

Saturday 9th May 2026 at 10.30am

Reardon Smith Lecture Theatre, NMW, Cathays Park, Cardiff

Professor Angela John

Will give a talk entitled

Against the odds: Philip Burton goes to America

Philip Burton (1904-95) was a stage-struck man whose life virtually spanned the twentieth century and crossed continents. As an actor he had many dramatic skills and was also a playwright and scriptwriter. In 1945, when the wireless was at its height, he became a full-time and pioneering BBC features producer. His productions included Dylan Thomas's *Return Journey*. He was responsible for almost 200 radio programmes in Cardiff and London.

He had become an erudite schoolmaster in Port Talbot, dedicated to inspiring his pupils to value drama and Shakespeare in particular. The most famous of the many young people whose lives he changed over two decades of teaching was Richard Jenkins who became Richard Burton.

Long fascinated by America, in 1954 he emigrated to the United States where he was a theatre director and ran the American Musical and Dramatic Academy, a prestigious New York stage school. He spent his final decades in Key West, Florida, writing books and still delivering the sparkling lecture recitals on Shakespeare that had earlier enthralled audiences right across the States.



Professor Angela V John is from Port Talbot in South Wales and studied Medieval and Modern History at Birmingham University. She gained an MA at Swansea and a doctorate in Manchester. From 1989 until 2004 she was Professor of History at the University of Greenwich and an Honorary Professor at Aberystwyth University for ten years.

Professor Angela John gave us the excellent talk on Richard Burton in 2021.

The fee of £10 for the talk followed by coffee and biscuits in the Oriel Suite may be paid on the day as follows:

- Cash – notes preferred
- Cheques payable to: Friends Museum Wales
- **OR** Paid prior to the event by BACS: Acct. name Friends Museum Wales

Sort code 30-96-26 A/C no. 83447260 Please use ref: PBurton and your initials

gwen.williams@friendsmuseumwales.org.uk