwyno'r deimensiwn Ewropeidd i'r Chwedl Arthuraid.

### **RHAGLEN 2: 'Y GREAL SANCTAIDD A'R GRYM ANSANCTAIDD'**

(Nos Iau, Chwefror 23, S4C, 9pm)

Dilynnir datblygiad a lledaeniad y Chwedl Arthuraid ar gyfandir Ewrop, i ymddangos bron ymhob iaith erbyn y 13eg ganrif a'r 14eg ganrif, cyn profi dirywiad yn y 15fed ganrif, wrth i oes newydd dyneiddiaeth ei throi'n destun sbort a dychan.

Mae Gwyn Williams yn bwrw golwg fanwl ar gerddi Ffrengig Chretien de Troyes a'r modd yr ail-wampiwyd y chwedl i apelio at chwaeth cynulleidfa wahanol. Gwelir ychawanegu straeon y Ford Gron, Caledfwlch, Camelot, Gwenhwyfar a Lawnslot ynghyd â chlwyno gwerthoedd urddasol sifalri, cariad llysaidd a'r twrnamaint.

Trwy gyfrwng stori'r Greal Sanctaidd, dangosir dylanwad crefydd ar y chwedl i ddatblygu elfen newydd i stori godineb Lawnslot a brwydr olaf Arthur. I gloi sonir am ddirywiad y Chwedl erbyn y 15fed ganrif wrth i ddyneiddiaeth ennill tir, a gyda darganfod gweddillion Arthur yn Glastonbury.

### **RHAGLEN 3: 'Y CLEDDYF YN Y MAEN'**

(Nos Iau, Mawrth 2, S4C, 9pm)

Mae'r myth Arthuriaidd yn dychwelyd i Brydain, ac mae Malory yn troi Arthur yn arwr Saesnig. Yn y cyfnod Tuduraidd daw Arthur yn gyfiawnhad dros imperialaeth, a caiff ei ddangos yn y rhaglen hon fel morwr rhyfelagr cyfnod Elizabeth ac fel dialydd Protestaniadd yng Iwerddon.

Daw i'r golwg yng ngwaith Blake ac yna yn fuddugoliaethus yng ngwaith Tennyson. "Daw Arthur," meddai'r Athro Williams, "yn wr bonheddig o Oes Fictoria."

Yn yr ugeinfed ganrif, daw Arthur y rhyfelwr i ymgorffori heddychiaeth T.H. White, ac yn y 1980au, mae'n symud i'r ymylon yn fersiwn ffeministaidd Marion Zimmer Bradley, *The Mists of Avalon*, a ddarlunir yn y rhaglen gan animeniddiad Joanna Quinn.

Ar ol bwrw golwg dros fersiwn Hollywood yn 1995 o'r myth Arthuriaidd, yn ystod y cyfnod ffil mio yng Ngogledd Cymru, mae'r rhaglen yn gorffen ar nodyn uchel gyda ffefrlyn yr Athro Gwyn Williams, *Morte d'Arthur* Tennyson.

### **SYNOPSIS OF SERIES**

#### **PROGRAMME 1: 'YNYS Y CEDYRN'**

(Thursday, February 16, S4C, 9pm)

Gwyn A. Williams sets out on a search for evidence of the historical Arthur and examines the three main historical sources of the period. Although the factual evidence of his existence is slender, Gwyn Williams claims that there is reason to believe that there was a real Arthur, but it is impossible to set a precise date.

The process of myth-making begins in early Welsh oral literature, where in Taliesin's poetry and the tale of *Culhwch ac Olwen*, Arthur is portrayed as a noble hero with magical attributes. The Arthurian legend is gradually shaped by religious influences, before being embraced by the Normans, and Geoffrey of Monmouth.

Gwyn A. Williams concludes that the real Arthur was probably a British warrior defending the remains of Roman-Christian civilization from the Saxons. The Britons turned him into a half-Pagan hero, and imparted him with divine powers. The Normans latched onto certain aspects of the myth which they could identify with, and introduced a new European dimension to the Arthurian legend.

**PROGRAMME 2: 'Y GREAL SANCTAIDD A'R GRYM ANSANCTAIDD'**  
**(Thursday, February 23, S4C, 9pm)**

The Arthurian Legend is followed to Europe, where by the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries Arthur was to appear in almost every language, before the legend's decline in the fifteenth century, when it became the subject of satire.

Gwyn Williams takes a close look at the French Chretien de Troyes version of the Arthurian legend, and the way it was adapted to appeal to the tastes of a new audience. The tales of the Round Table, Excalibur, Guinevere and Lancelot are added, as well as the new values of chivalry and courtly love.

The story of the Holy Grail demonstrates the religious influences on the Arthurian legend, with the development of the Lancelot story and Arthur's last battle. Finally, Gwyn Williams, outlines the legend's decline in the fifteenth century with the new age of humanism, and with the discovery of the remains of Arthur's grave at Glastonbury.

**PROGRAMME 3: 'Y CLEDDYF YN Y MAEN'**  
**(Thursday, March 2, S4C, 9pm)**

The Arthurian myth moves back from the Continent to Britain, where Malory turns him into an English hero. Arthur then becomes the justification for imperialism during Tudor times, hence his appearance in this programme both as an Elizabethan sea dog and as a Protestant avenger in Ireland.

He resurfaces with Blake and then triumphantly with Tennyson. "Arthur," as Prof. Williams says, "becomes a Victorian gentleman."

In the twentieth century, Arthur the warlord becomes the vehicle for T.H. White's pacifism and in the 1980s, he moves to the periphery in Marion Zimmer Bradley's feminist version *The Mists of Avalon*, illustrated in the programme by a Joanna Quinn animation.

After a glimpse of the 1995 Hollywood version of the Arthurian myth during its filming in north Wales, the programme ends movingly with Prof. Williams' own favourite, Tennyson's *Morte d'Arthur*.

## THE SEARCH FOR ARTHUR

The heroic and romantic exploits of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table are brought to life in the BBC Wales three-part drama documentary series, *Caledfwlch* (Excalibur) on S4C (Thursday, February 16, 9pm) and later this year on BBC-2. Actor Dafydd Emyr talks to RWTH WILLIAMS about his role as Arthur the Celtic hero.

Usually it's the knight in shining armour who gets to sweep away the helpless damsel in distress. But during a day of filming at Llan-gors Lake in the Brecon Beacons in wintry February, it was the Welsh knight, Arthur, who was being swept away by a gale force wind.

"We were filming the wounded Arthur being carried in a boat, across the lake, to Avalon," recalls Dafydd Emyr, who plays the part of the dashing King Arthur in *Caledfwlch*. "I was in the boat with Death, a young lad in a long black cloak who was rowing the boat towards the island of Avalon, which was an image painted on to a piece of glass and held in front of the camera.

"Gwyn Alf Williams was on the right hand side of the shot doing his 'piece to camera'. Unfortunately he was getting a bit unstuck with his Welsh lines, so we were trying to carry on rowing, but as the wind was so strong we were literally being swept away. After all that, I certainly felt like death itself."

Bringing to life the Arthurian legend, seeped in magic and fantasy, was to cause many a headache for the independent production company, Teliesyn. A whole range of technical tricks were brought in to help re-enact tales such as the Hand in the Lake, drawing the sword from the stone, as well as finding a way of conjuring up the idyllic Avalon.

The scene of the Hand in the Lake was also filmed at Llan-gors Lake, this time with the help of a frogman. "I'm sure he must have been freezing," says Dafydd Emyr. "Because it was the middle of winter he was wearing a full-body black wet-suit. The costume designer had kited him out in this long plain linen 'frock', which looked authentic enough over the wet suit. But once in the water, they found out it was see-through, and Excalibur was raised out of the water by someone who was pretty obviously a frogman."

Dafydd Emyr has plenty more anecdotes of the difficulties the production team and actors had to overcome during the filming period, problems ranging from heavy armoury and banners to bolting horses. But *Caledfwlch* is a far cry from the comedy send-up of Monty Python's *Holy Grail*.

With the Arthurian legend getting the Hollywood treatment in Wales last year, with the filming Richard Gere's *First Knight*, Arthur and his Knights are enjoying a revival. "People can't seem to get enough of Arthur," says Dafydd Emyr, who admits that Arthur has been a hero since his early childhood.

"I had a fairly traditional image of him, and this idea that he would come back to save our country one day. A heroic and romantic picture, with all the characteristics that go with that - bravery, strength and independence and fighting evil. Some kind of a Welsh or Celtic Solomon."

There are many theories concerning the origins of the Arthurian legend with many countries and cultures embracing Arthur as their own native hero. *Caledfwlch*, sets out to establish the truth about Arthur, when Welsh historian Professor Gwyn Alf Williams traces the historical Arthur and the development of the Arthurian legends.

Dafydd Emyr has his own feelings on the subject. "Personally I see Arthur as a Welshman, probably because it's something you learn from an early age and it's sort of in-built. My Welsh degree course introduced me to the works of Geoffrey of Monmouth, and French literature, but the first references appear in *The Black Book of Carmarthen* and *Culhwch ac Olwen* of the *Mabinogion*. I think of it as something totally naturally Welsh."

His joint Welsh and drama degree came in useful for the research that went with the part. "I love it when I get the chance to play a historical character, when I can read up and do some research, and it was an excellent chance to look back at the old college stuff. But also to read new things such as Malory and Tennyson, and follow Gwyn Alf Williams' chain of thought, and see how the character, the legend and mythology evolves."

*Caledfwlch* traces the hero Arthur through the ages, from his Celtic and Roman origins, through the romantic Middle Ages to Monty Python's *Holy Grail* and *First Knight* of the 1980s and 1990s, demonstrating how each period seizes on a particular aspect of the story to represent their different tastes and attitudes. Lancelot and Guinevere's adultery for example is an element which was added by the French in the Middle Ages, and is very erotic, while the English *Morte d'Arthur* is a lot more down to earth, "wham bam thank you ma'm" as Gwyn Alf Williams puts it. The scene is restaged, English style and then French style.

Working closely with one of Wales' leading, and most colourful historians, Gwyn Alf Williams, was an added bonus for Dafydd Emyr. "He's been a hero of mine since I saw the series *The Dragon Has Two Tongues* some ten years ago. Before then history had always been a boring subject, with this idea of blowing the dust off some old manuscripts, but that series brought history alive, and with Gwyn Alf's shining personality, and his ranting and raving, it changed everything. He's such a character, not just his academic authority, but as a man. He always has a smile on his face and the enthusiasm always comes over so clearly."

## ARTHUR AR GARLAM

Daw holl hud a rhamant chwedl Arthur a Marchogion y Ford Gron yn fyw i'r sgrin deledu mewn cyfres newydd o ddramâu dogfen, *Caledfwlch* gan BBC Cymru, sy'n dechrau ar S4C (Nos Iau, Chwefror 16, 9pm). Yr actor Dafydd Emyr sy'n sgwrsio gyda RWTH WILLIAMS am ei ran fel Arthur, yr arwr Celtaidd.

Nid pob Cymro sy'n cael y cyfle i wireddu breuddwyd, a chwarae rhan un o arwyr mwyaf y genedl. Ond i'r actor Dafydd Emyr daeth y freuddwyd honno'n fyw wrth iddo bortreadu cymeirad arwrol a rhamantus y Brenin Arthur, yn nrama-ddogfen newydd BBC Cymru, *Caledfwlch*.

"Darlun digon traddodiadol oedd gen i ohono, ar ôl darllen a gwyliau pan yn blentyn," meddai Dafydd Emyr, "ac wrth gwrs, y syniad yma ohono fo'n dod nôl i achub ein cenedl ni. Roedd o'n rhywun arwrol, rhamantus ac roedd ganddo fo yr holl briodoleddau sy'n cydfynd â hynny - yn gryf ac yn gadarn, a phenderfynol efo'r syniad yma o dda a drwg yn perthyn yn gryf iddo fo. Rhyw fath o Solomon Cymreig neu Geltaidd."

Yn ystod y gyfres yr hanesydd lliwgar, Yr Athro Gwyn Alf Williams, a'i arddull fywiog arferol sy'n arwain yr ymchwil am Arthur trwy ddogfennau hanesyddol cynnar, llenyddiaeth a chwedloniaeth y Canol Oesoedd hyd at ddiwedd y ganrif hon a ffilm Arthuraidd Hollywood *First Knight*. Dangosir sut mae gwahanol gyfnodau hanesyddol ac amrywiol ddiwylliannau Ewrop wedi hawlio Arthur yn arwr iddyn nhw ac addasu'r chwedl i adlewyrchu gwahanol agweddau a thueddiadu'r oes.

Er fod Arthur yn eilun arwrol i fwy nag un cenedl, mae cenedlaethau o Gymry wedi mynnu erioed mai arwr sy'n perthyn i Gymru yw Arthur, a cheisio canfod y gwirionedd am achau Celtaidd Arthur yw amcan yr Athro Gwyn Alf Williams dros dair rhaglen *Caledfwlch*.

Mae Dafydd Emyr yn credu'n bendant y gellir hawlio Arthur yn arwr Cymreig. "Yn bersonol, ydw, wrth gwrs, mae o'n rhan ohono ni fel cenedl. Mae o'n rhywbeth holol gynhenid Gymreig, neu Frythonig beth bynnag, ac mae hynny'n faint i ni fel Cymry."

Roedd yr holl ddadleuon am wreiddiau hanesyddol Arthur eisioes yn gyfarwydd i Dafydd Emyr, gan iddo astudio'r pwnc fel rhan a'i radd yng Ngholeg Prifysgol Bangor, a bu'r cefndir academaidd yn gymorth gyda'r ymchwil ar gyfer ei ran fel Arthur. "Dwi wrth fy modd pan dwi'n cael rhyw gymeriad hanesyddol fel 'na, ac mae o'n gyfle bendigedig i ail borri drwy'r hen stwff. Ond hefyd darllen pethau newydd fel Malory a Tennyson, gan ddilyn trywydd meddwl Gwyn Alf, a gweld sut roedd y cymeriad a'r mytholeg yn codi ac yn esblygu."

Arwr arall i Dafydd Emyr yw'r Athro Gwyn Alf Williams, ac roedd cael cydweithio ochr yn ochr ag ef yn ail-greu'r chwedl yn anrhydedd. "Mae wedi bod yn arwr ers amser, ers cyfres *The Dragon Has Two Tongues*. Roedd o'n un o'r rhagleni roeddwn i'n ei gwylio adref efo mam a dad. Roedd hanes cyn hynny yn bwnc eithaf diflas, a'r ddelwedd yma o chwythu llwch oddi ar rhyw hen gyfrolau. Roedd y cyfan yn dod yn fyw gyda phersonoloiaeth fel Gwyn Alf yn dwrddio dweud yr hanes."

Ond dydy cael bod yn arwr fel Arthur, gan feddu ar bwerau a grymoedd arallfydol, ddim yn fêl i gyd i actor, a bu'n dipyn o gur pen i'r cwmni cynhyrchu, Teliesyn, i feddwl am ddulliau technegol i ail-greu straeon fel y Llaw yn y Llyn, tynnu'r cleddyf o'r garreg, a chael hyd i leoliad paradwydsaidd Ynys Afallon.

Fe fu mwy nag un tro trwstan, ac ambell i farchog yn cael ei daflu o'i geffyl. Un golygfa sy'n sefyll yn y cof yw ffilnio ar Lyn Llan-gors ym Mannau Brycheiniog ar ddiwrnod gwyntog a rhegwlyd o Chwefror. "Roedd Arthur yn cael ei rwyfo ar draws y llyn i Ynys Afallon," cofia Dafydd. "Doedd dim ynys ar y llyn felly roedd darn o artistri yn cael ei beintio ar wydr a'i ddal o flaen y camera. Roedd Marwolaeth, llanc ifanc mewn clogyn llaes du, yn fy rhywo fi ar draws y llyn, a Gwyn Alf ar ochr chwith y llun yn siarad â'r camera. Ond roedd e'n cael y Gymraeg yn anghywir bob tro, a gyda'r gwynt yn chwipio roedd y rhywo yn mynd ar chwâl yn llwyr. Erbyn gorffen roeddwn i'n teimlo fel marwolaeth ei hun."

Bu'n rhaid galw am gymorth nofiwr tanddwr i ddramateiddio golygfa'r llaw yn codi o'r llyn i ddal y cleddyf, Caledfwlch. "Dwi'n siwr bod hwnnw just â fferu, ond roedd o'n reit ddoniol, "meddai Dafydd. "Achos ei bod hi'n ganol gaeaf, siwt ddu ffrogman oedd gynno fo ymlaen, ac roedd yn rhaid i'r adran wisgoedd roi'r ffrog 'ma o frethyn Cymreig golau dros ben y wisg nofio. Roedd o'n edrych yn hyfryd ond pan aeth y dyn i'r dŵr roedd hi'n 'see-through', felly roedd Caledfwlch yn cael ei godi o'r dŵr gan rywun oedd yn edrych yn amlwg fel ffrogman."

Mae angen ychydig bach o help hyd yn oed ar arwr fel Arthur weithiau.

**Cynhyrchwyd gan Swyddfa'r Wasg BBC Cymru, Chwefror 1995  
Produced by BBC Wales Press Office, February 1995**

**CALEDFWLCH  
EXCALIBUR**

**Yr Ymchwil am  
Arthur  
The search for  
Arthur**

**Gwyn Alf Williams**



**NERTH Y CLEDDYF:**

*Dafydd Emyr fel y Brenin  
Arthur a chwith, Richard  
Elfyn fel Lawnslot ac  
Athena Constantine fel  
Gwenhwyfar*

**POWER OF THE SWORD:**

*Dafydd Emyr as King  
Arthur and left, Richard  
Elfyn as Lancelot with  
Athena Constantine as  
Guinevere*

**CALEDFWLCH  
EXCALIBUR**

**Yr Ymchwil am  
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*Y BRENNIN A'R CHWEDL:  
Dafydd Emyr fel y Brenin  
Arthur ac Athena  
Constantine fel  
Gwenhwyfar, ac isod:  
Gwyn Alf Williams yn  
adrodd y hanes*  
*KING AND MYTH: Dafydd  
Emyr as King Arthur with  
Athena Constantine as  
Guinevere and below,  
Gwyn Alf Williams  
narrates the story*

