

# Crickhowell & Brecon & Radnor Express

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Helga Prosser outside her workshop. Inset: the steel Eisteddfod crown

## The poet's crown made from the veins of Wales

A CROWN from Crickhowell was the focal point of a druidic ceremony at the National Eisteddfod this week.

The steel crown, was made by artist Helga Prosser, was presented to Aberystwyth University lecturer Jason Walford-Davies, aged 31, writing under the name Brynach, for his work, *Egni*, a work about the miners' strike.

Helga Prosser used an oxy-acetylene welding torch to create the crown at her workshop in Llanbedr.

"It was quite a challenge," said Helga, in an interview for ITV Wales.

"We've seen some beautiful silver fabrications in the past that make welded steel look rough and crude.

"But steel is a basic ingredient of Wales's industrial strength."

Helga sees the roads, rails and canals of Wales as

resembling the intricate patterns of old Celtic designs. For the Newport Eisteddfod crown, she wanted to bring the ancient, abstract patterns together with hard-metal reality of the present day.

Helga came to Great Britain from her native South Africa in 1959 and studied at London's Central School of Art.

"That's when I became fascinated with the possibilities of welded sculpture," she recalled.

"The strength of the steel overcomes the limitations of other materials by being tough and moveable."

The crown is one of top two awards for poetry at the Eisteddfod. The bardic chair is given to the writer of the best poem in the traditional Welsh form, *cynghanedd*.

The bard who writes the best free-form poem is awarded the crown.