

WALES BIGGEST EVER ONLINE POLL REVEALS 100 HEROES.

Culturenet Cymru 100 Welsh Heroes/100 Arwyr Cymru: Shortlist Revealed.

The 100 most nominated names in the biggest-ever poll of Welsh national heroes are published today. The list – encompassing high achievers from science, culture, sport, politics, religion and education - has been compiled from more than 41,000 nominations received by organisers Culturenet Cymru.

Voting at the official website www.100welshheroes.com (English) and www.100arwycymru.com (Cymraeg) recommences on 5th January and continues until 23rd February. The final results - including the name considered the greatest Welsh person of all time – will be announced at a special event in Cardiff on St David's Day (March 1st).

The website has now been updated to include detailed biographical information on every Welsh Hero as voted for by the public. It is made up of the 20 most popular names in each of the five nomination categories - **Creatives, Groundbreakers, Leaders, Thinkers and Performers.**

CREATIVES: Includes world-famous designers **Julien Macdonald** and **Laura Ashley**, literary figures **Dylan Thomas**, **Roald Dahl** and **R.S. Thomas** alongside artists such as **Richard Wilson** and **Andrew Vicari**.

GROUNDBREAKERS: Reflects Wales' often overlooked contribution to science and innovation and includes microphone inventor **David Edward Hughes**, Internet pioneer **Donald Davies** and telecoms magnate **Sir Terry Matthews**. Social reformers **Aneurin Bevan** and **Margaret Haig Thomas** are also here.

LEADERS: The most popular Leaders range from early historical figures such as lawmaker **Hywel Dda** (Hywel the Good) through Liberal Prime Minister **David Lloyd George** to contemporary politicians **Neil Kinnock**, **Roy Jenkins** and **Gwynfor Evans**.

PERFORMERS: The most contested category blends sporting heroes **Colin Jackson**, **Gareth Edwards** and **Ian Rush** with actors **Anthony Hopkins**, **Catherine Zeta Jones** and **Richard Burton**. Two members of the band **Manic Street Preachers** are also included.

THINKERS: Three Nobel Laureates- **Bertrand Russell, Brian Josephson and Clive Granger** rub shoulders with religious leaders including **Archbishop Rowan Williams** and **St David**. The inventor of the equals sign, **Robert Recorde** is nominated along with educationalist **Elizabeth Phillips Hughes**, founder of Hughes Hall, Cambridge.

Culturenet Cymru is a Welsh Assembly Government sponsored body dedicated to promoting Welsh culture globally via the Internet. Minister for Culture, Sport and the Welsh Language, **Alun Pugh AM** says: "It is a measure of the pride we take in the achievements of our fellow Welsh men and women that so many people have provided nominations for 100 Welsh Heroes. The resulting list reflects both the diversity of those achievements and that of Wales itself. At last September's launch, I said we would probably disagree about who our individual heroes are. This list will energise and inform that debate. What's more, the excellent response so far makes the final outcome of this illuminating project all the more exciting."

By far the most popular name in the nominations phase was singer **Tom Jones**- who took more than 8% of the votes cast. Culturenet Cymru Chairman **Andrew Green** says "The first phase of voting has proved a stunning success. Now that we've arrived at our shortlist, I urge everyone to read all about each and every Welsh Hero at the official website before casting their vote. Together these names show how Wales and its people have had a disproportionately significant influence in just about every field of human endeavour. The website itself now represents a valuable online resource which will continue to inform and educate."

Votes can be cast online or on voting slips now being distributed around schools, colleges and public buildings in Wales.

Notes:

1. Of the 100 Welsh Heroes, 35 are living persons and 64 are dead while one – musician **Richey Edwards** - is listed as "missing, presumed dead".
2. Unusually among the recent crop of national heroes polls, 100 Welsh Heroes has allowed the public to select the shortlist. Other polls have used market research techniques or expert panels to pre-select candidates before the voting stage.
3. The St David's Day event will be staged in the early evening at the 'Glee Club' in Cardiff Bay. Editors should note that a number of tickets are available for readers, viewers or listeners as prizes for "100 Welsh Heroes" competitions or draws.
4. Interview opportunities with Andrew Green, Chair of Culturenet Cymru are available on Monday 5th January.