



NEWSLETTER

Cymdeithas Ddinesig Bro Porthaethwy

Menai Bridge and District Civic Society

CYLCHLYTHYR

Dates for your ZOOM and meeting diary:
Internet links to be issued closer to the day.

24th September 2021
FRIDAY AGM 7.0 p.m.
by Zoom and talk,
'What goes up must come down' Rev. Hugh Jones

Tuesday, October 19th
Zoom+ 2.30pm Developments and new beginnings down by the river Seiont by the Castle.
Mrs Pat Jones

Tuesday November 16th
Zoom+ 2.30pm The Challenges and Opportunities of Bangor by Mr Iwan Williams, Director Bangor City Council.

14th December Zoom+ Nature Watch by Philip Snow

January—meeting to be arranged

February - the work of M. E. Eldridge by Susan Fogarty

(Zoom+ meetings are at the War Memorial Community Centre)

Autumn/Hydref 2021

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Enough is Enough - Continued!

Section 215 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990

Not a snappy title is it as an introduction to an important issue! In our last issue we reported on our correspondence with Anglesey County Council about the derelict state of some buildings in the centre of Menai Bridge. The Act gives the local Council the power to enforce improvements where dereliction affects amenity. An assessment chart helps to give an unbiased score of different aspects of a site or building. Depending on the score different levels of action are proposed.

We are pleased to say that the owners of Bryniau and the Mostyn Arms have been approached again and have now begun to pay attention to their properties.

As for the Moreia Chapel - we understand that **exciting plans** are being made for the site.

As we didn't receive a reply to the letter we sent to the Council in May we wrote to a variety of our local representatives to see if they could help elicit some response. The Council did reply to Virginia Crosbie, our MP, and included in the text of the letter was a letter to us. We're grateful for the reply but on a personal note in many years of business dealing I don't think I've ever had a reply sent through a third party. To whom should we reply? Just so people are aware of the history of the site It was a well used Wesleyan Chapel and unfortunately with dwindling congregations who could not afford the upkeep it was sold. For many years the congregation continued to use the School room at the back

of the site. Eventually that too was sold. The Chapel itself became an 'antique shop' then a popular 'fruit and veg' shop. This was closed when the building was deemed unsuitable. The building on the right of the Chapel belonged to a local accountant. The whole site for which development was being considered included property belonging to the County Council - the Car Park and Library and to Menai Bridge Community Council—their Offices, the Tysilio Centre. Joint development of the site was sought as far back as **2001** but this foundered over legal difficulties.

After many attempts to breathe life into the development a meeting of 'interested parties' met in 2017 to consider proposals once more. This fizzled out. One of the papers issued later in July 2017 by the developers put forward several proposals:

- A. do the minimum—develop basic site only -
- B. develop to include Glyn Derw and the Wood Street Car Park
- C. As above but to include the Library and Town Council Offices.

The developer would look for a range of commercial and leisure companies to participate and suggested demolishing the Chapel and adjoining building, establishing a temporary car park for interim use. Mention was made in March 2017 about the future of the George V Recreation Field but it was decided not to include this in the plans. Note: The George V Fields are held in Trust and further protected by being registered with the Fields in Trust since 1964.

In June 2017 the Economic Development Office of the Council sent out a memo to interested parties stating, "Dear All, Following the meeting on 20/03/17, we hope to arrange another meeting to go through ION Development options.

An open discussion with all parties is deemed appropriate to better understand and discuss ambitions, to determine if there is common ground. The discussions will inform the IACCs position going forward."

Since then nothing. What a waste of people's time and effort. Even if all the interested parties aren't consulted our elected representatives should be kept informed. They need the knowledge to be able to look after our interests effectively.

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Planning Legislation and amendments.

You will gather by now that the Civic Society is concerned about the dereliction at the centre of the town. The Moreia Chapel site could involve development, or sale of property to aid development, by the County and Community Councils. Can a local Council grant itself planning permission? Yes it can as long as those managing the land/building and those with planning responsibility are separate. This seems to be what is stated in Section 316 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (TCPA 1990) as amended in 1992. and 2009. Other laws also seem to have an effect. For ordinary planning applications the negotiations between the developer and authority are

exempt from the **Freedom of Information Act 2000**, due to commercial confidentiality.

"However when a LPA applies to itself for planning permission, that exemption does not apply. In other words, a freedom of information request could obtain information about any written negotiations between the local authority officers involved in development and those involved in planning" (Standard Note SN/SC/1195 from the House of Commons 2009). Whether this is still the latest advice, whether it applies in Wales I don't know but I would like to think that it does.

Liz Moyle

RECENT PROGRAMME NOTES SUMMER EVENTS

20th April - Zoom Talk Tŵr Marcwis/Anglesey Column - Peter Simpson. Innovative scheme to renovate the Column from the new Anglesey Column Trust. We wish them well with their application.



Photo:
Anglesey
Column
Facebook

Latest News 23rd Aug 2021 from the Colum Trust!

"The announcement of the approval by the National Lottery Heritage Fund of a grant of £872,800 to our project to repair and reopen the Marquess of Anglesey Column was greeted with warm support from the local community. It was met soon afterwards with further support from the Gaynor Cemlyn Jones Trust, Anglesey Charitable Association and the Sustainable Development Fund with £38500 in total. This moves us closer to our target with some £200000 left to raise. We have bids in place to cover this amount and expect to receive further successful outcomes in the next few months. We have met with the NLHF to discuss a starting date and hope that we can begin work on site later in the year once we have completed all the legal processes and approvals. The construction phase is expected to take approximately 40 weeks and staff and volunteer recruitment will begin at an early stage of the development. We appreciate your ongoing interest and support and will keep you up to date as we make progress to reopening this monument that has such a special place in the memories of the community. P Simpson"

18th May - Zoom Talk 'Friends of Church Island during lockdown' Talk by Liz Perkins about work being carried on by the 'Friends' - includes a new brochure, children's leaflet, Keep Wales Tidy application and a PowerPoint presentation and film about the 100th Anniversary of the unveiling of the War Memorial. Your Society contributed both material and funds to aid the project.

Click the links below to view/hear the film.

Cymraeg: <https://youtu.be/ozQaqQw5N5M>

Saesneg: <https://youtu.be/eTel7HIMMuY>

By kind permission of the Friends of Church Island. Stunning photos and contribution from the Menai Bridge Brass Band.

15th June - Zoom Talk A Convergence of Creativity: when RS Thomas priest and poet met the artist M E Eldridge, they captured north Wales in poetry and paintings. A fascinating introduction to their work, especially that of M E Eldridge, by Susan Fogarty of the RS Thomas & ME Eldridge Society, preceding their Festival. (Also see future programme)

17th July Festival at Ynys Tysilio/Church Island. (following Covid Regs). On what will probably prove to be the hottest day of the year congratulations to the Friends of Church Island which held their Festival on Church Island - with contributions from, amongst others, the local choir,

**Liz Perkins - announcing the
Keep Wales Tidy Award**



**Bridget Geoghegan leading
the tour and at the
Cenotaph.**



Threnody, a special service for dogs and their owners, viewing the new film and display board and excellent guided tours of the Island, including some of the family graves where those killed in WWI & 2 are also mentioned.

FUTURE EVENTS

Over the past few months our Meetings have, of necessity, been on Zoom. As the regulations relax, about meetings of all types, then our meetings will also change and become more 'normal'.

We will have more 'face-to-face' contact but will retain Zoom as it means we could have lecturers from anywhere in Wales or indeed the world! This involves the use of more technology so we'll introduce it gradually as we learn how it works!

We will follow the advice and guidance of the organisation we hire our room from - The Menai Bridge War Memorial Community Centre. At present they recommend not sitting closer than one metre, unless you come with friends/your bubble and keeping face masks. This also corresponds with similar arrangements at Venue Cymru/Pontio and our own 'Risk Assessment' - we are obliged by law (Regulation 16 of the Health Protection (Coronavirus Restrictions) (No. 5) (Wales) Regulations 2020) to complete a risk assessment and take 'reasonable measures to minimise the risk of exposure to coronavirus on the premises, and to minimise the risk of spread of coronavirus by those who have been on the premises'.

September is a Zoom Meeting and after that meetings become gradually more open. If you wish to reserve seats next to a friend/someone in your bubble please notify Jane Cherrett beforehand. Those attending will be asked to confirm they have no Covid symptoms and to leave a contact phone number.

We wouldn't consider re-opening meetings unless we were sure we had done all that is reasonable to be safe.

24th September 2021 FRIDAY AGM 7.0 p.m. by Zoom. Please take this as advance notice of the Annual General Meeting. Full details are given in the enclosed/attached notice of the Meeting. The business meeting will be followed by an illustrated talk on, **'What goes up must come down.'** by our guest speaker the Rev. Hugh Jones (former airline pilot) Hugh has recently been ordained in the Bro Tysilio Ministry Area which includes Menai Bridge, Llandegfan, Llanfadrwg, Pentraeth, Llanbedrgoch and Llanfair ME.

ENERGY ISLAND?

Anglesey now promotes itself as 'the Energy Island', but Anglesey and North Wales have been at the forefront of power generation for the past 100 years, stimulated by a need to supply industry and tourism.

A Society member has kindly forwarded a technical report on the Electricity Industry in North Wales and this is set out below. Just who wrote the Report originally is uncertain and if you know please inform us so we can acknowledge the work.

"Mains electricity was introduced to Anglesey by the establishment of a steam generating station of 250 kws capacity in Holyhead in 1906. the electricity was distributed to the town of Holyhead only and was direct current.

Within a few years a similar type of **generating station had been established in Menai Bridge** and electricity was introduced to Llangefni by the establishment of a water wheel generator. These electricity supplies were used mainly for lighting.

Tuesday, October 19th 2.30pm Zoom+, meeting and viewing on the 'widescreen*' at the Community Centre.

Developments and new beginnings down by the river Seiont by the Castle. Mrs Pat Jones, Project Co-ordinator for Cei Llechi Harbour Trust, Caernarfon.

Tuesday November 16th 2.30pm Zoom+, meeting and viewing on the 'widescreen*' at the Community Centre.

The Challenges and Opportunities of Bangor by Mr Iwan Williams, Director Bangor City Council. With the longest High Street and shop closures, ravages of recent fires, Bangor's renewal is ongoing. The 125th anniversary celebrations on the re-furbished Pier are a welcome development.

14th December 2.30pm 'Anglesey Naturewatch'. Zoom+, meeting and viewing on the 'widescreen*' at the Community Centre.

Illustrated talk by Philip Snow, BA.
Christmas refreshments.

January - meeting to be arranged.

February - more about the art work of M.E. Eldridge (following members' requests)

*** widescreen - projector and added loudspeakers**

Jane Cherrett



RS THOMAS &
ME ELDRIDGE

Photo: RST & MEE Society website

Plas Cadnant - On the 28th August 2021 our President, Anthony Tavernor, celebrated the 25th Anniversary of moving into Plas Cadnant. Now one of the premier gardens and tourist attractions in Wales, we congratulate him and his team for the difference they have made to our town. (Anthony Tavernor and Maureen Parry-Williams at the Garden Party.



Photo: N Kneale

The first major change occurred in 1931 when the North Wales Power Company erected a 22,000 volts overhead line across the Menai Straits and across Anglesey to Caergeiliog. This line was fairly soon up-rated to 33,000 volts. Power was fed into this line from the Dolgarrog hydro electric power station and was transformed to 11,000 volts at Caergeiliog. From this point, overhead lines operating at 11,000 volts carried the power to Holyhead town and also to Trearddur and Rhosneigr areas. The changeover resulted in the steam generating station being closed down the following year. **Shortly after this the Menai Bridge generating station closed down and the town obtained electricity from Bangor Corporation by means of a sub-marine cable laid under the Menai Straits.** The registered office of the Menai Bridge Electricity Supply Company was 31 High Street—does anyone have more information please? In the late 1930's the North Wales Power Company established major transforming stations at Llanfair Pwll-gwyngyll (continued on page 4)

COMMITTEE

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For all correspondence please
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See our Website at
www.menaibridge
civicsociety.org.uk

(Energy Island continued from page3)

and Gaerwen. The electricity supply system was extended from Llanfair Pwllgwyngyll to Menai Bridge and Beaumaris, also supplying power for the BBC station at Penmon. The system was extended from Gaerwen to Llangefni and onto Amlwch and Cemais (sic). At this time the old generating station at Llangefni was closed down.

During the war years there was very little extension to the electricity supply system other than for war purposes.

Soon after the war, the Electricity Supply Industry was nationalised, and so far as Anglesey was concerned this meant that the Holyhead, Menai Bridge and North Wales Power Company electricity undertakings became the Anglesey district of the Merseyside and North Wales Electricity Board (MANWEB).

So for some 30 years Menai Bridge had its own generating plant! Where? Was it near the Gas Works set up in 1858 (down near where the Rugby Club is now)? We know that Menai Bridge UDC as electricity supplier merged with MANWEB in 1947 and before that the Council had taken over the Menai Bridge Electric Supply Company that had ceased trading in the early 1900s. For a while Menai Bridge had bought electricity from Bangor Council who in turn bought bulk supplies from the North

The North Wales Power Company, itself formed from the North Wales Power and Traction Company. At the turn of the century the railway having the authority to build hydro electric schemes and transmission lines over much of North Wales. e.g. Cwm Dyli, which is still in use. The Power Company was closely linked to Dolgarrog Power Station and the supply to the Aluminium Corporation.

The details of the North Wales Power and Traction Co. Ltd, on the internet, give an interesting insight into the funding of these enterprises by the likes of Pilkington (glass), Beecham (Pills), Mckeecknie (United Alkali) but that's a whole book in itself.

Back to Menai Bridge and indeed Llangefni and Holyhead Who were the pioneers who founded steam and hydro 'dynamo' schemes. Where were the generating plants? It would be sad if we couldn't acknowledge these entrepreneurs and lost this part of our own history. Wikipedia has much about Cwm Dyli, so what about Menai Bridge, Llangefni and Holyhead?

Cwm Dyli Power Station, the

"Chapel in the valley", built in 1905 still supplies the National Grid. It is Britain's oldest power station, and is believed to be one of the oldest Grid-connected hydro-electric stations in the world. Electricity produced here was also used to power the Long Wave Wireless Telegraph transmitting station built by Marconi in 1912 near Waunfawr.



https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/User:Born_Acorn [Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 Unported](#) license.

Cwm Dyli was claimed to be the largest electricity generating plant of its kind in Great Britain at the time. Water for the site primarily comes from Llyn Llydaw below Eryri/Snowdon, some 320 metres above the power station, where rainfall is very high. The water is carried from the lake through a tunnel and two 30-inch (0.762 m) diameter, 2 kilometres (1.2 mi) long pipelines. You can't disguise those. What people think of the pipelines remains a lively topic of discussion to this day.

COUNCILLORS

In our last Newsletter we mentioned that if you were concerned about **the derelict centre of Menai Bridge** you could contact your Councillor. You can of course contact any or all of our Councillors— Alun Mummery, Meirion Jones and Robin Williams. Although not all live in Menai Bridge they represent Aethwy and us on the County Council. All attend Menai Bridge Town Council Meetings

Subscriptions are often paid at the AGM so if you would like to pay yours now you would be most welcome! Whether we meet in person or by electronic means we still have considerable regular costs to cover. e.g. Insurance, Newsletters. Your continued support is much appreciated. Please send to : Liz Moyle, Bron Graig, Hill Street, Menai Bridge, LL59 5AD. Cheques payable to Menai Bridge and District Civic Society.