

Dylan Thomas was born on the 27th October 1914 at 5 Cwmdonkin Drive, a semi-detached house in the Uplands area of Swansea.

1914 was a momentous year for the World because of the outbreak of the Great War.

His father was an English teacher and although both his parents could speak Welsh, he and his sister Nancy were brought up as English speakers.

Cwmdonkin Avenue is located in a position that is high above Swansea Bay. As young boy Dylan would have looked out on the sea every day.

The changing moods of this wide, curving seascape would have a lasting impact on the imagination of the poet to be.

Dylan would continue to live and work for much of his life in locations with magnificent sea views.



At Swansea Waterfront a statue of Dylan as a young boy sits looking out over the docks and at the people who stroll by. The sculptor John Doubleday has shown the poet perched on the edge of his chair. He looks like he has been caught in the moment of creative thought.

Dylan began to write at a young age. He was a teenager when he began to keep the notebooks into which he poured his writing ideas, especially his poetry.



Although Dylan Thomas did not write in Welsh, the inspiration for much of his work was rooted in the closeness he felt for Wales, its people and its landscape. The historic town of Laugharne, with its magnificent castle and its swirling estuary provided him with many creative writing opportunities. He wrote 'Portrait of the Artist as a Young Dog' from the gazebo that is set into the imposing walls of the Castle.



Looking through the window of the door leading into the 'Writing Shed' at Laugharne it is possible to imagine Dylan Thomas at work. His table and chair are perfectly positioned to look out on the Estuary, but having a perfect view did not mean that the writing process was always easy for this gifted poet. His wife Caitlin said that it could take him hours to complete a line of poetry and that at times she had to lock him inside the shed to complete his writing.



Dylan Thomas was a great observer and a good listener. He had eye for detail and an ear for a good story and this is what makes his writing so special. It enabled him to bring places and people 'to life' in his poetry, short stories and plays. It sometimes makes the reader wonder! In Under Milk Wood, the First Voice at the beginning of the play describes 'the cobblestreets silent'. Is Dylan Thomas describing the town of Laugharne?



Dylan Thomas – Fact File

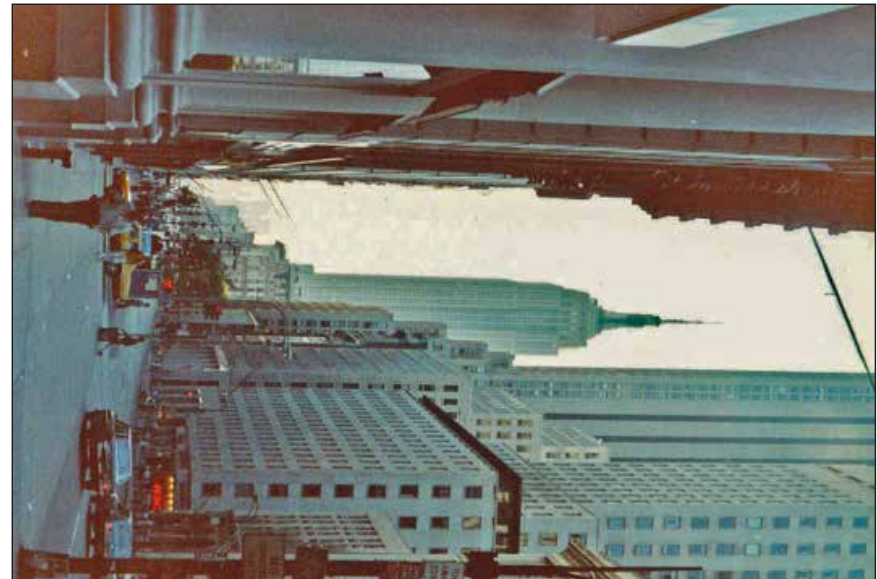
- 27th October 1914 – Born in Swansea, Wales.
- Decemebr 1932 – Becomes a full-time poet.
- 18th December 1934 – 18 Poems, (First collection of poetry published)
- 11th July 1937 – Marries Caitlin Macnamara.
- 14th May 1953 – ‘Under Milk Wood’ performed for the first time.
- 9th November, 1953 – Dylan dies in New York.



The poetry and work of Dylan Thomas became very popular in the United States of America, a popularity that continues still to this day.

Under Milk Wood was first performed on the stage in New York on May 14th 1953 with Dylan narrating.

The city that celebrated his great contribution to the world of literature would sadly soon witness his passing. Dylan Thomas died in New York on November 9th 1953.



Under Milk Wood is one of Dylan's most popular works and has never been out of print since it was first published.

Llareggub is the fictional town at the heart of the play, but is it purely fictional?

New Quay and Laugharne are both thought to have inspired the play. Look at Dylan's own drawing using this [link](#).



Laugharne was especially important to Dylan Thomas. He returned to live there several times over his lifetime.

The Boat House, which is built on the edge of the estuary, was to be his last house and home and is preserved today much as it was when he was alive. Perched above it, on the edge of the cliff sits the 'Writing Shed'.

This remarkable little building is held securely in place on legs of steel!

