

Porthaethwy – Mynedfa Ynys Môn  
Menai Bridge – Gateway to Anglesey

# NEWSLETTER

## Cymdeithas Ddinesig Bro Porthaethwy

## Menai Bridge and District Civic Society

# CYLCHLYTHYR

**Dates for your diary: More details on page 3.** Lectures start at 7.30pm (unless otherwise stated) and are held in the War Memorial Community Centre, Water Street, Menai Bridge.

**28th April 2017**  
**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING** - including discussion of the Library and Moreia Chapel. Speaker Anthony Taver-

**23rd May Anglesey**  
**Archive** visit with Dr. Hayden Burns 10.30

**28th June St Cybi's Church**, Holyhead with Dr. Kevin Ellis

**13th July Treborth Botanic Garden** with Dr. Jane Smith

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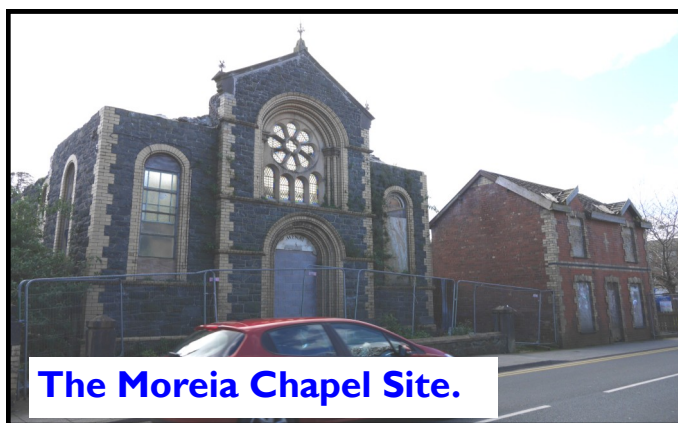


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Summer/Haf 2017

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The Moreia Chapel Site, which includes the house to its right, the School room and land at the back along Wood Street has been an eyesore for as long as many of us remember. At last it



**The Moreia Chapel Site.**

would seem that things are stirring. On the 20th March 2017 the County Council called a meeting of 'Stakeholders' to meet with them, the site owners (Glyn Davies for R L Davies and Co.) and the prospective developers, Ion Development. Members of the Town Council, Aethwy County Councillors, the Library Committee, your Civic Society (represented by Iola Prytherch and Liz Moyle, Chamber of Commerce and one or two others. No firm conclusions were reached, other than 'something must be done'. The County Council and local elections, to be held on 4th May 2017, may affect representation so the next meeting, to look at proposals in more detail, will be held on the 17th May 2017. Do you think you're a 'stakeholder'? In a way we all are. This is the centre of our Town, the 'Gateway to Anglesey' and this is the face that we present to the world. Oh dear! I was going to say that virtually anything would be better than the present situation. Certainly if you knocked it down (keeping the rose window and stones) and used the site for car parking most would be happy. Probably not the owners though; they do need to see a return on their investment. Just what is the site worth; who knows? Appreciably more if the Library and Council Offices were re-developed at the same time. And more again if the Recreation Ground was included— although the meeting decided that the best thing to do for now was not to include the recreation field in the plans. For now? Remember this site has the potential to be a multi million pound development and it's going to create tremendous amount of interest from developers. The role of a developer is to develop, of course, by adding value to a site for its owners. What would you value there? What do you want? More shops, a hotel, keep it a green space, flats, a library? You really do need to have your say. Ask your elected representatives and those standing for Office what they think. **Come to our AGM on 28th April** and take part in our open discussion. Learn more about the history of development in this part of Menai Bridge - given to the people of Menai Bridge by the Marquis of Anglesey. The Society has been invited to the next Meeting on the 17th May 2017 so do make your views known.

### Menai Bridge Railway Station?



**Photo N Kneale**

Do you remember Menai Bridge Railway Station? See page 3, and in 'Memories' and our Web-site for more details and photos.

## CIVIC TRUST and NATIONAL NEWS

In our January 2017 we heard about the sad demise of Civic Trust Cymru, caught in the turmoil of a Pension Fund in financial difficulties, it was forced into Administration. Many thought that the national Civic Society movement in Wales is too important to give up without a fight. We are grateful to Abergavenny and District Civic Society and Anna Lermom (former Director) for organising a Conference, in Abergavenny, to explore this further.

On 11th March about 30 Society Members, mostly from Mid and South Wales met with representatives from like minded organisations and the Heritage Lottery Fund, Council for British Archaeology, SPAB, CADW, Arcadis/Hyder (consultants to WAG), former Civic Trust England and former Trustees and Officer of Civic Trust Wales. The agenda gave the opportunity to discuss what happened with the Pension Scheme, is there need for a new organisation and if so its financial viability, leadership and next steps. Nick Roe (Wrexham), Anthony Tavernor and Liz Moyle attended from North Wales.

Much analysis had been carried out by Arcadis/Hyder looking at how Cadw might respond to the new Legislation and initiatives from the Welsh Assembly Government.

While the work of Cadw has been splendid in funding

the Civic Trust for many years their emphasis, quite naturally has been towards the conservation and interpretation of heritage. It was felt that the need now is for an organisation to be independent and to look as well at different issues - especially related to modern developments and the threats to the setting of heritage e.g. as for the planning application for the proposed Zorb Site, with the potential weakening of AONB and National Park protection.

Moving away from Government Grant Aid has tremendous implications for funding structures. A small working party will consider this and report back to members and Societies shortly.

We are grateful to Sue Essex for chairing the Meeting and turning what could have been a collective grumble into something positive. She is a former Welsh Assembly Government Minister for Environment, Transport and Planning in 2000 and later Minister for Finance, Local Government and Public Services in the Second Assembly 2003-07. She retired at the 2007 election.

**Liz Moyle**

## What will happen now?

In our last Newsletter we said that the Committee of the Society would review our own structure and constitution. We have started to do this with the help of Mike Williams BAHons (Banking and Finance), from the Wales Co-operative Centre. Mike is a Business Adviser and Chair of Amlwch Industrial Heritage Trust.

Our Constitution seems quite straightforward, if lengthy, but two anomalies have come to light and it would be good to clear these up:

4. Subscriptions - "The annual subscription shall be . . . . . or such reasonable sum as the Executive Committee shall determine from time to time, and it shall be payable on or before 1st May each year. Membership shall lapse if the subscription is unpaid three months after it is due"

Traditionally we have brought changes in subscriptions to an AGM to agree and would propose this is formalised and included in our rules in due course.

B12. Amendments. "This Constitution may be amended by

a two-thirds majority of members present at an Annual General Meeting or of the Society, provided that 28 days' notice of the proposed amendment has been given to all members ....."

Where I have underlined, there are some words omitted from my copy of the Constitution. It should read, I think, - "may be amended by a two-thirds majority of members present at an Annual General Meeting or Special General Meeting".

AGM or SGM is used as a standard phrase elsewhere in the Constitution. The AGM may recognise what is thought to be a typographical error but it would be prudent to follow what is stated and wait until near the next AGM to make changes. Copies of the Constitution are available (for those with e-mail access) or phone 01248 712324 for a printed copy.

There is no intention to call a Special AGM at present but we will take advice should any revised structure warrant it.

**Liz Moyle**

## RECENT PROGRAMME NOTES

### Jan. 27th Susan Booth Conservation & Development Officer for Diocese of Bangor.

A natural communicator, Susan's enthusiasm for safeguarding our Church Heritage really came across. See our Future Programme - we're going to follow this up by a guided tour/visit to St Cybi's Church in Holyhead. I didn't know it had a William Morris window either.

**Feb. 24th ANNUAL DINNER - The Civic Society** was delighted to welcome **Dr Shaun Russell** as speaker at our Annual Dinner and to hear his account of "Treborch Botanic Garden, past, present and future".

(continued on page 3)



## FUTURE EVENTS

**Lectures held monthly at 7.30pm in the lounge of the War Memorial Community Centre, Water Street on Friday evenings usually.**

### 28th April Friday ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

- including matters of concern - the Library and consultation for the Moreia Chapel Site (now moving forward). The business of the meeting will be followed by a talk from Anthony Tavernor giving an update on developments and future plans at Plas Cadnant.

**May 23rd Tuesday.** Visit Anglesey Archive, Mr. Hayden Burns, Archivist will take this tour. He will have various documents of particular interest to Menai Bridge Civic Soc. members. Well worth a visit - morning only, 10.30am start. The building is on the Bryn Cefni Industrial Estate, Llangefni. LL77 7JA. Cost £3  
Members may wish to have lunch afterwards at Oriel Môn and/or visit the Kyffin Williams Exhibition - an Anglesey Sketchbook. The exhibition encompasses a large selection of Oriel Ynys Môn's collection and will be the first time many of these works have been shown together.

## RECENT PROGRAMME NOTES continued from page 2 - "Treborrh Botanic Garden, past, present and future".

An excellent meal, preceded in this case by an excellent talk about Treborrh Gardens, made for a pleasant and convivial evening. Amazing that the Treborrh site was originally to be a garden homes development with railway station. This development wasn't completed and later the land was transferred to the University and the Botanic Garden formed. We are indebted to the Friends of Treborrh Gardens who helped stop their closure a few years back. This seems to be one of the few places in Wales where knowledge of Botany is highly valued. There are no Universities in Wales that now offer a Botany Degree! How things change.

As an aside, in 1917 Sir Henry Jones announced that "It is intended to commemorate the men of North Wales who fall in the war, and that the Memorial shall take the form of new Science Buildings at the University College of North Wales. In addition, we contemplate the erection of some special central feature of this group of buildings, artistic in character, which shall be the Memorial proper and shall bear the name of every son of North Wales, Gwynedd and Powys, who has fallen in this war." Four new science buildings housing the departments of Agriculture, Chemistry, Botany and Zoology and Physics were built and the balance of the money raised, by public subscription, was transferred to the College as a Bursaries Fund.

**March 31st Mike Blackburn - Industrial families of North Wales** - Summers, Darbyshires, Wynns, Platts, Pennants, Asheton-Smith and Oakeleys. Fascinating talk by a master of his subject - briefly summarised as the resources of Wales were systematically pillaged by and for the benefit of the few — or entrepreneurs who provided badly need work following the Enclosure Acts. Rather depends on your point of view doesn't it?

**June 28th Wednesday.** St. Cybi's Church, Holyhead. Situated within the walls of the Roman Fort is this ancient church. It has a rich history since its foundation in 540AD. Dr. Kevin Ellis will lead the tour of this vibrant church. 2.30pm start at the church. Cost £3

**July 13th Thursday** Treborrh Botanic Garden. Dr Jane Smith the new administrator of the Garden will lead a tour of the greenhouses and there will be a chance to see the new Chinese garden close by. Members wishing to walk further into the woodland may do so. Meet at the garden, access is off the Suspension Bridge just as you leave the bridge on the Bangor side. Go past the small industrial buildings on the left and then drive on to the greenhouses. 2pm start. Cost £3

Payment can be made on the day, but please telephone Jane Cherrett to indicate your interest, one week before each event (or use the form enclosed). Tel. 01248 713440 or 07812186119. Anyone able to car share or requiring transport please let Jane know.

**Jane Cherrett**



Photos N Kneale

Many of the large Estates are now back in 'public ownership', forming the basis of much of the National Parks and National Trust lands.

## Menai Bridge Railway Station

Following Dr Russell's talk curiosity got the better of me and I decided to have a look for the Station. Nothing is left now of Treborrh Station platform but if you look really hard you can see the remnants of Menai Bridge Station. All that is left is the entrance to the tunnel that went under the railway line to one of the platforms — and is now at the



back of a children's play area. Nonetheless I think you can tell it was a solid structure, built to last. (Rather like the Moreia Chapel, that continues to defy gravity) The Branch line to Caernarfon was closed in the 1970s and the building was knocked down in the 1980s. A nursery was built on its site and industrial units nearby. Most people don't know there was a Station in Menai Bridge, never mind what it looked like. We are indebted to Norman Kneale for his excellent photos of the Station and the people who worked there. Some of these are shown in 'Memories' (enclosed).



**Anthony Tavernor Esq.**  
**Llywydd/ President**

**Liz Moyle**  
**Cadeirydd/Chair**

**Maureen Parry-Williams**  
**Ysgrifennydd/Secretary**

**Jane Cherrett**  
**Ysgifennydd Cymdeithasol/**  
**Social Secretary**

**Renata Hufton**  
**Trysorydd/Treasurer**

**Iola Prytherch**  
**Deputy Treasurer/Trysorydd**  
**Cynorthwyol**

**Liz Moyle**  
**Newsletter Editor/Golygydd**  
**Cylchlythyr**

**Norman Kneale**  
**Photos/Fotograffau**

## CONTACT LIST

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**Booking activities for events**  
**and outings -**  
**Jane Cherrett**  
**Tel 01248 713440**

**County Councillors :**  
**Alun Mummery, Meirion**  
**Jones and Jim Evans**

**Town Council :**  
**Canolfan Tysilio, Menai**  
**Bridge**

**For all correspondence**  
**please contact the**  
**Secretary,**  
**Mrs Maureen Parry-**  
**Williams,**

**See our Website at**  
**www.menai-bridge**  
**civicsociety.org.uk**

## Shirley, Marchioness of Anglesey.

### Elizabeth Shirley Vaughan Morgan, Dowager Marchioness of Anglesey, DBE, LVO (better known as Dame Shirley Paget,

died on 21st January 2017, she was 92 . We offer our sincere condolences to her family. There have been a wide variety of appreciations of her life published already and they have highlighted her talent for languages, writing, analytical and management skills; carried out while raising a family of five. Not surprisingly perhaps, none of them mentioned that she was President of our Society for 40 years and played an active role in Committee work. She moved with ease from chairing the Broadcasting Complaints Commission and the Radioactive Waste Management Advisory Committee, to campaigning against inappropriate development on Menai Bridge Waterfront (and joined in stuffing letters in envelopes!).

When she was present at meetings everyone sat up that bit straighter and made sure they'd read their papers beforehand! You could be sure she had. She cared about where she lived and the people here and used her position for the good of the community. She was created a DBE for her public service in Wales in 1983.

She enjoyed her local contacts - popping into the hairdressers in Menai Bridge at short notice ("I really need to have my hair done, when can you fit me in? Now? Right, I'm on my way."), going down to Plas Cadnant to check on progress in the Gardens and Tearoom, paddling across the river in flowered wellies (and nearly falling in).

No one seems to have mentioned either that she was funny; she had a delightful sense of humour and was good company. If your family, friends and acquaintances miss you and what you stood for and the organisations you helped set up are thriving that's really rather a good epitaph.



## Plas Cadnant - a new season begins.

After many trials and tribulations the restoration of the Hidden Gardens at Plas Cadnant is now virtually complete. Many congratulations to all involved and thanks as well to Anthony for letting us share his celebrations at the

start of the month. Were you there? Would you like a simple copy of the photo above? i.e. this quality but larger, samples available at the AGM.